Language Attitudes and Social Identity. A Study on Russian-Speaking Immigrant Communities in Israel and Germany

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German summary

Diese Arbeit setzt sich die Erforschung der Spracheinstellungen russischsprachiger Einwanderer in Israel und Deutschland zum Ziel. Spracheinstellungen werden von Dragojevic et al. (2021:61) folgendermaßen definiert: „die sozialen Bedeutungen, die Menschen Sprache und deren Benutzern zusprechen.“[1] Spracheinstellungen sind in dieser Arbeit nicht nur der zentrale Untersuchungsgegenstand, sondern gleichzeitig auch das Instrument, anhand dessen sich der zweite zentrale Untersuchungsgegenstand erforschen lässt, nämlich soziale Identität. Letztere besteht basierend auf Tajfel & Turner (1979:40) aus „denjenigen Aspekten des Selbstbildes eines Individuums, die sich aus den sozialen Kategorien, zu denen es sich als zugehörig wahrnimmt, ableiten lassen.“[2] Demnach werden Spracheinstellungen und soziale Identität in ihrer Verzahnung untersucht, woraus sich die zentrale Fragestellung der Arbeit ergibt:

> Was sagen die Spracheinstellungen russischsprachiger Einwanderer in Israel und Deutschland darüber aus, wie sich diese im Aufnahmeland soziokulturell verorten?

Um dieser Frage nachzugehen, verwende ich einen interdisziplinären Ansatz, der theoretische und methodologische Perspektiven aus der Soziolinguistik, der Soziologie, der Sozialpsychologie und der Migrationsforschung kombiniert. Der interdisziplinäre Ansatz ergibt sich aus der Komplexität der obengenannten Fragestellung, in deren Mittelpunkt ein soziolinguistisches (Spracheinstellungen) und ein sozialpsychologisches (soziale Identität) Phänomen stehen, die im Kontext postsowjetischer Migrationsphänomene analysiert werden. Migration aus den Ländern der ehemaligen Sowjetunion ist sowohl in Deutschland als auch in Israel ein gewichtiges Phänomen, das insbesondere seit dem Zerfall der Sowjetunion an Bedeutung und Sichtbarkeit gewinnt. Die zahlreichen politischen, ethnischen und

[1] Meine Übersetzung. Das Original lautet: „the social meanings people assign to language and its users.“

[2] Meine Übersetzung. Das Original lautet: „those aspects of an individual’s self-image that derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself as belonging.“

soziokulturellen Konflikte, die sich in den postsowjetischen Ländern zutragen, haben einen direkten Einfluss auf Migrationsbewegungen nicht nur in der Region selbst, sondern aus dem postsowjetischen Raum vor allem nach Europa, Israel und in die Vereinigten Staaten von Amerika. Aus der historischen und aktuellen Bedeutung von Migrationsphänomenen in und aus dem postsowjetischen Raum ergibt sich die Notwendigkeit einer wissenschaftlichen Beschäftigung mit den Themen, die im Mittelpunkt dieser Arbeit stehen und die insbesondere aus soziolinguistischer Sicht ein Forschungsdesiderat darstellen.
In Kapitel 1 werden die Hauptmerkmale der vorliegenden Studie einführend beschrieben. Dabei liegt der Fokus insbesondere auf der prägenden Rolle des Forschungsfeldes sowie der Ansichten von Studienteilnehmern, woraus sich die Charakterisierung dieser Studie als „Feldstudie“ ergibt. Da Spracheinstellungen in den Ansichten von Menschen gegenüber Sprachen und deren Sprechern bestehen, werden aus der Perspektive der Studienteilnehmer im Sinne partizipativer Forschung (Unger 2014) Impulse abgeleitet, um zu einer Sensibilisierung migrationspolitischer Akteure in Israel und Deutschland für die Bedürfnisse und Selbstwahrnehmungen der Einwanderer beizutragen. Wie in Abschnitt 1.4 erläutert ergibt sich aus der Studie, dass zwischen den von der Migrationspolitik auf die Einwanderer angewandten Identitätskategorien und den Selbstwahrnehmungen der Einwanderer eine auffällige Kluft besteht, die schwerwiegende Folgen für die Integration hat. Insbesondere im Kontext postsowjetischer Migrationsphänomene nehmen Identitätskategorien eine äußerst bedeutende Rolle ein, da sie aus historischer Sicht vor allem Miderheitengruppen betreffen, die aufgrund der ihnen durch sowjetische Beamte zugewiesenen, im sogenannten „fünften Paragrafen“ des sowjetischen Reisepasses eingetragenen ethnischen Zugehörigkeit systematisch benachteiligt und verfolgt wurden.
Viele der Studienteilnehmer konnten nach Israel und Deutschland im Rahmen von Programmen auswandern, bei denen die ihnen extern zugewiesene ethnische Zugehörigkeit ein zentrales Kriterium ist. Auf der einen Seite handelt es sich in der israelischen Einwanderungspolitik um das Kriterium der jüdischen Zugehörigkeit, welches basierend auf dem Rückkehrgesetz Israels angewandt wird und aufgrund dessen insbesondere Einwanderer aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion mit einem enormen gesellschaftlichen Druck konfrontiert werden, da sie im israelischen politischen Diskurs als nicht jüdisch genug gelten (siehe Abschnitt 6.2.3), im Herkunftsland jedoch gerade aufgrund der ihnen zugeschriebenen jüdischen Zugehörigkeit als nicht russisch genug oder nicht sowjetisch genug galten.
Auf der anderen Seite sind es sogenannte Spätaussiedler und jüdische Kontingentflüchtlinge, die jeweils aufgrund deutscher und jüdischer Zugehörigkeit nach dem deutschen Zu-

wanderungsgesetz Anspruch auf Einbürgerung bzw. auf die Erteilung einer Aufenthaltserlaubnis haben. Auch im Fall von Spätaussiedlern und Kontingentflüchtlingen beruhen die Aufnahmebedingungen auf extern zugeschriebenen Kategorien ethnoreligiöser bzw. ethnonationaler Zugehörigkeit, die während der Sowjetunion geschaffen wurden und so zu einem Teil des Gepäcks werden, welches Einwanderer aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion nach Deutschland mitnehmen. Und auch in diesem Fall erleben Einwanderer „doppelte[...] Fremdheitswahrnehmungen“ (Panagiotidis 2021:124), die als Folge der Erwartungen der Aufnahmegesellschaft an sie auftreten, im wissenschaftlichen Diskurs jedoch bis auf wenige Ausnahmen vernachlässigt werden.

Somit werden in der Migrationspolitik der Aufnahmeländern die zu sowjetischen Zeiten etablierten Identitätskategorien fortgeführt, wodurch bei zahlreichen Einwanderern aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion sich das Gefühl eines Zustandes des „Dazwischen“ (Oushakine 2000 und Panagiotidis 2021) ergibt, welches in dieser Arbeit als kennzeichnendes Merkmal der postsowjetischen Migration betrachtet wird (siehe Abschnitt 1.4).

Diese Arbeit ist eine Mixed-Method-Studie, da sie auf Daten basiert, die im Rahmen einer qualitativen und einer quantitativen Studie erhoben wurden und die kombiniert analysiert werden, um ein möglichst facettenreiches Bild von Spracheinstellungen und sozialer Identität der russischsprachiger Diaspora in Israel und Deutschland wiederzugeben. Die qualitative Studie besteht aus 56 Interviews mit russischsprachigen Einwanderern im jungen Erwachsenenalter in Israel und Deutschland. Die quantitative Studie baut auf den Erkenntnissen aus der qualitativen Studie auf und wurde in Form einer Online-Umfrage mit 761 russischsprachigen Einwanderern ohne Altersbeschränkung in Israel und Deutschland durchgeführt. Das Studiendesign wird in Kapitel 5 detailliert beschrieben.

Aufgrund ihrer Interdisziplinarität lässt sich die Studie keinem einzelnen theoretischen Rahmen zuordnen, sondern es werden in ihr verschiedene theoretische Überlegungen zu einem organischen Gebilde kombiniert, welches tiefgreifende methodologische Folgen hat. Die Verflechtung von Theorie und Methoden wird in Kapitel 4 diskutiert. Dort wird ebenfalls auf theoretische Ansätze Bezug genommen, die für diese Studie von besonderer Bedeutung sind. Allen voran ist die „sociology of language“ von Joshua Fishman (1966), die sich von der sogenannten Labovschen Soziolinguistik (nach William Labov) distanziert, da in Fishmans Ansatz nicht Sprache, sondern Gesellschaft die Zieldimension der Erforschung bildet. Die interdisziplinäre Orientierung der Studie sowie die Triangulation qualitativer und quantitativer Methoden ergeben sich aus der zentralen Annahme, dass die Forschung dem untersuchten Phänomen gerecht werden sollte und nicht umgekehrt. Statt eine Hypothese

durch dafür ausgewählte Daten bestätigen zu lassen, setzt sich die vorliegende Arbeit zum Ziel, diejenigen theoretischen und methodologischen Ansätze anzuwenden, die notwendig sind, um die Komplexität des Untersuchungsgegenstandes unter Berücksichtigung der von den Studienteilnehmern zum Ausdruck gebrachten Relevanzen zu ergründen. Eine solche Perspektive erfordert Flexibilität und Offenheit, die im Rahmen der sogenannten Grounded-Theory-Methodologie nach Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]) wichtige Prinzipien darstellen (siehe Abschnitt 4.3). Im Sinne der Grounded-Theory-Methodologie werden in dieser Studie Daten zu den Spracheinstellungen und sozialen Identitäten russischsprachiger Einwanderer in Israel und Deutschland erhoben und analysiert, um Generalisierungen soziologischer Relevanz zu treffen. Vor diesem Hintergrund lässt sich die vorliegende Studie als eine linguistisch-soziologische Anwendung der Grounded-Theory-Methodologie beschreiben.

Der Studie liegt eine kritische Auseinandersetzung mit Konzepten zugrunde, welche die zentrale Arbeitsterminologie bilden. Die oben definierten Termini Spracheinstellung und soziale Identität werden in Kapitel 2 auf die ihnen zugrundeliegenden Konzepte Sprache, Einstellung, Gesellschaft und Identität zurückgeführt. Neben letzteren Konzepten werden in Kapitel 2 weitere umfassende Konstrukte wie Migration, Integration, Gruppe, Kultur und Sprachpolitik diskutiert. Auch der Begriff „postsowjetisch“ wird dort kritisch angegangen und dem Begriff „russischsprachig“ gegenübergestellt, da beide Begriffe in der vorliegenden Arbeit in unterschliedlichen Kontexten verwendet werden. In Abschnitt 2.8 wird auf die problematischen Aspekte eingegangen, die mit dem Begriff „postsowjetisch“ einhergehen. Sowohl im öffentlichen Diskurs als auch in der Wissenschaft kommt es zu einer unkritischen Verwendung von „postsowjetisch“, das die komplexen Transformationen, die im Gebiet der ehemaligen Sowjetunion nach deren Zerfall zutage treten, oftmals allzu vereinfachend unter einem Etikett zusammenzufassen versucht. Dabei wird die Tatsache weitestgehend vernachlässigt, dass „postsowjetisch“ für Menschen aus der ehemaliger Sowjetunion kein geläufiges Attribut der Selbstidentifizierung ist. Vielmehr verwenden Menschen, die in der Forschung bspw. als „postsowjetische Migranten“ bezeichnet werden, zur Selbstidentifizierung das Kriterium der Sprache. Demnach verstehen sich die Teilnehmer an dieser Studie als „russischsprachige Migranten“ und nehmen so implizit Bezug auf die Rolle des Russischen als Lingua franca für die Kommunikation zwischen Menschen, die in der ehemaligen Sowjetunion geboren oder sozialisiert wurden (siehe Pavlenko 2008b:27).

Der Begriff „postsowjetisch“ wird in dieser Arbeit nicht abgelehnt, sondern er wird vor allem in einem chronologischen Sinne verstanden, d.h. um Phänomene zu charakterisie-

ren, die sich nach dem Zerfall der Sowjetunion ereignet haben. So wird in Kapitel 3 ein historischer Überblick über postsowjetische Migration geboten, aus dem hervorgeht, dass ethnische (insbesondere jüdische und deutsche) Auswanderung aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion nur einen Bruchteil der Geschichte postsowjetischer Migration darstellt. Vor allem ab Ende der 1990s Jahre spielen ökonomische, politische und ideologische Faktoren eine prägende Rolle bei Migrationsphänomenen aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion, wie durch den Topos der „desillusionierten Emigranten" (Fomina 2021:8) zusammengefasst wird.

Den Kern der Arbeit bildet Kapitel 6, in dem die Ergebnisse der Datenanalyse vorgestellt werden. Die zentrale Erkenntnis der Analyse ist, dass Spracheinstellungen sich nicht primär auf Sprache beziehen, sondern vielmehr auf die gesellschaftlichen Akteure und Kontexte, mit denen die jeweilige Sprache von den Menschen, welche die Spracheinstellung äußern, in Verbindung gebracht wird. Dass russischsprachige Einwanderer nach Israel eine emotionale, weitestgehend positivere Einstellung gegenüber Hebräisch aufweisen als russischsprachige Einwanderer nach Deutschland gegenüber Deutsch sagt weniger über die Sprachen Hebräisch und Deutsch aus, als dass es Einblicke in Gruppendynamiken sowie Prozesse der Entstehung sozialer Identität in mehrsprachigen Gesellschaften liefert. Hinter der weitestgehend positiven Einstellung gegenüber Hebräisch stecken bei russischsprachigen Einwanderern in Israel ideologische Faktoren, die zu ihrer emotionalen Bindung an Hebräisch als „Sprache der Vorfahren" bzw. Sprache des jüdischen Volkes Israels (siehe Abschnitt 6.3.3) beitragen. Die positive Einstellung gegenüber Hebräisch steht offensichtlich in einem engen Zusammenhang mit dem hohen Grad an Selbstidentifizierung als israelisch bzw. jüdisch unter den russischsprachigen Einwanderern in Israel (siehe Tabelle 6.19).

Bei russischsprachigen Einwanderern in Deutschland lässt sich hingegen eine niedrige Verbreitung der Selbstidentifizierung als deutsch feststellen (siehe Tabelle 6.20), wodurch die weitestgehend neutrale Einstellung russischsprachiger Einwanderer gegenüber Deutsch erklärt werden kann. Ferner weisen die Selbstidentifizierungsmuster insbesondere bei russischsprachigen Einwanderern in Deutschland darauf hin, dass der von der Einwanderungspolitik vorausgesetzten ethnisch deutschen Zugehörigkeit als Kriterium für die Aufnahme als Spätaussiedler in der Selbstwahrnehmung der Einwanderer nicht entsprochen wird. Darüber hinaus lässt sich vermuten, dass das generell niedrige öffentliche Interesse für Spätaussiedler in der deutschen Gesellschaft, welches in der einwanderungspolitischen Beschreibung ihrer Integration als „gutes und geräuschloses Einleben" (BAMF 2019b:6) kondensiert wird, sich auf das Zugehörigkeitsgefühl von Spätaussiedlern in Deutschland negativ oder jedenfalls nicht positiv auswirkt, sodass neutrale Einstellungen gegenüber Deutsch

(siehe Abbildung 6.40) und Deutschland (siehe Abbildung 6.28) vor diesem Hintergrund als Ausdruck eines mangelnden Zugehörigkeitsgefühl interpretiert werden können. Zudem wird aus den Daten ersichtlich, dass eine bedeutsame Anzahl der Teilnehmer aus Deutschland eine sogenannte Weiterwanderung, d.h. eine zukünftige Auswanderung in ein anderes Land, in Betracht zieht (siehe Tabelle 6.18) und über keine eindeutige Verbesserung der eigenen Lebensqualität seit der Einwanderung nach Deutschland berichtet (siehe Tabelle 6.17). Dieses Datum mag auf den ersten Blick überraschend erscheinen, da in Deutschland die vorhandenen Bildungs- und Berufschancen im Vergleich zu Israel eine höhere soziale Mobilität der Einwanderer ermöglichen, die unter anderem durch die geringere Wohnsegregation (siehe Abschnitt 6.1.4) bedingt ist. Allerdings wird in der Studie gezeigt, dass die niedrigere Zufriedenheit und emotionale Bindung unter den Teilnehmern aus Deutschland im Vergleich zu den Teilnehmern aus Israel mit einer als mangelhaft wahrgenommenen Unterstützungsbereitschaft des sozialen Umfelds unter anderem im Sinne von Zivilcourage zusammenhängt (siehe Abschnitt 6.1.4 sowie Abbildung 6.4).
In der Studie wird gezeigt, dass russischsprachige Einwanderer in Deutschland die deutsche Sprache in deutlich mehr Kontexten verwenden, als Teilnehmer aus Israel Hebräisch verwenden. Dies dürfte eine Folge der Verfasstheit des staatlichen „Ulpan“[3]-Systems sein, bei welchem Einwanderer oft gemäß ihrer Erstsprache in Klassen aufgeteilt werden, sodass ihnen der Unterricht mitunter nicht in hebräischer Sprache, sondern in ihrer Erstsprache erteilt wird (siehe Abschnitt 6.3.1). Demnach ist auch in der Sprachdidaktik des Hebräischen in Israel das Problem der Segregation ersichtlich, welches nicht nur für Einwanderer sondern für die gesamte Gesellschaft Israels schwerwiegende Folgen hat.
Einstellungen gegenüber dem Russischen sind in beiden Teilnehmergruppen weitestgehend positiv, wobei darauf hingewiesen werden muss, dass die positive Tendenz bei den Teilnehmern aus Deutschland ausgeprägter ist (vgl. Tabelle 6.37 mit Tabelle 6.38). Ähnliche Muster lassen sich bei Einstellungen gegenüber den Herkunftsländern identifizieren, die unter den russischsprachigen Migranten in Deutschland tendenziell positiver sind als in der Teilnehmergruppe aus Israel. Trotz der Tatsache, dass in der deutschen Einwanderungspolitik einen großen Wert auf das Erlernen des Deutschen gelegt wird und sich die deutsche Sprachpolitik nach Adler & Beyer (2018:239) als „weitestgehend monolingual“ beschreiben lässt, ist Sozialisierung mit Deutschsprechern für die Teilnehmergruppe aus Deutschland

[3]Unter *ulpan* (Hebräisch für Werkstatt, Studio, Kurs) versteht man in Israel einen in den meisten Fällen staatlich subventionierten Hebräischkurs für *’olim*, d.h. Einwanderer gemäß des Rückkehrergesetztes Israels.

problematisch (siehe die Fallstudie über Informantin BDE34F in Abschnitt 6.1.2).
Obgleich die hohe Bereitschaft unter den Teilnehmern aus Israel für die Selbstidentifizierung als jüdisch bzw. israelisch als Zeichen einer unproblematischen Integration in die israelische Gesellschaft gelesen werden könnte, wäre eine solche Lesart basierend auf den in dieser Studie vorgestellten Daten falsch. Es ist nämlich sowohl aus der Forschung als auch aus dem israelischen öffentlichen Diskurs bekannt, dass die Zugehörigkeit postsowjetischer Olim zur jüdischen Gesellschaft Israels durchgehend infrage gestellt wird, da eine bislang unbekannte, jedoch allgemein als hoch eingestufte Anzahl an Olim aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion nach der Halacha[4] als nicht jüdisch gilt (siehe Abschnitt 6.2.6.2). Öffentliche Beanstandungen an der Zugehörigkeit von Einwanderern aus der Sowjetunion in Israel gewinnen vor dem Hintergrund wachsender religiös-nationalistischer Tendenzen in den letzten Jahren in Israel an Bedeutung und sind auch angesichts des andauernden, infolge der tragischen Ereignissen am 7. Oktober 2023 mit erneuter Wucht angefeuerten Konflikts zwischen Israel und Palästina nicht zu unterschätzen.
Die oben erwähnten Tendenzen finden in der aufsehenerregenden Äußerung von Rabbi Jitzchak Josef im Jahr 2020 (siehe Abschnitt 6.2.3) Ausdruck, die in Frage *b der Online-Umfrage thematisiert wird:

> Im Frühjar 2020 äußerte sich der sephardische Oberrabbiner in etwa folgendermaßen: „Rückkehrer aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion sind Gojim[5] und Kommunisten.“ Beschreiben Sie in nicht mehr als drei Wörtern, welche Reaktion diese Äußerung bei Ihnen hervorruft.

Aus den Reaktionen der Teilnehmer auf die Äußerung von Rabbi Jitzchak Josef wird ersichtlich, dass die unter ihnen verbreitete Selbstidentifizierung als jüdisch bzw. israelisch Teil eines Mechanismus zur Bewältigung des hohen gesellschaftlichen Drucks ist, dem Einwanderer aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion in Israel ausgesetzt ist. Demnach deutet die Kundgebung einer Identifizierung mit den kulturellen Werten (Schwartz 2006) nicht unbedingt auf Integration bzw. auf ein problemoses Zusammenleben mehrerer Gruppen in einer Gesellschaft hin.
Aus diesen Überlegungen ergibt sich ein hochkomplexes Bild der russischsprachigen Einwanderung nach Israel und Deutschland, welches mehrere sich gegenseitig widersprechende Zustände beinhaltet und aus dem hervorgeht, dass es für sprachliche und kulturelle Integra-

[4]Die Halacha ist das System des jüdischen religiösen Rechts.
[5]Das hebräische Wort „goj“, Plural „gojim“, bezeichnet Nichtjuden sowie Juden, die sich nicht an religiöse Vorschriften halten.

tion keine „Patentlösung“ gibt. Die Komplexitäten postsowjetischer Migration in Israel und Deutschland werden in Kapitel 7 zusammenfassend diskutiert; dort werden ebenfalls die Grenzen dieser Untersuchung besprochen sowie sich aus dieser Arbeit ergebende Fragestellungen für zukünftige Studien über Spracheinstellungen und (postsowjetische) Migration aufgezeigt.

Die zentrale Erkenntnis aus dieser Studie ist, dass die Erforschung von Spracheinstellungen insbesondere im Migrationskontext wertvolle Einsichten in Mechanismen der gesellschaftlichen Selbst- und Fremdverortung im Sinne der Grenzziehung zwischen Eigen- und Fremdgruppe erlaubt, die allerdings insbesondere in der Forschung zur postsowjetischen Migration vernachlässigt werden. Weitere Studien sind notwendig, um die Teilnehmerperspektive nicht nur in soziolinguistischen Ansätzen, sondern auch in der Einwanderungspolitik stärker einzubinden, um die mitunter unangemessen große Diskrepanz zwischen der Teilnehmer- und der Forscherperspektive (siehe Abschnitt 4.2) zu verringern.

Note on transliterations

The transliterations from Russian, Hebrew and Ukrainian featured in this dissertation follow the ALA - LC (American Library Association - Library of Congress) standards for romanization.

List of abbreviations

BAMF Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge

BVA Bundesverwaltungsamt

CBS Central Bureau of Statistics

CIS Commonwealth of Independent States

DESTATIS DESTATIS German Federal Bureau of Statistics

FSU former Soviet Union

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

RSE Reduced Sensitivity Effect

WoZuG Wohnortszuweisungsgesetz

Participant code names

0.1 Interview participants

In order to guarantee a confidential treatment of personal data, the names of interview participants have been modified into pseudonyms and substituted with code names. Pseudonyms were generated randomly so as to be as remote from the participants' real names as possible.
An example of a participant code name featured in this study is "SIL32F." It can be broken down to the following elements:

- "S" is the initial letter of the pseudonym with which the participant's first name was substituted,
- "IL" stands for Israel, i.e. the country in which the participant was recruited; "DE" is employed as a country code for Germany,
- "32" refers to the participant's age at the time of the interview. "00" is used for cases in which age is not disclosed out of privacy concerns,
- "F" refers to the participant's gender; "M" is employed for male gender. No other gender than female or male was indicated by the participants.

All code names are composed of the elements listed above and in the order in which they are listed above, i.e. pseudonym initial, country code, age, gender.

0.2 Quantitative survey participants

Names and surnames of participants were not collected in the quantitative survey. Each answer in the questionnaire is assigned a code composed of:

- a letter corresponding to a question;
- a number corresponding to the participant number.

In the following example, G328 stands for the answer provided by participant 328 of the Germany-based survey to question 15 (question code G); for the Israel-based survey, question 15 is marked with the letter I. The respondents' countries (Israel or Germany) are indicated in the text.

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This work is dedicated to all migrants.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Aim of the study

This study presents the results of research work conducted between 2018 and 2021 among Russian-speaking immigrant communities in Israel and Germany. These two countries, with the people I was able to interview and the knowledge they shared with me, have been the *field* where my research was carried out; this study is, in its integrity, a field study.
This study revolves around two core constructs, i.e. *language attitude* and *social identity.*
Language attitude has been described by Dragojevic et al. (2021:61) as "the social meanings people assign to language and its users." The latter description is only one of the many attempts undertaken by sociolinguistic scholarship at defining language attitudes, which have been an increasingly popular object of investigation over the last three to four decades. Garrett (2010) provides a detailed overview of research on language attitudes until 2010, illustrating that it "encompasses a broad range of foci [...] extend[ing] to all manner of sociolinguistic and social psychological phenomena, such as how we position ourselves socially, and how we relate to other individuals and groups" (Garrett 2010:15).
The broad character of the definition provided by Dragojevic et al. (2021) hints at how multifaceted a phenomenon language attitude is; its complexity is reflected in the many different perspectives which have been taken on in research.
As regards the notion of social identity, the definition which best suits the scope of my research questions is the fundamental one by Tajfel & Turner (1979:40), in whose words "[i]t consists [...] of those aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself as belonging."
In this study, I analyze the attitudes of Russian-speaking young adult immigrants from

countries of the former Soviet Union (FSU) to Israel and Germany towards their biographically relevant language varieties. At the same time, I regard the speakers' attitudes towards the said language varieties as a magnifying glass through which to study processes of social identity formation.
In this study, language attitudes are regarded as a lens through which the formation of social identity in migration contexts can be empirically studied. The study of language attitudes is especially fruitful in contexts affected by migration phenomena because users of a language often feel compelled to express attitudes, values and opinions towards languages in multilingual contexts, "in settings where languages are in competition and where some speakers [or, generally, groups of people] feel under threat" (Garrett 2010:11).
In this study, I argue that the context of migration from the former Soviet Union lends itself exceptionally well to the study of interactions between language attitudes and social identity because the fall of the Soviet Union, with all its multifaceted implications, has deeply affected the self-identifications and feeling of social belonging of millions of former Soviet citizens, many of whom decided to emigrate.
Working on language attitude and social identity implies reflecting on questions of paramount importance for linguistics, sociology, cultural studies and beyond: What are *language*, *culture*, *society*, *migration*? While these questions certainly won't be answered in this work, my contribution consists in providing my reading of these primal entities based on data from my research and in putting them in context so as to better understand the role of language attitudes for social identity formation. In spite of the aforementioned popularity of language attitudes in sociolinguistic research, I argue that they still are highly understudied and deserve thorough engagement by means of adopting an interdisciplinary perspective.
Yet, many aspects of language attitudes are still largely underresearched, and further theoretical and methodological work on language attitudes is highly necessary. In fact, in order to appraise the complexity and scientific potential of studying language attitudes, research needs to take into account its social psychological relevance, combining methodologies from social psychology, sociology, sociolinguistics and other disciplines. The crucial function of language attitudes for the formation and reinforcement of social identity has manifested itself to me during the course of fieldwork and was pointed at by the participants themselves in different ways. Throughout my research, the viewpoint of the participants has provided me with an invaluable orientation in theoretical, methodological and epistemological perspective; it occupies a key position in this dissertation, as shall become clearer in the next sections and chapters.

My investigation relies on data obtained with both qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative data consists in biographical interviews with Russian-speaking young adult immigrants to Israel and Germany, expert interviews with scholars and public figures, and journals in which I documented my experiences on the field.
Data for quantitative analysis was yielded by an online survey carried out with Russian-speaking participants from countries of the former Soviet Union based in Israel and Germany which was designed to identify overarching sociolinguistic and sociocultural patterns. Overall, the data corpus consists of 59 interview recordings with 62 participants on the one hand and of an online survey with 761 participants on the other hand. Throughout this work, however, the qualitative data occupy the central position; on account of their richness in content, they enable to attain a fine-grained, case-specific analysis which can then be complemented with insights from quantitative data.
The next section illustrates the structure of the study departing from the research questions and hypotheses.

1.2 Research questions

The central question pursued within my research project is:

Q1 What do Russian-speaking young adult immigrants to Israel and Germany think about their biographically relevant languages (Russian, Hebrew, German, etc.)?

The above question directly refers to the immigrants' language attitudes, subsumed in what the immigrants *think* about their biographically relevant languages. In my wording of the research question, the verb *think* hints at the fact that language attitudes rely on cognitive processes which, as such, always involve some degree of categorization. Referring back to the definition of *language attitudes* by Dragojevic et al. (2021:61) as "the social meanings people assign to language and its users," the process of assigning meaning to something presupposes creating some semantic categories by which this *something* shall be ordered. Since language attitudes, like attitudes in general, are an entity of social psychological interest, looking into them means looking into the mechanisms of their social action in the receiving society.
The following remark by Tajfel & Turner (1979:40) is instructive in this respect:

> Social categorizations are conceived here as cognitive tools that segment, classify, and order the social environment, and thus enable the individual to un-

> dertake many forms of social action. But they do not merely systematize the social world; they also provide a system of orientation for *self*-reference: they create and define the individual's place in society.

Thus, one of the defining characteristics of language attitudes is the expression of social categorization carried out by speakers onto other speakers and the language(s) that they use.
Studying language attitudes is key to understanding the way in which immigrants situate themselves and interact in society, which is where the next fundamental research question sets on:

Q2 What do the immigrants' language attitudes reveal about the process of the immigrants' integration in the receiving society and about their social identity?

In order to pursue Q1 "What do Russian-speaking young adult immigrants to Israel and Germany think about their biographically relevant languages (Russian, Hebrew, German, etc.)?" as well as Q2 "What do the immigrants' language attitudes reveal about the process of the immigrants' integration in the receiving society and about their social identity?," it is necessary to factor in the following aspects, which can be seen as sub-questions (SQ):

SQ1 How do Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel and Germany evaluate their language competence in their biographically relevant languages?

SQ2 How important do they deem it do maintain Russian, e.g. by passing it on to their children?

SQ3 How often and in which setting do they use which language?

SQ4 What do they associate with which language?

SQ5 What are their attitudes towards their country of birth vs. the receiving society?

To explain the relevance of the sub-questions and how they relate to Q1 and Q2, it is first necessary to make some observations concerning their reach.
SQ 1 to 3 address linguistic aspects such as language competence, language maintenance, language use and language attitude. These three linguistic aspects are essential to understanding how language attitudes form and function, which is specifically addressed in SQ4. SQ 5 addresses more general socio-cultural aspects and is the point where the immigrants' language attitudes are put in relation to their attitudes towards the receiving society vs.

other environments which are more familiar to them.
The fact that the sub-questions address on the one hand linguistic and on the other hand socio-cultural aspects is indicative of the elements which must be considered when producing both theoretical and empirical work on language attitudes, which is what I am doing with this study. In fact, both the questions and the sub-questions reflect the constituting factors of language attitudes, which are a construct at the interface of language, society and culture, therefore requiring an interdisciplinary approach. As mentioned above, theoretical aspects of language attitudes are the subject of Chapter 4.
After addressing the major research questions of this study, the following not less significant questions arise:

- Why is it relevant to ask these questions and sub-questions?
- How can they be answered?

The first of these questions concerns the motivation behind my research interest, while the second is ultimately about what readers can or should expect from this study. In the next section, I illustrate the motivation behind my research interest and how it is connected to some first-hand experiences with language attitudes.

1.3 Motivation

I was born in the Southern Italian city of Salerno in 1994. One year later, my family migrated to the Northern Italian city of Reggio Emilia. Internal migration from Southern to Northern Italy has affected millions of Italians since WWII (for a historical account of internal migration in 20th century Italy, see Gallo 2012). Since first grade, my parents insisted that I get rid of the Southern Italian accent which I wasn't aware of having. I remember asking my mother to make a couple of examples for cases when our family's pronunciation was *too southern*; the most striking example was the word *calzini*, Italian for "socks." Its standard pronunciation is [kalˈt͡sini] whereas we, as per Southern Italian, would pronounce it [kalˈd͡zini]. This minimal difference in voicedness vs. voicelessness of the affricate consonant pair /t͡s/ and /d͡z/which was barely perceivable to my ears was all of a sudden invested with a new, quite powerful meaning. To my mother's mind, correctly pronouncing *calzini* and, in general, adopting a more Northern Italian pronunciation would have granted our family a more mellow transition into the new society, lowering the odds of us getting labeled as Southern Italian immigrants.

I am describing a very common, almost banal dynamics in immigrant families, which goes under the label of accent modification (see Baratta 2016) and can be considered a sub-phenomenon of speech accommodation. Whether consciously or not, adopting certain features typical for certain language varieties with more – or, at times, less – prestige than one's own can be considered as a way of "presenting a particular version of [one's] dynamic social identity at a given moment" (Babel 2009:47).
Reconnecting to the above anecdote, it is not by studying phonetic characteristics and how they condition the purported negative reception of Southern Italian vernaculars in Northern Italy that one is to understand the *how* and *why* of the said negative reception. Similarly, this study is not about linguistic features; it is about what people think about language as the arguably most illustrative tool for understanding the how and why of social phenomena such as social identity formation, social categories and stereotypes.
During fieldwork, I encountered people whose immigration stories are not just meaningful to them as individuals; they often constitute precious resources for societies to identify major issues and create more equitable living conditions for all its members.
Next to the strictly scientific objective of this study, I intend to give a voice to migrants and their stories so as to raise awareness for migration as a phenomenon of cross-societal relevance; a phenomenon which can offer societies the opportunity to question the established order and make way for the new.
In the next section, I provide insights into what to expect of this study concerning its content and structure.

1.4 Expectations and tendencies

This study takes on a comparative perspective, observing the same phenomenon in two different settings: Israel and Germany. Comparative analyses on the Russian-speaking *diaspora* have been carried out predominantly from a historical and sociological vantage point, most notably by Remennick (2007) and Panagiotidis (2019 and 2021.) To date, an extensive study factoring in linguistic aspects is missing. My study contributes to filling this research gap from an interdisciplinary perspective combining the necessary linguistic, sociological and ethnographic expertise to study such a multifaceted subject.
In this introduction, I provide an overview of the theoretical and methodological aims which I pursue as well as of the research questions and assumptions which have been driving me throughout this research work, thus providing the reader with a frame for orientation

regarding the following questions:

1. What did you find out?

As basic as it might appear, this question is vital in that it contains in itself another question:

2. Why should anyone read this study?

Reconnecting to the *comparative perspective* mentioned at the beginning of this section, one question which I have regularly been asked throughout my research has been:

3. What comes out of your comparison between Israel and Germany?

Let's begin by answering the most essential of the above questions, namely the middle one: if you are interested in discovering what Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel and Germany think about the languages which play a relevant role in their everyday lives in the receiving societies, then this study will be helpful. The value of discovering what Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel and Germany think about their biographically relevant languages can be explained by my educated (i.e. data-driven) assumption that no migration phenomenon can be fully understood without looking at language attitudes.
On the basis of its complexity, the Russian-speaking diaspora is treated as a case study whose specific characteristics allow for generalization on the level of migration theory. This means that a reasonable expectation from this study is that of understanding whether there are phenomena especially characteristic for migration from the FSU and, if yes, which ones. To put it in one question,

4. What, if anything, makes migration from the FSU *special*?

Answering this question presupposes engaging with the meaning of *post-Soviet*; this is done in the next chapter, which engages in a terminological clarification. Furthermore, readers can expect that this study will offer a perspective on the differences in migration policy within Israel and Germany and how these affect immigrants in their daily life and self-identification. The migration policies of Israel and Germany have a high impact on the migration experiences of the immigrants whom I interviewed for my study. From this study emerges that immigrants from the FSU to Germany perceive their integration path as smoother and paved with less conflicts compared to their Israel-based counterparts. This is not only due to the different immigration regulations but also and most remarkably to the different societal structures and dynamics of both countries. At the same time, it

can be generalized that the self-identification of Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel has much stronger ideological motifs than it is the case for the Germany-based study participants, which to a broad extent is a consequence of differences in the societal configuration of Israel and Germany as well as of the immigrants' relation to administrative categories imposed on them by immigration policy.
This highlights another key factor in the study: the immigrants' uttering of their language attitudes both in the interview setting and within the quantitative survey – which, however, can be employed for qualitative purposes, too – lets conflicts surface between their self-identification and their external perception and/or categorization in society. Precisely these conflicts suggest new paths for best practice in immigration policy so that it can be adjusted to reduce the cleavage between self-perception and external constraints.
Besides the study of the immigrants' language attitudes, their general attitudes towards social, political, cultural phenomena become accessible both thanks to the (comparatively) spontaneous and unconstrained interview situation and to the anonimity of the quantitative survey; in fact, in the quantitative survey, the lesser degree of personal exposure on the side of the participants releases some pressure which is inevitably present in the face-to-face interview setting and partially rids them from the impulse of enacting face-saving strategies or presenting themselves as ambassadors of their native language/culture/society.
Furthermore, readers can expect that this study will challenge both laymen's stereotypes and academic misconceptions of the Russian-speaking diaspora. Against this backdrop, it is in particular the allegedly privileged position of Russian-speaking immigrants in comparison to other immigrant groups in Israel and Germany that deserves a critical treatment. Although it is true that certain administratively defined categories of Russian-speaking immigrants are granted access to both Israel and Germany more easily than it is the case for other groups of immigrants – as noted in Panagiotidis (2021:21 ff.), – I argue that the notion of privilege has a limited array of application within the scope of migration from the FSU. This section has offered an overview on what readers can expect to learn from this study. How exactly are these expectations to be fulfilled? This question can and should be answered by addressing the structure of this study, which is object of the next section.

1.5 Structure of the study

This study is structured as follows. In Chapter 2, I expand on the working terminology of this study. Next to defining and discussing the two central notions of this dissertation

as they are featured in its title, i.e. language attitudes and social identity, Chapter 2 expands on their significance by providing the definitions of the overarching notions which they presuppose, i.e. as language, society, identity, culture, migration, integration and attitude. While it is not possible nor intended to attain a full-fledged definition of these broad constructs which span across a range disciplines, Chapter 2 brings forth a tentative model of the elements and forces at play whenever the interaction of language, identity and migration is being studied. If this contribution largely represents a novelty, it is not due to the topics it treats, but because work on language, migration and identity is often characterized by terminological vagueness, especially for what concerns identity. To my knowledge, the latter problem has been sparsely discussed in linguistics (see, for example, Block 2009a and Block 2009b), but structured efforts addressing the conceptual problems around language, migration and identity are an exception. Taking a stance on these abstract and at the same time broadly used notions is all the more necessary in that, when work on language, migration, identity etc. does not provide a definition befitting the respective research context, this brings about consistent methodological issues, some of which are covered in 4.2.1.
The conceptual model for research on language, identity and migration presented in Chapter 2 includes the following terms:

- migration,
- integration,
- society; group, community
- identity; social, national identity,
- language,
- culture,
- attitude; language attitude,
- post-Soviet,
- Russian-speaking.

Most of these terms have a broad range of application and significance (‘language’, ‘culture’, ‘society’, ‘identity’ etc.), while some of them are more strictly contingent to the

issues of the communities investigated in this study ('Russian-speaking', 'post-Soviet'). Regardless, all the elements forming this conceptual model are defined are defined against the background of relevant research literature on them and befittingly to the aim of this study. based on the range of application which they find in this study. The above elements are put in relation to one another in Section 2.9, where I expand on the dynamics between them and their role within the conceptual model.

After it follows Chapter 3 devoted to a historical overview on post-Soviet migration. This chapter is especially original in that it provides an overview of the history of migration from the FSU into the present and of the main migration patterns and motifs behind several waves; to my knowledge, such an up-to-date, succinct contribution on post-Soviet migration movements has not been produced elsewhere before, with the exception of Panagiotidis (2021), whose focus is on post-Soviet migration to Germany. Another original aspect of the discussion lies in the fact that it brings together the historical perspective with issues of nationality and language policy explained both by referring to previous research and by presenting insights into the data corpus of this study.

Chapter 4 deals with the theoretical underpinnings of this study, expanding on their methodological implications. In this chapter I discuss the vital role of data for the generation of theory, as advocated by Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]). The major theoretical position of this study is extensively presented in Section 4.1 of Chapter 4. In this study, I employ an analysis of language – specifically, language attitudes and patterns of language use and maintenance – as an instrument to identify and analyze dynamics of social categorization. This perspective largely represents a novelty even in so-called 'traditional sociolinguistics', where the target dimension usually is not society, but language. After theoretically situating this study within the framework of Joshua Fishman's sociology of language (Fishman 1971) and referring to major approaches in perceptual sociolinguistics by Preston (1989) and Krefeld & Pustka (2010), the chapter moves on to a critical discussion of issues in traditional sociolinguistics which go under the label of "description hurdle" (see Section 4.2.1).

In Chapter 5 the study design and data collection are presented. The mixed-method design of the study, combined with its interdisciplinary perspective, the *critical approach* it adopts and the research gap that it sets out to fill, make for the most salient methodological innovations of this study. By critical approach, I mean that this study is characterized by a remarkable degree of self-reflection and questioning; this is the case throughout the study and is especially important with reference to the choice of methods, which always involve

some degree of bias and are never perfect. The necessity of identifying and reflecting upon these biases and limitations is all the more essential when working with data deriving from human interaction, as is the case in this study. Moreover, an open discussion on critical aspects of doing mixed-method research of sociological relevance can be useful to the scientific community in the spirit of open science and participatory research. Therefore, all the steps involved in the planning and, whenever necessary, adjusting and re-adjusting of the study design are discussed, so as to guarantee the highest possible degree of transparency and reproducibility of the study design.

The core of this study lies in Chapter 6 on data analysis. The decision of devoting the most consistent portion of this study to a discussion of data analysis is one of the consequences of adopting a Grounded Theory approach, which is discussed in Section 4.3 of Chapter 4. Thus, since data are regarded by Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]) as the foundation of theory generation, analyzing the data means creating categories of theoretical relevance. In this study, the categories emerging out of data analysis in Chapter 6 concern the demographics of the sample population, the participants' self-identification, their language practices and attitudes, as well as attitudes towards cultural and political issues. The combination of qualitative and quantitative data and hence analysis methods allows for the identification of patterns concerning migration from the former Soviet Union and is also a further aspect of innovation in that Grounded Theory approaches are largely qualitative and rarely mixed-method or quantitative.

From Chapter 6 emerges that time and space are two fundamental variables for the study of migration and integration. While this might sound obvious to some readers, these two dimensions are rarely addressed in research on language, identity and migration. Firstly, the divide between the participants' self-identification and the identity categories to which they are subject in immigration policy depends on time criteria, in that different generations might be subject to different immigration channels and different underlying identity categories. Secondly, while it is commonly expected that a longer time of stay equals a higher degree of integration, this simplistic equation made in immigration policy flattens out the immigrants' experiences and self-identifications; in fact, as the examples and statistics presented in the chapter show, integration is hardly possible even with a comparatively long stay in the receiving society if the latter is confronted with dramatic issues of segregation, as is the case especially in Israel. It is precisely when talking about segregation that the relevance of spatial aspects becomes evident: through examples and statistics, I illustrate that the segregation affecting FSU immigrants in Germany but especially in

Israel starts in geographical terms, i.e. as residential segregation, which has dramatic consequences in terms of educational and occupational chances and also in sociolinguistic terms. Quoting from Section 6.1.4, “if immigrants from the FSU are sent in groups on ulpan programs to highly segregated cities with little or no chances of interacting with native Hebrew speakers, their Hebrew learning experience and attitudes towards Hebrew can be expected to be negatively affected” (pp. 155–156).
The results are summarized and discussed in Chapter 7, where I sum up the achievements of this study, illustrate its limitations and propose questions for further research. The concluding discussion zeroes in on the most controversial findings of Chapter 6. As an example, how can the comparatively high degree of Israel-based questionnaire respondents self-identifying within the category “Israeli/Jew” (see Table 6.19) coexist with the comparatively high degree of segregation (also linguistic) and issues of discrimination to which Israel-based interview participant report being subject? This and further questions are extensively discussed in Chapter 7, from which becomes clear that language attitude is not – contrarily to the common assumption in sociolinguistics – a predictor of language behavior and that, instead, it points at how immigrants position themselves in society which, in the specific case of immigrants from the FSU to Israel and Germany, expresses itself in terms of the mixed – or “multiple” (Al-Haj 2019:119) – identities characteristic for post-Soviet migration.

Chapter 2

Terminology

In the present chapter, I unravel several terminological issues which have been pointed out in Chapter 1. The following terms require a definition, in that they are fundamental working concepts of this work:

- migration,
- integration,
- society; group
- identity; social, national identity,
- language,
- culture,
- attitude; language attitude,
- post-Soviet,
- Russian-speaking.

The order in which these terms are listed and discussed follows a conceptual scheme gradually uniting all the elements making up the core of this study from both a theoretical and an empirical perspective. Thus, migration is the first element of the complex, as it is seen as the background against which language attitude and social identity are investigated in this study. Next follows integration, a concept vital to the understanding of migration; however, it would not be possible to gain an understanding of the two concepts without

taking a stand on society, however briefly.
On a side note, the range of theoretical work on the concept of society is virtually immense, as is the case for most of the terms discussed in this chapter; it is necessary to consider that this chapter does not aim to advance theoretical work on these concepts but to define the meaning which they assume in this study.
Closely related to an understanding of society is the term identity, which is elaborated upon as social and national identity. The latter is often defined through language and culture, which are discussed subsequently. Next is attitude and more specifically language attitude, in which concept the nexus between language and culture is especially visible. The participants' language attitudes highlight how, in so-called post-Soviet countries, language is a highly politicized issue, often employed by institutions as an instrument to perform social differentiations; therefore, this chapter ends up by discussing the terms Russian-speaking and post-Soviet.
It is worth noting that this chapter does not aim at offering *universally valid* definitions of the terms but rather at contextualizing them within a given research field and disclosing their significance for the scope of this study, as well as at identifying limits and challenges for future research engaging with these terms.
Each section of the present chapter starts with a definition of the terms discussed and extract from this definition the premises for critical discussion and contextualization of the term within the scope of this study. Cognate terms frequently employed in association with the terms discussed below are also unpacked and included in a critical discussion.
This model is intended as a tool, providing a frame of terminological and conceptual reference to both students and researchers from different disciplines engaging with phenomena at the interface of language, identity and migration.

2.1 Migration

The following basic definition of migration is provided by Mayhew (2014): "The movement of people from one place to another." The breadth of this definition triggers several questions, among which the following is especially momentous: the question whether migration happens on a voluntary basis, out of a person's free will, or whether it happens forcibly, as the circumstances under which somebody lives leave them no choice but to move from a place to another. This difference between so-called forced and unforced – or voluntary – migration is not a black-or-white one; it is precisely the grey zone of migration in this

sense which is one of the main concerns of this study.
Based on Mayhew (2014),“voluntary migration refers to unforced movements, compulsory migration describes the expulsion of minorities from their country of birth by governments, or by warring factions.” While the distinction between the two types of migration might appear straightforward, it raises several issues:

> The term ‘forced migration’ implies that there is such a thing as ‘unforced migration’, though one hardly ever comes across this usage (...) If it is meaningless to talk about involuntary human migration, this is because, to migrate, when applied to human beings, implies at least some degree of agency, of independent will. (Turton 2003)

The difference between forced and unforced migration has been institutionalized, leading to the emergence of a field of study termed *refugee studies* (German *Fluchtforschung*) which is often directed towards the identification and evaluation of “urgent policy questions” (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al. 2014:4) affecting the welfare of refugees. According to UNHCR, refugees are “people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country.” A key topic in refugee studies is the question of legally recognized refugee status (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh et al. 2014:1), which is the key criterion employed by institutions such as UNHCR when dealing with refugee issues.
While a clear distinction might be helpful from the point of view of policy-making, where clear-cut categories are essential in order to enforce policies effectively, research shows that this difference is not as clear-cut as it is institutionally understood:

> while we should be interested in the factors that limit choice and the ways in which individuals, households and groups make decisions in the light of those limiting factors, we should not lump people together into categories, according to the extent of choice open to them. Different forced migrants, however they are categorised, have different areas of choice, different alternatives, available to them, depending not just on external constraining factors but also on such factors as their sex, age, wealth, connections, networks etc. This means that we have to understand the point of view and experiences of the people making the decision to move. We have to emphasise their embeddedness in a particular social, political and historical situation. We have to see them as agents, however limited, in a physical sense, their room for manoeuvre may be. (Turton 2003:11–12)

By critically dealing with the terminology of forced vs. unforced migration, I advocate a perspective in which the migrants' perceptions and representations of their own migration experiences play a central role. While this study does not deal with refugees in the institutionalized sense of the term, the groups at the center of this study – i.e, so-called Soviet Jews and Soviet Germans – have historically experienced both *forced* and *unforced* migration; and yet these categories, along with e.g. identity categories relevant in migration and integration policy of the nations involved, are not those employed by the immigrants themselves to socially situate in the receiving society. The example of PIL45M from Russia whose case is discussed in Section 6.4 shows that migration phenomena are far more complex and fine-grained than the definition provided by Mayhew (2014) and institutionalized in migration policy. In fact, the case of PIL45M, among several other examples provided throughout this study, illustrates how migration from countries of the FSU is often characterized by *blurred lines* between so-called unforced and forced migration, expressed by the figure of the "disillusioned emigrant [...] dissatistied with the political situation in the country" (Fomina 2021:8) without having necessarily been exposed to persecutions; however, there are also cases of persecution and of fleeing from an unsafe to a safe(r) life, as is shows in the cases of SIL39F (see Section 6.1.4) and HDE00M (see Section 6.4).
Perceived safety or unsafety is among the strongest motivators behind the participants' decision to emigrate, as is shown throughout this study and especially in Chapter 6. In the field of research on migration, a notion at times employed interchangeably with the term migration is *mobility*. D'Amato et al. (2019:5) provide an instructive perspective on mobility; they see mobility studies as a field "connect[ing] the movement of people more systematically with the global circulation of ideas, goods and objects." Thus, mobility is the – potential or actual – movement not only of people but also of objects, ideas (therefore, attitudes, too) and all that which is mobile, i.e. capable of moving or being moved. On the one hand, such a broad definition makes it difficult to draw a clear boundary as to what is not subject to mobility, resulting in the risk that everything could possibly come to be studied under the lense of mobility which, in turn, poses a challenge to the analytical capacity of studies on mobility. On the other hand, though, D'Amato et al. (2019:4) make a highly relevant point when they highlight the necessity of loooking critically at migration (i.e., human mobility) as, in their view,

> The notion of 'migration' highlights the capacity of a nation to define who belongs to the state and who does not. Classical migration research, therefore, operated from the perspective of the host societies and their capabilities to

assimilate migrants. Since then, migration was and remains publicly debated around the concepts of integration or assimilation.

Reconnecting to the importance of moving from unsafe to safe(r) life conditions mentioned above, Sirkeci (2009:3) introduces his understanding of the term "transnational mobility" as "a move from human insecurity to human security." In spite of the validity of the terms mentioned in this section, the term "migration" is the one mainly employed within this study, for several reasons. Firstly, nationhood and the crossing of state boundaries are highly relevant aspects in so-called post-Soviet migration; in fact, they influence the emergence and usage of the term "post-Soviet" and largely inform its understanding in research, as is shown in Section 2.8 of this chapter. Secondly, while mobility arguably includes migration in its meaning of "human mobility," talking about migration does not necessarily have to exclude the movements of objects and ideas along with people. In fact, as shown in Section 6.4, attitudes towards and conceptualizations of e.g. nationhood and ethnonational identity are part of the immigrants' baggage brought along through emigration to Israel, Germany and elsewhere. In fact, precisely the role of Soviet – and,to some extent, post-Soviet – nations in defining "who belongs to the state and who does not" (D'Amato et al. 2019:4) and thus institutionalizing discrimination has a long-lasting influence on the immigrants' identities and should therefore be highlighted, instead of aspects of nationhood being made invisible through usage of the term "mobility." As D'Amato et al. (2019) connect the notion of migration to *integration* and *assimilation*, the next section focuses on "integration" and related terminology.

2.2 Integration

The concept of integration has been widely studied in US American and European sociology. In Europe, Émile Durkheim is the most prominent sociologist to have contributed to theoretization on integration. Émile Durkheim's body of work is virtually unfathomable in its implications for modern sociology. This section draws on some of Durkheim's contributions to the study of integration and relates them to work by other scholars, providing an overview of research on the term "integration" and related terminology in contemporary migration studies.

In his 1893 doctoral dissertation *De la Division du Travail Social*, Durkheim introduces the concept of integration referred to the social systems constituting part of society as a whole : "division of labour [...] ha[s] as its function the *integration* [my emphasis] of the

social body to assure unity" (Durkheim 1960:62). Integration "binds the individual [and things, too] to society" (Durkheim 1960:129). Durkheim notes that integration is only possible based on social solidarity, which he regards as a consequence of the division of labor (Durkheim 1960:63) and of which he describes two types or, rather, declensions:

- a positive manifestation of solidarity, which is "a completely moral phenomenon" (Durkheim 1960:64) which "lead[s] wills to common ends" and by which "the more solidary the members of a society are, the more they sustain diverse relations, one with another, or with the group taken collectively." (Durkheim 1960:64)

- a negative manifestation of solidarity, "one which unites the thing to the person" (Durkheim 1960:115), as in the case of law regulating private property: this manifestation of solidarity prevents the emergence of conflict.

According to Durkheim, positive solidarity is essential for social integration, i.e. to hold society together without disrupting conflicts. A critical feature of integration is the relationship of similarity and differentiation which it implies in society:

> once it [the mass] appears it tightens the social bonds and makes a more perfect individuality of society. But this integration supposes another which it replaces. For social units to be able to be differentiated, they must first be attracted or grouped by virtue of the resemblances they present. [...] higher societies result from the union of lower societies of the same type. It is necessary first that these latter be mingled in the midst of the same identical collective conscience for the process of differentiation to begin or recommence. (Durkheim 1960:278)

Durkheim's observations on social integration undoubtedly deserve a critical treatment, especially considering the above reference to "higher" or "lower societies," one which, from today's perspective, appears ethically questionable. Nevertheless, Durkheim's work has had a major influence on later sociological theory; sociologist Talcott Parsons drew on Durkheim for the development of the theory he elaborated in his 1951 work *The Social System*. Parsons describes integration as follows:

> For [...] [boundary maintaining] system[s], the concept integration has a double reference: (a) to the compatibility of the components of the system with each other so that change is not necessitated before equilibrium can be reached, and (b) to the maintenance of the conditions of the distinctiveness of the system within the boundaries over against its environment. Integration may be relative

> to a moving equilibrium, i.e., an orderly process of change of the system, as well as to a static equilibrium. (Parsons 1991:23)

In both Durkeim and Parsons, the duality of similarity and differentiation is a key element in integration; this duality brings to the fore two concepts closely related to integration emerge i.e. adaptation and assimilation. In Parsons' terms, adaptation is an element of a "highly important set of mechanisms of socialization" (Parsons 1991:161); to Parsons, "adaptation of a social system to its environment" (Turner 1991:xvii) is necessary for social systems to survive social change.
As regards assimilation, this concept is present in Parsonian theory, too; in *The Social System*, it is described as a mechanisms e.g. enabling ethnic groups to organize kinship structure (Parsons 1991:119). As is evident from the above quotations and comments on them, Durkheim's and Parsons' view of integration is one which refers to the social system as an entity made up of several partial systems (German *Teilsysteme*); their perspective is not centered on the individual, nor even specifically on groups of people and their reciprocal interaction, but abstractly on systems.
Milton Gordon has carried out extensive theoretical work on assimilation. According to him, assimilation has several "possible relevant factors or variables" (Gordon 1964:61) to itself into which it should be broken down and analyzed. Gordon identifies seven types of assimilation; among them, cultural or behavioral as well as identificational assimilation are most relevant to the this study. Assimilation is defined as follows:

> Assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life. (Park & Burgess 1969:735)

The latter definition centers on the cultural aspects of interaction between individuals or groups and therefore has similarities with Gordon's (1964) view of "cultural or behavioral assimilation" (Gordon 1964:70 ff.) as relying on the condition of "change of cultural patterns to those of host society" (Gordon 1964:71). Gordon terms this kind of assimilation *acculturation*, a term which is often used especially in the context of migration phenomena.
The reception of the term assimilation has been problematic especially in the United States, where it "has come to be viewed by social scientists as a worn-out theory which imposes ethnocentric and patronizing demands on minority peoples struggling to retain their cultural and ethnic integrity" (Alba & Nee 1997:827). In view of the latter, cultural assimilation has

been gradually substituted in migration studies with the terms acculturation and, above all, inclusion.

Inclusion, too, was a subject of Parsons' theorization (Parsons 1991:39 ff.), and is nowadays employed with a sociopolitical connotation (Greve 2018:195) with reference to the inclusion of minority groups into the social and political life of the receiving society.

Within the scope of this study, the term "integration" is the one most frequently used, although assimilation and acculturation are also occasionally employed. Since this study has a strong empiric orientation, the participants' understanding of integration – a phenomenon, or rather process, which concerns them very closely – provides the researcher with a fundamental orientation for the choice of a theoretical framework to follow for studying integration amongst immigrants from the FSU to Israel and Germany. As show in Section 6.1.2, data from both the qualitative and the quantitative studies show that the participants' understanding of integration is not in terms of a tightening of social bonds (as according to Durkheim 1960:278) or in terms of the blending together of (parts of) social systems (as according to Parsons 1991). Instead, participants see integration as the process of finding their place in society by learning the receiving society's new language and cultural values (see discussion in Section 6.2.4). From the analysis presented in Chapter 6 results that the participants' usage of the term "integration" largely coincides with Park & Burgess's (1969) view on assimilation elaborated upon by Gordon (1964), who sees acculturation as a type of assimilation.

It is addressed in Section 2.1 that D'Amato et al. (2019:4) view migration as a topic "publicly debated around the concepts of integration or assimilation." Aspects of (ethno-)national belonging are always implicitly or explicitly present whenever one deals with integration; this does not only rely on the considerations of theoretical character presented in this chapter, but is also shown in Sections 6.2.1 and 6.4.

As pointed at in Chapter 3, the history migration from the FSU is one of institutionally denied and imposed identity labels; for decades under the Soviet regime and into post-Soviet times (until 1997), ethnonational belonging was registered in the passport (see Section 5.4) and institutionally employed as an instrument for social boundary-drawing. Arguably even more than migration phenomena in other parts of the world (see Section 3), migration from the FSU is one in quest of an identity.

From interview and quantitative survey data emerges that integration is understood by the participants as a path towards shaping – or reappropriating – a self-identification within the new societal context. Language plays a fundamental role on this path not only because,

e.g., learning German can be expected to make integration in Germany easier (see Section 6.3.3), but also and most importantly because of the values, ideas and attitudes which speakers associate with a language and its speakers, expressed as their language attitudes. A discussion on 'integration' calls for taking a stand on the term 'society', which is done in the following section, before introducing another crucial notion within this study, i.e. identity.

2.3 Society

As references to society are virtually omnipresent in this study, it is important to briefly discuss the term 'society' as it is understood in this study. As in the case of 'migration', 'identity' and other concepts discussed in this chapter, the scope of this study does not allow the thorough analysis and historical contextualization which the concept 'society' would evidently call for. The empirical approach of this study calls for a working definition of society applicable to the phenomena examined here: society is understood as interaction between people and groups of people on the grounds of commonalities – in terms of shared geographical, linguistic, ethnic, political, sexual and other features determining interaction between human beings.

The notion of society is tightly interconnected with that of identity, illustrated in Section 2.4. The above definition of society as an entity based on commonalities between people and groups of people subsumes the role of differences as the counterpiece to similarities:

> the practical significance of men for one another [. . .] is determined by both similarities and differences among them. Similarity as fact or tendency is no less important than difference. In the most varied forms, both are the great principles of all internal and external development. In fact the cultural history of mankind can be conceived as the history of the struggles and conciliatory attempts between the two. (Simmel 1950:30)

The above considerations on the role of similarity and difference are key to understand a basic social mechanism, i.e. that of social categorization. The following definition of society illustrates the relationship between society, social categories and groups:

> Society is structured categorically, and organised by inequalities of power and resources. It is in the translation of social categories into meaningful reference

> groups that 'social structure' influences or produces individual behaviour. Social identity theory focuses on how categories become groups, with the emphasis on inter-group processes. (Jenkins 2008:112)

2.3.1 Group

A sub-unit within society, the notion of group is highly significant in research on social identity in that negotiation of in-groupness and out-groupness is central to the forming of social identity. A group is defined as follows:

> [A] collection of individuals who perceive themselves to be members of the same social category, share some emotional involvement in this common definition of themselves, and achieve some degree of social consensus about the evaluation of their group and of their membership in it. (Tajfel & Turner 1986:15)

The group dimension plays a key role in this study which, as is visible in its title, focuses on Russian-speaking immigrant *communities* in Israel and Germany. The group dimension is essential to allow generalizations concerning the study of language attitude and social identity which wouldn't be possible by abiding on an individual level.
Belonging to a group (i.e. in-groupness) is a key component in social identity:

> individuals are motivated to achieve a positive self image and [...] such may be enhanced by a positive evaluation of one's own group. Since evaluations of the ingroup are assumed to be mainly achieved by comparison with other groups, [...] there is a general tendency for people to seek positive differences between the ingroup and relevant outgroups on various dimensions. (Brown 1984:608),

The above considerations are essential for the concept of identity, which is object of the following Section section 2.4.

2.4 Identity

Identity is defined as

> [A]n 'internal positional designation' that represents meanings actors use to define themselves as unique individuals (person identities), role occupants (role identities), or group members (social identities) (Stets 2006; Stryker [1980] 2002). (Carter 2013:204)

Identity is a notion describing a concept of psychological and sociological relevance; Carter (2013:204) highlights first of all internal aspects of the establishment of an identity, meaning the psychological processes taking place within an individual when he or she establishes a sense of self. However, as noted by Jenkins (2008:17), identity is not a 'thing' happening in a vacuum; instead, identity "must *always* be established." The act of establishing an identity is always a social act, for several reasons which allow to contradict Carter's (2013:204) view of identity as of an "*internal* [my emphasis] positional designation." In fact, since human beings live in society, the process of establishing an identity always equals positioning oneself in society. Here, the following question emerges: if identity is inherently social, why does the title of this study feature *social identity*? The next section elaborates on this question.

2.4.1 Social identity

Tajfel & Turner (1979) are generally regarded as the founders of social identity theory, summarized by Benwell & Stokoe (2022:25) as an approach which "explores the phenomenon of the 'ingroup' and 'outgroup', and is based on the view that identities are constituted through a process of *difference* defined in a relative or flexible way dependent on the activities in which one engages." As introduced in Chapter 1, social identity is defined by Tajfel & Turner (1979:40) as "consisting [...] of those aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself as belonging." Looking at this definition, it can easily be recognized how any category to which an individual perceives himself or herself as belonging always has implications going beyond the individual level. To paraphrase Tajfel & Turner (1979:40), the construction of identity establishes a connection between the individual and a category based on a perceived similarity between the individual and the given category. Therefore, the process of establishing an identity is always *social* in the sense that it is based on an association. However, in spite of the omnipresence of the social in every aspect of human life – or rather, elaborating on Latour (2005:3 ff.), in view of the fact that the 'social' is not a distinguished dimension of reality, but it informs reality altogether –, I argue that it makes sense to distinguish between different dimensions of identity, one of them being a social dimension.

There are several aspects of 'identity' to explore. One example is individual identity, which "has its roots in our earliest processes of socialisation" and concerns such features as "selfhood, humanness, gender and, under some circumstances, kinship and ethnicity [...] more robust and resilient to change in later life than other identities" (Jenkins 2008:41).

However, the dimensions of identity relevant within this study are not individual but group-related, hence the usage of the adjective ‘social’ before ‘identity’.
Within the context of migration phenomena, social identity acquires a place of particular relevance. The physical crossing of borders affects the migrants’ identity, leading them to have to reposition themselves in the new society:

> Examples of migration and mobility [...] illustrate how space (re)organizes micro-scale psychological processes. In terms of spatial relations, migration and mobility deal with geographic relocation. However, from a psychological point of view, this movement is characterized by a massive semiotic process in order to attribute meaning to the new settings, addressing and negotiating the borders that the ‘travellers in motion’ are exposed to and also redefining their own identity. Due to changes in the ecological, geopolitical, and sociocultural frames of the spaces, mobility and migration have an enormous impact on the cognitive and affective dimensions of human conduct. [...] the influence of these processes on identity as one of the psychological consequences of encountering borders. (Kullasepp & Marsico 2021:112–113)

Specifying which dimension of identity one is looking at can be helpful to tackle the indefiniteness with which the term ‘identity’ is often employed:

> Brubaker and Cooper have argued that ‘[r]ather than stirring all self- understandings based on race, religion ethnicity, and so on into the great conceptual melting pot of ‘identity,’ we would do better to use a more differentiated analytical language’ (2000: 20). Indeed, it seems that the concept of identity is in something of a crisis; although ‘identity’ is still used a great deal in a wide range of academic writing, there is increasingly an acknowledgement that its unqualified use, sometimes even lacking coherent definition, is highly problematic. (Jones & Krzyżanowski 2011:39)

In view of the significance of national boundaries and ethnonational belonging within the context of migration from countries of the FSU, it appears purposeful to mention the construct ‘national identity’, which is employed in the quantitative survey presented in Section 5.4 and analyzed throughout Chapter 6.

2.4.2 National identity

In the Russian-speaking context, the expressions nat͡sional'nost', nat͡sional'nai͡a identichnost' and the like featuring the adjective nat͡sional'nyĭ do not only refer to national identity as a citizen's identification with the nation within whose borders he or she lives, but they include the connotation "ethnic" or "ethnonational." Thus, the following question in the quantitative questionnaire:

> 7. Как бы Вы описали свою национальную идентичность, используя не более трех слов?
> 7. How would you describe your national identity using no more than three words?

refers to national identity understood as "the spectrum of shared beliefs, feelings, and behaviors that derive from shared [...] collective identification" (David & Bar-Tal 2009:366). Members of a collective base their identification with it on elements mostly significant for the definition of a "national-ethnic group" (David & Bar-Tal 2009:356), such as a territory, culture, language, memories, myths and others. The territorial element is not pivotal to the understanding of "national identity" within the scope of this study; in fact, it is difficult to talk about a shared territorially defined national entity as the main element of reference for the participants of this study, in that they come from what today are fifteen nation states and several disputed territories (see Section 6.1.3). Instead, culture and, above all, language are the key elements around which the understanding of national identity is formed in this study, where the most outstanding element of shared identification amongst the participants of this study is their self-perception as speakers of Russian. This aspect is elaborated upon in Section 2.5.
The importance of the construct "national identity" in migration phenomena from the countries of the FSU lies in the history of Soviet (and then post-Soviet) nationality policy by which, between 1932 and 1997, ethnicity was institutionally ascribed (Smith 2019:977), as is discussed in Section 5.4. The institutional ascription of "nat͡sional'nost'," i.e. ethnonational belonging, was a key instrument for the legitimization and maintenance of the Soviet Union's federal structure based on ethnicity, by which e.g. Tatars live in Tatarstan, Kyrgyzians live in Kyrgyzstan, Ukrainians live in Ukraine etc. , originally led by the will to "combat the 'twin dangers' of local nationalism and Great Russian chauvinism" (Smith 2019:976). Without further venturing into the history of Soviet nationality policy, it is worth noting that it naturally has had an influence on Soviet citizens' perception

of the relevance of ethnonational belonging in daily life, and the question "Kto By po nat͡sional'nosti?" ("What is your nationality?," literally "Who are you by ethnonational belonging?") is business-as-usual in Russia and other countries of the FSU, while it could be a taboo question elsewhere.

Question 7 in the questionnaire as well as addressing the participants' ethnonational self-identification both in the quantitative study and during qualitative interviews is highly significant in order to document it and position it against the backdrop of institutionally ascribed identity categories, with the ultimate aim of detecting differences between the two and interpreting the significance of this divide for future developments in immigration and integration policies.

The following section briefly takes a stand on the constructs "language" and "culture" which are mentioned above as defining elements for national identity.

2.5 Language

The above considerations about the notions "migration," "integration" and "identity" point to an understanding of language within this study as of one tightly interconnected with "national identity." While there are countless perspectives from which to study language, the one of language intended as "national language" best befits the purpose of this study because of the high significance played by aspects of ethnonational belonging in migration phenomena in and from the countries of the FSU, as is highlighted in the above sections, in Chapter 3 and throughout this study. This perspective on language seems all the more appropriate considering that the understanding of language in the Soviet Union has essentially been that of national language, in the sense of a language spoken in the territorial entities of the Soviet Union by the institutionally recognized ethnonational (minority) groups inhabiting it. Such a perspective is evidently a by-product or, at any rate, an element of Soviet nationality policy as discussed in Chapter 2.4.2. This kind of perspective on language appears best suitable for this study because it is the one closest to the immigrants themselves, as is highlighted in the data analysis offered in Chapter 6.

Joshua Fishman, widely regarded as the founder of so-called "sociology of language"[1], defines the term national language as "that language (or those languages) whose use is viewed as furthering socio-cultural integration at the nationwide [...] level." Although certainly

[1]The sociology of language is defined by Fishman (1971:217) as "an interdisciplinary social science approach to language in society."

valid in other contexts, e.g. within the field of EFL and of other languages-as-a-foreign-language, this definition of national language is not fully applicable to the phenomena investigated here.
On the one hand, Hebrew and German can indeed be regarded as the national languages of, respectively, Israel and Germany, i.e. the receiving societies of the immigrants who participated in this study. On the other hand, as mentioned in Section 2.4.2, the study participants – who understand themselves as Russian-speaking – come from all the 15 ex-Soviet countries, including a number of disputed territories. The status of the Russian language in FSU countries other than Russia is of high topicality since the fall of the Soviet Union, as voices of protests against public usage of Russian started rising, to different extents, in all countries of the FSU (see Section 6.2.2.1 for an account of post-Soviet language policy). Especially in the diaspora, Russian is preserving the status of a lingua franca for communication between people born or socialized in FSU countries (Pavlenko 2008a:27). This status extends well beyond the nationwide level mentioned by Fishman (1971:217) as one of the defining features of a national language.
In the case of the status of Russian in FSU countries, the following definition of national language by UNESCO (2005:421) appears more suitable for operation within this study: "Language spoken by a large part of the population of a country, which may or may not be designated an official language (i.e. a language designated by law to be employed in the public domain)." Defining the notion "national language" in contrast to "official language" is vital, as these two concepts often get mixed up in public discourse on language policy. Russian has the constitutionally defined status of official language in Russia and Belarus; moreover, the usage of Russian is mentioned in the constitutions of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ukraine[2], Uzbekistan and Moldova, which do not however state that Russian is an official language of the country but recognize,each to different degrees, the range of usage of Russian within the country.
Due to the widespread use of Russian across FSU countries, it can be stated to still be a

[2]As of late 2022, Article 10 of the Constitution of Ukraine reads as follows:
Державною мовою в Україні є українська мова. Держава забезпечує всебічний розвиток і функціонування української мови в усіх сферах суспільного життя на всій території України. В Україні гарантується вільний розвиток, використання і захист російської, інших мов національних меншин України.Source: `https://www.president.gov.ua/ua/documents/constitution/konstituciya-ukrayini-rozdil-i`.
"The official language in Ukraine is the Ukrainian language. It is a prerogative of the State to guarantee the full development and functioning of the Ukrainian language in all the public spheres of life on the entirety of Ukraine's territory. In Ukraine, the free development, usage and maintenance of Russian and other languages of Ukraine's national minorities" (my translation).

"national language" in many ex-Soviet countries, according the UNESCO definition cited above.

To sum up, I use the notion "national language" not with reference to a territorial entity with nation status, but to aspects of community and shared culture. Against this backdrop, Russian can be defined as a "national language" for a significant portion of the FSU diaspora in Israel, Germany and other popular destinations for post-Soviet emigration.

The label of Russian as of a "national language" in FSU countries cannot and should not be applied uncritically, especially because (public) usage of Russian and the ideologies associated with it are rapidly changing across FSU countries. As with most theoretical aspects discussed in this study, a crucial criterion for defining the meaning of "national identity" are the participants' views about this issue. This empirically grounded approach is akin to the one of Grounded Theory Methodology, whose influence in this study is discussed in Chapter 4 and whose centerpiece is the importance of data for the development of theoretical work in social sciences.

Since participation in the study requires native or near-native command of Russian and participant recruitment was explicitly directed towards speakers of Russian ("russkogovori͡ashchie"), participants overtly or covertly self-identify as "speakers of Russian."

Russian is regarded as one of the main languages of communication for people living in FSU countries and for those emigrating from FSU countries to several destinations, among which Israel and Germany.

The next section briefly expands on the concept of culture, one which tightly intersects with the understanding of language.

2.6 Culture

References to culture are frequent throughout this study, often in the attribute "sociocultural" combining aspects related to society and culture. On a side note, as in the case of "sociolinguistic" or "social identity," several scholars (like Carter 2013 on identity and Labov 1972b on language) argue that references to "social" are superfluous in that, since they *happen* in society, identity and language are social per definition. Yet, similarly to the arguments presented in Sections section 2.4 and subsection 2.4.1 for explicitly addressing the "social" in identity, I argue that it is purposeful to distinguish between different dimensions of culture, one of them being a social dimension.

Dimensions of culture can only be highlighted after providing an operational definition of

it.
The definition of culture which is found to be most adequate to work with in this study is the following:

> Culture is an abstract network shaping and connecting social roles, hierarchically structured knowledge domains, and ranked values. Culture is dynamic, shifting, reinterpreted moment by moment. [...] Culture permeates the individual, the community, behaviors, and thinking. (Everett 2018:2–3)

Everett (2018) sketches out at least two dimensions of culture, i.e. one affecting the individual and the other affecting the community in which it lives. The two dimensions are tightly interconnected and individuals are always, to different extents, embedded in a community context. However, employing the term "sociocultural" offers a narrower, more precise definition of the cultural aspects of interest within this study. In light of Everett's (2018) characterization of culture, it can be said that the term "sociocultural" refers to how people "make[...] sense of [themselves] in terms of the characteristics valued by the immediate environment in which one lives" (Oyserman & Markus 1993:192), which provides them with information on "how to be a person, how to be a self, or more generally 'how to be'"(Oyserman & Markus 1993:193).
The definition of culture by Everett (2018) is particularly appealing for the approach taken in this study because it brings to the fore the connectedness of all the elements discussed in this chapter. Everett's perspective on culture presupposes a framework in which culture functions as a connecting element between "social roles" Everett (2018:2–3) and "hierarchically structured knowledge domains" Everett (2018:2–3), one of which is language. This two-way relationship between language and culture is described as follows:

> language is dependent on culture for many of its functions as well as the forms it develops to carry out those functions. But I also mean that culture is codified, regulated, reinforced, and partially formed by language. Thus though language and culture are by this view epistemologically and ontologically distinct, they are not independent of one another in praxis. This notion of a language–culture symbiosis differs sharply from the idea that either is supervenient on the other. [...] Language and culture are causally implicated in and dependent upon each other for their existence at some level of diachronicity. The effects of language and culture are intertwined but there is no one-to-one mapping between them. (Everett 2015:359)

The language-culture symbiosis becomes especially visible through the study of language attitudes, whose definition is the subject of the next section.

2.7 Attitude

In social psychology, an attitude is defined as an "evaluative reaction [to] [...] an object, a person, or an abstract idea" situated "on a favorable to unfavorable continuum" (Albarracín & Shavitt 2018:300). Attitudes have an intrinsical social function in that they connect their "owners" to objects or persons towards which attitudes are expressed. According to Schwartz (2006:143), attitudes, which are object-dependent, are a narrower concept than values, which according to Schwartz (2006:143) "transcend specific actions and situations." Although values are not at the center of this study, the latter description by Schwartz (2006) is highly significant. In fact, from the analysis of data in Chapter 6 emerges that several of the participants' attitudes towards language and other elements are not related to language but, in fact, to a broader domain of human knowledge; they express the set of beliefs and views which people have about other groups of people and which are less ephemeral than attitudes intended as "evaluative reactions" (Albarracín & Shavitt 2018:300).
In such cases, the term "ideology" can also be applied to language, resulting in the notion "language ideology." Although the latter is occasionally employed as a synonym of "language attitude," language ideology entails orientation towards systems of "social meaning"(Gal & Irvine 2019:1). The notion "language attitude" is discussed thoroughly in the next section. Before moving on, it is necessary to expand on the functions of attitudes. Within the framework of Schwartz's Value Theory, attitudes rely on orientation to value systems which, in turn, revolve around the survival and welfare of individuals and the groups within which they are situated, as well as the coordination of social interaction between individuals and groups (Schwartz 2012:4). Thus, the expression of attitudes can be observed to have a fundamental role not just for human communication but for every aspect of social life, including interaction, differentiation between individuals and groups (in terms of the establishment of in-group versus out-group borders) and the expression and negotiation of social identity. Ultimately, one of the key functions of attitudes and overarching ideologies lies in the following:

> Ways of talking about speakers and speech are signs that point to speakers' political visions. Differentiations among such signs and the perspectives they

> entail are potentially present even in the smallest groups. They can be projected to and from larger social contexts, even internationally. By building on and evoking visions and reactions from other times and places, old distinctions can subtly shape present circumstances. (Gal & Irvine 2019:11)

The next section expands on attitudes towards language as they are defined in research and on their role in this study.

2.7.1 Language attitude

Paraphrasing Tajfel & Turner (1979:40), language attitudes, like other forms of the expression of social categorization (in itself a form of social action), allow their users to "undertake many forms of social action." In view of the performative nature of language attitudes emerging from the data (see Chapter 6), I use the concept **performing language attitudes** to refer to the act of uttering, developing, negotiating and/or maintainig the social categorization applied to language and its users. The label "performing language attitudes" reflects the dynamic expression of language attitudes within the context of social categorization; I regard both as processes and not as "static system[s]" (Gal & Irvine 2019:14).

Especially in the context of migration and multilingualism, performing language attitudes serves to situate immigrants in their new social context, providing them with the instruments to shape and re-shape their social identity according to the situation.

The stance on language attitudes adopted in this study is radically different from the mainstream position in sociolinguistics and research on multilingualism, where language attitudes are often studied descriptively as predictors of language use (I expand on this in Section 4.2.1). As I argue in Section 4.2.1, such a perspective is convenient when language use and the functioning of language – understood as a system – are the target of investigation, but not when studying processes of social categorization as they are expressed through language. These two different takes on the study of language could be summarized in what Diehl (2019:762) has termed *structuralism* and *functionalism* in sociolinguistics. Sociolinguistic structuralism is defined as a perspective which

> sees language as an autonomous system composed of universal elements and structures. The goal of structuralist analysis is to identify the rules of the linguistic system, a system that operates independently from social to cultural influences. Sociolinguistic functionalism, in contrast to sociolinguistic struc-

> turalism [...] understands patterns of communication as reflections of cultural knowledge and behavior. (Diehl 2019:762–763)

Wihout having to subscribe to or adopt sociolinguistic structuralism versus functionalism as working terms, the above quote concisely illustrates the difference between studying language attitudes to understand language behavior and the functioning of language as a system versus studying language attitudes to understand the underlying societal mechanisms. The latter approach is the one I undertake in this study.
The significance of studying language attitudes in contexts of migration is showcased in the following excerpt from an interview from the data corpus, which at the same time provides an example for the content shared by the participants during the interview. The excerpt stems from an interview with SIL32F from Russia now living in Haifa.C stands for myself, i.e. the interviewer.

> C: А какую роль играет вообще понятие языка в твоей жизни, что ты бы сказала?
> SIL32F: Довольно большую роль, потому что это все-таки то, что связывает с людьми. Для меня язык — это инструмент общения именно. Есть люди, которые лингвисты — в общем, ты знаешь их лучше чем я, которые язык именно воспринимают как, не знаю, исскуство, как какую-то вещь в себе, как это — самым предмет интереса. А для меня язык — это именно инструмент, это не сама цель, а это средство. Но это средство очень важное, потому что я человек общительный, значит я идентифицируюсь с людьми очень сильно.
> Для меня без языка — это как без рук.
>
> C: What would you say, which role does the concept of language play in your life?
> SIL32F: A fairly big one, because it's what connects you to other people. To me, language really is a communication tool. There's people, like linguists – this you know better than me – who perceive language, I don't know, as an art, as some kind of thing to itself, as a particular object of interest. But to me language is indeed an instrument, it's not the aim, it's rather a means, but this means is a very important one, because I'm a very sociable person, that is I really want to identify with other people.
> To me, having no language is like having no hands.

The above excerpt offers valuable insights into the complexity hidden behind the label *language attitudes*. This label subsumes a mosaic of phenomena, like e.g. the way speakers talk about language and its speakers, the values that they attach to language and its speakers, the way they conceptualize language and its speakers, and many other aspects which are analyzed at length in Sections 6.2, 6.2.2.1 and 6.3.
Observations by SIL32F on the role of language in her life are highly indicative of those aspects of language attitude which are at the core of this study: attitudes towards language are consciously employed by speakers to negotiate belonging to certain groups, enabling them to shape their social identity.
The above excerpt also highlights one of the tenets by which this study was carried out, i.e. groundedness in data and orientation towards those phenomena and aspects which the research participants perceive as relevant.
The definition of language attitudes found to be most applicable to the theoretical orientation and methods of this study as well as to the reality of the research field is the one mentioned at the outset of Chapter 1: language attitudes are the verbalized manifestation of "the social meanings people assign to language and its users" (Dragojevic et al. 2021:61). As is shown in Chapters 6 and 7, what people think about language often acquires symbolic meanings of how people see or would like to see themselves in relation (in contrast, in analogy, etc.) to other individuals and groups.
The symbolic and ideologically loaded meaning of language attitudes is especially visible in societies of the former Soviet Union, where language has historically been subject to massive policing efforts to control, change and censor it throughout the decades (see, e.g., Grenoble 2003 and Lucchetti 2021b).
When language attitudes are consolidated in society and make their way into institutional discourse, they come to acquire the character of language ideologies as they are referred to by Gal & Irvine (2019), becoming the foundation for language policy. The next section offers a brief digression on language policy in the Soviet Union and after its dissolution.

2.7.2 Language policy in the Soviet Union and its legacy

The aforementioned language policing efforts efforts found an expression in two apparently contrasting policies. On the one hand was "korenizat͡sii͡a" ("indigenization",) enforced between the 1920s and the early 1930s and again in the 1950s–1960s in Central Asia (Wierzbicki 2017:246). The policy of indigenization is described as follows:

> propagating the national languages in the administration, educational system,

> and the press, and promoting the indigenous culture and customs. However, it did not act to deprive Russians or Russian-speaking people of party or state-level positions. Korenizatsiya was often understood as implementing the language of local people. (Wierzbicki 2017:246)

Far from promoting the cultures and languages of other nationalities of the Soviet Union than Russian, "korenizat͡sii͡a" pursued the aim of propagating the Soviet ideologies even in the remotest areas of the Soviet Union.
On the other hand was so-called russification, a policy intensely applied under Stalin to promote the Russian language and culture with the ultimate aim of (re-)establishing Russia as the core of the Soviet empire.
From the above follows that language was not itself the aim of the policy; rather, through the control and manipulation of language, the Soviet regime aimed at controlling and possibly eliminating "unrest among the ethnic nationalities" (Marshall 1996:33), a problem which "plagued the USSR since its inception in 1922" (Marshall 1996:33).
Thus, language becomes an instrument to perform social differentiation. The effects of these efforts still endure today, more than forty years after the fall of the Soviet Union; they are visible in the self-identifications of the immigrants, many of whom define themselves as "stuck in between".
As shown by Panagiotidis (2019 and 2021), the history of post-Soviet migration is to a great extent the history of the ethnic minorities of the FSU. It even appears paradoxical to name them "minorities", as the territory of the former Soviet Union was inhabited by more than 90 different ethnic groups, of which ethnic Russians made up about half of the total population shortly before the fall of the Soviet Union (Anderson & Silver 1990).
On the one side of the aforementioned in-betweenness is Russia or any other country of the FSU, where the participants of this study were long perceived as *other* on the basis of their externally attributed belonging to a minority. On the other side are Israel, Germany and other destinations of so-called post-Soviet migration, where the immigrants are often generally labeled as Russian by the receiving society and thus, to different degrees, denied belonging.
This study empirically reinforces the observation made by Oushakine (2000:955) about the "feeling of being caught in-between" which he describes as inherent to the transition from the Soviet into the post-Soviet era.
In view of the above considerations, a certain dissonance emerges between the plethora of ethnic groups inhabiting the FSU and the uniforming function of the Russian language

which still today can be found to be a lingua franca for people born in the territories of the FSU (Pavlenko 2008b:27).
Data presented in Chapter 6 shows that this factor certainly contributes to the in-betweennes felt by immigrants, which is even reflected in the terminology employed in research to refer to immigrants from the FSU. In fact, while some researchers employ the term “post-Soviet” to refer not only to the time after the fall of the Soviet Union but also to the cultural practices of individuals who were born and/or socialized in countries of the FSU (see Panagiotidis 2021), others either decide against it or question its adequacy (Eggart 2022). A distinction between *Russian-speaking* vs. *post-Soviet* is carried out in the next section.

2.8 Russian-speaking or post-Soviet?

This study employs the term “Russian-speaking” as a criterion to define the communities studied. However, the term “post-Soviet” is occasionally employed in this study, too. As I note elsewhere[3], each of these two labels entails different connotations and methodological implications. It is therefore necessary to clarify on the meaning of both terms from a comparative perspective, underlining that they both are problematic to some extent.
In the last decades, the term “post-Soviet” has seen a rise in usage, being employed not only to define the time following the fall of the Soviet Union but also and more significantly the sociocultural transformations brought about by the political transformations.
Remarkably, first occurrences of the term post-Soviet appeared several decades before the actual demise of the Soviet Union. A search in the National Corpus of Russian shows that the term first showed up in 1938 in a pamphlet by anti-Soviet philosopher Ivan Solonevich in which he “encourages like-minded readers to follow the anti-Soviet *White Movement* and strive for a post-Soviet time, i.e. a time when the Soviet Union and its ideology will have disappeared” (Lucchetti 2021a:96).
In English-speaking texts, one of the first occurrences of the term was in 1988[4], that is “during perestroika, when a possible end of the Soviet regime was already in sight” (Lucchetti 2021a:96). In the COHA Corpus of Historical American English, the term “post-Soviet” reaches a peak in usage in the 2010s.
The “post” in “post-Soviet” implies the perceived existence of a landmark emerging with

[3]See Lucchetti 2021a.
[4]Source: COHA Corpus of Historical American English

the fall of the Soviet Union; a landmark which is first and foremost historical but which, overtime, came to include multiple dimensions consisting in the "spaces, identities, national narratives, contrasting ideas, beliefs, wishes, political stances, iconographies etc., all in some way related to the dissolution of the Soviet Union" (Lucchetti 2021a:96). In scholarship, countries of the FSU are often referred to as post-Soviet not only from a chronological perspective, i.e. because they were part of the Soviet Union, but also and most importantly because of the purported heritage deriving from the transition from the Soviet system to whatever came after it.

The fall of the Soviet regime involved transformations on several levels, above all political, social and economic, which affected all fifteen countries of the FSU. However, applying the label "post-Soviet" to these countries implies a uniformed view of these transformations and of how each of the countries dealt with the heritage of the Soviet Union. As noted by Baimenov & Liverakos (2022), the transformations taking place in the aftermath of the fall of the Soviet Union were highly diversified between each of the so-called "post-Soviet countries."

An uncritical usage of the term "post-Soviet" is problematic in many ways. First of all, if the term is used to designate the era starting after the fall of the Soviet Union, it needs to be asked which chronological validity it has – in other words, when will the post-Soviet end? – and on which basis it is argued for. Answering the question as to the anticipated end of the post-Soviet is an arduous task because of the virtual absence of theoretical work dealing with the term post-Soviet. However, in the last years and especially with Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, several voices are arising in and outside of academia claiming that the post-Soviet era is over. As an example, in their study of crime rates among the youth of a Lithuanian city, Kraniauskas & Acus (2020) argue that the post-Soviet is over, observing that the social stabilization evident from a fall in criminality rates is an indicator for the end of the "anomie" which all societal transformations, including the passage from the Soviet to the post-Soviet period, bring about.

The term "post-Soviet" never simply has the chronological criterion of the end of the Soviet Union as its central meaning; in fact, it is hardly possible to mention the "post-Soviet" without automatically referring to the aspect of transformations involved.

A second problem in the usage of the term "post-Soviet" is related to the diversity of transformations across the countries of the FSU, as addressed by Baimenov & Liverakos (2022) above. Critical voices against a generalized use of the label "post-Soviet" come from all countries of the FSU; they go hand in hand with growing authoritarian tendencies in

Russia's domestic and foreign policy, of which the aforementioned 2022 invasion of Ukraine is one vivid example. Against this backdrop, a refusal of the term "post-Soviet" represent a refusal of all that which the Soviet Union represented and, most importantly, of the position of political, economical etc. hegemony further propagated by Russia after the fall of the Soviet Union.

A third problem consists in the burden of memories from life in the Soviet system. Referring to the current sociocultural and political reality of the countries of the FSU in terms of "post-Soviet" suggests an inability – or unwillingness – to shape the present differently from the Soviet past, thus ultimately refusing to see the end of the Soviet Union as an actual turning point. Usage of the term 'post-Soviet' sometimes implies a nostalgic stance towards the Soviet Union, a phenomenon which has been observed by several scholars (see Oushakine 2000 and Boele et al. 2019). However, while instances of nostalgia for the Soviet Union are sparsely present also among the participants of this study, I deem it highly problematic to attach onto groups of people the label "post-Soviet" in view of the deep implications it has.

A fourth problematic aspect of "post-Soviet" – and the last addressed in this section – is that, while it is widespread in academia and used in the media, its usage appears far less widespread among people born and raised in FSU countries. Of all participants in this study, none employed the term "post-Soviet" either for self-identification or for the characterization of society and cultural practices of the country where they were born. While there may be people employing the adjective "post-Soviet" to characterize aspects of life in countries of the FSU, this doesn't apply for the participants in this study.

This does not mean that the term "post-Soviet" needs to be rejected altogether. In fact, it finds purposeful application in the studies of many researchers, of which Panagiotidis (2021) is an example. The term "post-Soviet" is occasionally used in this study,too. For instance, I use the expression "post-Soviet migration" in order to refer to migration phenomena from countries of the FSU taking place after the dissolution of the FSU, i.e. with a mainly chronological reference. Moreover, "post-Soviet" is also used in Section 6.4 where a characteristic aspect of the self-identification of immigrants from the FSU is addressed, i.e. their condition of "in-betweenness." This condition is addressed in Sections 2.7.2 and 6.1.2; it is described by Oushakine (2000:955) as "a certain feeling of being caught in-between: [...] between two times (past/future), between two systems (Soviet/post-Soviet)."

The term "post-Soviet" offers impulses to reflect on the variety of transformations taking place after the fall of the Soviet Union. However, its problematic facets discussed above

highlight that it is essential to use the term consciously and to question its purposefulness against the backdrop of the participants' attitudes towards it.

Instead of "post-Soviet," this study consciously employs the term "Russian-speaking" to characterize the study participants with a category central to their self-identification, as analyzed in Section 6.2. While all 15 countries of the FSU are represented among the participants' countries of birth, a common element in their self-identification is often Russian as the main language used for communication with family, friends and even colleagues (see Section 6.3.1). Self-identification as "Russian-speaking" is also a criterion for participation in the study, since Russian was the main language for both qualitative interviews and the questionnaire. An advantage offered by usage of the term "Russian-speaking" is that it allows for more differentiation than "post-Soviet": while "post-Soviet" would to some extent cancel the peculiarities of the participants' countries of birth and their cultures, "Russian-speaking" only addresses the linguistic aspect, without imposing constraints on the participants' identification in sociocultural terms. One can self-identify as a Russian-speaking and at the same time as Ukrainian, Armenian, Kyrgyz etc. (see the examples in Section 6.2.2).

Migration phenomena at the center of the study are mainly Russian-speaking in the sense that Russian plays a key role in the immigrants' biographies. Self-identification as "Russian-speaking" is certainly not common to all immigrants from the FSU to Israel. Growing negative attitudes towards speaking Russian or self-identification as Russian-speaking can be observed across all countries of the FSU, and they go hand-in-hand with growing dissatisfaction with the category "post-Soviet" externally applied to countries of the FSU. Since identity categories play a significant role in migration from the FSU, it is essential to let immigrants themselves decide with which label they wish to be addressed during fieldwork, instead of projecting onto them preexisting categories formulated either by Soviet (language) policy-makers or by the immigration policy-makers of the receiving countries (see discussion throughout Section 6.1).

One of the truly post-Soviet elements in migration from FSU countries is the significance of ethnonational identity categories, which were institutionally attributed to minorities of the FSU, labeled as e.g. "Jewish," "German" etc. under the fifth column of the Soviet passport (see discussion in Section 2.1). These externally attributed identity categories were often used by Soviet authorities as a pretext to systematically question the ideological loyalty of ethnic groups other than Russians, thus *othering* them in spite of their status as Soviet citizens. Paradoxically, this kind of othering continues – to a lesser extent – in Israel and

Germany as receiving countries of post-Soviet migration, where immigrants are subject to administrative categories which do not correspond to their categories of self-identification. This discussion illustrates that both “post-Soviet” and “Russian-speaking” have problematic aspects; this serves as a caveat for conducting research in general, and especially in the field of so-called post-Soviet migration, where labels come to be instrumentalized in policy and become symbolic of ideologies creating boundaries between groups of people.

2.9 A conceptual model of language, migration and identity

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of the aspects to consider when doing research on issues of language, identity and migration. Next to being contextualized and defined, the elements discussed in this chapter make up a conceptual model of language, migration and identity which aims to be helpful not only to researchers with a geographical focus on the former Soviet Union and the so-called ‘Global East’ (Müller 2020) but in general to whomever is interested in studying communities which, for historical or other reasons, are subject to particular efforts of social categorization either internally or by the surrounding communities (e.g., the receiving society). As I argue in Section 1.4 and throughout this study, the case of migration from the FSU is especially illustrative of mechanisms of social categorization in view of the striking divide between the immigrants’ self-perceptions and the externally attributed identity categories both before emigration, i.e. when being treated as a specific ‘minority’ within the context of Soviet ‘nationalities’ policy, and after emigration in the receiving countries.

Essentially, as anticipated in Section 1.5, this is a study on the role of language – in terms of language use and attitudes towards language – in mechanisms of social categorization, both internally and externally produced. The conceptual model presented in this chapter connects the dots between the major elements at stake:

- **migration**, discussed in Section 2.1, provides for an excellent context to study mechanisms of categorization because it always involves a trespassing of borders which are not only those of nations – or smaller political and administrative units – but also and most importantly those of belonging, which is often negotiated through language (i.e. belonging to one or more language communities);
- **integration**, a discussion of which strictly relies on categories of belonging. This

notion is highly controversial and often rejected or substituted with assimilation and acculturation; the conceptual model provides a clarification on these three terms and elaborates on the tight relationship between integration and self-identification. The concept of integration subsumes tensions between, among other things, self-identification and externally attributed belonging to a society also because, in many cases, the two do not necessarily coincide. However, these tensions are often neglected in public discourse on migration, which seems to rely on a conception of identities as *monodimensional* rather than fluid and multifaceted as they in fact are (see the concept of 'multiple identity' introduced by Al-Haj (2019:119), discussed in Chapter 6).

- **society** is a fundamental dimension of this model and one whose theoretical meaning is often taken for granted in sociolinguistic research. Societies are formed and inhabited by individuals interacting with each other, establishing similarities and creating borders between each other on which base to define groups (see Section 2.3.1). Essentially, society can be regarded as both the necessary condition for the negotiation of individual and group identities and one of its products;

- **identity** is investigated in several of its facets and understood as a fluid and multi-dimensional construct, as mentioned above. Even processes of the establishment of an individual identity are always rooted in society and always have implications for social identity, which in this study is investigated in terms of the dynamics leading a group to identify as such. National identity, then, can be considered a specific type of social identity where the group-defining elements refer to a nation or nationality. The latter two constructs are also discussed in the model, but not in greater detail; this is due to the extreme degree of confusion around them especially in the historical context of the FSU, where passport nationality, minority belonging and ethnonational identity are oftentimes acritically merged together; contributions doing away with this confusion around 'nation' are welcome to react to the aspects highlighted in this model.
  The definition of a national identity subsumes the concept of nation, which in turn rests upon a territory, culture, language, memories, myths and other more or less agreed-upon elements, as I argue in Section 2.4.2.

- **language** is accordingly investigated in terms of a national language, i.e. of a language spoken by a group of people who associate this language to a given territorially,

historically, culturally and/or politically defined entity. This definition of language within the scope of this study does not restrict the meaning of language in general only to its national dimension. Rather, it aims to show that, whenever we are having it to do with a language – say, e.g., Russian, Hebrew, and German –, the very fact that they are regarded as languages is dependent on processes of nation-building where a certain language variety is chosen by an elite to become the main instrument of official and superregional interaction. Moreover, as observed by Stern (2024:25–266), language lies at the "very core of national ideology" especially in Eastern Europe, where with the collapse of socialist regimes national identities were shattered, originating what Kamusella & Nomachi (2024:1) referring to Greenberg (2004) term "ethnolinguistic nation-states, each aspiring to have its own unshared idiom in the role of the official and national language".

- **culture** also is a constituting element of national identity and a dimension tightly interrelated with language. In Section 2.6 I adopt the definition of culture by Everett (2018:2–3) as "an abstract network ... permeates the individual, the community, behaviors, and thinking". Against the backdrop of this definition, culture is a fundamental element of this model, representing a common point of contact for language, identity and migration, i.e. the central elements of this model. With regard to language, it is situated in an interdependent relationship with culture, which it both enforms and reflects. Identity, too, is shaped by values which are, in turn, partially culture-dependent; and migration involves the crossing of several kinds of borders, including cultural borders.

- **attitudes** are regarded as the lens through which to study social identity because, as I state in Section 2.7, they have an intrinsically social function, being a link between the person uttering them and the object (be it a language or anything else) or person(s) about which they are formulated. Uttering an attitude means carrying out an act of identity; when it comes to language attitudes, they often point at people's positioning not only within a speech community but for everything which a given speech community stands for, including culture, nationality and other elements. As I elaborate in Section 2.7.2, language policy can be considered as a consolidated, institutionalized bundle of language attitudes which are adopted by nation-states and institutions with the overt or covert aim of establishing social hierarchies as a consequence of language hierarchies.

- finally, with regard to the attributes “**Russian-speaking**” and “**post-Soviet**”, they are two especially informative cases for identity labels in that they are often employed concurrently in the context of migration from the FSU. While the label ”Russian-speaking” revolves around language practices and was largely preferred by study participants for self-identification, ”post-Soviet” addresses complex historical and sociocultural dynamics and is rarely chosen by people as a category of self-identification, being more often used in academia and the media. Both labels are problematic in different ways; their inclusion within the conceptual model points at the necessity of always handling labels with care, especially when they are used to categorize people.

Chapter 3

Post-Soviet migration: historical overview

3.1 Soviet roots

The phenomena investigated in this study are central to the history of migration from FSU countries. Not only is the history of migration from FSU countries, to its greatest extent, a post-Soviet history, it is also first and foremost one in which Israel and Germany, next to the US (and, to a lesser degree, Canada), are the main destinations for the hundreds of thousands of individuals leaving FSU countries since the demise of the Soviet Union.

Emigration has been affecting Russia, Ukraine and other FSU countries far before the beginning of the Soviet era (in the case of the territories of Russia and Ukraine, at least since the 17th century; see Gevorkyan 2013 and Kent 2023). This overview focuses on emigration since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, a process lasting approximately between 1988 and 1991 (Anisin 2022:29).

Zooming in on Russia and Ukraine, two of the countries most strongly represented by the participants in this study, it is noted in Section 6.1.1 that considerable emigration "waves" took place in the 1970s and 1980s, with Israel as their main destination (see Tolts 2020 and discussion in Section 6.1;) but it wasn't before the fall of the Soviet Union that unprecedented peaks in emigration figures were recorded (see Figure 6.3). Research (Panagiotidis 2019 and 2021) shows that the history of post-Soviet migration, understood as the history of migration taking place after the dissolution of

the Soviet Union, is predominantly the history of those groups of people who were regarded as "minorities" based on the identity category assigned to them through the fifth paragraph of the Soviet passport, established in 1932 and only abolished in 1997 (see discussion in Sections 5.4 and 6.2.7). In Soviet history, minority is a concept defined in ethnonational terms. In this respect, the following statement on nationality policy in the Soviet Union appears controversial:

> No other state has gone so far in sponsoring, codifying, institutionalizing, even (in some cases) inventing nationhood and nationality on the sub-state level, while at the same time doing nothing to institutionalize them on the level of the state as a whole. (Brubaker 1994:52)

In fact, while the Soviet Union did introduce sub-states based on the ethnic groups inhabiting the territories, this does not mean that nationality was only institutionalized or relevant on the sub-state (i.e. Soviet republic) level. The fifth paragraph of the Soviet passport is precisely one indicator of state-level institutionalization of nationality, which had dramatic consequences for individuals even on a daily-life level, "especially for Jews" (Brubaker 1994:53). In fact, Jews were systematically denied access to tertiary education (Karklins 1984:291), a factor decisively contributing to their political disenchantment and causing many to emigrate.

The history of migration from the FSU is one strongly relying on institutionally ascribed categories, which in turn are tightly interconnected to ethnonational federalism as a core principle of the Soviet Union in its attempt to "unite the multinational population of the Soviet state" (Wierzbicki 2017:247). To this aim, russification of the nations in linguistic and cultural terms was one of several strategies undertaken during the course of Soviet rule. While, as Brubaker (1994:51) notes, "the Soviet Union was never organized [...] as a *Russian* nation-state," the fact that ethnic Russians appeared in the population census as the majority group (Kotljarchuk & Sundström 2017:21) and that "Russian was promoted by the state as its lingua franca" (Brubaker 1994:51) highlights the existence of a factual hierarchy in terms of ethnonational belonging.

Understandably, the significance of "ascriptive nationality" (as it is termed by Simonsen 1999) did not abruptly cease to exist after the demise of the Soviet Union; in fact, Soviet passports continued to be valid until 1997, when the fifth paragraph was abolished, and they continued to be valid into 2004. Moreover, categories of eth-

nonational belonging continued and still continue to play a significant role in Russia, its federal subjects and in the post-Soviet states, which are the geopolitical result of the Soviet national policy of "korenizat͡sii͡a," i.e. "indigenization" of the titular nationalities of the Soviet Union. As noted by Sato (2009:141), "'[t]itular nation' is an official term of Soviet and other socialist nationality policies, which means a nation representing a certain administrative unit and sub-national government." A titular nation is generally the prevailing ethnic group of a certain administratively defined territory whose name (or title, hence titular) also derives from the group's designation.

From the above considerations emerges a picture of post-Soviet migration as one whose patterns are highly dependent on Soviet nationality policy, perpetuating the relevance of ascriptive nationality well after the fall of the Soviet Union. The peculiarities of post-Soviet migration as a complex of phenomena expressing dramatic social, political and economic transformations have contributed to making historical research on these topics exceptionally prolific.

As hinted above, post-Soviet migration cannot be reduced to the phenomena treated in this study, but it involves all the countries of the FSU (see map in Figure 3.1.) In the relatively short time span between 1988 and today, all the countries of the FSU have been going through wars and conflicts, political turmoil, economical crises and many more changes disrupting previous balances and highly impacting migration dynamics. The fall of the Soviet Union opened migration routes previously closed and boosted migration movements which had not been possible under the Soviet regime; to a great extent, the history of migration from the former Soviet Union is essentially a post-Soviet history.

A determining factor explaining dramatic changes in migration patterns before and after the demise of the Soviet Union is the change in migration policy that came with the political transformation from the Soviet system into a new post-Soviet reality. While emigration from the Soviet Union had largely been prohibited since the 1920s, internal migration between Soviet republics was a widespread phenomenon which even the "propiska" (i.e. residential registration) system "did not significantly inhibit" (Chudinovskikh & Denisenko 2017:1). Chudinovskikh & Denisenko (2017) identify two periods between the 1950s and the fall of the Soviet Union characterized by different migration patterns:

> The first lasted from the beginning of the 1950s to the mid-1970s, when

Figure 3.1: 1991 Map of the former Soviet Union. Source: United States Central Intelligence Agency. 1991. Republics of the Soviet Union. Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, `https://www.loc.gov/item/2005626536/`

> Russia lost 2.7 million people to other Soviet republics. Migrants from Russia flowed to Ukraine and Belarus for postwar reconstruction and development, to the Baltic republics, to Kazakhstan for the development of fallow land, and to Central Asia to build newly industrialized economies. Meanwhile, migration from other Soviet republics gradually grew, starting a second stage – one of in-migration to Russia. This phase, occurring between 1975 and 1991, increased the population of Russia by 2.5 million. Initially, these flows were directed to remote, resource-rich areas aided by the offer of state benefits. Later, they were spurred by state reallocation of investments to the development of oil and gas fields in West Siberia and mineral resources elsewhere in eastern Russia. (Chudinovskikh & Denisenko 2017:1–2)

After the emigration flows from the FSU in the late 1970s and in the 1980s, which mainly involved ethnic Germans, Jews and Armenians directed towards Germany, Israel and the US (Gitelman 1982:43), major post-Soviet emigration movements happened throughout the 1990s, a period synonymous of turmoil, poverty and confusion in the collective memory of people from FSU countries. The nineties are known in Russian as “likhie dev’i͡anosti,” i.e. “wild nineties”.) The next section deals with post-Soviet migration in the 1990s.

3.2 The wild nineties: ethnic migration

The following excerpt from an interview with PDE35F from Kazakhstan offers an insight into her memoir of the nineties, one which resembles other accounts of the same period of time shared by other study participants:

> PDE35F: И пришел период — девяностые годы, когда начался развал Советского Союза, и люди думали куда ехать. Соответсвенно, у кого были немецкие корни — начали искать свою эмиграцию, еврейскую и немецкую эмиграцию находить. Это очень было быстро, я помню этот период, когда люди просто продавали все в квартирах и надо было иметь какие-то доллары в кармане и переезжать.

> PDE35F: And then came the time of the nineties, when the breakdown of the Soviet Union started, and people were wondering where to go. Accordingly, people who had German roots started looking for their emigration path, people with German and Jewish heritage started finding ways out of the country. It all happened very fast, I remember the time when people simply sold off everything they had in their apartments so to be able to have some dollars in their pockets and move out of the country.

The 1990s are the era of Boris Yeltsin (1991-1999), who inherited from Gorbachev the task of transitioning Russia out of the Soviet regime into a new era. Edwards & Rabbia (2022:77) define the nineties as the period in which “the full effects of the ‘pain of transition’ came to be felt,” framing them after Sharafutdinova (2020:105–132) as the “chosen trauma” of Russian society.
With the demise of the Soviet Union, new migration policies had to be established

by each of the FSU countries to face new challenges represented by that which would turn out to be a migration crisis affecting especially ethnic minorities. In fact, with the emergence of post-Soviet countries out of what once was the Soviet Union, new majority–minority dynamics developed in each of the country. As observed by Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya (2004),

> the speed of the USSR dissolution, the weakness of the organized democratic political forces, the destruction of the federal state framework, and the absence of adequate tolerant political culture have negatively influenced the position of minorities. (Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya 2004:489)

In Russia and most post-Soviet countries, the first changes in migration policies happened in the early nineties and were mainly concerned with regulating the status of refugees and displaced persons (Denisenko et al. 2020:28–29). One of the most influential steps in migration legislation was the so-called Bishkek Agreement of October 1992, i.e. "Agreement on visa-free travel for citizens of the CIS countries on the territory of its members," which was valid until 2001.

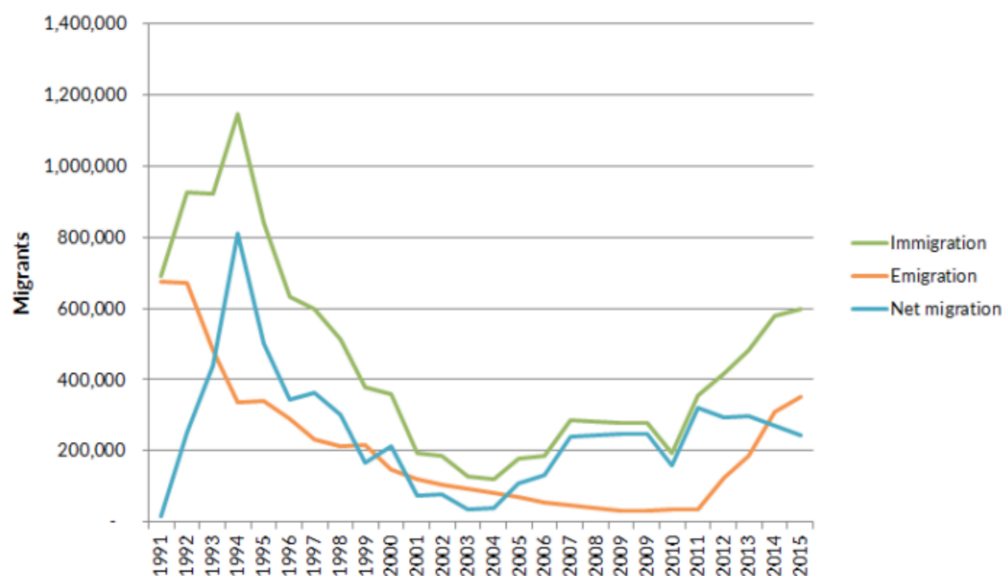
CIS stands for Commonwealth of Independent States. It was formed in 1991 and joined by 12 post-Soviet countries in the first years of its creation. Georgia withdrew from the CIS in 2008 as a consequence of the Russo-Georgian war; Ukraine gradually ceased its activity in the CIS since the 2014 Maidan and Russia's annexation of Crimea, finally withdrawing in 2018, and Turkmenistan has associate status.

In their analysis of post-Soviet migration, Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya (2004:485) identify three key periods in the nineties, each characterized by different migration patterns: the first one going from the dissolution of the USSR until 1992, which "was marked by the outflow from Russia of all the titular nationalities of the former Soviet republics (except for Armenians)" (Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya 2004:485). The case of Armenians represents an exception because, after the demise of the Soviet Union, ethnic Armenian refugees started fleeing Azerbaijan for Armenia (Groenewold & Schoorl 2006:6) and Russia.

During this period, the newly emerged Russian Federation was largely an emigration country, with the outflow being directed mostly towards CIS countries as well as Israel, Germany and the United States.

An elaboration of *Rosstat*[1] data presented by Aleshkovski et al. (2018) estimate that, between 1990 and 1994 (a period roughly corresponding to that identified by Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya (2004) and which Aleshkovski et al. (2018) describe as the first wave of post-Soviet migration), between 1.5 to 2.1 millions of Russian citizens left the country. The data elaboration published in an experimental project by Múčka (2017-2020) suggests that Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan were the most frequent destinations of emigration from Russia in the year 1990; according to Múčka's (2017-2020) elaboration, while Russia received a considerable inflow from post-Soviet countries, especially from Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, the proportions of the inflow were still far inferior to the outflow. Drawing a parallel to Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya's (2004:485) observation cited above, it can be hypothesized that during this first period of migration movement the inflow to Russia mainly consisted of ethnic Russians (based on the "fifth paragraph") who were to become ethnic minorities in the newly emerged post-Soviet states.
The second period of the 1990s is identified by Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya (2004:485) between 1993 and 1995. This period is characterized by a change in the geographical distribution of inflow-outflow patterns. While Russia had been an emigration country immediately after the fall of the Soviet Union, in 1993 emigration from Russia started to decline and the inflow of immigrants skyrocketed, reaching a net peak of 810,000 immigrants according to Chudinovskikh & Denisenko (2017:3). The inflow was mainly composed of ethnic Russians, but "a significant number were Russian speakers of other ethnic groups" (Chudinovskikh & Denisenko 2017:3). After the 1994 peak, however, both emigration and immigration figures started declining; a stabilizing negative trend characterizes the third period, identified by Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya (2004:485) between 1996 and 1999. Figure 3.2 reproduced from Chudinovskikh & Denisenko (2017:3) provides an insight into migration trends to and from Russia between 1991 and 2015, which can serve as a helpful reference throughout the sections of this chapter; especially mobility patterns in the first half of the 1990s manifest how Russia received a massive inflow of people, thus becoming "one of the world's major receiving countries" (Iontsev et al. 2010). However, negative mobility trends after 1994 affected not only Russia but all CIS countries, as noted by Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya (2004:493).

[1] The official statistical institute of the Russian Federation; Russian Федеральная служба государственной статистики (Росстат); English "Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat)."



Note: Immigration figures refer to inflows of migrants who stay in Russia longer than one year.
Source: Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), "International Migration," updated July 8, 2016, available online (in Russian).

Figure 3.2: Mobility trends in Russia, 1991-2015. Source: https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/russia-migration-system-soviet-roots

The third migration period also saw a shift in mobility factors. If, until that time, ethnic belonging and political motifs had been playing a decisive role, economic factors started growing in importance in the mid-nineties (Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya 2004:485). In other words, post-Soviet migration developed from ethnic to labor migration, a phenomenon retaining its significance still today and affecting especially Central Asian countries such as Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan (Korobkov & Zaionchkovskaya 2004:498). Emigration is a dramatic problem for the latter country, as over a population of less than seven million inhabitants "more than a million citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic are in temporary or permanent migration around the world, most of them in the Russian Federation" (UNDP 2021).
Labor migration within the CIS states was mainly directed to Russia. In fact, Russia had a relatively solid economic situation in comparison to the rest of CIS countries at a time when the transition to market economy after the end of the Soviet Union plunged all the post-Soviet states into hyperinflation.

In 1996, Russia's gross national income (GNI) per capita was "6,742 USD; it was twice as high as in Ukraine (3,325 USD), three times as high as in Moldova (2,100 USD), and five times higher than in Tajikistan" (Iontsev et al. 2010:50). This divide persisted and partially exacerbated at the turn of the century.
Another factor facilitating internal migration from CIS countries to Russia was influenced by " '[t]ransparent' borders [...] and the existence of multiple familial, emotional, professional and other connections" (Iontsev et al. 2010:51).
Focusing on ethnic Germans and Jews, the minorities at the center of this study, their emigration path typically differed from the patterns described above, as most of them resorted to the opportunity of emigration (or, rather, "repatriation" as it is framed by the receiving countries) to, respectively, Germany and Israel, along with the US and Canada.The time following Yeltsin's presidency is of dramatic importance for both minority groups: the "Putin era," which has been lasting since 1999, brought new emigration motifs to the fore, engendering what has been termed in Russian "putinskai͡a alii͡a," i.e. "Putin's aliyah," meaning "repatriation to Israel due to Putin."
Roughly based on the line traced by Mearsheimer (2016:28) in NATO-Russia relations in the past three decades, I distinguish two eras in Putin's Russia: a first one from his first appointment as acting president after Yeltsin's resignation in 1999 until the end of the first decade of the 21st century, and a second one from the beginning of the 2010s into current times.
The two periods are distinguished on the basis of crucial historical events and the orientation of Putin's domestic and external politics, with authoritarian tendencies increasing at the turn of the decade. Growing authoritarian tendencies in Putin's Russia (Kolstø & Blakkisrud 2016, Frye 2021 and Laruelle 2021) and the consequences thereof are mentioned by many participants of this study as the main motifs behind their emigration; this is illustrated by vivid examples cited and analyzed in Section 6.4.
Analyzing Putin's policies and their influence on migration patterns does not mean only looking at Russia: in fact, especially in view of Putin's "imperial revival" (McNabb 2016) and dramatic interference into sovereign states which were once members of the Soviet Union, it becomes clear how Putin's political agency has implications ranging far beyond Russia, influencing politics and migration trends throughout the post-Soviet space.

3.3 First Putin era: economic migration 1999 – 2010

What is termed here "first Putin era" designates a period when Putin was dealing with problems inherited from Yeltsin's presidency, including – among others things – unprecedented economic contraction, overpowering oligarchs and unrest in Russia's regions and neighboring countries, the latter finding expression in several "color revolutions" (Lewis 2020:49) and exploding into a number of conflicts:

- Abkhaz-Georgian conflict (unresolved since the fall of the Soviet Union)
- First (1994-1996) and Second (1999-2009) Chechen Wars
- Russo-Georgian War (2008)

It was during this period that "[t]he struggle to preserve and enhance Russia's sovereignty became the defining trope of Putin's second term in office, and a central pillar of the entire Putinist system" (Lewis 2020:49), a trope which gained momentum in what I refer to as "second Putin era." While emigration figures towards Israel and Germany didn't rise significantly until 2009 (see Tolts 2020:5–7 and Khanin 2010:7), data presented in Figure 6.3 illustrates significant movements in the early 2000s.

Russia's economic growth until 2008 could be regarded as one of the causes of the relatively low emigration trend during Putin's first (2000-2004) and second (2004-2008) presidential mandates. However, the scale of emigration from Russia in the 2000s is difficult to quantify with certainty in that "[t]he Russian statistical agencies did not keep a reliable record of those who left the country for good" (Chernysh 2020:89). In spite of the gradual restoration of Russia's economic situations during Putin's first two terms, economically motivated migration not just between CIS states but also from Russia to the West was trending in comparison to the 1990s, which were characterized mainly by ethnic migration; and with an increase of economically motivated migration throughout the post-Soviet states came an increase of remittances, a factor feeding into the countries' economic growth.

Aleshkovski et al. (2018) identify an emigration wave between 2001 and 2005 characterized by "interest in economic partnership with other countries" as "one of [...] [its] significant drivers" (Aleshkovski et al. 2018:149). Since the expiry of the Bishkek

agreement in 2001, several factors contributed to a restrictive turn in Russian immigration policy, and illegal labor migration both within the CIS states and towards foreign countries started becoming a significant issue.
The trend of economically motivated migration persisted throughout the decade, as Russia and other post-Soviet countries faced a financial crisis in 2008 which sparked population unrest with motifs similar to those at the center of the so-called "color revolutions" (Lewis 2020:49). As a result of the financial crisis, "Russia's commitment to further integration into the global economic system slowed, and the ideological prioritisation of sovereignty increasingly placed strains on policies designed to attract foreign investment" (Lewis 2020:56). This situation laid the foundation for the growingly authoritarian climate at least since the turn of the century, and in 2008 emigration figures to Israel experienced a new rise; the emigration trend to Israel still continues to record positive trends today. On the other hand, emigration to Germany has been more or less steadily decreasing since the early 2000s (Panagiotidis 2021:41–42) due to the fact that "immigration programs for former Soviet citizens began to be curtailed" (Chudinovskikh & Denisenko 2017:7). One exception to the decreasing trend in emigration from FSU countries to Germany is to be found in the years 2000 to 2005 (see Figure 6.3) during the Second Intifada, as a wave of Palestinian terrorism hit Israel, causing aliyah to temporarily drop and Jewish immigrants to opt for emigration to Germany rather than Israel (Panagiotidis 2021:41).

3.4 Second Putin era: disillusioned emigrants 2011 – ?

The notion "disillusioned emigrant" was introduced by Fomina (2021:8) to describe emigration from Russia out of political or ideological dissatisfaction, a phenomenon concerning Russia and the post-Soviet states especially since the 2010s which is exemplified by several participants' accounts (see Section 6.4). The following excerpt from an interview with SIL39F from Russia provides a concise explanation of how the "disillusioned emigrant" originated:

> SIL39F: Когда ты растешь, ну как — я в 8* [hidden for privacy reasons] году родилась, в 90-м году совесткий союз [распался], вот. Когда ты растешь на советских книжках, на этих иделах, вот там все, у меня такая бабуш-

> ка преподавала Марксизм и Ленинизм когда-то в университете и все такое, вот потом это все ломается, и потом это какое-то ощущение, что нету ничего, ну, святого, да? Нету какого-то идеала, а все какая-то, ну, ложь грубо говоря. И потом когда в России современной тоже нарастает вот патриотизм, вот то, вот се, потом это по большому счету ложь, и ты уже в принципе никому так особо и не веришь.
>
> SIL39F: When you grow up, well, like, I was born in 198* [hidden for privacy reasons], and in 1990 the Soviet Union [dissolved], and there you have it. When you grow up on Soviet books, on these ideals and stuff, well... for example, my grandma used to teach Marxism and Leninism in university, and then when everything breaks apart, then you feel like, well, that nothing is holy, right? There is no ideal, and everything is some sort of lie, roughly speaking. And then patriotism starts escalating in contemporary Russia, and this and that, but it's basically all lies, and you basically won't trust anyone anymore.

SIL39F's description expresses the condition of the "disillusioned emigrant," characterized by a mistrust in politics. It is not by chance that emigration rates from Russia and Ukraine to Israel started increasing during the 2010s, at a time when a wave of political protests took place in most post-Soviet countries, among which Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Russia, too.

A key moment for the history of post-Soviet migration is represented by anti-government protests in 2011 and 2012 on Moscow's Bolotnaya square opposing Putin's announcement that he would run for a third presidential mandate in 2012 and his subsequent election relying on electoral fraud (Lewis 2020:98). The Bolotnaya protests ended in violent clashes with the police and mass arrests, similarly to the Kyrgyz Revolution of 2010 and the Zhanaozen massacre in Kazakhstan in 2011.

Emigration to Israel started rising in 2010 and increased significantly in 2014 (Tolts 2020:2) following Euromaidan, Russia's annexation of Crimea and the contextual beginning of the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war. The ongoing impact of Russia's interference into Ukrainian politics on migration trends across post-Soviet states is not only visible in statistics (Tolts 2020; Fedyuk & Kindler 2016) showing an increase since 2014 of emigration from Russia and Ukraine – amongst other countries – towards Israel and EU countries. It is also strongly present in the narratives of

participants in this study leaving Ukraine for Israel (see Section 6.2.2.1).
Russia's annexation of Crimea represents yet another turning point not only in Russian domestic and external politics, but also in mobility patterns. Since 2014, a continuous escalation of Putin's authoritarianism is to be noted, with the murder of Boris Nemtsov (2015) and the poisoning (2020) and arrest (2021) of Alexei Navalny assuming a symbolic role among significant portions of the Russian-speaking diaspora (see the account of PIL45M in Section 6.4). Migration from the FSU to Israel has been steadily growing since 2014 into current times, with peaks around the years 2019, 2021 and especially 2022 (CBS 2022); and while emigration from FSU countries to Germany had been steadily decreasing due to restrictions to repatriation programs for so-called *(Spät-)Aussiedler* (i.e. ethnic Germans) and *jüdische Kontingentflüchtlinge* (i.e. Jewish immigrants from FSU countries), due to the 2022 escalation of Russia's war against Ukraine figures of immigration to Germany skyrocketed in March 2022 (DESTATIS 2022a).
With their dramatic impact on emigration, the political events of the last decade in the so-called post-Soviet space point at a significant problem in the immigration policies of Israel and Germany. In this study, I show that the aforementioned immigrant categories created for ethnic migration or repatriation to Germany from FSU countries, next to the criterion of "Jewishness" as a basis for aliyah to Israel by the Law of Return (discussed in Sections 6.1.1 and 6.2.6.2,) are largely perceived by the participants as not befitting their self-identification and situatedness in the new social context.
The following section briefly expands on these issue,s summarizing the characteristics of post-Soviet migration as they have been outlined by Panagiotidis (2021).

3.5 Summary: challenging the categories

While it has been illustrated in Section 3.4 that current post-Soviet migration to Israel and Germany is largely political, ideological and humanitarian, the immigration policies of Israel and Germany have only partially taken stock of these changes. Their categories for regulation of immigration from the FSU still rely on ethnoreligious or ethnonational belonging, categories which are not as present in the immigrants' self-identification as they are in administrative practices on which their immigration is reliant.

As Panagiotidis notes,

> post-soviet migration is defined by identity categories [...] the immigration process itself is based on these pre-existing categories. For immigration to Germany,both *Spätaussiedler* and *Kontingentflüchtlinge*had to prove compliance with certain criteria of ethnonational belonging in terms of German and Jewish heritage. [...] To put it metaphorically, during their immigration process, immigrants were pigeonholed, or had to pigeonhole themselves.[2] (Panagiotidis 2021:123)

It has been illustrated in Sections 3.1 and 6.2.1 that the functioning of the Soviet Union as of a state based on ethnofederalism was strongly reliant on ascriptive nationality. Furthermore, ascribed ethnonational identity functioned as a clog in an engine of discrimination and systematic persecution of "diaspora nationalities" (Kotljarchuk & Sundström 2017:144) and of people allegedly belonging to so-called "enemy nations" (Kotljarchuk & Sundström 2017:124), an engine which became especially visible in Stalinist Terror.

Categories are in no way detrimental or unjust per se; of course, migration policy could not function without categories ordering migrant groups according to several criteria which vary according to the specific social, cultural, linguistic, geographical, historical etc. context. However, from the materials analyzed in this study emerges a divide between categories set by administration (e.g. Jewish heritage, German heritage) and the immigrants' self-identification categories. This divide contributes to the immigrants' perception of non-belonging in the receiving society due to their perceived in-betweenness in the eyes of Soviet society before and Israel or Germany after emigration. This feeling of in-betweenness is epitomized by the following statement by participant BDE34F (see 6.1.2):

> Там я была немка, здесь я русская — понятно
> There I was the German and here I'm the Russian, it's business as usual.

[2] German original text: "postsowjetische Migration [ist] nun [...] durch Identitätskategorien geprägt, da bereits der Zuwanderungsprozess als solcher auf diesen Kategorien basierte. Spätaussiedler und Kontingentflüchtlinge gleichermaßen mussten für ihre Aufnahme in Deutschland nachweisen, dass sie bestimmte Kriterien ethno-nationaler Zugehörigkeit als Deutsche bzw. Juden erfüllten. [...] Bildlich gesprochen wurden die Migranten im Verlauf ihrer Aufnahme in Schubladen gesteckt bzw. mussten sich selbst in diese Schubladen begeben."

Perceived cultural in-betweenness is common to migrants from several contexts, not only from the FSU (see e.g. Genova & Zontini 2020 and Wang 2016 on in-betweenness amongst, respectively, Bulgarian and Italian immigrants to the UK and Chinese Americans returning to China.) However, in-betweenness is remarkably present in migration phenomena from the FSU as they concern minority groups who are subject to ascribed nationality both based on Soviet nationality policy and in the receiving country.

The emergence of categories such as *Spätaussiedler* and *Kontingentflüchtlinge* is the result of bureaucratic processes and does not necessarily match the self-perception of the social groups it seeks to circumscribe. Yet, by the very fact of its existence, it exerts a crucial influence on the identity construction of the individual and groups having to comply with the policies.

Migration policies shape a new reality by creating or modifying categories to which the migrants have to adhere if they wish to receive the benefits attached to the regulations. Thus, a condition of power imbalance emerges, forcing migrants to squeeze their identity into ready-made boxes to meet the expectations of the receiving society. Panagiotidis incisively sums up the paradoxical situation concerning post-Soviet migration in Germany:

> Once they were received in society as 'ethnic Germans', Russian-German *Spätaussiedler* were now faced with the expectation of being 'German' and nothing else. Similarly, Jewish *Kontingentflüchtlinge* were expected to be 'Jews.' In both cases, the fact that identity categories had different meanings according to the context generated confusion. In the Soviet context, Germans and Jews were defined based on their institutionalized, 'primordial' ethnic belonging [...]. In Germany, it was different: Russian-speaking Germans were met with incomprehension, similarly to non-practicing Jews or those who [...] didn't fulfill the minimum criteria for Jewish identity according to the halakha. Such 'perceptions of double foreigness' are expressed in a nutshell by a frequently occurring sentence among *Spätaussiedler*: 'There, we were the Germans (or the fascists), here we are the Russians.'[3] (Panagiotidis 2021:123–124)

[3] German original: "Qua ihrer Aufnahme als ‚deutsche Volkszugehörige' waren russlanddeutsche Spätaussiedler nun mit dem Anspruch konfrontiert, ‚deutsch' – und zwar nur deutsch– sein zu müssen. Jüdische Kontigentflüchtlinge wiederum sollten ‚Juden' sein. In beiden Fällen ergaben sich aber Irritationen daraus,

This brief historical overview on post-Soviet migration, paired with the participants' points of view as they emerge from interviews and the questionnaire, aims at raising awareness for the immigrants' perceptions and needs, challenging pre-established identity categories which are often the result of discrimination and institutionalized inequalities.

The next chapter discusses the theoretical underpinnings of this study and how they are intertwined with its methodology.

dass Identitätskategorien in unterschiedlichen Kontexten unterschiedliche Dinge bedeuteten. Deutsche und Juden waren im sowjetischen Kontext über ihre institutionalisierte und primordiale ethnische Herkunft definiert [...]. In Deutschland war dies anders: Deutsche, die Russisch sprachen, stießen auf Unverständnis, genauso wie Juden, denen jegliche religiöse Praktiken fremd waren und die oftmals das halachische Minimalkriterium für jüdische Identität ... nicht erfüllten. Auf den Punkt gebracht werden die damit verbundenen ‚doppelten Fremdheitswahrnehmungen' durch den von Spätaussiedlern oft geäußerten Satz ‚Dort waren wir die Deutschen (bzw. die Faschisten), hier sind wir die Russen'."

Chapter 4

Theory

It is essential to keep in mind that, as stated in Section 1.1, this study is a field study and not one which sets out to confirm assumptions; therefore, theory and methodology are highly interdependent in it, as theory (intended first and foremost as generalization) emerges from the quality of data which, in turn, is collected and analyzed in order to answer the questions underlying the research hypotheses.
This study was developed departing from the following hypotheses:

- integration processes highly differ between the Russian-speaking communities of Israel and Germany;
- these differences can be studied through the lens of language attitudes, because
- language attitudes yield information about how people position themselves and others in society.

Research never happens in a void; accordingly, these three hypotheses are not to be seen as *a priori* assumptions, but they developed out of previous experience with research on language attitudes and the Russian-speaking diaspora and their validity was confirmed by data collected during fieldwork, rather than by means of forcing the hypotheses onto the data in order to have them confirmed.
Based on the hypotheses above, language attitudes are at the core of this study, in which they are regarded as an instrument to gain insights into how participants position themselves and others in society. This perspective on language attitudes as a window into the understanding of social identity processes is the result of a two-way process: on the one hand, it was influenced by a thorough engagement with

the theoretical framework of sociology of language (discussed below in Section 4.1); on the other hand, this perspective emerged from the reality found on the research field itself. The approach of this study is epitomized by a statement made during an interview by informant SIL32F which is discussed in Section 2.7.1. The statement is reproduced in shortened form below:

> SIL32F: Есть люди, которые лингвисты [...] которые язык именно воспринимают как, не знаю, исскуство, как какую-то вещь в себе, как это - самым предмет интереса. А для меня язык — это именно инструмент, это не сама цель, а это средство. Но это средство очень важное, потому что я человек общительный, значит я идентифицируюсь с людьми очень сильно. Для меня без языка — это как без рук.

> SIL32F: There are people, like linguists [...] who perceive language, I don't know, as an art, as some kind of thing to itself, as a particular object of interest. But to me language is indeed an instrument, it's not the aim, it's rather a means, but this means is a very important one, because I'm a very sociable person, that is I really want to identify with other people. To me, having no language is like having no hands.

SIL32F highlights how language can mean different things to different people, and that she views it as an instrument by which she interacts and *identifies* with others. From the data analysis presented in Section 6 emerges that the attitude of SIL32F towards language is shared by many other participants. However, this perspective on language – and therefore on language attitudes – is not the one most widespread in sociolinguistics, a field of linguistics in which language attitudes are often studied, yet from a significantly different vantage point than the one adopted in this study. In the following section, I expand on the approach to the study of language attitude adopted here by situating it within the theoretical framework of sociology of language; moreover, I expand on the relationship between the latter and sociolinguistics.

4.1 Looking at language to understand society: sociology of language

The perspective on language employed in this study is closely related to the sociology of language, an approach mentioned in Section 2.5. The sociology of language was developed by Fishman (1971), who describes it as “an interdisciplinary social science approach to language in society” (Fishman 1971:217). Although the two fields are cognates, sociolinguistics and the sociology of language have two radically different orientations towards language. There can be stated to be some degree of terminological confusion around both terms, which have been used interchangeably by Fishman himself especially in his early works (see Severo & Görski 2017:121) and both of which occasionally are referred to under the label “sociolinguistics” still today. Preference towards usage of “sociolinguistics” rather than “sociology of language” might be due to the fact that sociolinguistics has been existing prior to the sociology of language, next to the fact that both fields of interest are located at the interface of language and society.

However, the two fields are highly distinct. Sociolinguistics can be described as the study of “language use within a speech community” (Mesthrie 2008:66), focusing on the influence of social factors on language use; examples of phenomena central to sociolinguistics are language variation and change. Sociology of language, on the other hand, is focused on society; in Fishman’s words, it “focuses upon the entire gamut of topics related to the social organization of language” (Fishman 1971:217). Thus, the sociology of language looks at society through the lens of language.

Orientation towards the sociology of language rather than towards sociolinguistics in this study stems from the subordinate role of social aspects in so-called Labovian sociolinguistics – named after William Labov, who is broadly regarded as the founder of sociolinguistics –, also described as “quantitative sociolinguistics” (Severo & Görski 2017:121). One of the reasons prompting Fishman to engage with a sociology of language was what he perceived as an “underexposure to serious sociological stimulation” (Fishman 1991:130) in sociolinguistics, where he found that the “linguistic half clearly and constantly outweighed the sociological half” (Fishman 1991:127) in what had originally been conceived as a discipline combining linguistic and sociological questions, theories and methods.

Language attitudes are often described as “a core concept in sociolinguistics” (Garrett

2010:19). Language attitudes, a subtype of the concept of attitude in social psychology, are forms of the expression of social categorization based on language, therefore allowing those who utter these attitudes to "undertake many forms of social action" (Tajfel & Turner 1979:40). Yet, while language attitudes are arguably a popular subject in sociolinguistics, a perspective on language attitudes oriented towards understanding dynamics of social categorization is uncommon in sociolinguistics, where language attitudes are instead regarded as factors by which to explain language variation and change.

The central hypothesis of this study is that language attitudes yield information about how people position themselves and others in society. In other words,the study of language attitudes is seen as a powerful instrument for the analysis of processes by which people – who also are speakers of one or several language varieties – create a social identity, i.e. how people construct their belonging or non-belonging to a social group. Thus, the perspective on language taken on by Fishman better befits the scope of this study than the one of sociolinguistics in the "traditional" understanding of the discipline described above and attributed to Labov (see Labov 1966, 1972a and 1972b).

In fact, while the term "sociolinguistics" might suggest engagement with sociological aspects, several scholars – amongst whom Cornips & Gregersen (2016) – argue that Labov's paradigm of sociolinguistics consists mainly "in the quantitative study of linguistic variation" and especially of sound change (Labov 1987, cited in Cornips & Gregersen 2016:502). The pioneering importance of Labov's contribution to linguistics in undoubted. What some scholars along with Cornips & Gregersen (2016) challenge, however, is the understanding of sociolinguistics as rooted in quantitative methods and dealing mainly with phenomena of structural phonetic interest. In fact, in spite of Labov's view of language as a socially situated entity, phenomena connected to the interaction between language and its social context have taken up a limited space in Labov's work. This issue has been noted by Darnell shortly after the publication of Labov's *Sociolinguistic Patterns* in 1972, in a review to which she emphasizes a fundamental ambivalence in Labov's work:

> [Labov] is ambivalent about the relationship of linguistics and sociolinguistics. On one hand, he argues that sociolinguistics should be simply part of linguistics, i.e. that linguistics itself must become sensitive to language and to details of actual speech. On the other hand, he accepts the label

> 'sociolinguistics' as a distinguishable enterprise. In accordance with this ambivalence, [he] argues that linguistic and social facts are inseparable; yet he proceeds to analyse them separately ... Social features are analysed in sociological tables, and not built into linguistic rules which are part of the theory (Darnell:1009–1010)

Summing up, as this study looks at linguistic aspects with a sociological interest, the approach of a sociology of language proposed by Fishman offers an especially advantageous perspective for this study. However, this does not by any means imply a rejection of sociolinguistics; in fact, there is a considerable degree of overlap between sociolinguistics and the sociology of language (with the two terms often being used interchangeably by Fishman himself, as noted above), and this study maintains employment of the term "sociolinguistic" to describe all those aspects which are at the interface between language and society broadly speaking (see Section 6.3).

As emerges from the above statement by informant SIL32F on her view of language, this study has a strong orientation towards the participant's standpoint. On the one hand, this is due to the fact that one of the two main subject matters of this study, i.e. language attitudes, essentially are standpoints, expressed by the participants in this study. On the other hand, orientation towards the participant's standpoint derives from the recognition that, in order to guarantee an analysis with a solid empirical groundedness, knowledge shared by the participants needs to be regarded as indexical of phenomena worthy of examination.

It is essential to note that orientation towards the participant's standpoint does not in any way mean that the participants' statements should be considered as expert opinions or scientific insights; the participants remain participants, i.e. laymen in the subject, while it is the researcher's task to provide a scientific analysis of the materials found on the field and the knowledge shared by the participants.

The next section expands on approaches in and beyond sociolinguistics paying particular attention to the participant's perspective which have been especially influential for this study.

4.2 Between the researcher's and the participant's standpoint

In their 2010 article *Towards a perceptual variety linguistics*, Krefeld & Pustka (2010) make the case for sociolinguistics to consider speakers' perceptions and representations of language as key analytical instruments for identifying marked linguistic variants. While this study is not concerned with language variation – one of the main preoccupations of Labovian sociolinguistics –, Krefeld & Pustka (2010) offer impulses which could be highly beneficial when studying any aspect of language. In fact, Krefeld & Pustka (2010:10–11) argue that "language knowledge, whose study is the objective of modern-day linguistics, includes not only [...] language competence [...], but also speakers' knowledge about languages and varieties."[1] Krefeld & Pustka (2010:14) differentiate between perception, which "is strictly related to language production, whereas representation [...] can be extralinguistically motivated."[2] In Krefeld and Pustka's framework, perception refers to phonological, syntactical, lexical and other specific microlinguistic (see Section 4.2.1.1 for a definition) features, while such phenomena as e. g. language attitude and language biography are not subsumed in its realm. The sociolinguistic aspects which I examine in this study are, rather, situated in the domain of representation, i.e. that which speakers make of any aspect related to language.

From Krefeld & Pustka's (2010) considerations in the field of variationist linguistics can be drawn consequences with far-reaching methodological implications for linguistics altogether. The informant should not be handled merely as an object of investigation providing the researcher with the language data which he or she elicits in order to reinforce his or her initial assumption. In fact, the informant has a key role as an actual *participant* of the research process itself, offering the researcher the basic orientation he or she needs to build analytical categories which have their foundations in empirical reality.

Krefeld & Pustka (2010) are not the only scholars in sociolinguistics arguing that the informant's role in the research process should be emphasized. Dennis Preston has

[1] My translation. German original text: "Zum Sprachwissen der Menschen, dessen Erforschung sich die moderne Linguistik zum Ziel gesetzt hat, gehört neben dem sprachlichen Wissen im engeren Sinne, d.h. der Kompetenz [...] auch das Wissen der Sprecher über Sprachen und Varietäten."

[2] My translation. German original text: "Während die Perzeption also untrennbar von der Sprachproduktion ist, können Repräsentationen [...] außersprachlich motiviert sein."

been engaging with the role of speaker perception in sociolinguistics (see e.g. Preston 1989). In 2010, he coined the term *language regard* (Preston 2010), described as "a term that refers to various methods and data types focused on nonlinguists' beliefs, evaluative or not, conscious or unconscious, about language [...][it] encompasses a range of phenomena including language attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and ideologies as well as a range of methodologies" (Evans et al. 2018:xix). Evans et al. (2018:xix) remark that language regard offers "a way of studying the intersection of language and society" which is at the essence of sociolinguistics and sociology of language.

Preston's placement of the folk (i.e. nonlinguist) perspective at the core of his studies has encountered resistance in scholarship in view of some problematic implications which are also sketched out at the end of Section 4.1. In fact, while aiming to understand either more about society through the analysis of certain language phenomena or the other way around, one should bear in mind that nonlinguist *statements about language* (Gal & Irvine 2019:1) are, however illustrative, just one part of the interpretative toolkit to be employed. This is especially relevant for qualitative approaches relying on triangulated data, just like this study. Importantly, the limits of a radical folk linguistic approach also lie in the fact that statements about language offer an insight only into what the informants are explicitly aware of, whereas a great deal of what they are unaware of remains inaccessible if the researcher doesn't embark on a full-fledged scientific analysis and interpretation of the data.

Approaches such as those of Krefeld & Pustka (2010), Preston (2010) and others can be regarded as reactions to approaches in what Tirvassen (2018:16 ff.) terms "traditional sociolinguistics" described as mainly deductive and "regardless of participants' beliefs and experiences" (Tirvassen 2018:172). In criticizing deductive approaches in traditional sociolinguistics, Tirvassen (2018) notes:

> It places the individual in pre-determined categories and, therefore, denies the ability the human being has to make sense of the world as an individual. At the same time, it denies the role that the context plays in dynamic social interaction. In traditional sociolinguistics, the context is insignificant because the cause-and-effect relationship between the status and role of actors and the larger social system provide the necessary explanation for social behavior. (Tirvassen 2018:172)

An almost institutionalized neglect of participants' worldviews and of their rootedness in a multi-layered social context hampers the original mission of sociolinguistics, a field preoccupied with the study of the social factors influencing "language use within a speech community" (Mesthrie 2008:66); within the scope of this study, I name it the "description hurdle," a term which is expanded upon in the following section.

4.2.1 The description hurdle

"Description hurdle" designates a hindrance to analytical depth in studies at the interface of language and society due to neglect of the participants' perspectives. "Description" relates to the fact that, instead of reaching a grounded understanding of sociolinguistic phenomena such as e.g. language attitude, language maintenance etc., studies with an orientation towards so-called "traditional sociolinguistics" (i.e. formally excluding the participants' perspectives) usually appear to dwell on a merely descriptive level. A similar issue is described by Tirvassen (2018) in the following:

> The descriptive framework conceived to examine the functions and status of languages [...] freezes language practice and attitudes towards languages in a rationally organised world where social behaviour is dictated by institutional organisations and non- scripted social rules that are shared by participants in their daily interactions. This approach to research [...] is ill suited to a human community that is developing its own forms of social organisation. (Tirvassen 2018:48)

When looking at multilingualism research, several studies in the last decades seem to be affected by the *description hurdle*. Especially case studies dealing with language attitude show a tendency to dwell on the descriptive level, thus coming short of analytical depth (Franceschini, personal communication, May 19th 2020). Studies on language attitudes often describe them as predictors of language competence, language learning and other linguistic behavior (see, e.g., Du-Nour 2000, Riehl 2014, Anstatt 2017), rather than analyzing them as significant phenomena in their own right.

Moreover, the assumption of a correlation between language attitudes and linguistic behavior is problematic from a social psychological point of view, in that attitudes

are subject to change. As noted by Albarracín & Shavitt (2018:300), "there are no guarantees that, for example, liking a political candidate will yield support for that candidate at the polls, overt behavioral responses are no longer part of the definition of attitudes."

4.2.1.1 A reading of Anstatt (2017)

While several studies deal with linguistic phenomena in the context of the Russian-speaking diaspora, most of them rarely combine approaches and/or questions from linguistics and from sociology, so as to find "a way of studying the intersection of language and society" (Evans et al. 2018:xix) which is central to this study.
One exception is the study by Anstatt (2017) cited above. In the first lines of her article, she asks the following questions with an evident sociolinguistic concern: "What do young people who grow up in Germany in Russian-speaking families feel and believe about Russian? And to what extent are their linguistic skills linked to those attitudes?" (Anstatt 2017:197).
As outlined above, one of the major research trends in sociolinguistics and studies on multilingualism is the study of phenomena such as code-switching, code-mixing and L1 (first language) vs. L2 (second language) competence. What these phenomena have in common is that they can be described as *microlinguistic*, i.e. pertaining to the field of *microlinguistics*. The latter is to be understood as according to the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics*:

> The study of language systems in abstraction from whatever is seen as lying outside them. Coined by G. L. Trager in the late 1940s, and defined as excluding the study of meaning: that belonged instead to a separate field of 'metalinguistics', seen as relating the formal system of language to other 'cultural systems'. Later redefined by other criteria, e.g. as the study of language systems in distinction from that of paralanguage. (Matthews 2007)

While what pertains morphology, lexicon, syntax etc. is the object of microlinguistics, macrolinguistics studies language in its broadest, more general sense, factoring in extralinguistic variables.

The study by Anstatt (2017) looks at a macrolinguistic variable, i.e. language attitudes, to better understand a microlinguistic variable, i.e. grammatical competence of Russian as L1 and how it can be maintained in the diaspora. As Anstatt (2017) explains, her study was carried out on 44 adolescent participants whose L1 is Russian and who emigrated to Germany with their families. In the following, Anstatt (2017) presents the study design:

> The data collection included four steps: (1) Completion of a written questionnaire, (2) retelling the story of a picture book in two languages, (3) performing a Grammaticality Judgment Task in Russian, and (4) participation in a structured interview, the language choice for which was left to the participants, however,nearly all participants chose German. The whole test battery was conducted in one session of approximately 45–60 minutes. Test administrators were L1 speakers of Russian but highly proficient in German as well. (Anstatt 2017:201)

Anstatt's research is of particular significance for this study because, to my knowledge, it is one of the few examples of sociolinguistic studies in the post-Soviet context reaching beyond microlinguistics to appraise migration from the FSU in a way which strives to do justice to its complexity. At the same time, a thorough reading of it brings to the surface the following questions: Why are language attitudes regarded as an additional aspect, rather than as a subject of investigation in their own right? Why would e.g. the maintenance of grammatical structures be more central a phenomenon to understanding language in the diaspora than it is to look at what migrants think and feel about certain languages?
As Anstatt (2017:204) puts it by drawing on Grosjean (1982) and Bradley (2001), "[l]anguage attitudes are assumed to be one of the major factors determining language preferences in bilinguals, and thus, they play an important role with respect to the maintenance of minority languages."
In her study, Anstatt (2017) looks at what she defines "objective linguistic data" such as "speech production data which was obtained through retelling of a picture book" and data from the "Grammaticality Judgement Test." (Anstatt 2017:213). The latter consists in presenting the 44 testees, who are bilingual speakers of Russian and German, with 20 sentences in Russian containing grammatical mistakes to proof their ability to detect these mistakes. As Anstatt (2017:216) summarizes, the study was

not able to detect a clear correlation between a positive attitude towards Russian and the Russian language competences of the testees: "the correlations, even among the linguistic parameters, are complex and difficult to interpret."

This brings up the question whether it is purposeful to conceive *microlinguistic* data as *objective data*, relegating language attitudes to the realm of subjectivity. The fact that an individual's thoughts and beliefs about a language and its speaker are subjective does not mean that they cannot or should not be studied scientifically. Additionally, if what is termed *objective data* does not result in the production of objective, undeniable correlations, this could mean two things: either the data isn't objective or, most likely, the underlying assumption that objective correlations between variables should be the aim of sociolinguistic studies is essentially misleading. According to Tirvassen (2018:173), the lack of analytical practice in sociolinguistics reflects an underlying conceptualization of languages as "identifiable, bounded systems," where formulas such as language attitude, language maintenance, language contact, code-switching and others are applied to data in order to confirm initial research assumptions.

By providing an empirically grounded analysis of the participants' language attitudes, this study uses an approach which includes the participants' perspectives as valuable hints at aspects of sociological relevance, with the aim of gaining an understanding of how Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel and Germany situate themselves and others in society. Such an approach is particularly close to the principles of Grounded Theory, which was developed by Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]).

In spite of its name, Grounded Theory is not properly a theory but rather a set of empirically derived guidelines for carrying out (mostly qualitative) research in the social sciences with the aim of generating theory. The application of Grounded Theory principles in this study is a direct consequence of the theoretical considerations described throughout this chapter. The next section expands on the Grounded Theory approach and its place in this study.

4.3 An interdisciplinary perspective on Grounded Theory

Introduced by Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]), Grounded Theory has been described as a paradigm change in the social sciences "to create fresh theories and new perspectives generated bottom up from empirical field data" (Hadley 2017:3 referring to Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:1–2 and 7). In this study, a Grounded Theory approach allows to develop a *grounded* understanding of language attitudes and social identity, i.e. one which emerges from the data and which places the informants' perceptions in the foreground.

Grounded Theory can be used not only in the phase of data analysis but also in data collection and even in the formulation of research hypotheses. As an example, the central hypotheses of this study (presented in Chapter 4) were elaborated upon by means of theoretical sampling, one of the centerpieces of the Grounded Theory approach. Theoretical sampling is described by Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]:45) as "data collection for generating theory [...] as it emerges."

The principle of theoretical sampling is the expression of the fact that theory generation and the observation of phenomena of relevance as they emerge from the data should go hand-in-hand in order for the theory to have a solid foundation in the reality it is being created to understand. Theoretical sampling also highlights that hypotheses and considerations of theoretical character are not immutable; instead, they can and should be modified whenever the quality of data requires so.

The flexibility (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:186) and openness (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:65) offered by Grounded Theory are not a prerogative of this approach alone; in German-speaking qualitative social research ("qualitative Sozialforschung"), theorization on interview techniques (Schütze 1977, Rosenthal & Loch 2002, Rosenthal 2011) highlights the importance of the "principle of openness" ("Prinzip der Offenheit"), also discussed in Section 5.2.1 and described by Rosenthal (2011:139) as "a form of open interviews [...] with the aim of identifying, understanding and explaining topics of investigation from the perspective of interviewees."[3]

The step following theoretical sampling and enabling "systematic discovery of [...] theory" (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:3) is the development of categories and their "conceptual propert[ies]" (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:23). The process of the gener-

[3]My translation.

ation of theory departing from data is described by (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:23) as follows: "[i]n generating theory it is not the fact upon which we stand, but the *conceptual category* (or a conceptual property of the category) that was generated from it." In other words, a Grounded Theory approach does not consist in describing facts found in data – i.e. in "letting data speak for themselves," as it were, – but in analyzing data while they are being collected in order to identify key concepts and categories upon which to build hypotheses and ultimately derive a theory.

Categories or key concepts upon which theories are generated are obtained by means of "coding" (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:107), i.e. by "jotting categories and properties on the margins of [...] field notes or other recorded data." Analogous processes for theory generation and data analysis to those outlined in Grounded Theory can be identified in so-called qualitative content analysis (German *qualitative Inhaltsanalyse*) developed by Mayring (1991).

While Grounded Theory is not new, its applications in linguistics are missing: as noted by Hadley (2017:4), "[i]n contrast to the spread of grounded theory in other fields of the applied social sciences, within applied linguistics, it has experienced marginalization and mistrust."

The neglect of Grounded Theory approaches in linguistics can be traced back to several reasons. Amongst them is the fact that Glaser and Strauss themselves have been vigorously attributing to their approach some kind of exclusivity, as illustrated in the following excerpt:

> This book is intended to underscore the basic sociological activity that only sociologists can do: generating sociological theory. Description, ethnography, fact-finding, verification (call them what you will) are all done well by professionals in other fields and by layman in various investigatory agencies. But these people cannot generate sociological theory from their work. Only sociologists are trained to want it, to look for it, and to generate it. (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:6)

The fact that Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]) think of Grounded Theory as of an approach for exclusive application in sociology surely does not function as an encouragement for scholars other than sociologists to engage with it.

A further problematic aspect resides in the fact that Grounded Theory was developed mostly for work on qualitative data, which makes its application in e.g. so-called

Labovian sociolinguistics problematic. Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]) do not exclude quantitative applications of Grounded Theory, to which they devote a chapter (pp. 185–220). However, their argumentation mostly refers to qualitative data, explaining why “most grounded theory studies have employed only qualitative methods” (Hadley 2017:32). At the interface between theory and methodology, this study proposes to expand the range of application of the Grounded Theory approach by applying it in a study of sociolinguistic (language attitude) and social-psychological (social identity) phenomena combining qualitative and quantitative data.

The theoretical considerations presented in this chapter are not the result of orientation to a single, immutable theoretical framework but rather of a highly interdisciplinary engagement, combining insights from sociolinguistics, sociology of language, sociology, social psychology, qualitative social research – all having the ‘social’ as their common ground. Against this backdrop, the flexibility (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:186) and openness (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:65) proposed by Grounded Theory and other aforementioned approaches are two essential principles in this study.

Chapter 5

Study design and data collection

Fieldwork yielded a total of 59 recordings of one-to-one and group narrative interviews, conferences and other social and private events in Russian-speaking contexts. Of the 59 recordings, 41 were carried out in Israel and 18 in Germany. Of all the recordings, 56 are interviews, among which five expert interviews and and five group interviews. The total number of study participants is 62.
Each of the recordings captures fragments of the complex fieldwork reality. However, not all the recordings contain information pertinent to the research question. The 56 recordings of one-to-one and group interviews with Russian-speaking participants in Israel and Germany constitute the main data source, whereas recordings of social and private events are a peripheral and can be considered as a side-corpus for use in future studies. Recordings of the latter kind may be termed situational in that they give account of the characteristics of the research context during fieldwork. Their function is comparable to the one of research diary entries documenting different aspects and stages of participant observation on field, reflections upon exiting the research field and reactions to literature and other scientific input from, e.g., discussions with fellow researchers.
Besides to qualitative data collected during fieldwork, this study is based on quantitative and, to a lesser extent, qualitative data collected through an online survey carried out in 2021 among Russian-speaking online communities of Israel and Germany. The latter survey can be termed "mixed-method," as it was designed to yield both quantitative and qualitative data. However, since most of the data collected through it are subject to quantitative analysis, I refer to it as "quantitative survey."

The pilot study represents a stage during which the research questions were refined, the main hypotheses were tested and data collection and analysis methods were put to the proof and modified; in this sense, it can be defined as the more “experimental” stage of fieldwork. Thanks to the pilot phase, the qualitative study could rely on empirically supported data collecting methods and guidelines for the investigation of relevant phenomena during interviews. In practice, these two phases were not separated but rather intertwined, being both part of the same data collection process. Thus, interview recordings from both the pilot study and subsequent fieldwork are considered as part of the data corpora and are analyzed as qualitative data in Chapter 6.
It is essential to keep in mind that the whole study presented in this work is *experimental* in the sense that it is highly data-driven and sets out not to confirm assumptions but to discover understudied aspects of language attitude and social identity from which to draw conclusions of theoretical character.

5.1 Overview

The following table presents a chronological overview of the steps involved in the project which led to the completion of this study. Disclosing the phases involved for designing and conducting a research project offers PhD researchers in the humanities a possible example of how a project mainly based on fieldwork can be structured. Data collected until the conclusion of the pilot study was helpful to understand how to go about the Germany-based part of field research and to design both the qualitative and the quantitative studies. The pilot study was also essential for the development of the categories employed for data analysis which are discussed at length in Chapter 6. The pilot study illustrates the importance of theoretical sampling, one of the centerpieces of Grounded Theory methodology which, in research practice, happens simultaneously with data collection (see Section 4.3).

5.2 Pilot study

During the Israel-based pilot study I collected nine interviews with a total of eleven participants as well as answers from a questionnaire handed out to five participants.

Time	Phase
October 2017 – August 2018	University Hebrew course
March 2018	Exploratory trip to Israel
October 2018	Ulpan Hebrew course
Winter 2018-19	Preparation for pilot study
March 2019	Pilot study in Israel
Spring-summer 2019	Fieldwork in Germany
October 2019 – February 2020	Fieldwork in Israel
March–April 2020	Virtual fieldwork in Germany
Summer 2020–Summer 2021	Data analysis
Spring 2021	Quantitative study
October–December 2021	Data analysis
January 2022– January 2023	Writing

Table 5.1: Chronological overview of research phases

The following sections illustrates the pilot study design.

5.2.1 Interview design

Language attitudes not only are the main subject of this study – next to social identity – but they are at the same time a tool for analysis of "how speakers situate themselves in society, how they develop a feeling of belonging to a group and how borders between groups are created" (see Section 6.3.2). Since language attitudes can be expressed in a variety of ways, studying them requires a flexible framework.
On field, the pilot study included two key moments, the first consisting in carrying out open interviews and the second in a questionnaire (see Section 5.2.2) on which the quantitative survey is based.
The pilot study was carried out with a total of eleven participants; interviews were recorded with a portable digital audio recorder. Of the 11 people interviewed during the pilot study, six were recruited by word of mouth. The remaining five participants are researchers at Israeli universities; they were involved in the pilot study as experts, within the framework of so-called expert interviews *expert interviews.* Interviews with them served the purpose of taking stock of the state of research on migration from the FSU in Israel and of phenomena of societal relevance among olim[1]

[1]An "'oleh" (Hebrew; plural "'olim") is somebody immigrating to Israel based on their Jewish heritage in compliance to the Law of Return.

from the FSU as they have been highlighted in research. They are defined by Littig & Pöchhacker (2014:1088) as "a [mostly] semi-standardized interview with a person ascribed the status of an expert." In general, the degree of openness of the interviews depends on several factors, one of them being the position of the interviewees on the research field and their knowledge on the subject of investigation.

Expert interviews were carried out with a combination of techniques typical for narrative and *focussed* interviews. The focussed interview was developped in the 1940s by Robert Merton and Patricia Kendall. Drawing on Merton & Kendall (1979), Rosenthal (2011) describe it as follows:

> Die Besonderheit dieses Vorgehens [...] ist nach Merton und Kendall (1979:171), dass alle Befragten "eine ganz konkrete Situation erlebt haben" [...] Das fokussierte Interview zielt also darauf ab, die Reaktionen auf ein und Interpretationen von einem von allen erlebten sozialen Phänomen mit einem ansatzweise offenen Vorgehen zu erheben. Für Merton und Kendall (1979:171) war von Bedeutung, dass diese Gesprächsvorgaben zunächst eine inhaltsanalytische Auswertung ermöglichten, die "zu einer Reihe von Hypothesen über die Bedeutung und die Wirkungen bestimmter Aspekte dieser Situation" führt. Diese Hypothesen dienen dann zur Formulierung eines Interviewleitfadens.[2] (Rosenthal 2011:145)

As regards the remaining five interviewees, I conducted with them so-called *narrative interviews*, introduced by Schütze (1977) into the sociological landscape of 1970s Germany. Drawing on Schütze (1977), Rosenthal & Loch (2002) describe narrative interviews as follows:

> Das narrative Interview zielt auf die Hervorlockung und Aufrechterhaltung von längeren Erzählungen zunächst ohne weitere Interventionen von seiten der Interviewer/innen ab. Konsequent wird hier [...] auf eine hypothesengeleitete Datenerhebung verzichtet und sich zunächst an den Rele-

[2]My translation: "The peculiarity of this method [...] is, to cite Merton and Kendall (1979:171), that all interviewees 'have experienced a very concrete situation' [...] Focussed interviews aim to collect the reactions to and interpretations of a phenomenon experienced by all participants by means of a partially open method. Merton and Kendall (1979:171) point at the importance of these criteria in that they allow for an initial analysis of content which 'leads to a number of hypotheses on the significance and on the implications of certain aspects of a given situation.' These hypotheses serve to formulate an interview guide."

> vanzen der Gesprächspartner/innen und deren alltagsweltlichen Konstruktionen orientiert. Die narrative Gesprächsführung bietet den Interviewten einen größtmöglichen Raum zur Selbstgestaltung der Präsentation ihrer Erfahrungen und bei der Entwicklung ihrer Perspektive auf das angesprochene Thema bzw. auf ihre Biographie. [...] Damit gewährleisten narrative Interviews eine profunde Basis zur Entwicklung von empirisch geerdeten handlungstheoretischen Konzeptionen.[3] (Rosenthal & Loch 2002:1)

Pilot interviews were conducted both in an unstructured and semi-structured fashion, sticking to the so-called "Prinzip der Offenheit" (*principle of openness*), described by Rosenthal (2011:139) as follows: "eine Form des offenen Interviews [...] ist hier dem Ziel geschuldet, das zu untersuchende Thema aus der Perspektive der Interviewten zu erfassen und darüber hinaus verstehen und erklären zu können."[4]
After carrying out unstructured open interviews, it is necessary to bring in more structure into the interview process so as to overcome the stage of "theoretical saturation" Rosenthal (2018:76), one during which "no additional data can be found whereby the sociologist [or, in this case, the linguist] can develop properties of the category" (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:61). "Category" refers to a broad scale phenomenon at study, e.g. language attitudes, as whose properties might count any relevant attributes described by the interviewees. Towards the end of pilot study, due to the unstructured interview fashion, theoretical saturation emerged, leading to the decision of conducting the main qualitative study based on semi-structured interviews.
Additionally to interviews, informants – except for the expert informants – were handed out a brief questionnaire made up of two sections, the first one collecting demographic data and the second one collecting data about the informants' *language*

[3]My translation: "Narrative interviews aim to elicit and maintain an extended narrative flux, at first without the interviewer's intervention. A hypothesis-based data collection is consciously rejected, so as to allow for orientation towards topics of relevance for the interviewees and their everyday life constructions. The conduction of narrative interviews offers the interviewees as much space as possible to autonomously design the presentation of their experiences and to develop their own perspective on the topic addressed as well as on their autobiography. [...] Therefore, narrative interviews guarantee a solid basis for the development of empirically grounded conceptions of action theory."

[4]My translation: A form of open interviews [...] with the aim of identifying, understanding and explaining topics of investigation from the perspective of interviewees

biography, drawing on the German-speaking research field of *Sprachbiographien.* The questionnaire is discussed in the next section.

5.2.2 Language biography questionnaire

The questionnaire's title in Russian is "anketa o sebe i o svoikh i͡azykakh," i.e. "questionnaire about yourself and your languages." The Hebrew and German versions of the questionnaire are titled, respectively, "sh'alon biografi-lashoni" and "sprachbiographischer Fragebogen." The questionnaire was developped based on the methodology typically employed in German-speaking studies working with the term *Sprachbiographie*, as e.g. in Meng (2004).
The term *Sprachbiographie* was coined by Rita Franceschini, who describes the notion as follows: "Die Sprachbiographie läßt sich als während einer autobiographischen Erzählung allmählich reproduzierte Präsentation des Sprachrepertoires charakterisieren"[5] (Franceschini 1996:86). The latter description hints at the fact that language biographies are less of a fully developed methodological instrument than they are a pre-scientific tool for observation, as is noted by Tophinke (2002):

> Sprachbiografie dient in einem vorwissenschaftlichen Sinne dazu, den Sachverhalt zu bezeichnen, dass Menschen sich in ihrem Verhältnis zur Sprache bzw. zu Sprachen und Sprachvarietäten in einem Entwicklungsprozess befinden, der von sprachrelevanten lebensgeschichtlichen Ereignissen beeinflusst ist.[6] (Tophinke 2002:1)

This methodology was employed for the pilot study test on account of the scarcity of research on language attitudes as the main subject on investigation. Although research on so-called *language biographies* has a different focus and different objectives than the study of language attitudes, its interest is close enough to the field of language attitudes to allow methodological parallels.
During the preparation of the pilot study, which was carried out in Israel, a version of the questionnaire was developed for Germany, too. Both questionnaire versions

[5]My translation: "A language biography can be described as a presentation of someone's language repertoire gradually reproduced during an autobiographical narration."

[6]My translation: "Language biographies serve to denote in a pre-scientific sense the fact that people are situated in an evolving process towards language(s) and language varieties, one which is affected by events of their life story in which language plays a significant role."

begin with an informed consent disclaimer guaranteeing the confidential treatment of data. Questionnaires questions in Russian plus translations to German for Germany and Hebrew for Israel-based respondents.
Figures 5.1 and 5.2 below present the structure of the Israel-based questionnaire including the informed consent disclaimer.
While allowing the participants to choose the language in which they feel most comfortable at filling out the questionnaire, the language preference itself was considered an additional, revealing piece of data, in that it discloses information about which functions the speakers associate with and/or perform in which language.
The demographic section includes questions about the interviewee's name, surname, date and place of birth, gender, national belonging and profession. The properly sociolinguistic section of the questionnaire is titled Данные о языках "Data about languages" and includes the following points:

– Native language(s)
  Родной/ые язык/и
– Other language skills
  Другие языковые навыки
– Could you please tell me a bit about the role of Russian in your life?
  Расскажите пожалуйста немного о том, какую роль играет русский язык в Вашей жизни
– Could you please tell me a bit about the role of Hebrew in your life?
  Расскажите пожалуйста немного о том, какую роль играет иврит в Вашей жизни
– Could you tell me about what you do in Israel?
  Расскажите пожалуйста немного о том, чем Вы занимаетесь в Израиле

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 exemplify the text of the Israel-based pilot questionnaire; in the Germany-based version, Hebrew and Israel are, respectively, substituted by German and Germany.
The questionnaire was administered to the five non-expert interviewees of the pilot study and to some of the participants in the main study; whether it was handed out to them or not depends on factors discussed in Section 5.3.
While the questionnaire proved beneficial for demographic data collection, some of which could go neglected in an unstructured interview, the sociolinguistic section of the questionnaire turned out to be both redundant and impractical for the informants

שאלון ביוגרפי-לשוני

Анкета о себе и о своих языках

שימו לב שכלו המידע האישי הנאסף בשאלון זה יעובד אך ורק למטרות מדעיות ויופיע בעבודות מחקר בצורה אנונימי. לשאלות אנא צרו קשר לחוקרת באופן אישי או על כתובת הדואר האלקטרוני שלהלן: Cristiana.Lucchetti@campus.lmu.de

Внимание! Все личные данные, указывамые Вами, будут разработаны исключительно для научных целей и представлены в научных исследованиях в совершенно анонимизированном виде. По всем вопросам, свяжитесь пожалуйста с исследователем лично или по электронной почте: Cristiana.Lucchetti@campus.lmu.de

מידע אישי
Личные данные

שם פרטי Имя	
שם משפחה Фамилия	
תאריך לידה Дата рождения	
מקום לידה Место рождения	
מין Пол	
לאום Национальность	
מקצוע Профессия	

מידע על שפות
Данные о языках

שפת\שפות אם Родной/ые язык/и	
כישורי שפה אחרים Другие языковые навыки	

Figure 5.1: Israel pilot study questionnaire, page 1

to fill out.

Evidence from the pilot study induced reflections of theoretical and methodological character about the notion of language biography, described by Franceschini as a

אנא תספר\י קצת על תפקידה של עברית בחיים שלך
Расскажите пожалуйста немного о том, какую роль играет русский язык в Вашей жизни

אנא תספר\י קצת על תפקידה של עברית בחיים שלך
Расскажите пожалуйста немного о том, какую роль играет иврит в Вашей жизни

אנא תספר\י קצת על מה שאת\ה עושה בארץ ישראל
Расскажите пожалуйста немного о том, чем Вы занимаетесь в Израиле

Figure 5.2: Israel pilot study questionnaire, page 2

"by-product of [her] post-doctoral thesis at the University of Basel" (personal communication with Rita Franceschini, May 2020; the work referred to is Franceschini 1998).

In the following, Franceschini (2002) describes how language biographies came to being in practice:

> Ich liess also erwachsene Deutschschweizer (meist Händler und Verkäuferinnen), von denen ich schon italienische Alltagskonversationen aufgenommen hatte, über ihr urbanes Umfeld und ihren Umgang mit Sprachen berichten. Für diese Narrationen, die auch stark mit argumentativen Passagen durchsetzt waren, hatte ich frei den Begriff *biografie linguistiche* oder eben *Sprachbiographien* als Begriff gesetzt. [...] Wir haben das Produkt einer solchen narrativ hervorgebrachten sprachlichen Autobiographie *Sprachbiographie* genannt.[7] Franceschini (2002:25–26)

Language biographies are to be understood as an informal narration by speakers on the languages playing a relevant role in their lives. In view of the lack of organic theoretical and methodological work on it, employing the notion *language biography* does not appear beneficial within the scope of this study. Empirically grounded theoretical and methodological work on language biography is needed in order to explore the potential of language biographies in studies on multilingualism and migration; an example for such work can be found in Holzer (2021).

The connection between research focusing on language biographies and research on language attitudes is evident in that people's narrations on their life experiences related to language often bring to the surface the speakers' attitudes towards their biographically relevant languages. Tophinke (2002:12) is of the opinion that“[i]n der Analyse sprachbiografischer Schilderungen eröffnen sich Möglichkeiten, Einstellungen und Haltungen zur Sprache bzw. Sprachvarietäten zu eruieren, die auf das aktuelle Sprachverhalten Einfluss nehmen.”[8]Thus, a thorough reflection on the notion of language biography and its possible implications for the study of language attitudes is appropriate and even necessary.

Besides the redundant character of the questionnaire for the study of the interviewees'

[7]My translation: “I asked German-speaking Swiss adults (mostly merchants and salespeople) whom I had previously recorded having everyday conversations in Italian to describe their urban environment and their engagement with languages. To describe these narrations, which included many argumentative sequences, I spontaneously came up with the term *biografie linguistiche*, i.e. language biography. [...] We decided to name the result of a narratively produced linguistic autobiography a ‘language biography’.”

[8]My translation: “analyzing language biographies allows to determine views and attitudes towards language and/or language varieties which affect current language behavior.”

language attitudes, another problematic aspect involved with *language biography* in the questionnaire consisted in explaining the meaning of this expression to the participants. This is not surprising, as the term lacks a clear-cut definition. While reflecting on a possible translation of *sprachbiographischer Fragebogen* into Russian, I was not able to find any literal translation to suit the scope of the study and resorted instead to the paraphrase “anketa o sebe i o svoikh i͡azykakh,” i.e. “questionnaire about yourself and your languages,” while the Hebrew version “sh’alon biografi-lashoni” and the German version “sprachbiographischer Fragebogen” left some of the interviewees startled. This was an eye-opening empirical finding on definition problems of *Sprachbiographie*.
Another reason against integrating language biographies in my study is the fact that it can mainly be studied through interpretation, but does not lend itself ideally to scientific generalization; as it is neither a standardized method nor a defined theoretical concept, it is highly individual/subjective in its character, which hampers categorization or the conduction of quantitative observations.
The next section deals with the design of the qualitative study.

5.3 Qualitative study

Lessons learned from the pilot phase were put into practice by modifying significant aspects of the research strategy. Among other things, the informed consent format was modified from a disclaimer coming with the questionnaire to a separate extended privacy policy form explicitly based on European data protection and privacy law, providing the interviewees with a legal explanation for the privacy and data protection procedures which the data would undergo throughout the study. This decision was taken in view of the growingly infrequent use of questionnaire.
The law on which the privacy policy relies is called *General Data Protection Regulation* (German *Datenschutzgrundverordnung*,a law which “imposes obligations onto organizations anywhere, so long as they target or collect data related to people in the EU” (Wolford 2018). Data protection is essential whenever handling data and especially in light of the sensitiveness of the information shared by participants in this study.
While good on paper, the decision to provide the interviewees with an extensive and

detailed privacy disclaimer generally was not positively received by the informants, who were mostly annoyed at the thought of having to go through several pages of paperwork and preferred signing the last page of the privacy form after a brief explanation by the researcher on what the paperwork is about. Observations from research practice on the reception of privacy forms among study participants in social sciences could be helpful for further research to adapt privacy and data protection guidelines to the needs of the participants.

5.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

The type of interview I employed after the pilot study is usually referred to as a *leitfadengestütztes Interview* (see Flick et al. 2009), i.e. a semi-structured interview. A semi-structured interview is described by Galletta (2012:1–2) as "sufficiently structured to address specific dimensions of your research question while also leaving space for study participants to offer new meanings to the topic of study."

The "Leitfaden," i.e. interview guide, consists of a set of questions covering relevant topics. The interview guide varied between participants and was prepared before the interview. It was assembled to address both the issues at the center of the study and questions of interest for the participants based on personal information disclosed by them during the recruitment phase. A list of the most frequently asked interview questions is illustrated in Table 5.3; it coincides with the content of most interview guides.

Interviews were comparably long, lasting between half an hour and two and a half hours. The average duration of the interview recordings is 59 minutes.

Demographic data collected through the questionnaire were entered into an Excel spreadsheet right after the end of the interview to minimize the risk of any information loss. Data entered into the Excel spreadsheet were anonymized according to the strategy illustrated in Chapter making sure to remove as many sensitive details as possible.

The main qualitative study includes 47 interviews, of which 18 were recorded in Germany and 29 in Israel. All of the interviews with immigrants to Israel were carried out *in loco*. The majority of Germany-based interviews took place in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic and therefore had to be carried out online. I expand on

virtual sampling in Section 5.3.3.

5.3.1.1 Interview structure and questions

Which questions were addressed during the interview depends on the following aspects:

- background information shared by participants during recruitment
- adequacy of asking a given question at a given time, formed during the interview situation
- respectful treatment of sensitive topics

All of the aforementioned factors are interdependent: the interviewer evidently has more and better instruments to form a judgment on the convenience or adequateness of asking certain questions if he or she has a certain degree of background information on the interview partner, which is helpful during the interview preparation phase. As regards so-called sensitive topics, background information on the interview partners also is highly helpful, if not indispensable, to determine how these are perceived by the interview partners. In fact, the very understanding of what a sensitive topic is depends on the interviewees' perception of it. As Lee & Renzetti (1990:510) point out, sensitive topics in research are usually "treated in a commonsensical way, with no attempt at definition." Based on commonsense and research experience, areas more likely to be perceived as sensitive are the following

> (a) where research intrudes into the private sphere or delves into some deeply private experience; (b) where the study is concerned with deviance and social control; (c) where it impinges on the vested interests of powerful persons or the exercise of coercion and domination; and (d) where it deals with things sacred to those being studied which they do not wish profaned. (Lee & Renzetti 1990:512)

The difficulty of defining a sensitive topic lies in the fact that what might be sensitive for one individual at a given time and in a given context might not be sensitive for another individual, or even for the same individual in a different context. Lee & Renzetti (1990:512) elaborate upon this in the following:

> The sensitive nature of a particular topic is *emergent* [my emphasis]. In other words, the sensitive character of a piece of research seemingly inheres less in the topic itself and more in the relationship between that topic and the social context within which the research is conducted. It is not uncommon, for example, for a researcher to approach a topic with caution on the assumption that it is a sensitive one, only to find that those initial fears had been misplaced.

The emergent character of sensitive topics was particularly evident during the virtual fieldwork phase. Based on my research experience, modes of human communication – which is always multimodal (Norris 2004:1) – highly differ between virtual and live communication, influencing the researchers' perception of sensitive topics. If, following Lee & Renzetti (1990:512), topic sensitivity is identified in relation to the social context, the latter is far less appreciable in a virtual interview situation than during *in loco* fieldwork. A definition of virtual fieldwork is provided in Section 5.3.3. The topics covered by the questions are manifold and can be classified as follows:

1. Personal background
2. Immigration history
3. Language: learning, maintenance, use etc.
4. Cultural matters

The thematic areas show considerable overlap with the topics covered by the questionnaire designed for the quantitative survey, which is described in Section 5.4. In fact, the quantitative questionnaire was designed departing from the structure of the interviews.Generally, the interview was structured as follows: Especially in interviews for which recruitment happened via social media, the warming-up phase often consisted of questions addressed by the interview partners to me. I deem it an ethical obligation of the researcher towards the interview participants to provide them with sufficient information on the researcher's personal motivation and, above all, the scope of the project. However, as certain topics might be sensitive to the researcher himself or herself, the researcher has the right and, to some extent, duty to preserve his or her own safety, which is paramount for the success of the research enterprise; safety issues concerning the researcher are arguably the less considered side of the coin, but they are just as essential when planning qualitative research, as

Interview phase	**Content**
Warming up	– Negotiation of compensation, e.g. coffee – Questions by the interviewees on researcher's interests – Questions by the researcher on interviewee's personal background
Interview core	Questions by the researcher (see thematic areas 1 – 5)
Conclusion	– Questions by the interviewees on the project's aims – Requests by the interviewees, e.g. follow-up on study results – Offer of additional compensation, e.g. coffee

Table 5.2: Interview structure

noted by Lee & Renzetti (1990:511–512).
In the following table, I present an overview of the most frequently asked questions and addressed issues for each of the thematic areas indicated above. The questions reported in the following table are formulated in a straightforward way mostly because they do not address issues which could be be described as sensitive and which were treated with according regard. For reasons of practicability, the following table is not comprehensive of all the questions asked during the interviews; nor would it be possible to compile a question catalog of sorts based on the issues addressed during the interviews. In the context of unstructured and semi-structured interviews, the interview situation itself is flexible, providing both the interviewer and the interviewee with the possibility of gradually familiarizing with each other, so that over time even so-called sensitive topics can be addressed without triggering negative reactions. Also, especially in the case of couple or group interviews, the interview might take the form of a dialogue during which the interviewees interact with each other and ask each other questions which, in turn, are relevant to the issues studied. The advantage of conducting semi-structured interviewed is that they are "sufficiently structured to address specific dimensions of your research question while also leaving space for study participants to offer new meanings to the topic of study" (Galletta 2012:1–2).

Since the focus of the study are language attitudes and their contribution to the formation of social identity, the topic of language is at least touched upon in all the thematic areas. Based on my fieldwork experience carrying out interviews, straight-

Thematic area	Questions
Personal background	– What is your occupation? – Where did you grow up? – Do you have family? etc.
Immigration history	– When did you immigrate to Israel/Germany? – What was the motivation behind your immigration? – Did your immigrate alone or with family? etc.
Language: learning, maintenance, use etc.	– How did you learn Hebrew/German? etc. – Are you happy with your Hebrew/German command? – Is it important for you to pass on Russian to your children? – Which language do you prefer using in which context? etc.
Cultural matters	– Do you feel integrated in Israeli/German society? – Is there anything you miss about the country where you were born? – What is your general opinion on the position of Russian-speaking immigrants in Israel/Germany? etc.

Table 5.3: Frequently asked interview questions by thematic area

forward questions like the ones mentioned in the table are generally viable when the issue addressed does not require interpretation; this is often the case in quantitative surveys, like the one I carried out after fieldwork and which is described in Section 5.4. However, when dealing with language attitudes, research practice shows that they cannot be studied by simply asking “what is your attitude towards [e.g.] Rus-

sian?." Recalling a definition of language attitudes can be helpful understanding why that is so: language attitudes are "the social meanings people assign to language and its users" (Dragojevic et al. 2021:61). First of all, language attitudes are a scientific construct whose meaning is not necessarily known to laymen. Thus, addressing language attitudes explicitly in a question during qualitative interviews would result in having to explain what they are, which presents the researcher with several challenges. In fact, one of the reasons why language attitudes are at the center of this study is precisely because of the conceptual fuzziness about them in research, which this study sets out to overcome.

Furthermore, if language attitudes could be understood by asking one straightforward question, this would eventually make fieldwork superfluous, meaning language attitudes do not require any interpretation and can be studied sufficiently by means of e.g. an online questionnaire. However, I argue that the limited understanding of language attitudes in research derives from a lack of qualitative engagement with this topic, which has traditionally been relegated to quantitative surveys (Soukup 2012:213) (see discussion in Chapter 4. This does not mean that quantitative methods are inadequate for the study of language attitudes – quite the opposite; this study resorts to quantitative methods, too. I call for an integration of qualitative and quantitative methods for a rich understanding of language attitudes, along the lines of Soukup's observation that "quantitative 'language attitude' research needs to take constructionist considerations into account in order to retain its scientific relevance today" (Soukup 2012:212).

Experience during fieldwork brought up a central characteristic of language attitudes, namely their being "interactionally emergent," as is also noted by Soukup (2012:218). In fact, the articulation of the interviewee's attitudes towards a language variety happens within the interactional context of the interview and, outside of the interview situation, in interaction with the person's social environment. Generally, interaction is fundamental when talking about any kind of attitude, which in social psychology is typically defined as "the evaluation or affect associated with a *social object* [original emphasis]" (Greenwald 1990:254) and which is subject to change.

In psychology, attitudes are often treated as predictors of human behavior (see Albarracín & Johnson 2019:6), which reveals an underlying assumption that they are largely stable phenomena. This is reflected in the etymology of the word *attitude*, deriving from Medieval Latin *aptitūdō* "ability, aptitude" or, possibly, *actitūdō* "pos-

ture;" etymologically, an attitude is a predisposition. However, throughout fieldwork I made experiences and collected data largely contradicting the presumed stability of attitudes, which, being situated in interaction, are dynamic and subject to change based on the social environment and on the mode of interaction.

5.3.2 Participant recruitment

This study focuses on young adult immigrants (approximately up to 40 years of age). As there is no agreement on how to define *young adulthood*, my classification follows (Colarusso 1990), according to whom this phase lasts from the age of 20 to 40; however, there is no strict age-based exclusion of participants from this study. Rather than delimiting a strict age range, the criterion of young adulthood addresses first generation as well as so-called *generation 1.5* (Remennick 2017) immigrants to Israel and Germany who were born either in the decade before the demise of the Soviet Union or after it.

That of *generation 1.5* is a debated categorization itself; it is worth referring to Remennick's definition of it:

> A term used for immigrants who moved to a host country as older children or adolescents (between the ages of 8– 10 to 18), usually with their parents and/or other family members. In most countries that hosted the 1990s immigration from the USSR/FSU, the 1.5 generation adults are now between their early 20s and late 30s. Scholars often disagree about the age bracket defining the 1.5 generation, but most assert that they form a special category of immigrant experience, different from both their parents (the 1st generation) and immigrant children born in the host country (the 2nd generation). Of course younger and older 1.5ers tackle different challenges in their schooling, learning host language and relations with parents and peers, calling for a more nuanced approach to this category of immigrants. (Remennick 2017:70)

Recruitment was carried out so as to obtain as *large* and as *varied* a sample as possible. As concerns the size of the participant population, if it is *too* little, its representativeness will be questionable even in a qualitative study, which is not defined

by an ambition to identify statistically relevant patterns. At the same time, it is not possible to define which exact amount of participants is to be considered as *too little*, *enough* or *too large* in qualitative studies. Defining any quantity standards for sampling in qualitative studies is problematic also because a larger amount of participants involved in a qualitative study does not automatically result in more knowledge. This is due to the fact that the risk of theoretical saturation becomes higher the further the data collection is extended. As Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]:61) note, "[t]he criterion for judging when to stop sampling [...] is the category's theoretical saturation."

As concerns the internal diversification of the population sample, what I mean by *varied* is possibly differing from the demographic characteristic of the researcher, so as to minimize or at least contain what is termed "selection bias." It stems from the paradigm of quantitative research (Galdas 2017:1) and has been defined by Collier & Mahoney (1996:59) as follows:

> Selection bias is commonly understood as occurring when some form of selection process in either the design of the study or the real-world phenomena under investigation results in inferences that suffer from systematic error.

With reference to population selection in qualitative research, "[s]election bias relates to both the process of recruiting participants and study inclusion" (Smith & Noble 2014:101). One of the main risks associated with selection bias resides in the influence of the researcher's personal demographic characteristics over the demographics of the population sample, as I observed during my study of swear word usage and gender roles in post-Soviet societies (Lucchetti 2021b). Being a young female-identifying researcher with access to educational resources, it is highly challenging for me to be able to reach people with a drastically different demographic characterization, i.e. lack of education, lack of interest in questions of societal relevance.

It is necessary to distinguish between *sampling* and *recruitment*; the following clarification by Kelly (2010:672) is informative:

> Sampling[... is]the acquisition of data from a cross section of a population in lieu of data from each member Recruitment, on the other hand, entails the sampling technique put into actual practice in the course of enrolling subjects into a study. Metaphorically, sampling techniques function as

> the blueprint by which the project is built and recruitment entails the actual construction process, a process dependent upon the conditions of the enterprise, which are not always fully understood until ground is struck.

Keeping this distinction in mind, it is evident how sampling (i.e. the design of recruitment criteria, strategies etc.) and recruitment go hand-in-hand and should be treated considering their co-dependence. Although sampling and recruitment concerns are not usually a priority in qualitative research (as observed e.g. by Kelly 2010, McCormack et al. 2013 and McCormack 2014), discussing them is an essential part of qualitative research work directed towards methodological innovation.
Given the vast sociocultural differences between Israel and Germany, it is evident that participant recruitment and sampling strategies should vary according to the field. As an example, fieldwork experience shows that addressing strangers on the street for participant recruitment is a far more accepted approach in Israel than in Germany.
The following two strategies were most commonly employed for participant recruitment: word-of-mouth and online recruitment on social media; the latter proved to be the most effective strategy.
By word-of-mouth I mean the spreading of information about my project around acquaintances in and outside of academia likely to know individuals willing to partake in my study and fitting the criteria of my sample target – i.e., young adult immigrants to Israel and Germany with a native or near-native command of Russian and a biographical connection to countries of the FSU.
In both cases, my recruitment mode was directed towards potential participants who could enrich the sample and provide insightful information; such a mode has been termed *purposeful sampling* and is described by Creswell & Clark (2011:173) as follows: "[p]urposeful sampling in qualitative research means that researchers intentionally select (or recruit) participants who have experienced the central phenomenon or the key concept being explored in the study."In purposeful sampling, the researcher seeks to address potential participants who based on his or her judgment could provide insightful and rich information. Creswell & Clark (2011:174) state that a kind of purposeful sampling is what they term "maximal variation sampling," one

> in which diverse individuals are chosen who are expected to hold different perspectives on the central phenomenon. the criteria for maximizing differ-

> ences depend on the study, but it might be race, gender, level of schooling, or any number of factors that would differentiate participants. The central idea is that if participants are purposefully chosen to be different in the first place, then their views will reflect this difference and provide a good qualitative study in which the intent is to provide a complex picture of the phenomenon.

The above quote brings to the fore another problematic aspect about sampling both in quantitative and in qualitative studies. In fact, if the study participants are targeted on the grounds of the researcher's expectation that they could provide the kind of information needed, odds are high that this recruitment practice will be liable to bias, in that the sample is not going to be representative of a whole population, with all its outliers. An example for this downside of purposeful bias which can often be noticed in qualitative research practice is that in which university students are targeted as study participants. While this recruitment strategy may be convenient in terms of reachability of the informants, it is exposed to a considerable degree of bias.

Firstly, along the lines of Grounded Theory methodology, some degree of detachment between the researcher and the field is highly necessary to control the risk of "going native" (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:226). Secondly, as (Khatamian Far 2018:282) notes,

> different incentives may stimulate different subsets of population to take part in the study and causing participation bias [...] Furthermore, students who are motivated solely by extrinsic incentives might not take part in a study with sincerity which can affect their responses and consequently lead to invalid research data.

While this kind of bias cannot be entirely avoided, awareness of its possibility is essential.

Recruitment on social media proved to be the most effective method to control possible bias. It was carried out e.g. by publishing Facebook posts about my research project and inviting Facebook friends and friends of friends to share my post. This method resembles word-of-mouth communication, only in a digital format.

Reaching a vast and demographically varied sample population – by means of so-called *random sampling* – is significantly easier via online recruitment, especially

for quantitative studies. Random sampling is described by Marshall (1996:522) as a method by which "the nature of the population is defined and all members have an equal chance of selection." Marshall (1996:523) is of the opinion that random sampling is inadequate for qualitative research in that

> studying a random sample provides the best opportunity to generalize the results to the population but is not the most effective way of developing an understanding of complex issues relating to human behaviour.

Marshall (1996) argues that there is no absolute advantage in applying the random sampling strategy of quantitative studies to qualitative studies based on the following observation:

> [R]andom sampling of a population is likely to produce a representative sample only if the research characteristics are normally distributed within the population. There is no evidence that the values, beliefs and attitudes that form the core of qualitative investigation are normally distributed, making the probability approach inappropriate [...] [P]eople are not equally good at observing, understanding and interpreting their own and other people's behaviour. Qualitative researchers recognize that some informants are 'richer' than others and that these people are more likely to provide insight and understanding for the researcher. Choosing someone at random to answer a qualitative question would be analogous to randomly asking a passer-by how to repair a broken down car, rather than asking a garage mechanic—the former might have a good stab, but asking the latter is likely to be more productive. (Marshall 1996:523)

The above observation is eye-opening with respect to the aforementioned belief that selection bias and a too demographically uniform sample allegedly impairs the validity of qualitative studies. This belief appears to be based on several misconceptions. The first of such misconceptions is that normal distribution applies to basically anything, including such phenomena of sociolinguistic relevance as language attitudes. A normally distributed variable is one whose probability is symmetrically distributed around the mean value. Yet it is questionable whether normal distribution is that *normal* in any and every field of study, besides the fact that its "normality" in nature is questionable (see Lyon 2014:647, who in his analysis of normal distribution states

that they "are 'often approximately normal' only if we carve up the world the right way with our variables".)

The second misconception is that quantitative studies are the sole scientifically trustworthy studies; this misconception is widespread in linguistics, too, as noted by Hadley (2017). This is part of a widespread position in qualitative research according to which the quality standards (German *Gütekriterien*) for qualitative research should be defined based on the traditional quality standards for quantitative research, which are summarized by Steinke (2010:319) as follows: "Objektivität, Reliabilität und Validität."[9] Of course, quality standards are essential in qualitative research as well. Yet in qualitative studies, where the detection and interpretation of meanings plays a key role, *objectiveness* as a quality criterion would be inappropriate, mainly because it misses the point of what qualitative research mostly is about; namely, about investigating the participants' perspectives while at the same time maintaining a clear distance between the researchers' and the participants' standpoints. This distance is also called *methodisch kontrolliertes Fremdverstehen*, a term elaborated by Schütze et al. (1981) and Bohnsack (2021) which roughly translates to English as "methodically controlled understanding of the other." It is precisely this *distance*, subsumed in a profound *awareness* of the researcher's position on the field and towards the studied phenomenon, that differentiates qualitative research from journalistic accounts or impressionistic narration.

Against this backdrop, efforts to try and minimize any possible bias by e.g. randomizing the sample recruitment are an act of awareness and distance-taking which I regard as an example of orientation to quality standards.

Keeping in mind the methodological differences between qualitative and quantitative research is essential. When carrying out qualitative studies, researchers should not have to orient themselves to the quality criteria valid for quantitative studies as the only criteria available. What is needed instead is further theoretical work on quality criteria suiting the characteristics of qualitative research without invalidating it as a "non-scientific approach." I point at *distance-taking* and *awareness* as two possible quality criteria for future discussions on quality standards in qualitative research.

Marshall (1996) observes that qualitative researchers tend to employ the following three strategies for participant recruitment: what he terms "convenience sample" and "judgement sample" and the third strategy being theoretical sampling, a funda-

[9]My translation: "objectivity, reliability and validity."

mental element of Grounded Theory. Convenience sample involves “the selection of the most accessible subjects” (Marshall 1996:523) based on virtually no other criteria than the researcher’s convenience “in terms of time, effort and money” (Marshall 1996:523). Judgement sample is said to be “the most common sampling technique” in qualitative research (Marshall 1996:523) and is described as a strategy by which “[t]he researcher actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research question” (Marshall 1996:523), while theoretical sampling is defined in Section 4.3. The sampling methods described by Marshall (1996) show a considerable overlap with other sampling methods described throughout this chapter; as an example, the principles behind both judgement and convenience sampling are similar if not identical to the sampling method which Creswell & Clark (2011) refer to as “purposeful sampling.” The blurriness of terminological boundaries once again points at the need for serious theoretical engagement with the questions of sampling and recruitment in qualitative research.

5.3.3 Virtual fieldwork

The Covid-19 pandemic had dramatic consequences in many fields, including the way in which research is carried out. As outlined in Table 5.1, after concluding fieldwork in Israel in February 2020, my return to Munich happened while Europe was preparing for severe lockdown measures. Due to lockdown, traveling to cities and personally meeting people was not possible; thus, I resorted to “virtual fieldwork,” by which I mean the collection of ethnographic information via online interaction with the field. Obviously, I was not alone in turning to online methods for qualitative data collection, a practice which has emerged long before the Covid-19 pandemic and which is occasionally termed “netnography” (see Costello et al. 2017). In spite of substantial differences between the actual and the virtual fields, the collection of material of ethnographic and/or sociological interest in online settings entails similar challenges and provides access into similarly complex interactional dynamics as is the case for *in loco* fieldwork. Hence, I subscribe to the term *virtual fieldwork* as it is used in research to describe approaches “sit[ting] within a broader methodological context of online or virtual ethnography which comprise approaches for conducting ethnographic studies of online communities and groups” (Wiles et al. 2013:20). During the pandemic, social networks became an essential setting of interaction, allowing

individuals and communities to maintain their exchanges alive. As noted by Nesbitt & Watts (2022) in their study on virtual fieldwork with Black Bostonians, though such a shift in a relatively short time brings along challenges, it also reveals a potential which could be exploited beyond pandemic or emergency times. Some of the benefits offered by virtual fieldwork within the context of my study are illustrated in the following section.

5.3.3.1 Specifics and benefits

The virtual field is not less *real* than the physical one and can equally yield information of ethnographic interest; it also lends itself to carrying out participant observation.

The virtual fieldwork phase among Germany-based immigrant communities took place between March and April 2020 and continued with interruptions until the development of the online survey in the spring of 2021. During this phase, I engaged in recruiting virtual interview participants and getting to know the online communities in which their interaction takes place. The recruitment yielded ten virtual interviews.

One of the key advantages offered by online interviews is the possibility of reaching people who would normally be unreachable due to geographic distance, a full agenda or other issues.Virtual fieldwork and recruitment revealed a striking potential to "increase [...] [the] participant pool" (Nesbitt & Watts 2022:344) of the study, allowing to recruit participants in a much shorter amount of time than with *in loco* fieldwork as well as to conduct interviews in a more time-efficient way.

During the virtual recruitment phase, members of online communities generally noted having more time available to engage with social media due to lockdown measures. Especially in a country the size of Germany, traveling from one city to another is comparatively time-consuming; virtual fieldwork allows to explore the Russian-speaking communities of, e.g., Bremen and Karlsruhe in parallel, carrying out participant observation in several Facebook groups while being located in Munich.

Moreover, virtual fieldwork can be described as being more selective than usual *in loco* fieldwork, since the researcher has room for preselecting social media platforms and user communities with which he or she is going to interact based on criteria for a purposeful recruitment. The aspect of selectivity has the following implications:

1. diminished risk of “being drowned by the flood of data” (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:40);
2. diminished exposure to possible risks deriving from the treatment of sensitive topics.

As regards the first implication, the researcher can more easily control the *flood of data* from the comfort of his or her desk than when immersed in the physical field, where reality is less controllable and/or predictable. Also, the physical field generally requires a number of efforts to be entered and exited, while the virtual field is more broadly accessible.
The second implication goes hand in hand with the first one; face-threatening or inconvenient situations can be handled more securely by the researcher at an increased distance.
In spite of the increased physical distance between the researcher and the study participants, several strategies can be undertaken to adapt the communication modes to the virtual interview setting. While publishing posts in Facebook groups for virtual recruitment, I became aware of the importance of humanizing my online presence by adding to the post information about myself, my education and my interests as well as by engaging in interaction with the post respondents in the comment section. Such steps can “help prospective participants feel more comfortable about engaging with [...] [the] project” (Nesbitt & Watts 2022:346). The following picture provides an example of a humanizing strategy during virtual recruitment. The description includes a personal introduction, details about the project as well as a hint to the challenges of recruiting participants during the pandemic. Especially the latter was a significant ice-breaker, prompting reactions of empathy in the comment section. A comment by EDE40F, who later went on to participate in the interview,reads: У меня есть время, как думаю и у многих других i.e. “I have time, as I think many of us do.”
Figure 6.2 shows overall high engagement in the comment section, which especially during online recruitment attempts before the pandemic would usually remain empty for several days in a row or receive only few comments. The degree of engagement and willingness to participate can be observed to correlate with the degree of activity of the community itself. The latter is hard to evaluate for novices to the Facebook group in question, which is why virtual fieldwork – just as any kind of fieldwork – should include enough preparation time to e.g. carry out participant observation and

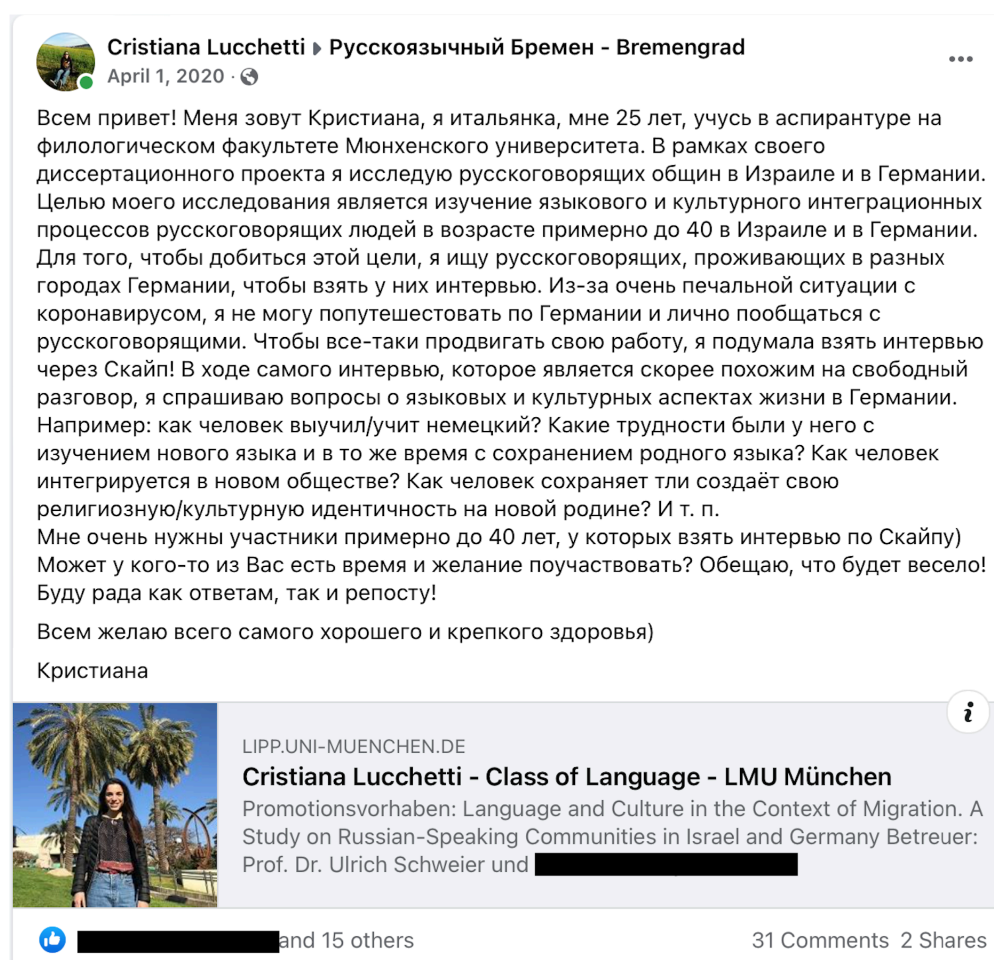


Figure 5.3: Example from virtual fieldwork on Facebook, recruitment phase

become familiar with community dynamics.

Thus, during the virtual fieldwork phase of 2020 and with periods of field withdrawal into the spring of 2021, I was able to observe several Facebook-based communities of Russian-speaking immigrants in Germany and become aware of differences in topics of interest and sense of community throughout the groups which I joined and explored.

The following snapshot from Google Maps provides an overview of the cities and regions of Germany which the Facebook groups cover and in which the users are located. The areas covered during fieldwork are all marked in blue except for Dresden (red) and Munich (green). The groups in which I carried out recruitment and fieldwork cover the major areas of Germany with a statistically relevant population of immigrants from the FSU. At this point, the issue arises as to how to search for Facebook

Figure 5.4: Virtual fieldwork locations

groups in which to carry out purposeful sampling. The question is: For which regions and cities of Germany can I expect Facebook groups of Russian-speaking immigrants to exist, and based on which information? A search for Facebook groups was driven by several criteria, including the educated assumption that the most densely populated cities of Germany, i.e. Berlin, Hamburg and Munich, are likely to contain a higher concentration of immigrants from the FSU than, e.g., rural areas in the lower-income *Bundesländer* of Germany such as Saarland or Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (source: Statistische Ämter des Bundes und der Länder 2021). A further strategy was to employ the Facebook search engine similarly to a corpus tool. The search items which I most frequently employed are the following:

- русскоговорящий *Russian-speaking*, e.g. Русскоговорящий Мюнхен *Russian-speaking Munich*; Русскоговорящие из Эмсланд *Russian speakers from Emsland*
- русскоязычный *Russian-language*, e.g. Русскоязычный Ганновер *Russian-speaking Hannover*; Русскоязычные в Дрездене и Саксонии*Russian-speakers in Dresden and Saxony*

– русский *Russian*, e.g. Русский Аугсбург *Russian Augsburg*; Russen in Berlin - Русские в Берлине *Russians in Berlin*

– украйнцы/ українці *Ukrainians* (respectively, in Russian and in Ukrainian), e.g. Українці в німеччині *Ukrainians in Germany*

Groups of people self-identifying as Ukrainians were added into the search as well as groups of people self-identifying as Kazakhs and immigrants from other FSU countries. This decision was made on account of the following aspects: firstly because, especially in the case of immigrants from Ukraine and Kazakhstan, they constitute a statistically relevant portion of migration from the FSU to Germany (Panagiotidis 2021:57 ff.); and secondly because of the widespread use of Russian throughout the communities of immigrants from the FSU (see Section 2.5), regardless of the language used in the group title. The cleavage between self-imposed language policy and actual language use which can be observed in Facebook groups targeting immigrants from the FSU in Israel and Germany are discussed in Section 2.7.2 and Chapter 6 and are crucial for data interpretation.
Virtual fieldwork has a great and largely still unexplored potential; in many cases, "it is effective in producing a heterogeneous participant sample in a short amount of time" (Nesbitt & Watts 2022:343), although it should be noted that, similarly to other sampling criteria, the heterogeneity of the sample is always relative to the recruiting and sampling methods, the demographic background of the researcher and further aspects clarified throughout this dissertation. Future research at the interface of linguistics and social psychology could highly benefit from virtual fieldwork methods while at the same time contributing to an experience-based discussion on its advantages and limitations. The latter are addressed in the next chapter.

5.3.3.2 Limitations

Virtual recruitment and fieldwork involve dealing with people about whom the researcher has no information except for that which is made public by them on social media. On the one hand, this allows to go about the interview process in a relatively unbiased way, possibly contributing to making the virtual interview situation a less staged one than in person (see Murthy 2008). On the other hand, the virtual setting might hinder the researcher from identifying sensitive topics or critical aspects to make communication effective and create a comfortable interview atmosphere for ev-

eryone involved. This downside was evident during virtual fieldwork, allowing me to collect enough observations to label it “reduced sensitivity effect.” The label “reduced sensitivity effect” (hereafter RSE) can be used by researchers who conduct virtual fieldwork to advance discussions on the limitations of virtual fieldwork.

An RSE is to be observed while carrying out virtual fieldwork – also called digital ethnography by Lester (2020) – on topics which might potentially be perceived as sensitive by both the interviewer and the interviewee, e.g. questions relating to ethnic belonging, political views, religious convictions, sexual orientation etc. An RSE might arise in virtual fieldwork contexts when, due to the online setting, the relatively low degree of acquaintance between the parties involved leads to a reduced alertness to sensitive topics, which might negatively affect the newly emerged relationship between the parties and result in disrupted communication or unsuccessful conclusion of the interview conversation.

An additional aspect to be considered is that the online setting might contribute to depersonalizing the researcher in the eyes of the interviewees and spread the gap between the participants’ and the researchers’ universe, producing the impression of “conflicting agendas” (Lavorgna & Sugiura 2020:264) between both universes. This can be due to several factors, not least the fact that, in order to gain credibility and access online communities in which to carry out netnography, the researcher often has to disclose a considerable amount of information about himself or herself, by which the participants could be positively or negatively biased. As Lavorgna & Sugiura (2020:264) note,

> Participants’ frame of orientation can be strongly impacted by the fact that they are in the position to easily discover researchers’ arguments (for instance, by looking at previously published studies), and from there make assumptions about the researchers’ own research agenda and their worldview, impacting upon the manner in which they interact with us (if at all) and the research.

5.4 Quantitative study

One of the main differences between the quantitative and the qualitative studies regards the target population; for the interviews, recruitment was directed towards

so-called *young adults*, i.e. people up to 40 years of age. In the quantitative survey, no age parameter was set. The aim of the quantitative survey is to bring statistical relevance into the overall picture; the quantitative study is designed to collect information about as broad a population sample as possible.
As explained in Chapter 6, the high number of participants (761) allows to carry out a comparative analysis within the qualitative study, comparing the young adult cohort with people above the age of 40 to look for generational pattern differences in terms of language attitude, language use, self-identification, social identity and other crucial matters to this study. In view of the paucity of studies comparing different generations of Russian-speaking immigrants to different countries – exceptions are Saar et al. (2017) and Otwinowska et al. (2021), – the comparative perspective allowed by the broad sample is a valuable element of the quantitative survey.
The survey is in Russian; native or near-native command of Russian is one of two essential parameters for participation, the second one being self-identification as first-generation or 1.5 generation immigrants to Israel and/or Germany.
Two phases were crucial for the development of the quantitative study, i.e. the pilot study and virtual fieldwork during the Covid-19 pandemic. As to the pilot study, the language biography questionnaire provided an orientation for the structure of the quantitative study. Virtual fieldwork, on the other hand, consolidated the understanding of online sampling as a particularly "cost-efficient methodology" (Lavorgna & Sugiura 2020:262) to reach a broad spectrum of participants in a relatively slow amount of time: the survey reached 761 participants within a week.
The survey consisted of two questionnaires, one for Israel-based and one for Germany-based respondents. Its titles were, respectively, Русскоговорящие в Израиле and Русскоговорящие в Германии ("Russian-speaking people in Israel" and "Russian-speaking people in Germany".) They were designed on Google forms, include a confidentiality policy and, respectively, 37 and 35 questions distributed in four thematic sections. The following table provides an overview of the survey sections: The survey was posted across Facebook groups targeting Russian-speaking people living in both countries; 391 participants from Israel and 370 from Germany were recruited. The survey was closed after one week to avoid collecting repetitive information. This shows a practical application of the criteria illustrated by Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]:61) for recognizing theoretical saturation:

> As he [the researcher, in Glaser and Strauss' terms, is always *he*] sees

Section	Topic
1. Demographic data	gender, year of birth, country of birth, country of residence,education,occupation
2. Emigration data	year and framework of emigration
3. Sociolinguistic data	self-evaluation of language competence, language attitude, language use etc.
4. Sociocultural data	self-evaluation of integration, political views, views on receiving society etc.

Table 5.4: Sections of the quantitative survey by thematic area

> similar instances over and over again,the researcher becomes empirically confident that a category is saturated. He goes out of his way to look for groups that stretch diversity of data as far as possible, just to make certain that saturation is based on the widest possible range of data on the category

Below is a list of the questions included in the two surveys; the two questions preceded by an asterisk were only administered to the Israel-based respondents.

Section 1: Demographics

1. Год рождения – 1. Year of birth
2. Место рождения – 2. Place of birth
3. Место проживания – 3. Place of residence
4. Пол – 4. Gender
5. Оконченное образование – 5. Completed education
6. Род деятельности – 6. Occupation

7. Как бы Вы описали свою национальную идентичность, используя не более трех слов?
7. How would you describe your national identity using no more than three words?

Section 2: Emigration data

8. Если Вы родились не в Германии/в Израиле, то в каком году Вы сюда эмигрировали?
8. Year of immigration to Germany if you weren't born there

9. Если Вы родились в Германии/в Израиле, то кто первым из Вашей семьи сюда эмигрировал?
9. If you were born in Germany/in Israel, who was the first in your family to emigrate?

10. В каких рамках Вы или Ваши родственники эмигрировали в Германию/в Израиль?
10. Within which framework did you or your relatives emigrate to Germany/to Israel?

*a. Служили ли Вы в израильской армии?
*a. Did you serve in the IDF Israel Defence Forces?

Section 3: Sociolinguistic data

11. Как бы Вы оценили свои знания русского языка?
11. How would you rate your knowledge of Russian?

12. Нравится ли Вам русский язык?
12. Do you like Russian?

13. Почему? Объясните коротко, используя не более трех слов
13. Why? Explain briefly, using no more than three words

14. Как бы Вы оценили свои знания немецкого/иврита?
14. How would you rate your knowledge of German/Hebrew?

15. Нравится ли Вам немецкий/иврит?
15. Do you like German/Hebrew?

16. Почему? Объясните коротко, используя не более трех слов
16. Why? Explain briefly, using no more than three words

17. Насколько Вам важно передать русский язык своим детям?

17. How important is it for you to pass on Russian to your children?

18. Насколько Вам важно, чтобы Ваши дети знали немецкий/иврит?
18. How much do you care for your children to know German/Hebrew?

19. Как часто Вы общаетесь на русском языке дома с семьей?
19. How often do you speak Russian at home with your family?

20. Как часто Вы общаетесь на русском языке с близкими друзьями?
20. How often do you speak Russian with your close friends?

21. Как часто Вы общаетесь на русском языке с коллегами?
21. How often do you speak Russian with your colleagues?

22. Как часто Вы общаетесь на русском языке в соцсетях?
22. How often do you communicate in Russian on social media?

23. Как часто Вы пользуетесь русскоязычными СМИ?
23. How often do you consume Russian-speaking mass media?

Section 4: Sociocultural data
24. Приведите не более трех слов, которые Вы ассоциируете с Германией/Израилем
24. Name no more than three words which you associate with Germany/Israel

25. Приведите не более трех слов, которые Вы ассоциируете со страной, где родились Вы или Ваши родственники
25. Name no more than three words which you associate with your or your relatives' country of birth

26. Насколько Вы довольны политической ситуацией в Германии/Израиле?
26. How satisfied are you with the political situation in Germany/Israel?

27. Почему? Назовите причины, используя не более трех слов

27. Why? Name reasons using no more than three words

28. Насколько Вы довольны политической ситуацией в стране, где родились Вы или Ваши родственники?
28.How satisfied are you with the political situation in the country where you or your relatives were born?

29. Почему? Назовите причины, используя не более трех слов
29. Why? Name reasons using no more than three words

30. Улучшилось ли качество Вашей жизни с тех пор, как Вы живете в Германии/Израиле?
30. Has your life quality improved since your move to Germany/Israel?

31. Задумываетесь ли Вы о том, чтобы переехать в другую страну?
31. Are you considering relocating to another country?

32. Если да, то в какую?
32. If yes, to which country?

33. Задумываетесь ли Вы о том, чтобы вернуться обратно в страну, где Вы или Ваши родственники родились?
33. Are you considering moving back to the country where you or your relatives were born?

34. Дополните следующую фразу, используя не более трех слов: «немцы/израильтяне — ...»
34. Complete the following statement using no more than three words: “Germans/Israelis are ...”

35. Дополните следующую фразу, используя не более трех слов: «русские — ...»
35. Complete the following statement using no more than three words: “Russians are...”

*b. В начале 2020 года, главный сефардский раввин высказался примерно так: «репатрианты из бывшего СССР — гои и коммунисты». Опишите не более тремя словами, какую реакцию вызывало или вызывает у Вас такое высказывание.
*b. At the beginning of 2020, the Sephardic Chief Rabbi stated approximately the following:"immigrants from the former USSR are goyim and communists." Describe your reaction to this statement using no more than three words

The questionnaire was structured so as to give the respondents the broadest possible freedom of choice as to whether to answer a question or not. The only compulsory questions are 1 to 7, since demographic data and information on national identity are essential in this study.
While section 1 and part of section 2 of the questionnaire concerning demographics and the emigration framework address rather straightforward questions, the design of section 3 and 4 presented several challenges of methodological and ethical character. In fact, a core issue already arises with the opening question of section 2, in which the respondents are required to describe their national identity in three words. Among all the working concepts of this study, the category of (ethno-)national self-identification (see Section 2.4.2) is essential for analysis, as it provides a basis for understanding the immigrants' social identity construction. At the same time, the terms *ethnic* and/or *national identity* cannot be employed without being problematized. In fact, what is generally termed 'nat͡sional'nost" in Russian generally refers to a person's ethnic belonging rather than to their status of citizen of a nation or, in today's Russia, of a federal subject. However, in Soviet nationhood policy, categories of ethnic and national belonging came to overlap (see Section 2.4.2), following the establishment of ethnic federal republics under Lenin and the introduction of internal passports under Stalin (Kolstø 2013:32), whose controversial, largely ethnically rooted conception of nationhood is expressed in his 1913 essay *Marxism and the National Question* (Stalin 1950 [1913]). Every former Soviet citizen is well acquainted with the so-called fifth paragraph (Russian "pi͡ataia͡ grafa") of the passport, under which the citizen's 'nat͡sional'nost" was registered. The following excerpt from Lucchetti (2021a:97) provides a brief overview of the assignment of ethnic belonging categories in the FSU:

> At the age of 16, every Soviet citizen had to choose a nationality based on their parents' institutionally registered nationalities (Baiburin 2012:105). The assignment of national identity was only to a limited extent depending on the citizen's self-identification; it very often entailed 'negotiation with officials who insisted on assigning a given 'nationality''(ibid.). This system, which factually institutionalized ethnic segregation, was abolished in 1997.

Background knowledge on Soviet administrative categories for ethnonational belonging helps highlight the relevance of question 7: it offers the respondents the chance to self-determine their ethnonational belonging outside of a rigid administrative framework. The respondents do not have to choose from a set of ready-made labels handed to them by an authority whose aim is to socially categorize them. Instead, attention is drawn towards the immigrants' own self-identification, with the aim of stimulating discussions about more equal and respectful migration policies (see Lucchetti 2021a:99).
The limit of three words has been set for the following questions: 7, 13, 16, 24, 25. The word limit is the result of reflections around the following questions:

- Which is the least amount of words which can be expected to be strictly necessary for informants to summarize complex thoughts?
- Which is the maximum amount of words within which respondents can be expected to provide as concise answers as possible?
- Which word limit is enough to force respondents to give up so-called *function words* and focus solely on *content words* instead?

With reference to the last point of the above list, the difference between function and content words is to be understood as follows after Corver & van Riemsdijk (2001:1):

> Content words are often characterized as being those lexical items which have a relatively 'specific or detailed' semantic content and as such carry the principal meaning of the sentence. [...] As opposed to content words, function words have a more 'non-conceptual' meaning and fulfill an essentially 'grammatical' function; in a sense they are needed by the surface structure to glue the content words together, to indicate what goes with what and how.

The aforementioned questions share the feature of openness in that they target the way in which the participants describe or explain complex entities such as identity, attitude towards Russian/Hebrew/German and their associations with their country of birth/country of immigration. The presence of open-end questions shows that, while the questionnaire was designed mainly for quantitative analysis, it also lends itself to qualitative (text) analysis within the mixed-methods approach of this study, i.e. one which involves both qualitative and quantitative methods Unger (2014:58). In fact, it is a prerogative of this study to deliver a sociologically and linguistically grounded interpretation of data beyond the mere identification of statistically relevant patterns.

Setting a word limit allows to collect all the answers in a textual sub-corpus within the quantitative corpus, allowing for a concise overview of analysis category limits and a more efficient prediction of the point of theoretical saturation. Through quantitative analysis, the words named by the study respondents offer an overview of trends in conceptualization of identity (question 7), language (questions 13, 16) as well as geographical and cultural contexts (questions 24, 25). Thus, the textual sub-corpus resulting out of the answers to open-end questions can be considered as an experiment with the aim of exploring solutions for what Rubtcova et al. (2017:187) describe as " one of the most important [problems] in sociological research," namely "the quantitative interpretation of qualitative data." In fact, while textual data collected with open-end questions can be regarded as qualitative, it is only through quantitative analysis – e.g. in terms of word frequency analyzed in correlation with age group, country of birth etc. – that the word choices acquire a sociological value within the scope of the study, allowing for an empirically grounded discovery of socially relevant categories and patterns which wouldn't be possible with just qualitative analysis. A mixed-method approach allows to work towards the following research gap identified by Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]):

> Quantitative data is so closely associated with [...] verification that its possibilities for generating theory have been left vastly underdeveloped. However, some [...] monographs based on quantitative data indicate that they can be a very rich medium for discovering theory. (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]:185)

Not all the questions of the questionnaire are open-ended or resulting in rich textual

material, since one of the main concerns during the quantitative study design was a balance between breadth of the sample and conciseness of the answers, so as to allow a possibly clear and straightforward arrangement of analytical categories. Section 2 focuses on collecting information about the emigration history of the respondents and/or their families and features questions which can be answered e.g. by naming a year (question 8), a family relation (question 9) or simply with 'yes' or 'no' (question *a). Number 10 is a multiple choice question, offering the respondents a set of possible answers. The respective answer sets for Germany-based and Israel-based respondents are presented in the following Table 5.5. The predefined answer options

Israel	**Germany**
Multiple choice: – Aliyah – Other	Multiple choice: – Repatriation program for *Russia Germans* – Jewish heritage – Other

Table 5.5: Emigration framework multiple choice sets

given for question 10 are based on Israel and Germany's respective administrative policies for immigration from countries of the FSU. Based on Israel's Law of Return, *aliyah* – i.e. immigration to Israel on the grounds of Jewish heritage – represents the main framework of immigration to Israel from all countries, including countries of the FSU; both the Law of Return and aliyah are discussed in into further detail in Chapter 6. Although aliyah is the foundational element of Israel's immigrantion policy, it is not the only one; as noted by Afeef (2009:3), Israel has "an ethnically stratified migration regime [...]. In the Israeli context, it therefore makes sense to speak of two parallel and separate migration regimes: one for those with Jewish ancestry and one for other immigrants," such as migrant laborers, asylum seekers and those seeking family reunification.

As far as Germany is concerned, its immigration policy for former Soviet citizens is directed mainly to the two following categories, i.e. so-called *Aussiedler* or *Spätaussiedler* and so-called *Kontingentflüchtlinge*. It is worth recalling the definitions of the aforementioned labels, which are contextualized and discussed at length in Chapters 3 and 6: a (Spät-)Aussiedler is "a descendant of German nationals from

the former Soviet Union and other Eastern European states" BAMF (2019b), while a Kontingentflüchtling is a Jewish immigrant from countries of the FSU (BAMF 2019a). Similarly to immigration to Israel, the two main administrative categories addressing immigrants to Germany do not constitute the only possible frameworks of immigration.

For both respondent groups, option "Other" in the questionnaire allows to specify the framework of immigration without having to underlie the constraints of administrative categories, which would leave out many possible immigration paths including illegal immigration. Multiple choice questions in the questionnaire are structured so as to impose onto the respondent as little previous assumptions and ready-made categories as possible, with the aim of obtaining information based on the respondents' perceptions and self-identifications which, in turn, are essential for the development of analytical categories.

In section 3 about sociolinguistic data, the majority of the questions consists in scaled-response questions (11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26, 28, 30) requiring the respondent to situate the value addressed by the question on a scale from one (minimum) to five. Figure 5.5 below exemplifies the scale system. The scale is

Как бы Вы оценили свои знания русского языка? *

1 2 3 4 5

Неудовлетворительно ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Отлично

Нравится ли Вам русский язык? *

1 2 3 4 5

Совсем нет ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Очень

Figure 5.5: Scaled-response questions 11 and 12 from the Israel questionnaire

oriented towards the evaluation system commonly used in Russian and post-Soviet academic institutions by which 1 is the lowest grade and 5 is the highest one. How-

ever, the direction of the scale is specified with added adjectives to the sides to avoid possible confusion especially among the Germany-based respondents. In fact, the most commonly employed grading system – in academia and beyond – in Germany has an opposite direction to the Russian one, going from 1 as the highest grade to 5 as the lowest.

Summarizing the qualities of the quantitative survey, both the numeric and textual data resulting from it can be analyzed quantitatively with R, which offers a broad array of analytical instruments; moreover, the textual dataset can be analyzed qualitatively, too, thus implementing the insights reached with the qualitative analysis of interview data. Data analysis is the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 6

Data analysis

In this chapter, data are analyzed departing from the quantitative study, whose structured outline in the design lays the foundation for analytical categories. As reported in 5, the quantitative corpus includes questionnaire answers by 761 participants, of which 391 live in Israel and 370 in Germany. The number of responses can be regarded as relatively high for a study of this kind: even in questionnaires on language attitude eliciting exclusively quantitative data, the number of participants rarely exceeds a couple of hundreds (as an example, see the Québec case study cited by Kirchner 2022 and the Puerto Rico case study cited by Loureiro-Rodríguez & Acar 2022). However, even with a comparatively high number of participants, it remains quite hard to determine which amount of responses is sufficient to carry out generalization; the issue of generalization in quantitative surveys on language attitude is also noted by Kirchner (2022:143). This is why, specifically within the scope of this study and generally in the field of language attitude research, a mixed-method approach "allows for deeper and more nuanced insights than can be obtained than by any one method alone" (Kirchner & Hawkey 2022:337).
Therefore, data from the qualitative corpus, which consists of 56 interview recordings, interlace the analysis of theme complexes from the quantitative study. Insights into the informants' narratives allow to expand on patterns found in the quantitative survey, adding an interpretive dimension to the statistical evaluation. The interpretive dimension is essential, among other things, in view of the following:

> because of the often-forgotten fact that language attitudes are not like minerals there to be mined and unearthed, they are social constructions

> constantly changing to meet the demand of the situation in which they are expressed. (Ryan et al. 1988:1076)

Analysis of data from the quantitative survey was carried out mainly with the programming language *R* on the platform *Rstudio*. For data to be fed into *R Studio*, they were downloaded as an Excel spreadsheet featuring one worksheet for Israel-based data and one for Germany-based data.
This chapter orients itself towards the order of questions asked in the quantitative survey; therefore, the next section provides an overview on the demographic characteristics of the participant population. As hinted in Chapter 5, demographics are highly instructive for the data-grounded creation of analytical categories.

6.1 Demographics

6.1.1 Migration in time

The first question in the demographic section of the survey addresses the year of birth. The following Table 6.1 and Table 6.2 present the summaries on years of birth for Israel-based and Germany-based respondents; for easier interpretation, Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 provide the values in age, too: In spite of the absence in the quantitative survey of an age limitation, the average age of the participants – expressed by the parameter "mean" – is compatible with the young adult age range. The average year of birth is 1975 for Israel-based participants and 1980 for Germany-based participants, resulting in an average age of 46.8 for Israel-based and 42.1 for Germany-based participants.
Although data collected for this study do not aspire to quantitative representativity for the entire population of FSU immigrants to Israel and Germany, the above details on average age at least partially resonate with broader statistical data collected by German and Israeli institutions, especially in the case on data about post-Soviet immigration to Germany.
Data elaborated by the BAMF - *Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge* (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) (BAMF 2019b) based on the 2011 *Mikrozensus* show that, in 2011, the average age of (Spät-)Aussiedler (including, however, immigrants from all the former eastern territories of Germany) was 46.7 years, which is

Parameter	Year
Minimum	1939
Median	1976
Mean	1975
Maximum	2005

Table 6.1: Years of birth: Israel summary

Parameter	Year
Minimum	1937
Median	1981
Mean	1980
Maximum	2004

Table 6.2: Years of birth: Germany summary

Parameter	Age
Minimum	17
Median	46
Mean	46.8
Maximum	83

Table 6.3: Ages: Israel summary

Parameter	Age
Minimum	18
Median	41
Mean	42.1
Maximum	85

Table 6.4: Ages: Germany summary

only slightly higher than the average age of German immigrants resulting from my survey.

As regards immigrants to Israel, it is unclear whether data made available by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) refers to age at the time of immigration or to age of the participants at the time of the census, although the first option seems more likely in specific cases. As an example, the 2011 press release on immigration to Israel focuses on the age structure of the immigrant population who arrived to Israel in 2010, using the following wording: “[t]he immigrants who arrived in 2010 were somewhat younger compared to the previous year”(Cohen-Castro 2011:2–3).

Data from the 2021 CBS population report show that the average age of immigrants from the former Soviet Union to Israel was 35.7 years in the year 2020 (CBS 2020). Should this piece of data refer to mean age regardless of the time of arrival in the country, this would imply that the Israel sample of this study is about 10 years older than the mean age of immigrants from the FSU in Israel, while age patterns of the Germany-based sample are in line with general statistics.

Significant differences in age patterns are related to the different characteristics of the sample populations examined by the CBS and in this study, respectively; in fact, the CBS sample focuses on first-generation immigrants only, employing the Hebrew word "'olim" which refers to first generation immigrants, while Israeli-born individuals are referred to as "sabras" (Hebrew "tsabarim") in Israeli public discourse. In contrast, the sample of this study includes not only first generation immigrants but also exponents of the so called *generation 1.5* as well as representatives of the second generation. Ultimately, from an analysis of the age range of the sample population emerges that it targets mostly individuals adhering to the category "young adult."

The difference in average age between Israel-based and Germany-based participants of the study could be conditioned by several factors. The Israel-based sample is slightly broader than the German one (391 vs. 370 respondents), which could make age tendencies slightly more visible or polarized, although the latter seems statistically unlikely.

A highly significant aspect to be considered is that, though in many respects comparable, migration phenomena from countries of the FSU to Israel and Germany are remarkably different. The fact that emigration to Israel was possible for Soviet citizens at an earlier time could be a factor conditioning the higher average age of the Israel-based sample than among so-called *Aussiedler* and *Spätaussiedler* to Germany. In fact, emigration from the FSU to Israel has a considerably longer history than to Germany, dating back even to the time before the foundation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948. While there notably have been major immigration waves from the FSU to Israel in the 1970s and 1980s (see Tolts 2020 for a detailed historical account), this isn't the case for Germany, where the immigration flow from the FSU began in the 1990s after the collapse of the Soviet Union (see Chapter 3). Before that, permission to emigrate to Germany was only granted in a highly limited amount of cases and exit visa refusals were the rule for most applicants (see Jäger 1983 for a detailed report on the position of ethnic Germans in the Soviet Union).

From an overview of statistics emerges that immigrants from the former Soviet Union to both countries have a higher mean age than the mean age of the general population. In fact, as Khanin (2010:8) reports, "[o]nly 26% of Russian olim are age of [sic] 20 or less, compared to 35% of Israeli Jews." In Germany, the situation is comparable: if (Spät-)Aussiedler have a mean age of 46.1 years (relying on 2011 data cited in BAMF 2019b:40), in 2019 the mean age of the general population of Germany was 44.5 years according to data collected by Germany's Federal Office of Statistics (see Bundesamt 2021). This piece of information is essential for the contextualization of this study within broader demographic patterns of Israel and Germany.
Studying the demographics of Soviet and post-Soviet migration opens a window into sociopolitical aspects which are crucial to gain a deep understanding of, on the one hand,the historical significance of the passage from Soviet to post-Soviet political entities and, on the other hand, of the cultural significance of the post-Soviet, how a general understanding of it formed and what its validity is today. Thus, taking a close look at the relatively late opening of emigration routes from the FSU to Germany compared to Israel, it can at least partially be explained by the following observation: "sie [waren] während der beiden Welbkriege Angehörige der feindlichen kriegführenden Nation [...], was ihr Schicksal in entscheidender Weise bestimmte" (Dietz 1986:3).
After World War II, the first tentative approach at establishing a West German-Soviet contact on matters concerning the "repatriation" of ethnic Germans from the Soviet Union to Germany dates back to 1955, when chancellor Konrad Adenauer was on his first and last diplomatic visit to Moscow since the beginning of his office in 1949. The fidelity of ethnic Germans was constantly under scrutiny in the Soviet Union, something which applies to the treatment of many other ethnic minorities under Soviet power and which is especially true for ethnic Germans based on German-Soviet antagonism during WWII.
A comprehensive, up-to-date analysis of the societal treatment and perception of minorities in the FSU is a long overdue contribution to Soviet and post-Soviet studies, as overt and covert ethnic conflicts run throughout the history of the Soviet Union and beyond its dissolution.
Regarding the questioned fidelity of minorities in the former Soviet Union, the following excerpt from an interview carried out during the Germany field study is especially insightful. Interviewee KDE53M emigrated from Moscow to Berlin in 1990.

> KDE53M: Die Juden waren in der Sowjetunion nicht wegen Ihrer Religion separiert. Sie waren eher als nicht ganz dazugehörig, quasi, unterdrückt. [...] also, mein Vater konnte nicht in die Partei beitreten. Er wollte unbedingt in die kommunistische Partei, damit er seine Karriere weitermachen kann. Er wurde nicht genommen, weil er ja, gerade durch diese Möglichkeit der Ausreise nach Israel, gab es große Zweifel an der Loyalität der sowjetischen Juden. [...] er konnte ja rein theoretisch, konnte mein Vater nach Israel auswandern. Es war nicht leicht, aber es war möglich. Und wenn er als Parteimitglied das gemacht hätte, dann hätte seine Parteizelle im Betrieb große Probleme. Das war eben die Frage der Loyalität. Also wie stehen jetzt, wie standen sowjetische Juden zu dem sowjetischen Staat.Ja also, es war nicht wirklich, nicht hundertprozentig regierbar.

> KDE53M: In the Soviet Union, the Jews weren't segregated on religious grounds. Rather, they were oppressed because they were perceived as if they didn't belong there [...] well, my father couldn't join the Party. He wanted to join the Communist Party at all costs, so as to make headway in his professional life. But he wasn't accepted into it, because – precisely because of the possibility of emigrating to Israel, his loyalty was questioned just like the loyalty of Soviet Jews in general. [...] Theoretically, he could have emigrated to Israel. It wouldn't have been easy, but he could have done it. And if he, as a Party member, had done it, then his Party cell in the factory would have got into trouble. That really was a question of loyalty. Meaning, of how Soviet Jews see the Soviet State. It wouldn't have been 100% governable.

Thematic complexes related to sociocultural issues brought to the fore by the informants during the interview are discussed at further length in the sections of this chapter devoted to sections 2 (emigration data), 3 (sociolinguistic data) and especially 4 (sociocultural data) of the questionnaire. However, the demographic section of the quantitative survey already addresses aspects with deep sociocultural and other implications, which is why insights into interview data accompany this section, too. The density plots at Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.2 help visualize the distribution of the years of birth among the respondent population, showing how most of them are concentrated approximately between the 1970s and the 1990s for both countries.

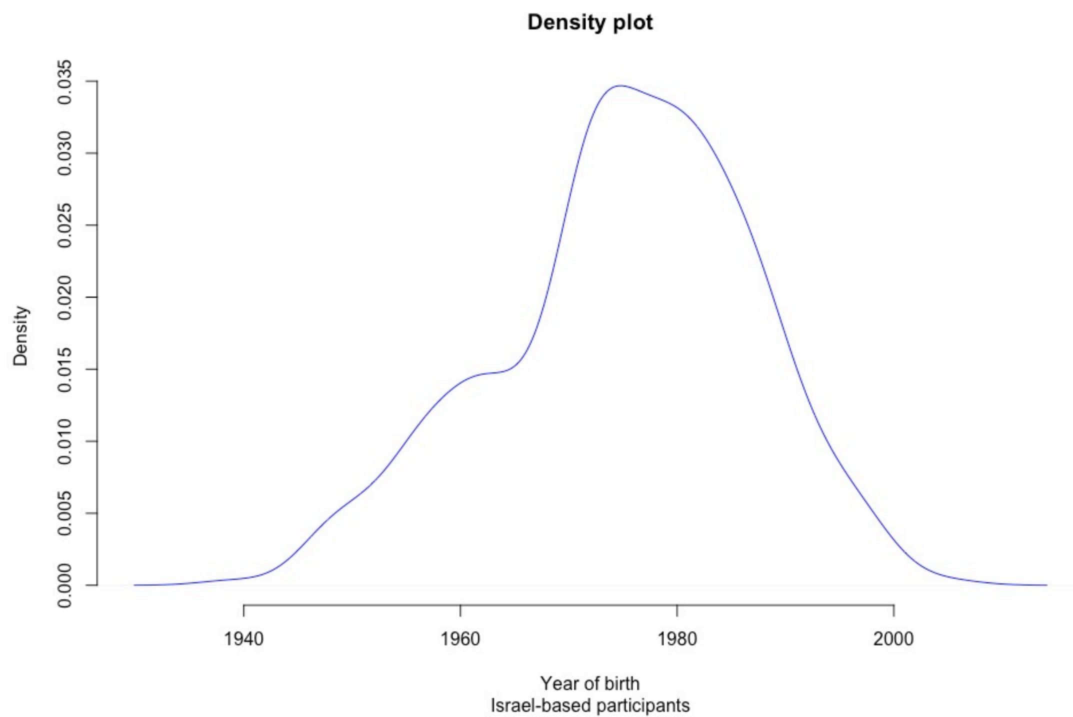


Figure 6.1: Distribution of respondents' years of birth, Israel

Figure 6.24 and Figure 6.2 point at the importance of focusing on the population range which has been selected in this study: not only are young and young adult immigrants often neglected in research on post-Soviet migration, they also make up a significant part of the immigrant population in both Israel and Germany, where the majority of immigration from the territories of the FSU is inherently post-Soviet in a chronological sense,gaining momentum starting from the 1990s. Data collected by Tolts (2020) show that, before the fall of the Soviet Union, the peak years for Soviet immigration to Israel were the years between 1971 and 1974 as well as 1978, 1979 and 1989. Peak levels refer to yearly values equal to or above 10,000. However, these figures are barely comparable with those of the 1990s and beyond, with another peak in immigration figures emerging in the 2010s. The graph below is based on a table appearing in Tolts (2020:2) and compares figures for the peak levels in immigration from the FSU to Israel between 1970 and 2018 with immigration from the FSU to Germany in the same time range. As is visible in Figure 6.3 and addressed in 3, the period between 1990 and the first half of the 2000s is of critical significance for migra-

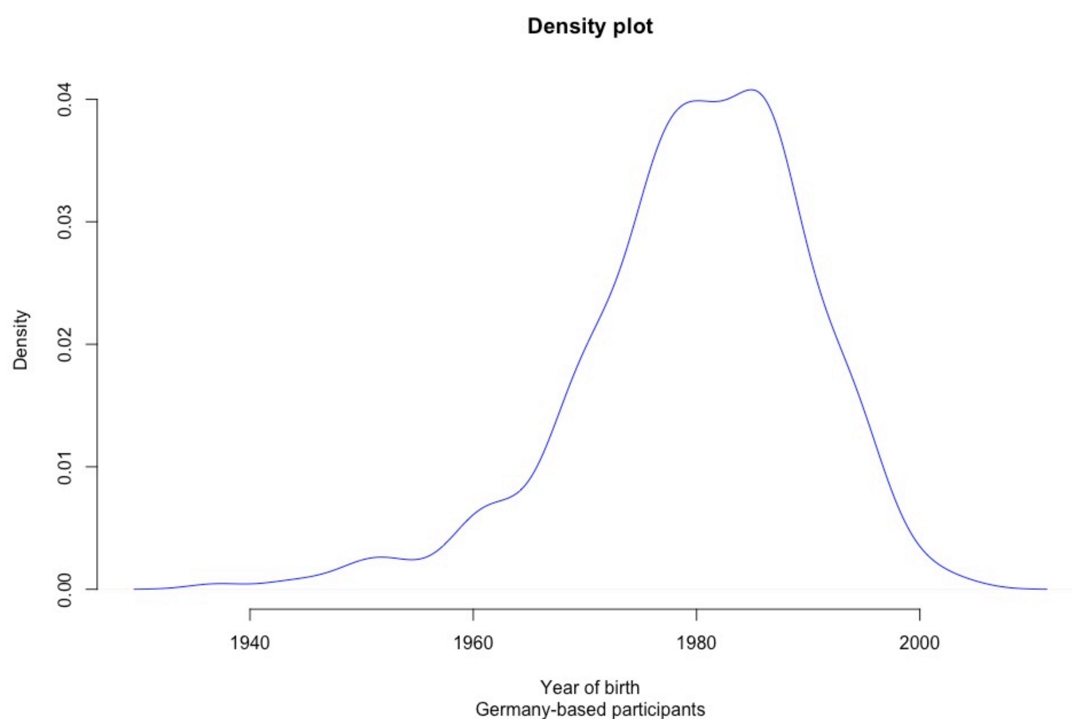


Figure 6.2: Distribution of respondents' years of birth, Germany

tion phenomena from the FSU and especially for Jewish emigration (Tolts 2016:23); it is therefore surprising that the generation born in those years and a decade before, i.e. in the 80s, is comparatively neglected in research.
The 80s are a telling decade for migration patterns from the FSU: as illustrated by Figure 6.3, emigration figures dropped consistently during the 80s. The reasons behind this drastic reduction in emigration figures have been object of speculation by numerous scholars; Salitan (1989-1990:681 ff.) advances a compelling analysis of Soviet emigration policy in the 80s, citing deteriorated US-Soviet relations, demographic problems and so-called Brezhnevian stagnation as some of the possible factors for stagnation in emigration, too. These observations add to the necessity of analyzing migration phenomena affecting people who were born in the period on which this study focuses. In general, migration phenomena are an indicator – or, in Salitan's terms, a "barometer" (1989-1990:671) – of the sociopolitical dynamics at play in the countries affected by them. In the case of Soviet migration policy, it is revealing of the changing attitude of Soviet bureaucrats and policy makers towards

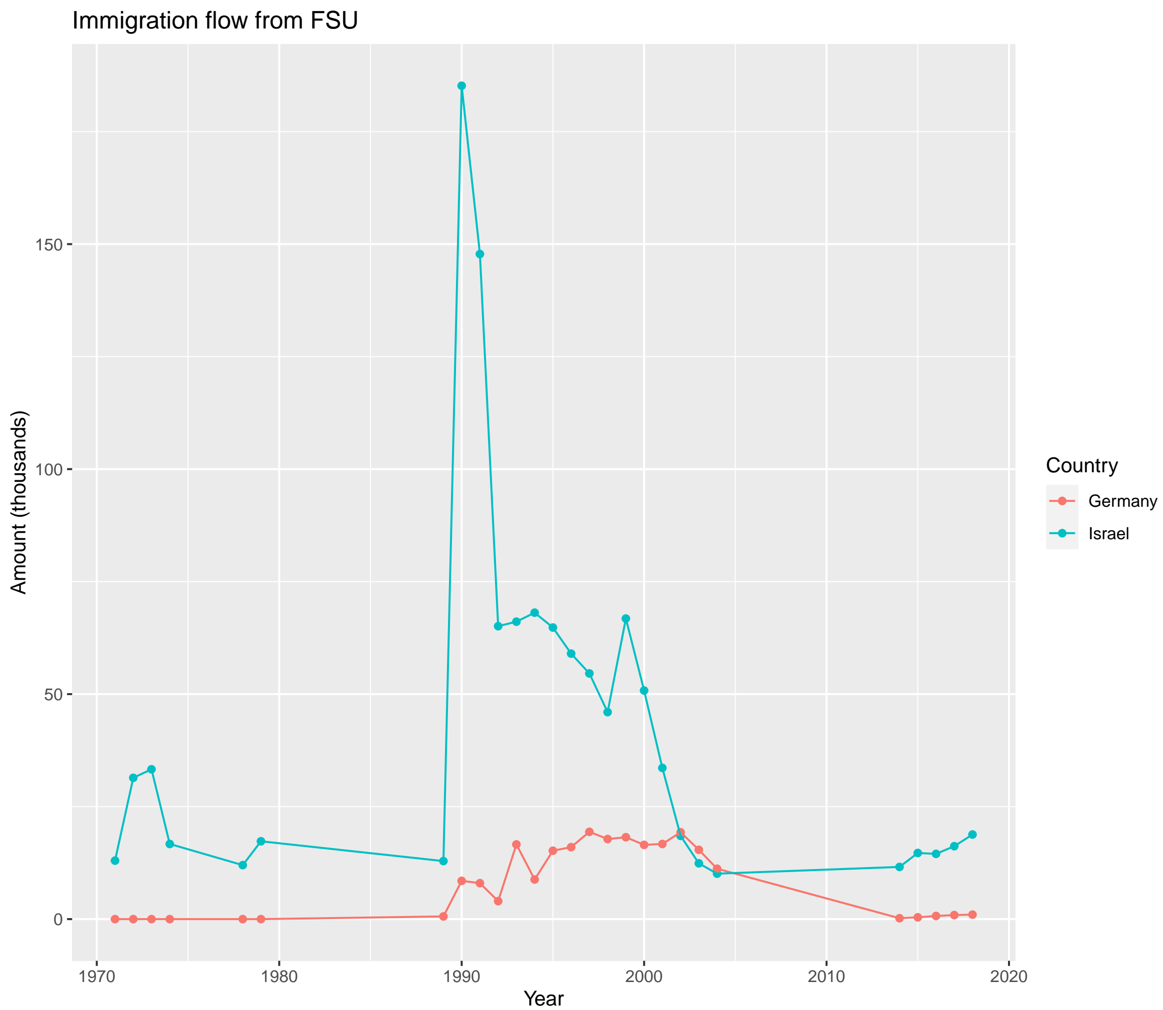


Figure 6.3: Immigration flow to Israel and Germany, 1971-2018. Based on Tolts 2020

ethnic minorities, among which Soviet Jewry and Soviet Germans are a most notable case.
While immigration waves from the FSU to Israel and Germany are historically well documented, it can be insightful to look at data regarding the respondents' date of emigration, which is documented at question 8 of the questionnaire:

- 8.Если Вы родились не в Германии/в Израиле, то в каком году Вы сюда эмигриговали?
- 8. Year of immigration to Germany/Israel if you weren't born here

Crossing data about the respondents' year of emigration with their year of birth and with the current date can allow to attain statistics on the following factors, too:

- Duration of stay in receiving country
- Age at time of immigration

An analysis of data related to question 8 produces the following insights:

- within the Israel-based sample, the earliest date of emigration is 1967, while the same parameter is the year 1977 for the Germany-based sample
- within both samples, the latest year of emigration is 2021
- in the Israel-based sample, participants emigrated to Israel about 18.5 years ago on average, while the same parameter amounts to 14.7 years for the Germany-based sample
- the mean age at time of immigration is 28.4 years for the Israel-based sample and 27.5 years for the Germany-based sample

These insights are in line with historical documentation of Soviet and post-Soviet immigration to Israel and Germany, thanks to which it is known that emigration to Israel was possible years if not decades earlier than to Germany, as discussed above. As concerns the mean time of permanence in the receiving countries, the median value for duration of stay since immigration is 22 years in Israel and 14 years in Germany.

For the Germany-based sample, the value of the mean duration of stay is considerably lower than in German Federal statistics, according to which (Spät-)Aussiedler have a mean duration of stay in Germany of 23.1 years (BAMF 2019b:40). In the BAMF report, the average duration of stay is described as "comparatively short"[1] (BAMF 2019b:6). Data from the BAMF report does not include information on *jüdische Kontingentflüchtlinge*, i.e. Jewish immigrants to Germany. According to data presented in the 2021 *Mikrozensus* of Germany's Federal Bureau of Statistics (DESTATIS 2022b), Ukrainian immigrants to Germany – the majority of whom, as per Panagiotidis (2021:60), immigrate with a *Kontingentflüchtling* status – have an average duration of stay in Germany of 18.9 years (DESTATIS 2022b:103) and a mean age upon arrival of 30.9 years old (DESTATIS 2022b:102). This makes them on average older than the immigrant cohort from Russian Federation (mean age of 26.9 years at time of immigration, DESTATIS 2022b:102) and Kazakhstan (mean

[1] My translation; the original reads as follows: "im Verhältnis zu der relativ kurzen Aufenthaltsdauer" (BAMF 2019b:6).

age of 22.8 years at time of immigration, DESTATIS 2022b:102). Here be it again noted that most immigrants to Germany from Kazakhstan are (Spät-)Aussiedler, as Panagiotidis (2021:60) mentions.

Not only are Soviet and post-Soviet Jewish immigrants to Germany usually older than immigrants from all FSU territories (for which the mean age at time of immigration is 25.5, DESTATIS 2022b:102), they are the immigrant group with the highest mean age at time of immigration among all immigrant groups considered in the 2021 Mikrozensus (DESTATIS 2022b:102).

As regards data on the parameter of average duration of stay for Soviet and post-Soviet immigrants to Israel, to my knowledge it is not clearly reported in literature. As concerns the immigrants' average age, I was not able to find specific data among those made public by the Israel CBS. Some CBS statistics focus on the average age at time of immigration for immigrants of a specific year; for example, the average age at time of immigration of immigrants who arrived in Israel in 2021 is 34. 8 (Cohen-Castro 2022:4). Whether the reference is to mean age at time of immigration in a single year or over a certain period of time or, rather, to mean age of the overall immigrant population, what emerges out of an analysis of statistical data released by the Israel CBS is that the immigrant population of Israel is slightly older than the native population.

Summarizing on data about age and duration of stay, the following table provides an overview of the main time parameters discussed in this section and compared with the same parameters in the general statistics of Israel and Germany. Ultimately,

Cohort	Mean age at immigration	Mean age	Length of stay
Sample Israel	28.4	46.8	18.5
Sample Germany	27.5	42.1	14.7
Israel	34.8	–	–
Germany	25.5	39	22.3

Table 6.5: Summary on age and length of stay, sample vs. national cohorts. Sources: own data corpus; Cohen-Castro 2022; DESTATIS 2022b

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the samples collected in this study are approximately in line with the time parameters resulting from national statistics, as there appears to be no striking discrepancy between the two data-sets. The most essential difference in terms of time concerns length of stay, which is on average longer for immigrants to Germany on a national

scale. Although the respective data for Israel is missing, it is safe to assume that the national-scale length of stay of immigrants to Israel will be higher than within the sample collected for this study. One of the arguments supporting such an assumption – and a well-known fact which is discussed throughout this chapter – is that aliyah from the Soviet Union to Israel has a considerably longer story than Soviet emigration to Germany.

Moreover, the recruiting strategy is likely to have had an influence on the population recruited. Most Facebook groups in which information about the study was posted are communities of first generation immigrants who still discuss issues related to immigration or situate themselves within a context as close to the one of the native country as possible,for which the use of the Russian language as a practice of preserving cultural heritage plays a paramount role. Thus, the length of stay in Israel and Germany of immigrants who are members of such groups can be inferred to be shorter than the average length of stay in the country of all immigrants from the former Soviet Union.

The latter tendency is even more evident in the qualitative interview corpus; most of the people who decided to participate in the study are relatively new in the receiving countries, which is especially the case for immigrants to Germany – thus aligning with the length of stay tendency of the quantitative corpus.

This section highlights how time plays a key role in immigration. If one takes the criterion of length of stay, the receiving society and above all its institutions often tend to attach high expectations in terms of language learning and integration to the immigrants' length of stay in the country. The following excerpt from BAMF (2019b:6) is especially informative in this respect; it stems from an introduction to the report written by Christoph Bergner, CDU politician and German governmental officer for questions regarding Aussiedler and national minorities between 2006 and 2013:

> Spätaussiedler sind im Verhältnis zu der relativ kurzen Aufenthaltsdauer in Deutschland gut integriert, wofür die in der Publikation zusammengefassten Studien eine Reihe an Erklärungen liefern. Dieses Ergebnis bestärkt die Politik in der Annahme, Spätaussiedler seien ein Gewinn für Deutschland und das Bemühen um ihre Aussiedlung und Integration war und ist eine Investition in die Zukunft unseres Landes.[2]

[2] My translation: "Considering their relatively short stay in Germany, Spätaussiedler [i.e. ethnic

By describing their average length of stay as comparatively short, the author of the introduction draws an implicit comparison to other historic immigrant groups to Germany – such as, e.g., Turkish immigrants, whose average length of stay in the country is 33 years according to the 2021 *Mikrozensus* (DESTATIS 2022b:103). The assumption that offering ethnic Germans from the former Soviet Union the chance to "repatriate" to Germany would benefit the receiving country from a financial point of view most likely relies on the fact that immigrants from the former Soviet Union generally have a high education level, which does not apply to other immigrant groups. What the statement shows is the tendency of policy-makers to have high and even opportunistic expectations from certain immigrant groups, while at the same time placing the immigrants in ready-made categories without giving them the chance to voice their needs, struggles and self-perception.

The author of the aforementioned introduction goes on to define the integration process of Spätaussiedler as " 'gutes und geräuschloses' Einleben" (BAMF 2019b:6), i.e. "a smooth and silent adaptation". The latter statement undoubtedly contains more than a grain of truth; in general, Spätaussiedler and their integration are far more rarely discussed or problematized in German public opinion than e.g. refugees from Syria or Afghanistan. As Panagiotidis (2021:21) points out, Spätaussiedler are perceived as "white immigrants" and therefore "exposed to less manifestations of racism than citizens and migrants of color or than people classified as muslims" [3] (Klingenberg 2019:151 quoted in Panagiotidis 2021:21).

The privileged categorization attributed to Spätaussiedler points at a sort of immigrant hierarchy (see Panagiotidis 2021:21) based on which policy makers act. At the same time, it can easily become a disadvantage for the immigrant group itself, leaving immigrants who came to Germany as Spätaussiedler under the impression that their problems and/or possible conflicts within their communities are not a relevant topic for German policy makers.

Especially relating to the aspect of length of stay in the country, this parameter

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Germans from the former Soviet Union who emigrated to Germany after 1990] are well integrated in Germany. The studies summarized in this report offer several explanation for this fact. This result confirms the political assumption that Spätaussiedler are an asset for Germany and that efforts towards their repatriation and integration were and still are an investment in the future of our country."

[3] Original excerpt: "sie sind als weiße und säkulare, christliche oder jüdische Migrant_innen weit weniger Rassismen ausgesetzt als Bürger_innen und Migrant_innen of Color oder als Muslim_innen klassifizierte Menschen."

needs to be problematized and loosened from the often established correlation to the degree of integration. Just as a short time of stay in the country does not automatically result in poor integration, a long time spent in the country does not mean that an individual or community will be well integrated. Although such an observation might sound obvious, it is necessary to reflect on its significance time and again, as a widespread neglect of the immigrants' viewpoints in policy-making has contributed to creating and reinforcing stereotypes clashing with the interests of the immigrants and their communities. In the following section, I present case studies from the qualitative corpus which offer insights into the divide between policy making and the immigrants' perception of the immigration experience and integration process over time.

6.1.2 Integration in time

A careful reading of the statement by Bergner (BAMF 2019b:6) raises the question as to who or what defines what integration is and what this term means in which context. This section presents examples for how the immigrants see integration and which role time – in its widest sense – plays in its perceived realization or lack of it; examples question the validity of the equation made in policy making according to which a longer time of stay equals better integration.
From an observation of the usage of the word "integration" in the data corpus emerges that participants employ it with a meaning which does not 100% overlap with the one attributed to it by Durkheim (1960) (see discussion in Section 2.2) but rather shares more similarities with what Gordon (1964) terms "cultural assimilation" or "acculturation," considered by Gordon as "likely to be the first of the types of assimilation to occur when a minority group arrives on the scene [...] [and] may take place even when none of the other types of assimilation occurs simultaneously or later, and this condition of 'acculturation only' may continue indefinitely" (Gordon 1964:77).
Participant number 328 from the Germany-based quantitative survey (code G328) answers question 15 about the factors contributing to her (in this case positive) attitude towards German as follows:

G328 Новая родина,друзья,интеграция

G328 New homeland, friends, integration

Similarly, participant I167 from the Israel-based quantitative survey answers question 15 by describing her positive attitude towards Hebrew as follows:

I167 возможности общения и интеграции

I167 opportunities for socialization and integration

Both G328 and I167 evaluate their attitudes towards, respectively, German and Hebrew as positive (4 out of 5 points) and motivate their positive attitude by illustrating that knowledge of the language of the receiving country enables them to establish social contacts and become part of a community. Thus, according to the two participants, acculturation presupposes linguistic adaptation, too – which, in the model by Gordon (1964), is subsumed in cultural and behavioral assimilation, considering language as a type of human behavior.
An analysis of Gordon's model is particularly instructive with respect to the aforementioned statement by Bergner (BAMF 2019b:6) on the integration of Spätaussiedler in Germany: in Gordon's model, a full-fledged assimilation is not a matter of time; in fact, cultural assimilation can happen in a relatively short time, depending on the context as well as on the immigrant's motivation and other factors which are hardly quantifiable.
After providing a clarification on "integration" and related terms, the next two sections analyze examples from the qualitative corpus to illustrate which role time factors can come to play for the immigrants' perceived integration.

Case study: BDE34F BDE34F self-identifies as "deutsch", i.e. German. She and her family emigrated to Germany from an ethnic German village in Kazakhstan in the year 2001. Their immigration process was regulated by legislation for the repatriation of Spätaussiedler (literally "late resettlers"), i.e. ethnic Germans immigrating to Germany after december 31st, 1992. Those emigrating before this date are called simply *Aussiedler*.
The German body of law responsible for refugee and exile right is the so-called *Bundesvertriebenengesetz* (in short BVFG). As Panagiotidis (2021:47) remarks, the differentiation between resettlers and late resettlers is based on the covert assumption that discrimination based on German ethnic belonging would diminish – or even disappear? – with the fall of socialist totalitarianisms in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. The BVFG determines that only those who were born before January

1st, 1993 can receive the status of Spätaussiedler and thus repatriate to Germany. Thus, as Panagiotidis (2021:47) observes, "the repatriation of late resettlers from the former Soviet Union is therefore destined to expire"[4]. The latter point already illustrates how time criteria are employed in policy-making to create administrative categories which influence the immigrants' immigration and integration process.
In the following excerpt, BDE34F illustrates the struggles of emigrating to the territories of former Eastern Germany:

> BDE34F: Все знали что я немка, как бы, то есть там я была немка, здесь я русская — понятно. Вот, а, ну, много немцев было у нас в классе там [...] город такой был, потом все в Германию уехали по-тихонечку. [...] Приехала в 10-ый класс, приехали мы к сожалению в бывшую ГДР, что осложнило интеграцию. Вот, ну соответсвенно мы общались только с русскими, нас было достаточно много, мы там прожили в таком общежитии для переселенцев,вот, а потом когда-то переехали через девять месяца в Нидерзаксен,папа нашел работу, мы переехали, там уже девятый класс закончила,пошла дальше учиться и так далее и так далее, но очень долго ничено не говорила [...] я прямо молчала.

> BDE34F: Everyone knew I'm German, like, I mean, there I was the German and here I'm the Russian, business-as-usual. And well, there were a lot of Germans in our class [...] it was like this in out city, but then everyone began emigrating by and by. [...] I arrived to Germany in tenth grade. Sadly we came to the former German Democratic Republic, which made our integration harder. And so we only socialized with Russians, there were many of us. We lived in a dormitory for resettlers, and then at some point we moved to Niedersachsen [i.e. Lower Saxony] after nine months. My dad found a job and moved, I finished ninth grade there, then I moved on to the next class and so on and so forth, but I didn't speak for a long time [...] I kept silent all the time.

It was not a choice of BDE34F and her family to move to the territories of former Eastern Germany; in fact, this destination was assigned to their family in the recep-

[4]My translation. Original German text: "Die Spätaussiedlermigration aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion läuft somit perspektivisch aus." (Panagiotidis 2021:47).

tion center of Friedland, which is the obligatory first stop for all Spätaussiedler. Differently from most Aussiedler, upon their arrival, Spätaussiedler cannot settle down in any city of their choice but are instead distributed across the federal states of Germany according to the so-called *Königsteiner Schlüssel*, i.e. "Königstein formula," issued in 1992. The Königstein formula is also employed to regulate the distribution of Jewish Kontingentflüchtlinge across the territory of Germany.
Moreover, based on the so-called *Wohnortzuweisungsgesetz* (i.e. Law on the assignment of a place of residence; in short *WoZuG*) issued in 1989 and valid until 2009, Spätaussiedler are assigned a temporary place of residence in which they are bound to stay for a maximum of two (or three, between 2000 and 2009) years or until they find working or education opportunities elsewhere (Michl 2019:129). As can be inferred from the intricate regulations, post-Soviet migration to Germany is subject to particularly high top-down control (see Panagiotidis 2021 for a thorough analysis).
According to the *Bundesverwaltungsamt* - German Federal Office for Administration (in short *BVA*), in the process of assigning to the resettlers their temporary places of residence, officers try to consider the resettlers' wishes based on e.g. family relations, occupational and educational chances *as far as possible* (German "im Rahmen des Möglichen"). The WoZuG law and the Königstein formula were issued to counteract integration problems which had been emerging in the context of Aussiedler immigration approximately until the fall of the Soviet Union. Among these problems are so-called chain migration (German *Kettenmigration*) phenomena, by which immigrants often concentrate in metropolitan areas where their family members, friends or acquaintances have settled down before them. The top-down distribution of immigrants across the federal states of Germany was conceived to avoid the formation of ghetto-like areas and facilitate the integration of resettlers in the German social tissue, as well as to diminish the financial burden of those regions in which the concentration of resettlers had been particularly high (like, as an example, the state of Lower Saxony). The question whether these measures have had the desired effect is highly debated in German public discourse, as is the question whether the WoZuG – and the limitation of the immigrants' freedom of movement which it involves – is compatible with German constitutional law.
As can be inferred from the above observations, time plays a key role in the issuing and enforcement of immigration law; time boundaries are established by law which the immigrants have to comply with, and these artificially set up boundaries can have

life-changing effects for the immigrants. In the following interview excerpt, BDE34F explains how the policy valid at the time of her immigration to Germany affected her and her family's self-perception as well as her integration process in general:

> C.:А что было самое трудное в том, что вы приехали сначала в [бывшую] ГДР?
> BDE34F:Сложное было наверное — обмануты ожидания и незнание истории [...] мы просто не знали, мы думали едем в историческую родину, Германия — прекрасная, святая страна вот, а сюда приехали и оказалось что никто тут нас не ждет. И там была очень тяжелая экономическая ситуация, там было 20% безработицы, и естественно мы были козлами отпущения. [...]
> C.:А вас просто по программе туда отправили в деревню эту?
> BDE34F:ну мы уже поздные переселенцы же, мы в 2001 приехали и на тот момент уже нельзя было выбирать [...] нам сказали типа, ну вы можете конечно выбрать, но вот вам на выбор, и показывает весь восток там.мы еще не очень понимали что это для нас значит, мы просто смотрели какая земля ближе всего городу, в котором жили наши родственники с которыми мы общались хорошо [...] и как-то оказались в Заксен-Анхальт [...] и поэтому я была травмированная, и [...] все-таки след такой остался и я очень долго приходила в себя и только на самом деле когда я поступила уже в институт когдя я поняла что там нормальные адекватные и культурные люди которым пофигу с каким я акцентом говорю вот тогда я расслабилась и начала общаться с людми, разговаривать, заводить друзей, ну то есть я очень долгий у меня быд процесс этот интеграционный.
>
> C.: What was the most difficult aspect of living in former Easter Germany after your arrival?
> BDE34F: The most difficult aspect was, well, probably deceived expectations and a lack of history knowledge [...] we just didn't know, we thought we're going in our historic homeland, that Germany is an amazing, sacred country, and then we arrived here and discovered that nobody had been waiting for us.And the economic situation was really harsh there, with an unemployment rate of 20%, and of course we served as the scapegoats. [...]
> C.: Did they send you to this village within some kind of program?

> BDE34F: Well, I mean, we are late resettlers, we arrived in 2001 and at that time you couldn't choose anymore [...] they were like, of course you can choose, but here is your choice, and they're only pointing [on a map] at the East. Back then we didn't understand what this means for us, we just looked at which state is closer to the city were our relatives lived, since we were in good terms with them [...] and so somehow we ended up in Saxony-Anhalt [...] and therefore I was traumatized, and [...] anyways I still feel the consequences and it took me a long time to pull myself together, and it wasn't until I went to college, when I understood that the people there are o.k., that they're reasonable and well-educated and that they don't care about my accent, well it wasn't until then that I started to relax and to socialize with people, to talk, to make friends. That is, my integration process was very long.

Although BDE34F emigrated to Germany approximately 20 years ago, she expresses dissatisfaction with her integration process and recounts that her closest contacts – her husband, friends and relatives – are mostly Russian-speaking immigrants themselves. Her perception of her integration process as of a long – and winding – one might be influenced by the fact that she, as the elder of two siblings, is in the position of that which is called 1.5 generation; she emigrated to Germany as a teenager, while her brother has spent most of his life in the new country and was able to construe a solid network of German-speaking friends. The following excerpt illustrates the participant's bridging position between two generations:

> C.: Как родители? Они тоже избавились от акцента?
> BDE34F: Это забавная история. Нет, конечно нет, они смотрят теперь уже русское телевиденье, по началу смотрели немецкое, когда приехали старались учить. Папа работает все это время, он конечно довольно неплохо себя чувствует, конечно его бесит, что он так, ну, ограничен в своей речи, но у него даже очень неплохой немецкий [...] а мама, у нее акцент, но она очень хорошо знает, она все может объяснить. Она сильно переживает, что она говорит с акцентом. [...] Ночами не спит, там, про себя формулирует. Я помню, у меня тоже такое было [...] и вот у нее такой уровень. То есть они не интегрированы там в немецкое общество, у них нет круга общения немецкоговорящего [...] А брат говорит отлично, я бы

> даже сказала по словарному запасу где-то лучше меня [...] он нормально себя чувствует,у него куда больше немецких друзей чем у меня [...] и все немецкое ему больше нравится, он такой прям немец немец.
>
> C.: What about your parents, did they also get rid of their accent?
> BDE34F: That's a funny story. No, of course not. They watch Russian TV now. When they arrived, they were trying to learn [German] and so at the beginning they would watch German TV. My dad has been working the whole time and therefore he feels quite well [here], of course it's annoying for him that he's, well, in a way limited in his speech, but he's got quite a good German [...] as to mum, she's got an accent, but she knows [German] really well and can explain everything. She is very nervous about the fact that she speaks with an accent. [...] She can't sleep at night because she is busy rehearsing sentences in her head. I remember going through the same [...] that's her [German] level. That is, they are not integrated in German society, they don't have a German-speaking network of contacts. [...] as to my brother, he speaks excellently, I would say even better than me with regards to his vocabulary [...] he feels well, he's got many more German friends than I do [...] and he just prefers everything German, he's like a real German.

The example of BDE34F is not to show that the integration of late resettlers from the former Soviet Union is problematic per se; in fact, thanks to the legally defined framework, resettlers and late resettlers from the Soviet Union do in some respects have a facilitated – or privileged (Panagiotidis 2021) – immigration path in comparison immigrants from other regions of Europe and the world. However, her case is largely representative of the difficulties encountered by post-Soviet immigrants to Germany; examples similar to those of BDE34F can be found in literature (see Panagiotidis 2021) as well as throughout the data corpus collected in this study; applying onto post-Soviet immigrants to Germany the label of "well integrated" without further reflections would mean whitewashing their situation and thus arbitrarily depriving the immigrants of their voice on structural issues affecting their quality of life. An analysis of the case of BDE34F, as with the cases analyzed throughout this study, is intended to direct the attention of policy-makers to often neglected problems.
The example of BDE34F sheds light into how post-Soviet immigration is highly influ-

enced by time factors, predominantly on account of the strict and at times intricate regulations to which immigrants are subject.
The next case study delves into the influence of time factors for immigrants from the former Soviet Union to Germany, so as to obtain a picture as complete as possible by comparing the integration process in both countries.

Case study: ZIL32F ZIL32F is a native of Belarus. Between the years 2004 and 2005, at the age of 15, she emigrated to Israel by herself within the program *Na'ale*. The program is funded by the Jewish Agency as well as by the Israeli Ministry of Education. It was established in 1992 with the aim of offering highly talented Jewish youth from all over the world the chance to spend the final years of high school at one of several elite high schools throughout Israel participating in the program.
Although a search for information on the program does not yield that it was developed for a specific group of people, most of the participants in Na'ale are pupils from countries of the former Soviet Union (Tartakovsky 2009:178), with many of the schools offering teaching in Russian, too. It seems no coincidence that Na'ale was opened in 1992, one of the peak years in immigration from the former Soviet Union. Applicants to the program have to pass a number of highly selective tests; as Tartakovsky (2009:178) illustrates, "the main criteria for acceptance are academic abilities [...] high motivation for immigrating to Israel, and a lack of psychopathology."
ZIL32F immigrated to Israel at a time when immigration rates had reached the lowest rates since the beginning of the 1990s immigration wave (see Figure 6.3), amounting to 20,000 immigrants per year approximately (Cohen-Castro 2011). The period in which ZIL32F left Belarus was full of turmoil for the country; in 2004, a referendum was passed lifting the "limit [on] the number of mandates a president might serve" (White & Korosteleva-Polglase 2006:156), thus allowing President Alexander Lukashenko to run for another term; the results of the referendum were followed by turmoil and demonstrations which went on for months (White & Korosteleva-Polglase 2006). Although ZIL32F was still at a very young age when she decided to emigrate to Israel, her mostly negative accounts of Belarus are related to sociopolitical aspects of life in the country, contributing to her decision to relocate to Israel.
She reports having spent every summer since the age of 7 at summer camps organized by the Jewish Agency in Belarus and being highly motivated to emigrate since an early age. In the following, the participant illustrates the motivations and expecta-

tions behind her immigration and how they transformed themselves throughout her life in the new country:

> ZIL32F: הייתי מאוד ציונית. מגיל 7 הייתי בתוכנית בסוכנות בכל קיץ כל המחנות שהיו. הייתי ממש עמוק בזה. ואת יודעת, מספרים לך שם שזה מדינת חלב ודבש ו...וכן, עליתי לארץ. והתאכזוותי, כן, שאף אחד לא באמת מחכה לך פה ואף אחד לא צריך אותך פה וכן קשה. אבל אני חושבת שלפחות זה נתן לי הרבה יותר אופציות מבלארוס. זה חור שאין מה לעשות שם, אין לך אופציה לבטא את עצמך. [...] זה מדינה שמאוד ענייה ומאוד סגורה. אז אין לך לעשות מה שאת רוצה. הכל מאוד לפי תדמית ופה את מרגישה הרבה יותר חופשיה בארץ. ואני באמת... הייתה תקופה שקצת התאכזוותי ואז הייתה תקופה שמאוד אהבתי את הארץ. עכשיו אני בתקופה שזה קצת מבאס אותי שאני לא מוצאת את המקום שלי, שלא משנה כמה זמן אני אהיה פה ומה, אני אעשה, אני תמיד אשאר רוסיה וזה מאוד מבאס אותי
>
> ZIL32F: I was a big Zionist. Since I was 7 years old, I participated in a program by the [Jewish] Agency every summer and went to all the camps that they offered. I was really into it. You know, there they tell you that it's the land of milk and honey and... and yes, I made aliyah to Israel. And I was disappointed that nobody is actually waiting for you here and nobody needs you here and it's really hard. But I still think that at least it gave me many more options than Belarus. It's like a hole, there's nothing to do there, you have no option to express yourself. [...] It's a really poor and closed country, so you can't do what you want there. Everything works according to a ready-made template, whereas here in Israel you feel much more free. And I really... there was a time in which I was a bit disappointed, and then there was a time in which I really loved Israel. Now I'm going through a phase in which it pisses me off a bit that I can't find my place. It doesn't matter how long I live here and what I do, I'll always remain the Russian and it really pisses me off.

Time factors have been playing a decisive role for her integration process and are also perceived as an element of distress. Her statement "[i]t doesn't matter how long I live here and what I do, I'll always remain the Russian and it really pisses me off" is especially revealing in that it implies a dissonance between what society expects of the immigrant and how the immigrant perceives themselves in time.

On the one hand, immigration policy expects of the immigrant that they will take

subsequent, well-defined steps leading to integration into society; in her case, these steps are the Na'ale program, followed by her *aliyah* and by military service. On a side note, ZIL32F is one of only two interview respondents to have done military service in the IDF Israeli Defence Forces. Compliance to military service in Israel is broadly considered as "a sign of Israeliness – that is, of adopting the Israeli ethos" (Lomsky-Feder & Rapoport 2003:116). Surprisingly,although the majority of respondents in the quantitative survey self-identify within the category "Israeli/Jew" (see Section 6.2.1), most of them did not serve in the IDF, as illustrated in Table 6.6.

On the other hand, even after fulfilling all the steps foreseen by policy and reaching

Military service	%
No	81.33
Yes	18.67

Table 6.6: Participation in military service, Israel-based respondents

an exceptional command of Hebrew, the integration process cannot be complete if it is not confirmed by society's perception of the immigrant as of an insider. In view of the latter, the effect of the Na'ale program is comparable to that of the WoZuG and of the constraints posed by German immigration policy on late resettlers; while the proclaimed objective of the Na'ale program is to "connect [participants] with Israel and [their] Judaism" (Na'ale 2023), ZIL32F reports being annoyed by the fact that she couldn't speak Hebrew to her peers and teachers during high school in Israel:

> ZIL32F: אחרי חצי שנה הראשונה שעליתי לארץ כבר דיברתי כי רציתי להתקשר עם חבר״ה ה... היה לנו הרבה שכבות שם, הרבה חרב״ה, ואת רוצה להתקשר איתם, משעמם לך שם רק עם האנשים שאת איתם. ואז לא בחרת להיות איתם, אז את לא באמת רוצה להיות חברה שלהם [...] דיברתי אבל לא כל כך טוב כי גם אין לך כל כך צורך, כי כולם מדברים רוסית, גם רוב המורים. [...] וזה גם תמיד לא כל כך רציתי להתקשר עם רוסים. תמיד חיפשתי את הדוברי עברית.
>
> After the first half year since my aliyah I already spoke [Hebrew] because I wanted to communicate with the [Hebrew-speaking] kids... there were many different layers there, many kids, and you want to talk to them, it's boring if you stick with the people they put you with, without you choosing, and you don't want to be their friend. [...] So I did speak Hebrew but not that well, because you don't really need to, even most of

> the teachers spoke Russian [...] and the thing is, I never really wanted to communicate with Russians; I always sought Hebrew-speakers.

Youth from the former Soviet Union who participated – and participate – in the Na'ale program are particularly interesting for this study for a number of reasons: first of all, the Na'ale generation falls within the age range on which this study focuses, as the program was created in 1992. Secondly, for applicants from the former Soviet Union, Na'ale implicitly is the expression of the epochal passage from the Soviet into the post-Soviet, with all the social and cultural turmoil it brought along. As Tartakovsky & Mirsky (2001:257–261) acutely note,

> Naale students have been raised in the post-perestroika Russia, a society that is still in a transition, has not yet shed the old Soviet characteristics [...] and tries to link back to the even older pre-Soviet Russian heritage [...] the general feeling of being abandoned, which is typical to the post-Soviet society, may be especially intensified when adolescents leave home for another country.

Thus, by looking at migration in time, one is not only considering factors related to the immigrants' age at time of emigration and at present, at their year of birth,length of stay in the receiving country and other generational or age-related factors; one is naturally and most importantly looking at the historical and sociocultural contexts between which the immigrants move. What can be learned from the examples examined above is that the condition of the post-Soviet immigrant is one characterized by a dichotomy which is arguably even more pronounced than is the case for the immigrant in general, regardless of their sociocultural and national background. Oushakine (2000:995) describes the post-Soviet condition in a nutshell:

> [...] a certain feeling of being caught in-between: [...] between two times (past future), between two systems (Soviet/post-Soviet) [...] The post-Soviet threshold, the post-Soviet transitionality and in-betweenness thus has a peculiar nature-it does not provide any cues about the direction to follow, it does not channel one's identificatory process.

The following section analyzes aspects related to space, e.g. the immigrants' country and/or city of birth, their current region/city of residence and which significance these factors have within the immigrants' integration process.

6.1.3 Migration in space

This section departs from the following questions in the questionnaire:

- 2. Place of birth
- 3. Place of residence

and expands on the meaning of these factors within the broader context of the immigration and integration process.
The quantitative survey features participants from all the countries of the former Soviet Union plus Germany, Israel and Turkey. Tables 6.7 and 6.8 report the countries of birth for each participant subset with the respective frequency rates. Moreover, Tables 6.4 and 6.5 serve as a summary on the regions of birth of, respectively, the Israel-based and Germany-based participants. One aspect made visible by the maps is the fact that, while the regions of birth of Israel-based participants appear to be more highly concentrated around European Russia stretching sparsely into the Far East region, the countries of birth of Germany-based participants form a more evident cluster around the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia. Accordingly, it is to be observed based on Tables 6.7 and 6.8 that Kazakhstan is much more frequent as a country of birth among Germany-based respondents (10%) than Israel-based respondents (2.05%), which is likely due to the fact that a conspicuous portion of ethnic Germans repatriating to Germany as Aussiedler or Spätaussiedler was born in Kazakhstan (BAMF 2019b:32–33).

In Tables 6.7 and 6.8, the names of countries of birth are reported as they were designated by the respondents, regardless of whether or not these designations are geopolitically and historically correct. Data about the countries of birth are presented in their original form since they offer insight into the respondents' worldviews and positioning in a social and geopolitical environment. As an example, mentions of the USSR as country of birth convey how strong its presence still is in the imaginary of the respondents. Other noteworthy mentions include those of disputed territories such as Crimea and Transnistria, which testify to the burden represented by conflicts in the post-Soviet context for people who have been socialized in it. Understandably, these conflicts have an enduring relevance for the respondents even after moving abroad. They are carried along by the emigrants on their routes, shared by them in their social networks; their meaning is question, discussed about and re-negotiated within the context of the receiving society, in whose sense-making processes new

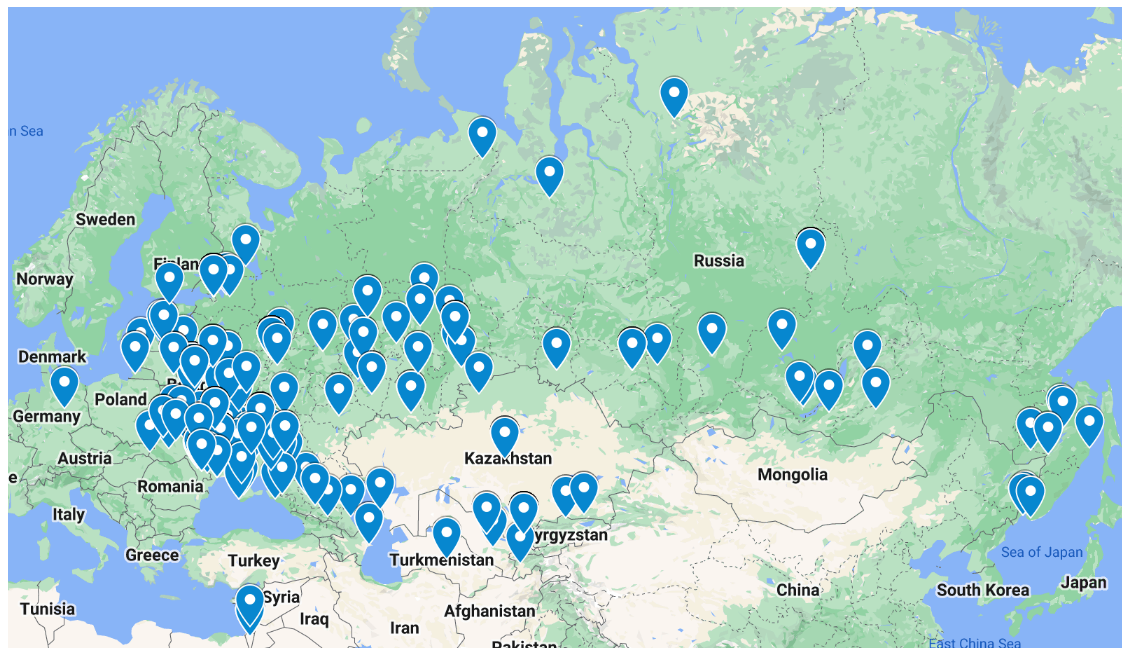

Figure 6.4: Regions of birth, Israel sample. Created with Google My Maps

perspectives are brought.

Among all countries of birth, Russia is the most frequent for both Israel-based and Germany-based participants, followed by Ukraine. Based on the quantitative survey, Ukraine is a much more frequent country of birth for immigrants to Israel (29.92%) than to Germany (18.38%). It is difficult to elaborate a statistically grounded explanation for this phenomenon, as immigration from the FSU to Israel is (not exclusively, but mostly) documented considering data for immigrants from the whole geographical area of the FSU rather than by country; extensive data on immigration to Israel from Ukraine (Cohen-Castro 2022) has only started emerging after the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian war in 2022, while the dataset for this study was collected before it. According to estimates by Tolts (2016:31) based on a combination of both CBS data and data from other sources, about 1.1 million immigrants from the former Soviet Union lived in Israel in 2009.

Although arguably more complete than its Israeli counterpart in several respects, the statistical documentation of the countries of birth of immigrants from the FSU

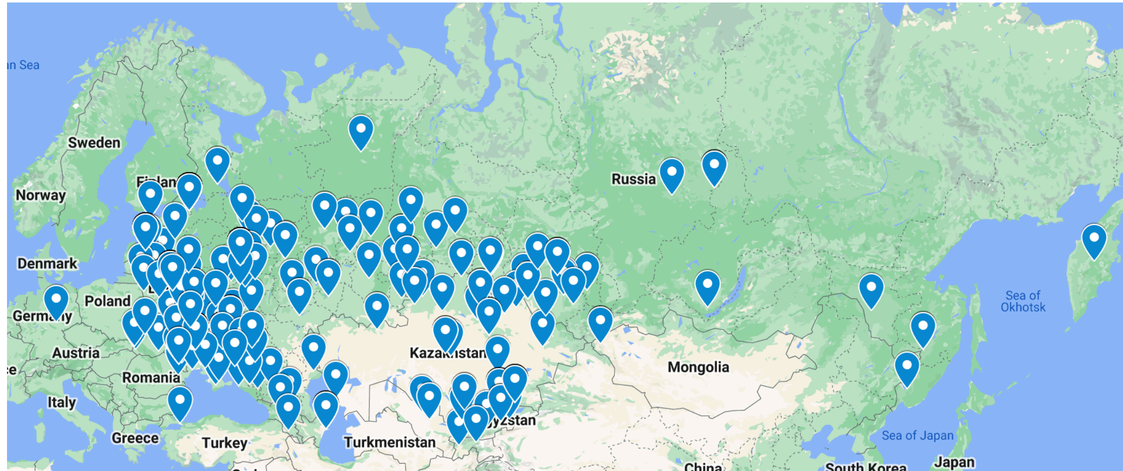

Figure 6.5: Regions of birth, Germany sample. Created with Google My Maps

is fragmented in Germany, too. There, data on immigrants from Ukraine is easily accessible, and DESTATIS (2022b) reports that 308,000 Ukrainian-born people were living in Germany in 2021, while Russian Federation-born residents of Germany reportedly amount to 1.3 millions. The total of immigrants from all countries the FSU living in Germany in the year 2021 reportedly amounts to 3.5 millions (DESTATIS 2022b). However, what creates fragmentation in data made available by DESTATIS is the fact that some tables report data on immigrants by country and some other tables instead focus on the immigrant category from an administrative point of view, citing Spätaussiedler without specifying from which country they are and ignoring the category of Kontingentflüchtlinge, the majority of whom can be assumed to be Ukraine-born (see Panagiotidis 2021). While no statistics can be perfect, completing them by adding in detailed data about e.g. the countries of birth would allow researchers to analyze highly revealing correlations which would otherwise be neglected; examples for such correlations are provided in the course of this section.
Not every participant provided details on their city or region of residence in the new

Country of birth	Frequency (%)
Azerbaijan	0.51
Belarus	6.39
Crimea	0.26
Estonia	0.26
Germany	0.26
Israel	1.02
Kazakhstan	2.05
Kyrgyzstan	0.51
Latvia	1.02
Lithuania	1.28
Moldova	4.09
Russia	43.48
Tajikistan	0.26
Turkmenistan	0.26
Ukraine	29.92
USSR	4.60
Uzbekistan	3.58
No mention	0.26

Table 6.7: Percent frequency of countries of birth; as per original designation by Israel-based respondents

country; 311 of the 391 Israel-based participants and 323 of 370 Germany-based participants did choose to fill out point 3 of the questionnaire, i.e. "Место проживания" – "Place of residence". An analysis of data on the places of residence yields that the majority of participants from both countries come from urban areas with more than 500,000 inhabitants, with slightly more than half of the total participants coming from cities with more than a million inhabitants.

These criteria are relevant to infer the degree of acquaintance with urban contexts because, from a sociological point of view, whether somebody was born and raised in an urban or rural area can have significant implications on that person's education, income level, access to health and further aspects. The parameters identifying bigger urban settlements in the FSU in Table 6.9 below were set partly after the OECD list of metropolitan areas of the world (Ahrend et al. 2020).

Of all the major urban settlements of the FSU, Moscow and Saint Petersburg unsurprisingly are the cities of birth with the highest frequency among respondents; of the Israeli-based respondents, 28 (i.e. 9%) were born in Moscow and 26 (i.e. 8.4%) in Saint Petersburg. Similar figures are to be found among Germany-based respondents,

Country of birth	Frequency (%)
Armenia	0.27
Azerbaijan	1.62
Belarus	8.38
Crimea	1.08
Estonia	0.54
Georgia	0.27
Germany	0.27
Kazakhstan	10.00
Kyrgyzstan	3.24
Latvia	3.78
Lithuania	0.54
Moldova	3.51
Russia	44.59
Tajikistan	0.54
Transnistria	0.27
Turkey	0.27
Ukraine	18.38
USSR	0.81
Uzbekistan	1.62

Table 6.8: Percent frequency of countries of birth; as per original designation by Germany-based respondents

City of birth size	Israel participants, %	Germany participants
≥500,000 inhabitants	71.7	70
≥ 1mio inhabitants	55.3	53.8

Table 6.9: How much of the immigrant population to Israel vs. to Germany comes from an urban environment?

of whom 33 (i.e. 10.2%) were born in Moscow and another 33 in Saint Petersburg.

As is visible from Table 6.9, the Israeli-based sample population can be defined as slightly more urban than their Germany-based counterparts, although this label cannot be applied to the sample population without at least two further warnings; first of all, “urban” refers to the participants’ cities of birth, not to their places of residence in the new country.

Secondly, the fact that a participant was born in a metropolitan area does not automatically make their lifestyle “urban” nor grant them access to the resources that are usually concentrated in urban areas more than in remote villages. This section is devoted to *migration in space* because, although arguably often neglected in

migration studies, the geographical and ecological (in its broadest sense) reality in which the immigrants live dramatically affects the whole migration experience. The importance of studying the geography of migration from the FSU is highlighted by Berthomière (2001:188) in the following:

> The geography of immigration from the FSU to Israel is a necessary first step, since describing the preferential places of residence of these immigrants helps grasp their absorption strategies, and sheds light on their perception of the socioeconomic realities of the country.

Such factors as urban planning and architecture greatly impact the life quality of the immigrants; if Bat Yam and other Israeli cities like e.g. Ashdod are considered by some to be the “Russian ghetto” of Israel, this has ecological reasons, too.
As with the countries of birth, not each of the participant shared information on their places of residence; 191 out of 391 Israel-based participants and 285 out of 370 Germany-based participants made this piece of data available. The next figures present the distribution of the immigrants’ places of residence on the map of Israel (Figure 6.6) and Germany (Figure 6.7). Comprehensibly, there is some degree of overlap between places of residence of the quantitative survey participants and the cities of Israel and Germany where qualitative interviews were conducted. This is also influenced by the recruitment methods, since a great amount of participants is reachable through social media groups centered around a specific geographic area – in which or close to which the participants live, too. Still, the characteristics of the quantitative survey have enabled to reach participants from areas which simply it wouldn’t have been possible for one researcher to cover during fieldwork in two countries.
The cities of residence of Israel-based participants span from the very northern tip of the country around the so-called *Krayot* (i.e. villages making up the suburban area east of Haifa) down to the very South in the city of Eilat, including areas as remote from urban centers as the community settlement of Poria - Neve Oved by the Sea of Galilee.
Similar observations can be made about the Germany-based respondents: although most of them reside in major urban areas which are covered in fieldwork, some of them reside in peripheral areas like e.g. Bruck in der Oberpfalz, a 5,000 inhabitant village located about 100 km away from Nuremberg.

Figure 6.6: Places of residence, Israel sample. Created with Google My Maps

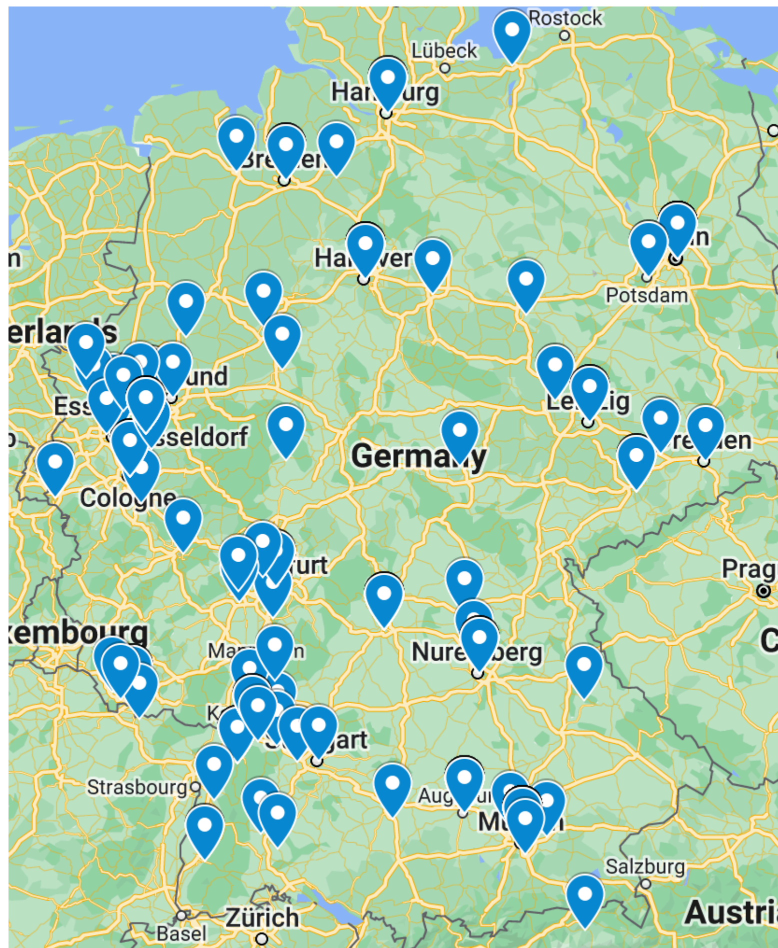

Figure 6.7: Places of residence, Germany sample. Created with Google My Maps

Respondents from both countries are representative of the highly urbanized and educated immigrant population from the former Soviet Union now residing in Israel and Germany; as addressed above, there does seem to be a relationship between urbanization and level of education, although it is not always possible to establish whether said relationship is causal, too. While one would not immediately associate the level of education to what characterizes "migration in space", it is a factor allowing the immigrant's mobility, both in a social and a geographical sense, and is therefore observed in this section. Tables 6.10 and 6.11 present ratios on the highest educational attainment of the respondents.

Educational attainment	%
Middle school	0.26
High school	10.23
Vocational training	7.42
University	72.12
PhD	3.07
Other	6.91

Table 6.10: Highest educational attainment, Israel-based respondents

Educational attainment	%
Middle school	2.43
High school	5.95
Vocational training	6.76
University	72.97
PhD	4.32
Other	7.57

Table 6.11: Highest educational attainment, Germany-based respondents

According to CBS data from 2011, 60% of the young adult population enrolls in a degree program at a university or college; 37% holds a first-level (e.g. BA) degree, and 14.3% holds a second-level (e.g. MA) degree title. 2.1% of Israel's population enrolls in a PhD program, but only 1.3% completes one (Bar-On et al. 2011). Except for the relatively low first-level degree attainment values, Israel's educational attainment figures are more or less in line with the average educational attainment level of OECD countries, i.e. member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

In fact, Israel's overall level of tertiary education attainment – regardless of the degree type – amounts to 47.3% of the young adult population (between 25 and 34 years old) and to 46.1% of the adult population (between 55 and 64 years old), being thus higher than the OECD average. Unless otherwise specified, the latter and all the following data stem from OECD (2021).
As regards gender aspects, the CBS report notes the following: "Israeli women constitute[d] a majority in all degree levels: 55.9% of first degree students, 59.2% of second degree students, and 52.4% of doctoral students" (Bar-On et al. 2011:1).
Looking at German statistics, the level of tertiary education attainment is generally lower than the OECD average of 45.6 for the young adult population and 29.1 for the adult population. In fact, only 34.9 % of the young adult population and 27.6 % of the adult population have attained a level of tertiary education. Moreover, according to DESTATIS (2020), only 1.2% of Germany's population has attained a doctoral degree, of which 47% are women and 53% are men.
Thus, assuming that the survey participants are representative for the immigrant population of Israel and Germany at large, immigrants from the FSU have a considerably higher level of tertiary education attainment than the average level of both their receiving countries.
Table 6.12 provides a comparative overview of data from the survey vis-à-vis national scale statistics of Israel and Germany. Disclaimer: the value for Israel and Germany's tertiary education attainment was obtained by calculating the average between the tertiary education attainment rate of the young adult and the adult population; this figure may vary in official statistics according to the source and year in which data was collected. In view of the respondents' exceptionally high level of tertiary at-

Population	Tertiary education,%	Doctoral degree, %
Israel-based sample	72.1	3.0
Germany-based sample	72.9	4.3
Israel, nation-scale	46.7	1.3
Germany, nation-scale	31.2	1.2

Table 6.12: Comparing tertiary education and PhD attainment levels across the populations

tainment, one could expect that their occupational situation would be accordingly favorable; instead, the respondents' position on the job markets of Israel and Germany is situated below the national standards of the respective countries. While

Israel's unemployment rate amounts to 3.7% of the labor force population (Pasternak et al. 2022:10), the unemployment rate of the Israel-based sample amounts to 5.8%; the unemployment rate of Germany in May 2022 is 2.8% (DESTATIS 2022c), while it amounts to 9.0% among the Germany-based survey respondents.Zeroing in on the respondents' occupational status yields the finding that their job category often does not reflect their level of education and high skilledness; this comes as no surprise, as research on the life quality of immigrants from the FSU to Israel and other countries has shown (see Remennick 2003a, Lewin-Epstein et al. 2003 and Semyonov et al. 2015). While screening the survey data for category building by that which Glaser & Strauss (2006 [1967]:107) name *coding for categories*, occupational categories were abstracted from the respondents' entries at point *6.Occupation* in the questionnaire.
Tables 6.13 and 6.14 show the immigrants' occupational categories with related frequency values.

Occupational category	% of population
Administration	2.82
Blue collar	12.56
Caretaking	3.85
Culture	6.15
Education	12.31
Healthcare	12.82
IT	17.95
Law & finance	8.72
Other	2.31
Retired	4.62
Trade	10.00
Unemployed	5.90

Table 6.13: Occupational category by frequency, Israel-based respondents

From Tables 6.13 and 6.14 emerges that an astonishing 12.56% of the Israel-based respondents has occupation in the so-called blue collar category, which encompasses such occupational activities as factory work and anything related to hard manual labor; the blue collar category is less widespread among Germany-based respondents, amounting to 7.36% of the total respondent population. This piece of information possibly reflects a tendency in the position of post-Soviet immigrants on the labor markets of Israel in comparison to other countries; in fact, as has been noted by

Occupational category	% of population
Administration	2.72
Blue collar	7.36
Caretaking	2.45
Culture	6.81
Education	14.71
Healthcare	13.08
IT	12.26
Law & finance	7.36
Other	1.09
Retired	1.63
Trade	21.53
Unemployed	8.99

Table 6.14: Occupational category by frequency, Germany-based respondents

Semyonov et al. (2015),

> [i]n the Israeli labor many FSU immigrants had experienced downward occupational mobility; many settled for employment at lower occupational status (than the occupations they had in country of origin) and lower earnings (than those predicted on basis of their educational level). Indeed, Soviet immigrants in Israel, despite their European origin, are still disadvantaged in attainment of high status occupations and earnings when compared to European immigrants from western countries. (Semyonov et al. 2015:355)

Chances for occupational mobility or, in this case, the lack thereof evidently have a high impact on the immigrants' life quality, oftentimes translating into residential segregation and systemic hindrances to the immigrants' perceived integration in the receiving society. The latter phenomena are to be observed especially among Israel-based interview partners.

Segregation of immigrants appears to be more acute a problem among FSU immigrants to Israel than to Germany; this does not solely rely on information shared by participants in both the qualitative and the quantitative studies, but also on the immigration and integration policies of both countries as they are both discussed in public discourse and analyzed in literature.

The key aspects of the policies are discussed in this study, too. Referring back to

the WoZuG, i.e. *Law on the assignment of a place of residence* issued in 1989 to regulate the settlement of Spätaussiedler across the territory of Germany,while its effectiveness is disputed, the fact that it was at all issued is highly indicative of the level of engagement with issues related to immigrant segregation in Germany.

It is not the aim of this study to judge whether the immigration and integration policies of one country are more effective than the other; there is no such a thing as a *perfect* immigration policy, one which will be perceived as just by all the parties involved. One of the aims of this analysis lies in locating problematic spots in the policies of both countries based on the immigrants' perceptions as they are exposed in interviews and questionnaire answers, so as to raise awareness among policy-makers for the immigrants' needs and identities.

It is argued in literature and in this study that post-Soviet immigration is highly regulated in Germany, where administrative categories largely ignore the immigrants' self-identifications, thus making the immigrants subject to constrictions and labels paradoxically similar to those with which they had been acquainted in Soviet times, too (see Panagiotidis 2021 for a thorough analysis). On the other hand, Israel does not issue policy specifically directed to immigrants from the former Soviet Union, but every aspiring oleh is equally subject to the Law of Return, a law first issued in 1950 – and amended in 1970 – granting immigration to people of Jewish descent, by which after the 1970 amendment is meant anyone having at least one Jewish grandparent – regardless whether from the side of the father or the mother – or a Jewish spouse (Knesset 1970).

This brings to the fore substantial differences in the policy-making approaches of Israel and Germany towards immigration from the former Soviet Union; in the case of Israel, although there is no law specifically addressing immigration from the FSU, the Law of Return is highly debated especially in the context of post-Soviet immigration, since a conspicuous number of immigrants from the FSU is non-Jewish according to halakhic (i.e. Jewish religious) law.

The following section provides excerpts from the qualitative study to exemplify the latter issues against the backdrop of immigration policy.

6.1.4 Integration in space

Especially in Israel, one of the issues perceived most negatively by the interviewees resides in occupational (im)mobility; in fact, while there are several exchange programs overtly or covertly addressed especially to youth from the FSU willing to immigrate to Israel – like, e.g., the example of Na'ale, or the program *Taglit* mentioned in the following excerpt –, educational qualifications obtained in FSU countries before aliyah are not automatically considered equivalent to Israeli diplomas and need to go through a process of recognition which can be lengthy and problematic. This most certainly implies some degree of additional stress for so-called *'olim ḥadashim*, i.e. new immigrants, most of whom have to find an accommodation and acquire enough command of Hebrew before venturing through bureaucracy. Immigrants may happen to find themselves in a situation in which, after submitting their diplomas for recognition, they are not allowed to take on employment yet.
The following case study exemplifies the dramatic influence of issues related to occupational mobility on the overall integration process.

Case study: MIL27M MIL27M was recruited spontaneously by means of so-called street recruitment,which is described in Chapter 5. At the time when I contacted him for recruitment, MIL27M was working on his shift in a supermarket in Tel Aviv. He was one of several Russian-speaking workers in the shop. Although the supermarket chain is owned by non-Russian speaking Israelis, it caters to immigrants from the FSU and has many non-kosher products in its assortment.
MIL27M moved from Russia to Israel in 2016 after participating in *Taglit* (Hebrew for “discovery”), a program founded in 1999 by private donors and now partially sponsored by the Jewish Agency with the aim of offering young adults with Jewish heritage the chance to explore the country for ten days and possibly deciding whether they would like to make aliyah into Israel.
After the conclusion of Taglit, MIL27M went on to participate in another educational program named *Masa* (Hebrew for “journey”). The Masa program lasts longer than Taglit (at least several months) and has the declared aim of allowing participants to e.g. carry out an internship or otherwise gain professional and/or educational experience in Israel.
In the following, MIL27M recounts his professional experience in the new country:

> MIL27M: А профессию какую писать? Я не хочу эту профессию писать!
> C.:Да какую, любую!
> MIL27M: Я учусь на программиста и очень надеюсь, что я буду им работать скоро.
> C.: Конечно, тогда — программист. Но по-моему это очень уважаемая профессия в *** [obscured for privacy reasons], почему нет?
> MIL27M: Нет, вообще нет. У нас самые худшие условия труда.
> C.: Типа самые худшие по сравнению с чем?
> MIL27M: Ну, как сказать, смотри — нас не кормят, мы работаем шесть дней в неделю обязательно, нам ничего не дарят, никаких подарков. Здесь очень в Израиле распространено дарить подарки, делать какие-то сурпризы, а у нас этого всего нет. Относятся к нам как к ресурсу, то есть рабочая обычная сила
>
> MIL27M: Which profession should I write? I don't want to write this one!
> C.: Well, whichever you want to!
> MIL27M: I'm studying to become a programmer and I really hope I'll find a job as one soon.
> C.: Sure, then [write] "programmer." But I think it's a totally respectable occupation at ***, why not?
> MIL27M: No, not at all. We have the worst working conditions.
> C.: You mean the worst in comparison to what?
> MIL27M: Well, how to say, look, they don't even give us food, we have to work six days a week, they don't give us anything, any gifts. In Israel it's very common to give gifts or make surprisers, but we don't have any of that. They relate to us as to a resource, like, simply to a labor force.

At the beginning of the interview, MIL27M was handed by me the sociolinguistic questionnaire which is discussed in Chapter 5 and which he decided to fill out straight away. At the moment of filling out the field about his profession, he reported hesitation. In fact, his supermarket job is not the one for which he has been studying, nor is he satisfied with or proud of working there. He recounts a general feeling of disappointment and eluded promises, most of which is related to a lacking correspondence between his education and the occupational chances available in

Russia first and in Israel now. The following excerpt outlines his immigration path and the disappointments scattered along it:

> MIL27M: Я закончил университет на инженера [...] и начал искать работу [...] а зарплата инженера — 25,000 рублей. Это 1500 шекелей, меньше 500 долларов. Инженер — человек с высшим образованием![...] Я подумал как это вообще возможно, почему! Я очень этому расстроился, и после окончания университета я сюда поехал на Таглит. [...] Там нам начал рассказывать про Масу, начали предлагать возможности, и я в это поверил очень сильно тогда. [...] В общем я приехал сюда на программу Масу. [...] Я в это все поверил, в итоге обучение оказалось никаким, никакой стажировки я не получил, язык толком я — иврит, то есть, я не выучил. То есть, перед приятием решения получать ли мне теудат зеут или нет, я понял, что я за эти 9 месяцев, 10 месяцев ничего практически не улучшил у себя. Я тогда очень расстроился и думал, зачем мне это надо, может мне обратно поехать, но я подумал что, нет, уже все.

> MIL27M: I graduated university as an [...] engineer and started looking for a job [...] and then an engineer's salary is 25,000 rubles a month, i.e. 1500 shekels, that is less than 500 dollars. For an engineer! Somebody with a university degree! [...] I thought, how can this be, why! I was very disappointed and after graduating I came here with Taglit [...] and they started telling us about Masa, started to offer us some perspectives, and I trusted this quite firmly back then. [...] I believed all of this, but in the end the education was worth nothing, I got no internship and as for the language, I didn't learn any Hebrew. That is, at the moment of deciding whether I should get my Te'udat Zehut [Israeli ID], I realized that within the last 9 or 10 months nothing had changed for the better in my life. I was very disappointed then and started questioning what the point is, whether I should go back, but then I realized that there's no going back.

In the latter excerpt, the interviewee summarizes his life path as one studded by difficulties mostly in the educational and professional sphere. MIL27M notes that these difficulties were among the strongest push factors for his decision to emigrate. Although expecting that his life quality would significantly improve through emigration, he expresses mainly negative attitudes towards immigrant life and was ashamed

of his occupation at the time when the interview took place. The fact that educational and occupational chances highly influence social – and geographical – mobility becomes obvious throughout the interviewee's narration of his immigration path. Once MIL27M decided to relocate from one of Russia's largest cities to Israel, he found himself living in the city of Ramle, where he had found an available spot in a subsidized Hebrew ulpan. Though geographically located in the Central District of Israel, the city of Ramle can be described as belonging to Israel's *periphery*, i.e. an economically and culturally marginal area consisting of "development towns, small towns and moshavim[5] [...] or [...] urban neighbourhoods that in the past were called 'distressed neighbourhoods'" (Henshke 2001:138).

Ramle, along with other cities of Israel's periphery, is a so-called mixed city, i.e. one in which at least two ethnic groups live, which in Israel's context often refers to the coexistence of Jews and Arabs in the same urban area. The designation "mixed" might convey the impression that different ethnic groups come into contact with each other, but this not the case in Ramle and other "mixed cities" of Israel which are marred by segregation (Monterescu & Rabinowitz 2007). This implies a number of socioeconomic problems for its inhabitants. It is often precisely in the mixed cities of the periphery – such as, along with Ramle, Lod, Akko, Nof HaGalil and Ma'alot – that a high concentration of FSU immigrants is to be found. This could be due to several factors, among which possibly chain migration and, more significantly, the function of "Judaization" of mixed cities which has been argued to be assigned in some cases – overtly or covertly – to FSU immigrants on nationalist grounds (see Tzfadia & Yacobi 2007 for a thorough analysis of this issue).

Putting the experience of MIL27M against the backdrop of these and other issues of life in Israel's peripheral and, in general, mixed cities, it is comprehensible that life in Ramle presented him with increased difficulties along his immigration path; in his words,

> MIL27M: А так мне было очень сложно, особенно по началу когда я жил в городе Рамле, где после восьми вечера все умирает. Мне было очень сложно адаптироваться

> MIL27M: And for the rest, I had a really hard time, especially in the beginning, when I was living in the city of Ramle, where after eight in the

[5] A *moshav* (plural *moshavim*) is a cooperative agricultural village in Israel.

> evening everything is dead. It was really hard for me to adapt

Naturally, segregation also has consequences in sociolinguistic terms: if immigrants from the FSU are sent in groups on ulpan programs to highly segregated cities with little or no chances of interacting with native Hebrew speakers, their Hebrew learning experience and attitudes towards Hebrew can be expected to be negatively affected under such circumstances. Sociolinguistic issues are described extensively in Section 6.3.

The case of MIL27M exemplifies concisely the issues negatively affecting the integration process of numerous FSU immigrants to Israel and which, based on data collected within the scope of this study, are not to be found in the same proportions among FSU immigrants to Germany.

The societal and migration policy factors negatively influencing the experience of MIL27M are reflected in the perceptions and evaluations shared by participants in the quantitative study, too, and are ultimately in line with nation-wide statistics on social mobility, which can also help to explain the differences in terms of social mobility between immigrants from the FSU to Israel vs. Germany.

Although the data corpus resulting from the quantitative study consists of answers from more than 700 participants, such an amount is still insufficient to allow detecting widely representative patterns. If anything, though, looking at data from the quantitative corpus can still be helpful to indicate potential issues or other phenomena worth examining or pointing the policy-makers' attention at. Thus, while low income (in this study, from the categories "blue collar," "caretaking" and "unemployed") immigrants to Germany are spread across several – generally highly populated – cities throughout Germany, low-income participants from Israel tend to reside in a more concentrated fashion, especially in cities of the so-called periphery of Israel. The fact that low income immigrants to Israel tend to reside in the periphery and have a slightly more concentrated residence pattern than their Germany-based counterparts could point at a lower social mobility for FSU immigrants to Israel as opposed to Germany. Tables 6.15 and 6.16 provide an overview on the latter aspects: Not only does a higher percentage of Israel-based respondents have low income occupation than Germany-based respondents (22,31% vs. 18,8%),but the above table also allows to reflect on some possible tendencies of societal relevance. Looking at the Germany-based table, unemployed individuals and low-income earners are more highly concentrated in industrial centers such as Dusseldorf, Hanover

City	% of respondents
Afula	2.22
Akko	**8.89**
Arad	2.22
Ashkelon	4.44
Bat Yam	2.22
Beer Sheva	**11.11**
Eilat	4.44
Ein haBesor	2.22
Haifa	4.44
Jerusalem	4.44
Karmiel	**6.67**
Katzrin	4.44
Kfar Saba	2.22
Kiryat Motzkin	2.22
Kiryat Yam	2.22
Lod	2.22
Ma'ale Adumim	2.22
Migdal haEmek	2.22
Naariyah	4.44
Nof haGalil	2.22
Netaniyah	4.44
Or Akiva	2.22
Rishon leZion	2.22
Rosh haAin	2.22
Tel Aviv	**8.89**
Yafo	2.22

Table 6.15: Places of residence of low-income respondents in Israel

and Nuremberg; at the same time, with the exception of these outliers, the rest of low-income respondents are quite equally distributed over some of the most important economic and cultural centers of Germany's regions (e.g. Augsburg, Munich, Karlsruhe, Leipzig, Dresden etc.) and, to a lesser extent, small towns in the federal states of Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Hesse,Lower Saxony, Northrhine-Westphalia and Saxony.Thus, while it appears difficult to identify a tendency in low-income respondents' places of residence in Germany, the same is not valid for Israel, where most of the cities featured in Table 6.15 are known as places with a high percentage

City	% of respondents
Aldingen	1.85
Augsburg	5.55
Baden-Baden	5.56
Bamberg	1.85
Bremen	5.56
Chemnitz	5.56
Dortmund	1.85
Dresden	1.85
Dunningen	1.85
Düsseldorf	**16.67**
Frankenberg	1.85
Hamburg	1.85
Hannover	**7.41**
Karlsruhe	3.70
Kirchberg	1.85
Köln	1.85
Leipzig	3.70
München	5.56
Nürnberg	**7.41**
Rotenburg / Wümme	1.85
Saarlouis	1.85
Senden	1.85
Waldbronn	1.85
Wuppertal	1.85
Würzburg	5.55
Xanten	1.85

Table 6.16: Places of residence of low-income respondents in Germany

of immigrant population from the FSU[6] which are at the same time mixed cities (e.g. Akko, Haifa, Jerusalem, Lod,Nof haGalil, Tel Aviv-Yafo) and/or cities of the sociocultural periphery (Akko, Ashkelon, Beer Sheva, Karmiel, the Krayot,the cities of Bat Yam and Rishon leZion in the southern suburbs of Tel Aviv, i.e. the area called *Gush Dan*), including settlements like Ma'ale Adumim and *moshavim* (i.e. Ein haBesor).

The latter observations are helpful in the analysis of the immigrants' integration

[6]The Israel CBS has only very limited information about the percentage of FSU and/or Russian-speaking immigrants in selected cities of Israel; the latter was explicitly communicated by the CBS within e-mail correspondence between the CBS and the author of this study.

paths in Israel vs. Germany and, as hinted above,do partially reflect national patterns in social mobility enlightened e.g. in the World Economic Forum's *Global Social Mobility Report* (WEF 2020). In fact, from the WEF report (WEF 2020) emerges that Germany ranks eleventh (78.8 social mobility points out of 100) in the global social mobility ranking for 2020, while Israel holds place 33 (68.1 out of 100). The WEF report shows that Israel performs more poorly than Germany in terms of education access, education quality and equality, work opportunities and working conditions (compare pages 92–93 for Germany with 112–113 for Israel in the WEF 2020).

The latter observations are not to conclude that there are no individuals perceiving their story of immigration and integration to Israel as successful nor that, conversely, all FSU immigrants to Germany perceive their story as one of success and satisfaction through and through. Rather, they provide an interpretation framework for whether and why the immigration and integration path is perceived as successful or not successful by the immigrants themselves.

In order to further contextualize FSU immigration to Israel and Germany in space, a missing piece needs to be added which is touched upon in the above discussion on social mobility, too: immigrants' degree of satisfaction with life in the new country. While the latter aspect is not strictly of demographic character, it has demographic implications discussed in the following.

The discussion of the respondents' degree of satisfaction with life in the new country is based on question:

> 30. Has your life quality improved since your move to Germany/Israel?

and question:

> 31.Are you considering relocating to another country?

Question 30 is scaled, allowing the respondents to pick a value from 1 (minimum) to 5 (maximum). Within the scope of this analysis, values 1 and 2 are associated to a negative, evaluation, value 3 is associated to an average evaluation and values 4 and 5 are associated to a positive evaluation.

Generally, respondents from Israel evaluate changes in life quality coming with aliyah in a slightly more polarized way than their Germany-based counterparts; Table 6.17 provides the ratios for each value on the scale in each respondent population. As is visible in Table 6.17, informants from Israel tend to evaluate their immigration

Value	Israel %	Germany %
1	5.12	1.09
2	3.07	1.90
3	14.07	20.11
4	29.16	31.52
5	48.59	45.38

Table 6.17: Evaluation of life quality improvement after immigration to Israel/to Germany

experience to the country more frequently either very negatively (1) or very positively (5) than is the case for the Germany-based respondents, where a higher concentration of responses can be spotted around values 3 and 4. The broadest divide between the two populations can be appreciated especially around value 3, with a difference of above six percent points between the two populations.
Table 6.17 is indicative of attitude tendencies which are to be found in the sections of this chapter dedicated to sociocultural and, most importantly, sociolinguistic aspects of the data analysis.In fact, they point at the immigrants' emotional binding to their image of new countries which, in turn, is influenced both by the immigrants' self-identifications and by pre-established identity categories in the immigration policy of the respective countries.
Throughout this chapter is observed how Israel's and Germany's migration policies present substantial differences and how the policies and their differences dramatically affect the immigrants' lives – as an example, in terms of which city or area the immigrants choose, as well the extent to which the policy allows them to choose autonomously where to settle down. Moreover, in this chapter is discussed how Germany's immigration policy is one driven by explicit, ready-made administrative categories within which the immigrant has to fit and which are highly present in the immigrants' daily life, influencing their position in society as well as their access to educational, occupational and further resources. Thus, in order to accomplish immigration to Germany, Jewish Kontingentflüchtlinge and Spätaussiedler have to fulfill different criteria than e.g. Vietnamese Kontingentflüchtlinge or refugees from other countries; on the other hand, Israeli immigration policy is mainly based on only one law, i.e. the Law of Return, applying onto all prospective olim one main criterion, i.e. proof of Jewish heritage. While this does not mean that Israeli immigration policy is less hierarchic in terms of its outcomes in society, it means that it is less *overtly* so. Also, because Judaism plays a fundamental role in Israel and its national

formation while religion can be said to play a marginal role in German nationhood, the ethnoreligious aspect is central to Israeli policy and highly affects the immigrants' self-identifications, as is analyzed in Sections 6.2.1, 6.3.3 and 6.4. In spite of the better social mobility opportunities which FSU immigrants to Germany generally appear to have, their evaluation of possible improvements in their life quality since immigration is not overwhelmingly positive but rather neutral. This points as the fact that educational and occupational chances or other factors contributing to social mobility and social welfare do not alone suffice for the immigrants to deem their immigration as positively affecting their life quality. The latter is reinforced by data on the immigrants' desire to relocate, which interestingly show that a far higher percentage of Israeli-based respondents does not (values 1, 2) wish to relocate to another country than is the case for Germany-based respondents. Data on relocation desire is presented in Table 6.18. Thus, although social mobility and other factors

Value	Israel %	Germany %
1 (very low)	35.29	22.80
2	21.48	23.90
3	18.16	24.18
4	10.74	16.76
5 (very high)	14.32	12.36

Table 6.18: Degree of relocation desire among immigrants to Israel and to Germany

certainly impacting life quality in a country are evaluated in WEF (2020) statistics as more favorable in Germany than in Israel, aspects such as degree of satisfaction with life quality improvement in the new country as well as degree of relocation desire point at a higher emotional attachment to the receiving country among Israel-based respondents. Statistics from the World Happiness Report (Helliwell et al. 2022) as well as insights into the OECD Better Life Index (OECD 2022) also argue for the latter inference. Let's briefly look at how the Helliwell et al. (2022:15) conceptualize happiness and what criteria are analyzed to produce country rankings for happiness in the report:

> Our measurement of subjective well-being continues to rely on three main well-being indicators: life evaluations, positive emotions, and negative emotions (described in the report as positive and negative affect). Happiness rankings are based on life evaluations as the more stable measure of the quality of people's lives.

Based on Helliwell et al. (2022) data, Israel occupies position 9 in the top 10 ranking of the world's happiest countries, whereas Germany holds place 14. Moreover, based on world data on life satisfaction shared by OECD (2022), Israel "outperforms the average in health, social connections and life satisfaction." Some of the topics which the OECD Better Life Index includes in its measurement of well-being and in which Israel performs exceptionally well in comparison to Germany are community, defined as the "quality of [...] social support network" (OECD 2022), and civic engagement, defined as "[...] involvement in democracy". The criterion of community is particularly relevant to this study in that the feeling of being situated in a community whose members are ready to support each other significantly affects a person's social identity in terms of the degree to which they identify with a group of people united by the same values, ideas, attitudes etc.
The feeling of belonging to a community is often addressed by the Israel-based participants of the qualitative study and has a significant influence on the immigrants' life choices; the following excerpt from an interview with SIL39F exemplifies cases in which the feeling of being situated in a community becomes a supporting force throughout the integration process, leading the immigrant to develop the wish to engage themselves more and more for the community and the place where it is located.

Case Study: SIL39F At the time of the interview, SIL39F had only been in the country for one and a half years, but had already made several occupational and volunteering experiences which brought her to improve her Hebrew proficiency and partake in charity and women's rights initiatives based in the city of Be'er Sheva, where she resides with her family since aliyah. In the excerpt below, she describes her fondness of Jerusalem, to which she feels emotionally attached; at the same time, she feels strongly attached to Be'er Sheva, too.

> С.:А вы именно в Беер Шеву хотели попасть, или как это получилось?
> SIL39F:Муж мой, он здесь был на Таглите и у него было хотя бы какое-то представление. [...] Вот поэтому мы сюда приехали, на самом деле просто потому, что так получилось. Но мы так и рады что мы здесь, потому что здесь нам хорошо. [...] Я жертва Иерусалимского синдрома. Мне очень нравится Иерусалим и по-моему он не похож на другие города. Там волшебный воздух, этот город — потрясающее место. Я знаю, что часто го-

ворят, что там жить очень сложно, невозможно и тяжело, и наверно это так, но это место которое мне нравится больше всех остальных.
C.:Так что ты бы туда даже переехала?
SIL39F:Да, может быть. С другой стороны с Беер Шевой мне тоже было бы жалко расставаться. Я полтора года здесь, вот но такое, за эти полтора года у меня здесь много чего появилось вот мы здесь стараемся активной какой-то жизнью жить вот и что-то делать, с кем-то встречаться, что-то узнавать, поэтому Беер Шева мне тоже очень нравится.
C.:[...]А что-то изменилось в твоем мировоззрении с тех пор как ты переехала в Израиль?
SIL39F:[...]То, что мне дал Израиль — колоссально много. Здесь открытые люди, вот, и те возможности которые у меня есть здесь, несмотря на то, что это маленькая страна, вот и несмотря на то, что у меня как бы нет особенно здесь так ни денег, ни ничего [...] все равно я чувствую, что можно много сделать. И это очень здорово и воодушевляет. Как-то чувствуешь себя больше здесь ,чем там. Каждый человек больше значит,как будто. Это не то, чтобы мировоззрение, но это приятное чувство.

C.: Did you intentionally move to Be'er Sheva, or how did it go?
SIL39F.: My husband had been here on Taglit and at least had some kind of clue [...] that's why we moved here, simply because that's how it went. But we're really happy to be here, we're doing fine here. [...] I am a victim of the Jerusalem syndrom. I really like Jerusalem, to me he's a city like no other. It's got something special in the air, it's just a fantastic place. I know that many people say it's a difficult place to live in, that it's impossible, and hard, and they're probably right, but it's the place I like the most.
C.: So would you consider moving there?
SIL39F: Yes, maybe. On the other hand, it'd be quite sad to part from Be'er Sheva. I've been here for one and a half years, but in this period of time I achieved many things, we try to lead an active life here and to take some kind of action, to meet people, get to know things, so I really like Be'er Sheva, too.
C.:Has anything changed in your attitude towards the world since you moved to Israel?

> SIL39F: [...]What Israel has given me is just incredible. People are very outgoing here, and the opportunities I got here, even though it's such a small country, and even though I don't have anything in particular here, neither money nor anything else [...] I still feel that there is a lot which can be done here. And this is just so cool and inspiring. Somehow you feel like you are *more* [my emphasis] here in comparison to back there. Every single person is just worth more here, as it were. It's not about my attitude towards the world, it's more of a feeling.

The above excerpts reinforce the importance for immigrants to develop a sense of belonging – in terms of the definition of social identity by Tajfel & Turner (1979:40) as "those aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself as belonging" – to the receiving society or to a community rooted within it. This sense of belonging often relies on emotional attachment to values which the immigrants associate with the receiving countries. Based on data from both the qualitative and quantitative corpora, a lesser degree of emotional attachment to the receiving country is present among Germany-based than Israel-based respondents, explaining the fact that participants' attitudes towards aspects as e.g. life quality improvement and relocation desire are evaluated more neutrally by Germany-based respondents, whereas Israel-based respondents tend to have either evidently positive or negative attitudes towards the latter and other aspects. These patterns of emotional neutrality vs. emotional attachment on the side of the immigrants can be regarded as a reflection of the societal dynamics of Israel and Germany at large and are conveniently observable by looking at *migration in space*, i.e. at the distribution of immigrants over the country's territory.
It has been illustrated in this chapter that FSU immigrants to Israel tend to settle down by chain migration more conspicuously than FSU immigrants to Germany, the latter being subject at least partially to a more centralized distribution system binding them to a specific town or city for a specific time range (see Panagiotidis 2021:82). While the centralized system of Germany did not prevent the formation of so-called *Russenghettos* (Panagiotidis 2021:81), based on data collected within this study – which, in turn, to a significant extent rely on the participants' standpoints – the entity of geographic segregation appears far more problematic in Israel (especially in its periphery) than in Germany. The latter is possibly related to an overall higher degree of social mobility and access to occupation and educational resources

in Germany than in Israel.
The above observations testify to the role of attitudes – and, in particular, language attitudes, discussed in Section 6.3.3 – as analytical instruments for the study of migration phenomena: looking at the immigrants' standpoints,evaluations and feelings about landmarks of their immigration and integration trajectories is fundamental to deliver empirically grounded interpretations of statistically identifiable patterns, many of which would remain devoid of meaning for the purpose of migration policy implementation,if the immigrants' standpoint are consistently neglected as has been the case both in research and in policy itself.
The next section builds the core of the analysis, focusing on the immigrants' self-identifications in ethnonational and cultural terms and on the relation between the immigrants' self-identifications and their attitudes towards language, departing from the following empirically grounded insight that studying language attitudes means trying to "understand people's processing of, and dispositions towards, various situated language and communicative behaviors and the subsequent treatment extended to the users of such forms" (Cargile et al. 1994:211).

6.2 Identity and language

The study of language attitudes and attitudes towards other aspects of immigrant life become all the more revealing of significant patterns if the two are looked at jointly. During the qualitative interviews, which were carried out in a mostly open fashion, it was observable that the majority of the participants would discuss their attitudes towards a given language variety in analogy with, on the one hand, linguistic and, on the other hand, political, cultural, social aspects of relevance in their immigrant everyday life.
This section discusses the immigrants' self-identifications, highlighting the divide between the immigrants' perceptions and the identity categories imposed by the bureaucracies of immigration policy. After treating the immigrants' self-identifications based on both quantitative data and insights from qualitative interviews, the immigrants' language attitudes are analyzed. Subsequently, both language attitudes and self-identifications are looked at jointly, thus illustrating the significance of language attitudes for the immigrants' construction of social identity in the receiving country.

6.2.1 Self-identification

The self-identification categories which this section refers to emerged out of the necessity for simplification involved in working with quantitative data. They are based on the participants' answers to the following question in the survey:

> 7.How would you describe your national identity in no more than three words?

The formulation of question 7 is the result of several reflections. While the English term "national" addresses self-identification in terms of nationhood (i.e. the respondents' passports, essentially), the original Russian formulation of the question

> 7. Как бы Вы описали свою национальную идентичность, используя не более трех слов?

employs the attribute национальный ("nat͡sional'nyĭ"), whose semantics include both national and ethnic aspects of identity. As is discussed in Chapter 2, the merging of both ethnic and national identity aspects in the term "nat͡sional'nyĭ" was facilitated by Soviet nationality policy by which, on the one hand, the Soviet state had an "ethno-federal structure" (Smith 2019:977) and, on the other hand, Soviet citizens' ethnicity was institutionalized by being "ascribed to individuals and entered in their passports based on the nationality of their parents, [...] which had profound effects on entitlement to education and career prospects" (Smith 2019:977). The formulation of question 7 represents a compromise between administrative terminology, with which the immigrants are acquainted due to their familiarity with the so-called *fifth paragraph* of the Soviet passport abolished in 1997 and is discussed in Chapter 5. While on the one hand referring to the immigrants' nationality might be perceived as targeting nationality either in terms of citizenship or in ethnonational terms according to Soviet policy, the wording of the question clarifies that the respondents' self-identification plays a central role: the respondents are free to determine which ethnonational designation of their choice more adequately describes their identity.
From the quantitative survey emerges a complex picture of the participants' identity, which they define based on religious, ethnic, national, linguistic,cultural and other parameters. One of the main difficulties in creating identity categories for analysis resides in the fact that most participants tend to describe their identity as a mosaic of elements, drawing on several of the aforementioned parameters at the same time.,

while immigration policy instead generally employs only one criterion at a time for the creation of "identity" categories with the aim of directing groups of immigrants with shared characteristics to the immigration channel deemed convenient by bureaucracy. After a thorough analysis of the participants' responses to question 7, the following overarching identity categories are detected for Israel-based participants:

- Israeli/Jew
- Russian and FSU
- Mixed
- Other

and the following for Germany-based participants:

- German
- Jew
- Russian and FSU
- Mixed
- Other

Before delving into an interpretation of the above self-identification labels, it is worth pointing at the following tables illustrating the percentages for each self-identification category, as this piece of information is relevant throughout this chapter. In order

Identity category	%
Israeli/Jew	40.15
Mixed	30.95
Other	14.32
Russian & FSU	14.58

Table 6.19: Self-identification percentages, Israel-based respondents

to fully appreciate the significance of self-identification categories, it is necessary to factor in data resulting from question 10 "Within which framework did you or your relatives emigrate to Germany/to Israel?". The following Tables 6.21 and 6.22 show a summary of the categories extracted from the participants' answers: The picture of emigration frameworks is much more fragmented among FSU immigrants to Germay, while in Israel aliyah and other programs based on Jewish heritage preparing

Identity category	%
German	2.43
Jew	3.51
Mixed	23.24
Other	28.38
Russian and FSU	42.43

Table 6.20: Self-identification percentages, Germany-based respondents

Emigration framework	%
Aliyah	93.08
Family reunification	0.77
Marriage	2.82
Masa program	1.28
Na'ale program	1.03
Other	1.03

Table 6.21: Emigration framework, Israel-based respondents

Emigration framework	%
(Spät-)Aussiedler	19.46
Blue card	4.86
European Union citizen	3.51
Family reunification	3.78
Jewish heritage	30.00
Marriage	8.65
Other	5.14
Studies	11.08
Work	13.51

Table 6.22: Emigration framework, Germany-based respondents

young adults for aliyah (such as Masa and Na'ale) are the preferential emigration path. Interestingly, Jewish emigration is more widespread than repatriation as (Spät-)Aussiedler among FSU immigrants to Germany.

The ethnic motif appears to play only a reduced role in emigration to Germany, where student and business migration are far more present.

Illegal immigration is left out of the picture, as it is certainly difficult to document through an online survey. While its proportions can hardly be quantified in official statistics, it can be assumed that it makes up a relevant portion of migration phenomena in both Israel and Germany. The last comprehensive report on illegal im-

migration to German is from 2005 (Sinn et al. 2005) and estimates between 100,000 and 1,000,000 illegally resident migrants, an unprecised amount of whom are "Eastern Europeans" (Sinn et al. 2005:7) and "nationals of countries with a history of or ongoing migration flows to the Federal Republic of Germany (e.g. Turkey, former Jugoslavia, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Vietnam)" (Sinn et al. 2005:7).
Information on illegal migration to Israel appears to be better documented; according to Sheps (2021), 48,600 migrant workers entered Israel on a tourist visa in 2019, of whom 37,300 (i.e. 76,7%) were from the FSU (Sheps 2021:7).
Data presented in Tables 6.21 and 6.22 is essential to gain a grounded understanding of the participants' self-identification trends as they are illustrated in The fact that ethnic motifs – expressed through the frameworks of Jewish and German ethnic heritage for repatriation or emigration to Germany – are only secundary in Table 6.22 partially explains the low degree of self-identification with the category "German" among FSU immigrants to Germany (compare Tables 6.19 and 6.20 with 6.21 and 6.22).

6.2.2 *Russian & FSU* category

As hinted at the beginning of this section, the step of attaining synthetic identity categories is both essential to the purpose of analysis and, at the same time, relying on extreme simplification. The category "Russian and FSU" is highly problematic in that it includes people whose self-identifications hardly have any common features. One might legitimately question whether two immigrants to Germany, one self-identifying as Ukrainian and the other as Kyrgyz, can be assigned the same analytical category simply based on the fact that both countries were members of the Soviet Union until four decades ago. However, there are arguments for the analytical validity of the category, which rely on linguistic commonalities and can be showcased through examples from the data corpus.
As discussed in Section 6.1.3, the majority of the participants were born in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan and other countries of the former Soviet Union. Russia is the country of birth of more than 40% of the participants from both countries; its relevance is not only demographic but also biographic. In fact, mentions to Russia and/or to the Russian language in answers to question 7 about self-identification present 133 occurrences among Israel-based respondents and 192 among Germany-

based respondents. At the same time, references to Ukraine, which is the second most frequent country of birth for both respondent populations, amount to 24 for Israel-based and 29 for Germany-based respondents; references to Belarus amount to 5 for Israel-based and 22 for Germany-based respondents, and so forth, thus pointing at a rough correspondence between the frequency of the immigrants' countries of birth and their self-identifications.

Another identity-defining aspect which is often cited by respondents to question 7 is the Russian language, regardless of the immigrants' country of birth. The following examples are indicative of the relevance of the Russian language for the participants, illustrating how the participants are faced with the challenging task of condensing their multi-faceted identity within three words.

The example below stems from answer L151 in the Israel-based survey population. Its author was born in Kramatorsk, in the Donetzk Oblast of Ukraine, and describes her (ethno-)national identity as follows:

> L151 Русский язык, литература, украинский флаг
> L151 Russian language, literature, Ukrainian flag

The next example M112 stems from a Germany-based participant born in the Latvian city of Daugavpils:

> M112 Русскоговорящая гражданка Европы
> M112 Russian-speaking citizen of Europe

The following example stems from Kyiv-born, Germany-based respondent 152 and mentions slavic origing as an additional factor next to Ukrainian nationality and Russian language:

> M152 украинка, славянка, русскоязычная
> M152 Ukrainian, Slav, Russian-speaking

Numerous cases along the lines of the examples above are to be found in the quantitative data corpus, showing how the Russian language, with its literary and cultural artifacts and values which the respondents attach to it, is seen by the average participant as a defining element of their "nat͡sional'nai͡a identichnost'", i.e. of their (ethno-)national identity. This point is central to the whole study and explains why, notwithstanding the immigrants' post-Soviet background in terms of their national

origin and historical period in which they were born, the term *Russian-speaking* can be considered far more adequate than *post-Soviet* to describe the immigrant community analyzed in this study, which is representative of a considerable portion of migration phenomena from FSU countries in general. In fact, the immigrants' language practices are mentioned as an element not only defining their identity but also allowing them to identify with a community in the receiving country. Based on data collected for this study, it can be argued that it is not the use of Russian as a language per se, but rather the values which its speaker attach to it and other speakers – i.e., their language attitudes –, which constitutes one of the main building blocks of the immigrants' social identity along their integration path.
The latter observations represent a nodal point of this study and have highly complex implications in view of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict since 2014, especially following the Russian aggression of Ukraine which was started on February 24th, 2022. These implications are discussed along this chapter. But before delving into them or before providing an analysis of the participants' self-identifications, it is necessary to expand on the relation between language attitudes and social identity. The following excerpts are especially insightful, providing food for thought on language attitudes and their importance when studying societal dynamics.

6.2.2.1 Russian, Russian-speaking and post-Soviet identities

The excerpts stem from an interview with KIL25F who was born in the Ukrainian Oblast of Kirovohrad and emigrated to Israel with her family in 2011. Her mother IIL44F also participated in the interview, self-identifies as Ukrainian and defines Ukrainian as her native language. IIL44F acquired near-native knowledge of Russian while working for a short period in Moscow, an experience common to many living in perpiheral areas of the FSU where occupation is not easily accessible. Her husband, father of KIL25F, is a native of Russia, speaks Russian as his native language and has no command of Ukrainian. Therefore, as IIL44F and KIL25F recount, the language spoken at home is Russian, with some code-switching to Ukrainian here and there. In the excerpt below, KIL25F describes Russian as the language in which her life takes place, literally attributing to it a vital function; this attitude coexists with her self-identification as Ukrainian, which she states at the beginning of the interview while filling out the sociolinguistic questionnaire discussed in Chapter chap:design.

> KIL25F:Нам просто нужно было уехать, потому что, знаешь, в Украине уже произошли многие изменения [...]. [Там] я не знала украинский язык, и мне было трудно говорить на украинском. Я все время на русском [говорила] и мне было трудно переключиться на украинский.Боже, и учительница мне: «ти повинна знати українську мову!», и я смотрю, я понимаю что я должна знать ее, но я не могу ее знать, потому что вся моя жизнь на русском состоит, ну как!
> C.:[...]А есть между русскоязычными какие-то конфликты?
> KIL25F:[...]Слушай, ты такой хороший вопрос задала. Я тебе скажу, на него отвечу так, с моей точки зрения и с моих наблюдений [...] не так, как в России и в Украине, что там вообще война между русскими и украинцами. Здесь все равно, как они говорят, что **мы все из** [бывшего] **Советского Союза**, то есть, здесь нету такого там, «ты русский, все я с тобой общаться не буду», «а, ты украинка, я с тобой общаться не буду.»
>
> KIL25F: We simply had to go, because, you know, many changes were already starting to happen in Ukraine [...] [There] I didn't know Ukrainian and I had a hard time speaking it. I spoke Russian all the time and found it hard to switch to Ukrainian. And, oh God, the teacher would be like: [*in Ukrainian*] "you need to know the Ukrainian language!" and I look at her and I know I need to know it, but I can't know it, because my whole life exists in Russian, how should I do it?
> C.:[...] Are there any conflicts between Russian-speaking [immigrants] here?
> KIL25F: [...] Listen, that's a great question you asked. Let me tell you, I'll answer it based on my point of view and on my observations [...] it's not like in Russia and in Ukraine where there is basically a war going on between the Russian and the Ukrainian. Here it doesn't matter, it's as they say, that **we're all from the** [former] **Soviet Union**, I mean, here we don't act like "oh, you're Russian, then I'm not gonna talk to you," "oh, you're Ukrainian, I won't talk to you."

The latter excerpt hints at the meaning of the "post-Soviet": while it is barely a category actively used by the immigrants themselves for self-identification, it is often employed as a common frame of cultural reference for immigrants to construct a

collective identity in the receiving country. At the same time, as illustrated in the example below, implicit reference to the post-Soviet cultural frame largely relies on a linguistic feature, i.e. the still widespread active or passive knowledge of Russian in many FSU countries.
While her active command of Ukrainian is limited, KIL25F reports having a secure passive knowledge of it and is fond of it, describing it as a " співуча мова"(spivucha mova), i.e. "melodious language". However, it is through usage of Russian that she has created and creates a social network of reference in her immigrant life.
Not only are most of her social contacts to Russian-speaking people from several FSU countries, as shown below;

> KIL25F:[...]Мой парень — грузин, и он выучил русский здесь. [...] Я такой человек общительный, мне везде легко найти общение. Я просто куда ни прийду, я везде себе нахожу с кем мне пообщаться. Я в Бат Яме когда жила, там магазин, грузинка девочка,у нее свой магазин, я у нее покупала, и так получилось, что мы начали с ней так общаться тесно.

> KIL25F: My boyfriend is Georgian and he learned Russian here. [...] I'm a very communicative person, anywhere I can easily find people to talk to. Doesn't matter where I go, I always find somebody to talk to. When I used to live in Bat Yam, there was a shop there, it was owned by a Georgian girl and I used to go for shopping there, and so it happened that we started to interact quite closely.

KIL25F employs the adjective русский (russkiĭ), i.e. "Russian", to define herself as opposed to native,especially religious, Israelis; the latter usage of the attribute "Russian" (Russian *russkiĭ*, Hebrew *rusi*, German *Russe*) to designate Russian-speaking people from the countries of the FSU is common in immigrant communities both in Israel and in Germany, as well as in the FSU immigrant communities of the United States. An example of this usage of the attribute is provided in the excerpt below, where KIL25F positions herself with respect to her Israeli ex-husband's treatment of her as a non-halakhic Jew:

> KIL25F: Это просто дикий расизм! Он мне говорит, что она гойка, не еврейка, пусть отмечает свои праздники русские, а вот израильские еврейские праздники, он [ребенок] пусть с папой отмечает. А я говорю, что,

> говорю, это вообще за деление такое? Если я русская, то что, мне теперь не жить? Не дышать?
>
> KIL25F: It's just some uncivilized racism! He goes like,she's a *goya* [gentile, non-Jewish], she's not a Jew, so she shall celebrate her Russian festivities by herself, while he [the couple's child] should celebrate Jewish festivities with his dad. And I'm like, what is this distinction supposed to mean? Am I not supposed to live, to breathe, just because I'm Russian?

As can be inferred from the above examples, several components come into play for the definition of her identity; on the one hand, she feels a strong affective bond to Ukraine and its culture; not only was KIL25F born and raised there, her mother also speaks Ukrainian as her first language. On the other hand, growing up as a Russian-speaker and moving from Ukraine to Israel, Russian represents for the whole family an indispensable means of communication in the new country, through which – particularly in cities like Bat Yam – immigrants from the FSU are able to socially interact with one another and possibly develop a sense of belonging to a community; so much so that K. talks of herself as of a "Russian", thus implicitly referring to the fact that she, as the majority of FSU immigrants to Israel, is a speaker of Russian. Thus, what defines the community is primarily usage of Russian, while cultural practices – in terms of e.g. food, beliefs etc. – of course retain a high relevance but might differ very significantly depending on the immigrants' country of origin in the FSU.
While linguistic policy and language ideology are rapidly changing in the post-Soviet countries and Russian is gradually becoming a secondary or minority language in several of them (see Pavlenko 2008b for an overview of language policy in all post-Soviet states,albeit not the most up-to-date), Russian seems to preserve its status of a *lingua franca* especially in the diaspora (Pavlenko 2008a:27).
The latter observations are far from generalizing on the post-Soviet space as a Russian-speaking context; however, it is essential to point out that a considerable portion of transnational mobility from the post-Soviet states to other countries, including Israel and Germany, is indeed Russian-speaking. In fact, the questionnaire and the qualitative study address *in Russian* Russian-speaking immigrants from the countries of the FSU to Israel and Germany not arbitrarily, but out of the ethnographically grounded observation that migration from the countries of the FSU is, to a great extent, Russian-speaking. In this respect, the Russian invasion of Ukraine

on February 24th, 2022 – with all the events leading up to it over a decade at least – represents a turning point for migration from Ukraine, and studies comparing migration from Ukraine before and after the war are highly necessary in order to obtain an exhaustive and up-to-date sociolinguistic picture of the situation.
The above reflections and generalizations based on the case of KIL25F suggest a possible answer to the following question posed by Brown (2013:240):

> Why continue to group and consider these countries together more than 20 years after the collapse of the Soviet Union? Researching language policy and education in this region, whether this particular space is labeled post- Communist (Bulajeva & Hogan-Brun, 2010[7]), post-socialist (Silova, 2010b[8]), or post-Soviet (Ciscel, 2008[9]; Kulyk, 2013[10]), points to strong links between the Soviet past and the post-Soviet present.

Brown (2013) makes a crucial point: it is especially in terms of language policy and ideology that the post-Soviet should be studied, so as to engage in depth with the complexity and variety it entails, rather than treating the post-Soviet as it were an imaginary territory only "meaningful in researchers' geographic frames" (Brown 2013:240) to which a label is uncritically attached.
This is not an invitation to reject the validity of the term "post-Soviet" altogether; in fact, it is used in this study, too, as I explain in Section 2.8. It is rather a solicitation to scientifically engage with FSU countries as watchfully and critically as to be able to recognize the historically, socially, linguistically and otherwise conditioned moment in which this label becomes too far removed from the reality it is employed to describe. Therefore, the attribute *post-Soviet* wouldn't describe the commonalities shared by the immigrant communities with which this study engages accurately enough as the attribute Russian-speaking. Moreover, the materials collected for this study and their analysis and interpretation suggest that the sociolinguistic reality of the immigrant

[7]Cited as: Bulajeva, T., & Hogan-Brun, G. (2010). Introducing early foreign-language learning in the Baltic context. *Comparative Education*, 46, 79–97

[8]Cited as: Silova, I. (2010b). Rediscovering post-socialism in comparative education. In I. Silova (Ed.), *Post-socialism is not dead: (Re)reading the global in comparative education* (pp. 1–24). Bingley, UK: Emerald.

[9]Cited as: Ciscel, M. H. (2008). Uneasy compromise: Language and education in Moldova. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 11, 73–395.

[10]Cited as: Kulyk, V. (2013). Combining identity and integration: Comparative analysis of schools for two minority groups in Ukraine. *Compare*, 43, 622–645.

communities at the center of this study can be considered representative of migration from FSU countries at large.
The latter point is reinforced by the following observations made by Brown (2013:241) which deserve particular attention:

> Post-Soviet states all contend, in varying ways, with the enduring legacy of Soviet language policies that privileged Russian. Once the dominant and official language of the Soviet Union, Russian continues to play some type of influential role in the policies of these countries. As Verschik (2009)[11] noted, "all languages spoken on post-Soviet territory have been or still are in contact with Russian."

While the contact with Russian is diminishing in those FSU countries whose politics are not aligned with Russia, like e.g. Georgia and Ukraine, the immigrant communities of Israel and Germany are composed of individuals who left their country at a time when the Soviet heritage – in terms of language policy and language use – was likely far more perceivable than today. Thus, it is necessary to consider that the attitudes which the study participants express on the linguistic and cultural reality of the country they left years if not decades ago might in some cases testify to an image 'frozen in time', as it were.
As explained above, the linguistic aspect is one of the most compelling factors supporting the creation of the category "Russian and FSU;" "Russian" refers not to the country of Russia but to the Russian language and its usage by participants both from Russia – the most frequently occurring country of birth among the study participants – and other countries of the FSU where the usage of Russian is still widespread. Moreover, since some of the immigrants have a highly mixed (ethno-)national heritage and/or were considered as belonging to minorities and some of them were subject to persecutions and/or discriminations in their countries of birth, it is understandable that the employment a linguistic criterion to describe self-identification could serve as a strategy of detachment from the pressures of ethno-national identity policies which have been imposed onto minorities for decades in the Soviet Union. In fact, one could go as far as to argue that a self-identification in linguistic terms can serve as a coping mechanism against the condition of *otherness* which is intrinsic in the condition of the immigrant in general and of migration from the FSU to several coun-

[11] Cites as: Verschik, A. (2009). Introduction. *International Journal of Bilingualism*, 13, 299–307.

tries – especially when it comes to Jewish and German emigration from the FSU. In view of repeated expressions of “otherness,” the category “Other” was created, which is discussed at length in Section 6.2.5.

The methodological considerations behind this and each of the identity categories which are illustrated in this section provide a much needed contextualization to the self-identification statistics at Table 6.19 and Table 6.20. The next section engages with an analysis of figures for the category “Russian and FSU” and an interpretation of the differences found between Israel-based and Germany-based respondent population.

6.2.3 *Russian and FSU* in figures

When looking at figures for the category “Russian and FSU,” the divide between Israeli-based and Germany-based data can hardly be overlooked, consisting of almost 30 percent points. Self-identification in terms of Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian or of identity associated to any country of the FSU is evidently less frequent in Israel than in Germany; in the latter country, the majority (42.43%) of respondents choose a self-identification falling under the analysis category “Russian and FSU,” whereas the same self-identification category only accounts for 14.58 % of the Israel-based respondents. An interplay of several aspects contributes to this striking difference, first and foremost those treated in Section 6.1. In fact, as pointed out there, the degree of satisfaction with life quality improvement after immigration is on average higher among Israel-based than Germany-based respondents which, as discussed in Section 6.1, points at a stronger emotional attachment to the receiving country and ultimately at a more distinct sense of belonging to it. While the so-called “russkai͡a ulitsa”, literally “Russian street”[12]) is highly active in Israel, and the Russian language is widespread in its linguistic landscape, the repatriation policy of

[12]The expression русская улица is widely used in communities of olim from the FSU to design the Russian-speaking world of Israel, with its mass media, businesses selling goods from the FSU, cultural events appealing to immigrants from the FSU, etc.; the expression is not employed in standard Russian and is likely to be a calque from Hebrew, where the word for “street”, i.e. רחוב, can be employed to identify a cultural space or context in which the members of a community communicate with eachother about topics and issues related to the community itself, as in its usage in the expression הרחוב החרדי, i.e. “the ultra-Orthodox street” meaning the ensemble of people, practices, rituals etc. characterizing the ultra-Orthodox world of Israel.

Israel is based on strong ideological motifs with which the olim can be assumed to at least partially identify and which are reflected in the immigrants' high degree of emotional attachment to their receiving country's cultural, linguistic and religious practices. The interrelation between the immigrants' attitudes towards Russian vs. Hebrew and German and their attitudes towards their FSU country of birth vs. Israel and Germany is analyzed in further detail in Section 6.4, allowing to shed light on the broad spectrum of aspects involved in the development of the immigrants' social identities. The divide between Israel-based and Germany-based respondents can be argued to point at the presence of a strong value system providing emotional orientation and a basis for self-identification to FSU immigrants to Israel, whereas in Germany the same appears to be lacking, leaving the immigrants with a need to turn *backwards* – i.e. to their or their relatives' countries of birth – and maintain solid ties with their post-Soviet background as a means as to construe their identity in the new country.
At the same time, however, FSU immigrants to Israel are subject to high pressure from so-called *tzabar* (i.e. native) Israeli society, as their *Jewishness* in halakhic terms is constantly questioned. This aspect is discussed in the qualitative interviews and is addressed in question *b of the quantitative questionnaire:

> *b. At the beginning of 2020, the Sephardic Chief Rabbi stated approximately the following: "Immigrants from the former USSR are goyim and communists." Describe your reaction to this statement using no more than three words.

Considering the top-down pressure on olim from the FSU, often judged in public discourse as being "not Jewish enough," the fact that most Israel-based respondents turn away from references to Russia, the FSU and the Russian language when formulating their self-identification, turning to a self-identification as Israelis and/or Jews instead, can be regarded as a reaction to what Remennick & Prazhisky (2019:267) describe as"the demand to lose their old identity as a condition for inclusion in the Israeli collective." Against this backdrop, the comparatively low amount (14.58%) of Israel-based respondents whose self-identifications fall under the category "Russian and FSU" is understandable. At the same time, the high amount of Germany-based respondents self-identifying within the category "Russian and FSU" can be explained with the absence of such pressure derived by state ideology, as Germany is largely a

secular state. This observation has significant implications for integration of immigrants from the FSU to Germany, which are discussed in Section 6.2.4.

Identity pressure on and the expectations of the native society towards FSU immigrants to Israel are not the only possible factors explaining the low rate of self-identifications in the category "Russian and FSU". In fact, looking back to Tables 6.4 and 6.5, Ukraine is considerably more represented as a country of birth for Israel-based respondents (29.92%) than it is the case among Germany-based respondents (18.38%). The conflict between Russia and Ukraine since at least 2014 can be observed to have a dramatic influence on the participants' self-identifications, leading many of them to a denial of anything Russian, first and foremost the Russian language for Russian-speaking natives of other FSU countries than Russia. If a similar analysis of self-identifications was to be carried out after the beginning of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, it can be expected that the distancing act from anything Russian or even post-Soviet be yet more pronounced. Further studies comparing self-identifications of migrants from the FSU before and after the Russian invasion of Ukraine are necessary to advance research on identity and the conceptual limits of the post-Soviet.

FSU immigrant populations to Israel and Germany are structurally different; while the majority of Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel were/are not considered as "ethnically Russian,""ethnically Ukrainian" or as belonging to the ethnically titular group of their native country and emigrate to Israel on the grounds of their Jewish heritage, the same is not the case for Germany, which alongside Spätaussiedler and jüdische Kontingentflüchtlinge attracts high-skilled migrants from the countries of the FSU. In fact, Germany "is one of the OECD countries with the lowest barriers to immigration for high-skilled workers" (Leterme 2013) and several paths are viable for (prospective) immigrants from the FSU, who, as is pointed out in Section 6.1, can on average be considered "high-skilled", since the majority of them (about 72% in this study) has university-level education. On the other hand, non-Jewish immigration to Israel is a highly controversial topic in Israel; as illustrated by Averbukh (2016:5),

> The Israeli citizenship system does not provide for the systematic settlement of non-Jewish immigrants. As a result, no organised procedure regulating how these individuals can obtain a controlled, permanent status within Israeli society exists. A few years ago, the relatively new phenomenon of a high influx of non-Jewish immigrants and those wishing to

> settle triggered a public debate on ways in which the citizenship system could be reformed. To date, however, its legal shortcomings and contradictions have not been resolved [...] non-Jewish minorities within the State are kept to a minimum.

Therefore, differences in the degree of identification with the category "Russian and FSU" between immigrants to Israel and Germany can be better appreciated when considering that the frameworks for immigration to the two countries, as well as the state ideologies of Israel and Germany, are substantially different.
The observations made in this section clearly testify to the interdependence of the identity categories in that one cannot be explained without referring to the others. This interdepence on the level of analysis reflects the reality of identity practices of immigrants from the FSU as they are to be found both in the interviews and in responses to the questionnaire. Identity is not just a question of defining who one is, in isolation from the environment – in both geographic and social terms –. In fact, it always is a question of drawing boundaries between the self and the other. Especially in the case of belonging to a group, the creation of identity lies in what Brown (1984:608) terms a "search for positive distinctiveness." Brown (1984) refers to the *social identity theory* developed by Tajfel & Turner (1979) by arguing that

> individuals are motivated to achieve a positive self image and [...] such may be enhanced by a positive evaluation of one's own group. Since evaluations of the ingroup are assumed to be mainly achieved by comparison with other groups, it follows that there is a general tendency for people to seek positive differences between the ingroup and relevant outgroups on various dimensions.

The above considerations apply to all invididuals as social beings and acquire even more significance in the case of immigrants, whose existence is always situated between a *here* and a *there* and punctuated with "decisions about who to feel close to, what is common between 'us' and 'them' and the drawing of a defining border between 'our people' and 'the others'" (Koroļeva 2019).

6.2.4 *German* category

Of all self-identification categories, "German" is the least widespread, applying to only 2.43% of Germany-based respondents. This is striking especially in comparison to the self-identification tendencies of Israel-based respondents, of which 40.15% self-identify in terms of the category "Israeli/Jew" representing association with the core values of Israeli society. As I refer to in Section 6.2.6.2, when employing the term "core values," it is necessary to carry out a particular effort of self-reflection; this is especially important in order to avoid resorting to cultural stereotypes which have no scientific validity nor a foundation in empiricism. What I call the "core values" of a culture, in this example of German culture, cannot be identified based on data obtained for the purpose of this study; first of all, because it is not the objective of this study to compose a catalog of "core values" ascribed to a culture; and secondly, because the database of this study is too limited to allow a structured identification of cultural values allowing for generalization. However, this study allows to infer that what more than 750 respondents associate with cultures familiar to them will have some degree of overlap with the "core values" of those cultures.
Shalom Schwartz, a pioneer of cultural value theory, observes the following which is highly significant for this discussion:

> I view culture as the rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices, symbols, norms, and values prevalent among people in a society. The prevailing value emphases in a society may be the most central feature of culture [...] These value emphases express shared conceptions of what is good and desirable in the culture, the cultural ideals. Cultural value emphases shape and justify individual and group beliefs, actions, and goals. Institutional arrangements and policies, norms, and everyday practices express underlying cultural value emphases in societies. For example, a cultural value emphasis on success and ambition may be reflected in and promote highly competitive economic systems, confrontational legal systems, and child-rearing practices that pressure children to achieve. The preference element in cultural value orientations – values as ideals – promotes coherence among the various aspects of culture. Because prevailing cultural value orientations represent ideals, aspects of culture that are incompatible with them are likely to generate tension and to elicit criticism and

pressure to change. (Schwartz 2006:138–139)

Descriptions of “germanness” are to be found at Figure 6.28, Figure 6.21 and throughout Section 6.4. Remarkably, respondents whose self-identification falls within the category “German” also tend to employ German to describe their self-identification, whereas a similar phenomenon is not found among Israel-based respondents identifying within the category “Israeli/Jew”. Examples are:

M301. Deutsch
M301. German

M239. Deutschland mein Land
M239. Germany my country

6.2.5 *Other* category

There are several cases of a direct expression of “otherness” among questionnaire respondents which testify to the difficulty of establishing identity categories for the purpose of scientific analysis, especially if these are primarily based on (ethno-)national criteria. As an example, Israel-based respondent L58 was born in Odessa and defines himself as “nerusskiĭ russkiĭ” i.e. ”non-Russian Russian”, pointing at an otherness which appears to be perceived almost as paradoxical. As a Ukrainian-born Russian-speaking individual with Jewish heritage, he experiences an in-betweenness amid several categories. This in-betweenness might be better understood when looking at the cultural and linguistic reality in Odessa, a city with a vibrant historic Jewish community and where “Ukrainian should be the official language but Russian is widely used” (Polese et al. 2019:263). Moreover, against the backdrop of Soviet nationality policy, the “russianness” of somebody whose fifth paragraph in the Soviet passport reads “Jewish” is automatically questioned, if not canceled, since it is not treated as a matter of self-perception but rather relies on coercion.
Another example pointing at a similar “otherness” is that of L192, a Moscow-born woman living in Haifa, who defines herself as “lost in between”; or that of M25, a woman born in Transnistria and living in Augsburg, who remarkably defines herself as суржик (“surzhik”), thus using a linguistic metaphor to describe her self-identification. In fact, Surzhik is “a language variety combining Ukrainian and Russian” (Knoblock 2020:87) predominantly spoken in parts of Eastern Ukraine and

neighboring regions in Russia and Moldova. While the word *surzhyk* in Ukrainian originally designates a mixture of different types of flour (Braga:122), it is primarily known in its figurative usage as a language mixture of Ukrainian and Russian and is often used pejoratively, "reflect[ing] a heightened purist language ideology that emerged with the elevation of Ukrainian to official state language in 1989 and the declaration of Ukraine's independence in 1991" (Bilanyuk 2004:410). That several participants define their identity in linguistic terms is indicative of the importance of language attitudes for the construction of identity both on an individual and on a social level. However, linguistic factors are not the only ones playing an influential role for the immigrants' self-identifications. For instance, the category "Other" applies to the above examples of self-identification in terms of linguistic otherness and other self-identifications whose frequency is too low to allow the creation of a dedicated category; other aspects than linguistic ones come into play for the remaining categories "Israeli/Jew,""Jew," "German" and "Mixed" which are discussed in the next section.

Besides to references to "otherness" as an identity condition, the category "Other" includes all those self-definitions which appear with a low frequency rate and cannot be assigned to any of the remaining categories, as is visible in the following examples:

M370 Без наций!
M370 No nationality!

M103 Непонятно кто я
M103 No idea who I am

L37 Национализм неприемлю
L37 I can't tolerate nationalism

L120 Иммигрант
L120 Immigrant

The category name "Other" adequately comprises those instances in which the respondents find themselves at loss for a self-identification or refuse to self-identify in national terms based on political convictions, as in example L37. Among the most disparate answers, there is a recurring self-identification sub-category which is worth noting, accounting for 15 out of 56 "Other" answers of the Israel-based and 22 out of

105 “Other” answers of the Germany-based respondents. The subcategory is named Cosmopolitism, containing examples such as the following:

> L136 Космополит
> L136 Cosmopolite
>
> L204 Гражданка мира
> L204 Citizen of the world
>
> M105 Земля моя родина
> M105 Earth is my home
>
> M360 Человек мира
> M360 Cosmopolite

The reference to cosmopolitanism is remarkable in that, while it might evoke positive associations in most Western countries, the label “cosmopolitan” was often applied to Soviet Jews with a discriminatory connotation, as noted by Pinkus (2021:232):

> derogatory term applied in 1949 to Jewish intellectuals in the Soviet Union, at the peak of Russian chauvinism and its struggle against Western influence in Soviet culture and science. [...] The campaign against the ‘cosmopolitans,’ however, marked the first public attack on Soviet Jews as Jews, and is thus considered as initiating what Soviet Jews call ‘the Black Years,’ which lasted until Stalin’s death in March 1953.The campaign against ‘cosmopolitans’ who have no homeland was initiated in articles in the central organs of the Communist Party [...] Anti-Jewish policy did not cease, however, and began to take even more extreme forms in succeeding years. The term ”cosmopolitans” was also applied to Jewish intellectuals in other Communist countries at later nonconformist periods.

Against this backdrop, it is remarkable that the immigrants apply for self-definition in what appears to be positive terms a category which, at least until the collapse of the Soviet Union, was used to discriminate Jews, especially those belonging to the so-called intelligentsia; in this way, they carry out a sort of identity reappropriation, though there is room left for speculation on whether or not this act of reappropriation is concious.

6.2.6 *Israeli/Jew* and *Jew* categories

As for the category “Israeli/Jew”, it applies to Israel-based participants whose self-definition relies on Jewishness understood by the participants as a religious and/or ethnonational attribute and which might or might not be explicitly related to the State of Israel. Since none of the Germany-based participants refer to Israel when expressing their self-identification, the identity category for Germany-based respondents only refers to Jewishness and not to Israeliness.
The category “Israeli/Jew” merges aspects of state policy, nationhood, ethnicity and religion. While skimming the data for a preliminary analysis of self-identification patterns, they revealed that references to Israel and Jewishness are in many cases combined by the participants, as in the following examples:

L100 Я израильский еврей
L100 I am an Israeli Jew

L263 Израильтянин - еврей
L263 Israeli - Jew

While creating two separate identity categories for “Israeli” and “Jew” might have yielded additional information with regard to possible conflicts between e.g. citizenship and (ethno-)national belonging, these aspects are not central for the study and were therefore filtered out of this analysis.
Of the 157 participants making up the 40.15% of the respondent population (see Tables 6.19 and 6.20) whose self-identifications fall under the category “Israeli/Jew,” 59 participants mention in their self-identification more than one aspect. In most of the cases, their self-identifications include a references to the word “evreĭ,” i.e. “Jew” plus another attribute specifying it.

6.2.6.1 Religious categories in Israeli society

In 14 instances, the word “evreĭ” co-occurs with the adjectives “svetskiĭ, ” i.e. “secular” or “ne religioznyĭ, ” i.e. “non-religious,” which reveals a reference to the following religious-based identity categories widespread in Israeli society: “ḥaredi” (i.e. ultra-Orthodox),“dati/dati le’umi” (i.e. religious/national religious), “masorti” (traditional), “ḥiloni” (secular) (see Striedl 2022:61–86 for a thorough discussion).

References to Israel's typical categories of religious self-identification clearly are not to be found among Germany-based respondents, to whom the need to define themselves in religious terms is lower. This piece of information acquires high significance also in light of the factors analyzed in the previous section regarding the participants' emotional attachment towards the receiving countries, which is higher among Israel-based participants.

6.2.6.2 Reappropriation of Jewishness

From the qualitative interview results that most of the Israel-based participants lead a secular lifestyle while at the same time showing a moderate to high degree of emotional attachment to the receiving society. However, the quantitative survey highlights an aspect which could have overall relevance for FSU immigrants to Israel and which can't be detected solely by conducting qualitative interviews: a clear tendency towards Jewish and/or Israeli self-identification can be interpreted as a public reappropriation of an identity on whose account the immigrants were discriminated in their countries of birth and which they aren't fully allowed to own in Israel, either. But why is the Jewishness of immigrants from the FSU questioned in Israel, whereas the same is not the case for FSU immigrants to German? One of the answers lies in Israel's immigration policy, or rather, as illustrated by Galili (2020:4),"the collision course between the Zionist-secular Jewish Law of Return, based on a broad definition of 'who is a Jew,' and the Rabbinical Orthodox laws that govern some aspects of Jewish Israelis' personal lives," amid which aspects is marriage, as an example. For someone to be considered Jewish under Rabbinical Orthodox (i.e., Halakhic) law, they should be children to a Jewish mother; however, according to estimates, a percentage of FSU immigrants to Israel between as low as about 20% (Della Pergola & Reinharz 2009, cited in Guilat 2019) and as high as 40% (Novikov 2016:484) is non-Jewish in halakhic terms. Moreover, since the community of immigrants from the FSU makes up a significant portion of Israel's society, amounting to an estimated 15% of the population (see Section 6.1), it is understandable that they will be subject to public scrutiny and debate more than other less represented communities.

The fact that the Jewish and the Israeli element are not considered separately in the analysis category makes it difficult to speak with certainty about a reappropriation of Jewish identity as such; however, the Jewish and the Israeli element are often mentioned jointly in the respondents' self-identifications. At any rate, the above

observations point at is a tendency among FSU immigrants to Israel to self-identify in terms of the core values of the receiving society, which there are arguments to interpret as a reappropriation of that identity which either was denied in the FSU or is questioned in Israel itself.
As noted in Section 6.2.4, talking about the "core values" of any society is highly problematic; my understanding of "core values" is one largely grounded in empiricism in terms of the participants' attitudes as analyzed in this study, assuming that self-identification as e.g. "Israeli" reveals that they identify themselves with how they view Israel and what they believe it stands for (addressed e.g. at questions 16, 24, 26 and 34 of the questionnaire). Next to the respondents' answers, aspects of Israeli history, culture and society naturally play a significant role for my understanding of the self-identification category "Israeli/Jew." Such aspects include, but are not limited to, e.g. Zionism and Judaism, while it is not an objective of this study – nor would it be possible – to circumscribe either Israeli culture or any other culture, for that matter.
A perspective on the reappropriation of Jewish and/or Israeli identity among Russian-speaking immigrants from the FSU is largely missing in literature, likely due to the fact that extensive quantitative or mixed-method studies are missing, up to few exceptions.
One exception is that of Al-Haj (2019), whose study titled *The Russians in Israel* is based on two main quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews and focus group interviews. Al-Haj (2019:119) discusses matters of identity mostly based on qualitative interviews, through which he comes to a remarkable conclusion:

> [...] most participants manifest *a multiple identity* that simultaneously includes three main components; Israeli, Jewish, and Russian Ethnic. Nevertheless, [...] the Jewish component has basically a secular meaning for them, the Israeli component mainly reflects citizenship content while the Russian-ethnic component reflects ethno-cultural content.

While observations on a reappropriation of Jewish identity are missing from the picture, Al-Haj's observations are highly relevant for this study and resonate with its findings. In fact, according to Al-Haj's (2019) analysis, the Jewish self-identification of immigrants from the FSU to Israel is mostly in secular terms, which indeed emerges from the quantitative data collected for this study, too; in fact, the merging of the

Jewish and Israeli identity factors also testifies to the mostly secular view which immigrants from the FSU have of Judaism and on their new life in Israel. Al-Haj's (2019) highlights that the self-identification of immigrants from the FSU to Israel contains multiple elements coexisting, which resonates with the finding of this study that a conspicuous percentage of the respondents' self-identifications fall under the category "Mixed." This category and the pertaining figures are discussed at length in Section 6.2.7.

6.2.6.3 ***Multilingual Jew*** and boundary-drawing in immigration

Next to attributes specifying on the religious views, the category "Israeli/Jew" applying to Israel-based participants includes mentions to linguistic as well as cultural and ideological aspects, such as in the following cases:

L110 Многоязычный еврей
L110 Multilingual Jew

L355 еврейка сионистка израильтянка
L355 Jew Sionist Israeli [woman]

L379 Хитрожопый еврей
L379 Smart-ass Jew

L379 can be regarded as another example of identity reappropriation, as is mentioned in Section 6.2.5. In this case, the reappriopriation act appears to be intentional, involving some degree of sarcasm about the Soviet stereotype of the cunning Jew, discussed by Korey (1972:128) in his analysis of Soviet antisemitism. By referring to a racial slur addressed towards Jews in Soviet times, Israel-based respondent 379 is making it evident that, to Soviet minorities, self-identification is not just a matter of the self, as for decades the only valid identification was the one imposed by the regime in the fifth paragraph of the Soviet passport. Traces of the minorities' repressed self-identification throughout Soviet times are ironically made visible in the respondents' references to Soviet antisemitism as well as administrative categories of identity.

L110 is a further example for the central role of language – and the values attached

to it by its speakers – for the immigrants' construction of their identity. On the one hand, it is obvious that migrants regard their multilingualism as a constituting element of their identity in the receiving country, since migration in most cases involves some degree of multilingualism and/or language contact; on the other hand, while other elements than language also play a *border-defining* role in the context of migration, linguistic aspects can be observed to be employed by the immigrants symbolically, condensing in one attitude towards language a complex of other identity-defining aspects; especially in the case of sensitive categories such as religion, ethnonationality etc., a direct reference to which could for any reason be seen by the immigrant as disadvantageous or for their construction of (especially social) identity, evidence from this study suggests that language attitudes can come to be used vicariously for the expression of attitudes towards other identity-defining aspects. It is worthwhile referring back to the terminological discussion on the concept of identity in Chapter 2, in which identity is defined as follows:

> An identity is an 'internal positional designation' that represents meanings actors use to define themselves as unique individuals (person identities), role occupants (role identities), or group members (social identities). (Carter 2013:204)

The symbolic usage of attitudes towards language can even be hypothesized as a face-saving strategy in cases when the immigrant perceives a threat to their identity, or when they feel the need to reinforce their identity by drawing a border to other individuals or groups in a society. The latter case is especially significant for the context of migration from the FSU, where top-down (administrative) identity constraints would feed a vicious circle of overt discrimination and humiliation for many minorities.

This is especially noticeable in the case of attitudes towards multilingualism – as referred to in the above example of L110 – , which is always positively regarded by the study participants, reflecting a trend also present in research on multilingualism [13] to treat it as a resource along the lines of the underlying conceptual metaphor

[13]See, for instance, the titles of the following studies in multilingualism: Rosenberg, Peter and Schroeder, Christoph (eds.). 2016. Mehrsprachigkeit als Ressource in der Schriftlichkeit [Multilingualism as a resource in literacy] Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter; Callahan, Rebecca M. and Gándara, Patricia C. (eds.).2014. The Bilingual Advantage. Language, Literacy and the US Labor Market. Bristol, Buffalo and Toronto: Multilingual Matters

MULTILINGUALISM IS RICHNESS, which is in turn related to LANGUAGE IS CAPITAL. For FSU immigrants, most of whom are highly educated (see Section 6.1), multilingualism (one's own and/or the children's) is employed as a border-defining element to valorize one's identity by creating an "us" versus "them." The latter is especially visible in the example of aforementioned interviewee KIL25F:

> KIL25F: Он [ребенок] у меня [...] знает русский, украинский, английский и иврит. Четыре языка, и у меня когда спрашивают, тот случай в кафе, когда мы сидели, а та женщина-израильтянка спрашивает, говорит, что вот — мой сын знает только, ну вот иврит, и английский он только начал учить,а я говорю, ну я считаю, что это очень плохо. Моему ребенку только два года, он у меня четыре языка знает.

> KIL25F: He [child] speaks Russian, Ukrainian, English and Hebrew. Four languages, and when they ask me, once it happened that I was sitting in a coffee shop and there was an Israeli woman who asked, she was like, "my son only speaks, well, Hebrew, and he just started to learn English", and I was like, well, I think that's just too bad. My son is only two years old and he already knows four languages.

The above excerpt illustrates how immigrants might decide to use the multilingualism involved in their immigration experience as a positive resource to draw a line between themselves and the natives of the receiving country, thus upgrading their immigrant identity whenever they feel a need to. The latter is a clear example of the role played by language attitudes for the construction and reinforcement of immigrant identities, of which further are to be found among the data.

By performing language attitudes (see Section 2.7.1), immigrants socially and ideologically position themselves in the receiving context. Therefore, their views about language, which often take on a stereotypical and/or metaphorical character, are broadly presents in their narrations on the immigrant experience. A further example is to be found in the following excerpts from a group interview with VIL31M and IIL38F. The following biographic information on VIL31M and IIL38F is provided for a minimum of context: VIL31M was born and raised in Odessa, while IIL38F is from Western Ukraine. Both reside in Israel. VIL31M made aliyah to Israel in 2013, while IIL38F did not have aliyah rights based on the Law of Return and emigrated to Israel within a different framework in 2007.

Some of the aspects highlighted by the immigrants in the following quote are discussed in the following sections, too, as they are related to such issues as language maintenance and the establishment of a family-specific (or, generally, group-specific) language policy by the immigrants themselves.

> C.: А что с русским, вам важно, чтобы ваши дети и на русском очень хорошо разговаривали?
> VIL31M: Для меня это очень важно.
> IIL38F: Да, очень важно, да у нас дети учат русский язык.
> VIL31M: Я считаю русский прекрасным, замечательным языком. Очень ёмким, очень...
> IIL38F: Да, он обогащает детей.
> VIL31M: Он очень да, он обогощает, он культурно развивает, понятное дело что, я так скажу. Это будет не патриотично по отношению к Израилю [...] если на иврите говорит в мире ну может 10 миллионов человек, да? То мы понимаем, что культура этого языка — она не такая большая, как культура русского языка, которая там наверное на пол миллиарды человек, если не больше, если взять совокупно всех русскоговорящих во всем мире, и Россия и Украина и все страны.

> C.: What about Russian, do you care for your children to have excellent command of Russian, too?
> VIL31M: It's very important to me.
> IIL38F: Yes, it's really important. Yes, our children study Russian in school.
> VIL31M: To me, Russian is a great, wonderful language. It's very concise, very...
> IIL38F: Yes, it's enriching for children.
> VIL31M: Right, it is highly enriching for children, for their cultural development. Of course, well what I'm going to say might sound anti-patriotic towards Israel [...] and if, say, 10 million people speak Hebrew in the world, alright? well then it goes without saying that the culture of this language is not as big as the culture of the Russian language, which probably counts half a billion people if not more, if we take all Russian-speakers

of the world cumulatively, Russia, Ukraine and all the countries.

Russian is mostly described with positive attributes not in virtue of its specific linguistic or sociolinguistic features but more significantly within the general context of the multilingual condition of immigrants, which in this and many other cases from both the qualitative and the quantitative study is employed as an identity-defining element. In general, the language attitudes expressed by the participants show how language attitudes are less about language than they are about the people uttering them. The latter is a fundamental insight into the dynamics of language attitudes and is discussed more extensively in Section 6.4. Ultimately, language attitudes, like attitudes towards any other phenomenon or object, reveal how people's "evaluative categor[ies]" (Albarracín 2021:11) are organized in cognition and how these categories come to gain a societal relevance, thus translating in social categories by means of performing language attitudes.
All in all, attitudes towards multilingualism as a resource enabling immigrants to navigate different cultural and societal environments can be regarded as a mechanism by which they valorize their multiple identities. The next section focuses on the self-identification category "Mixed," which is one of the largest categories among both Israel-based and Germany-based respondents.

6.2.7 *Mixed* category

Differently to the category "Other," created as a "residual category" to collect all those instances of self-identifications which are not frequent enough to be assigned a separate category, "Mixed" is a category collecting those instances in which "multiple identities" (Al-Haj 2019) come into play. Reflecting on the terminology employed in literature and immigration policy to refer to the immigrant groups at the center of this study, many participants would typically fall under the labels "Russia Germans," "Soviet Germans" or "Soviet Jews;" in German-speaking terminology, the former two are generally termed "Russlanddeutsche," while the latter term corresponds to "jüdische Kontingentflüchtlinge," with "sowjetische Juden" being not as widespread in German-speaking academia.
Each of these labels draws on multiple elements at once. These elements generally are a reference to, on the one hand, the country of the FSU of which the immigrants

are native, and, on the other hand, the geographical and social context in which the immigrants are currently living. Expressions such as “Soviet Jews,” “Soviet Germans,” and the like of “Soviet” plus another element designing ethnic belonging have a revealing and almost paradoxical character at once. While associating the attribute “Soviet” to minority groups of the FSU might seem to place special emphasis on a “Soviet” quality or “Soviet” affiliation of the groups themselves, it is widely known that these minority groups, along with others under the Soviet Union (see Kotljarchuk & Sundström 2017 for an overview), were discriminated on the grounds of their externally questioned and/or denied belonging to the Soviet system, which was made visible in the fifth paragraph of the Soviet passport.
At the same time, some of the participants in this study employ such self-designations as “Soviet Jew” and the like, bringing to the fore a conflation of externally established identity categories and perception and representation of the self. The following examples illustrate the possible points of contact between the internal and external dimensions of identity definition:

M107 Советско-еврейская немка
M107 Soviet-Jewish German woman

L240 Советские евреи L240 Soviet Jews

Example L240 is especially telling, as the usage of plural in “Soviet Jews” possibly points at a preexisting collective identity to which participant 240 associates himself. This “conflation,” or rather the reciprocal influences between self-identification and external identification of minority groups, is touched upon in this section and repeatedly throughout this study.
The self-identifications discussed in this section can be defined “mixed” quite obviously because they are composed by at least two elements, each of which is essential to the expression of the immigrants’ identity. A *mixed* self-identification is exemplified in the following:

M230 eingedeutschte Russin
M230 germanized Russian woman

L192 Lost in between

M301 Сижу на трёх стульях
M301 I'm sitting on three chairs

L327 Русскоговорящий еврей
L327 Russian-speaking Jew

M359 Я и не русская и не немка
M359 I am neither Russian nor German

L32 Смешение нескольких национальностей
L32 A mixture of several nationalities

The examples reveal some degree of overlap between categories "Other" and "Mixed;" as a residual category, other includes less frequently named self-identifications, which include mentions of otherness as a self-identification trait. At the same time, examples like L192 or L32 above point at the fact that a mixed or multiple self-identification denotes the immigrant as someone *else*, somewhat foreign, "lost in between". Therefore, upon deciding which category to assign a self-identification to, the line between categories "Other" and "Mixed" can be particularly thin in some cases. These cases also include references to the topos of cosmopolitanism, which is discussed in Section 6.2.5. Within the scope of this study, I differentiate between self-identifications in terms of cosmopolitanism and self-identifications in terms of multinationality; this decision rests on my case-by-case interpretation of responses, which yields that the explicit or implicit mentioning of several national identities is still a clearer selection of national identity than references to cosmopolitanism, which can be interpreted as a sort of waiver of national identity in the first place.
The most representative and frequent examples for self-identifications of the category "Mixed" generally feature references to the following aspects:

– the geographical context of birth of the immigrants or their relatives, i.e. in most cases FSU countries;
– sociocultural, ethnic or religious aspects conditioning emigration, i.e. Jewish heritage for emigration to Israel or Germany
– the country of emigration, i.e. Israel or Germany

So-called *Soviet Jews* or *jüdische Kontingentflüchtlinge* have several preferential routes of emigration, among which Israel and Germany. Thus, mixed self-identifications include Jewish identity not only among immigrants to Israel but also to Germany, as in the following example:

> M96 русско-немецкая еврейка
> M96 Russian-German Jewish woman

The category "Mixed" is of crucial significance in this study because it subsumes one of the basic mechanisms for the formation of social identity: that of "positive valorisation of the in-group," as Jenkins (2008:152) terms it. All self-identifications of the participants manifest the self-presentation of the immigrants who, depending on which identity category they choose to associate themselves to, carry out an act of positioning themselves in society, too. The self-identification examples which are provided throughout this chapter, and especially in the category "Mixed" discussed here, are highly indicative of the interactional dynamics between personal and social identity; in Jenkins's (2008:112) terms, personal identity "differentiates the unique self from all other selves", while social identity "is the internalisation of, often stereotypical, collective identifications." Personal and social identity are brought together whenever aspects of ethnicity are addressed, which is the case in question 7 of the questionnaire:

> 7. Как бы Вы описали свою национальную идентичность, используя не более трех слов?
> 7. How would you describe your national identity using no more than three words?

The interplay of individual and collective identification expressed in ethnicity is poignantly described by Jenkins (2008:87) in the following:

> As a collective identity that may have a massive presence in the experience of individuals, ethnicity [...] is often an important and early dimension of self- identification. [...] Ethnicity depends on similarity and difference rubbing up against each other collectively: 'us' and 'them'. Ethnic identification weaves together the fate of the individual with collective fate in a distinctive fashion, and it can be enormously consequential.

The category “Mixed” collects the self-identifications of individuals who regard their identity as a mosaic of different ethnicities, nationalities, cultural and religious traditions; while some might show a rather negative towards their own self-identification, as in the example of L192 defining himself “lost in between”, others positively appreciate the multiple quality of their self-identification, as in the case of M125 who defines her identity as follows:

> M125 Гармоничное единение нескольких
> M125 Harmonic combination of several [elements]

What is evident from an analysis of the so-called mixed self-identifications is the divide between the participants’ self-perception and identity categories created and enforced by immigration policy. This divide is present in both respondent population and is especially visible in the case of Germany-based respondents, where the institutionally defined category of so-called Spätaussiedler often comes into collision with the individuals’ self-perception. In fact, the term *Spätaussiedler* already carries out a degree of *othering* on the immigrants. As noted by Panagiotidis (2015), Spätaussiedler are defined as “ethnic Germans emigrating since the year 1950 from the former Communist States of Middle-Eastern, South-Eastern and Eastern Europe to the Federal Republic of Germany;”[14] the terminology employed in the definition highlights that, while they might be considered foreign in their home country, Spätaussiedler do not *repatriate* but *emigrate* to Germany; particular emphasis is placed on the administrative regulation of the migration trajectories, whereas the immigrants’ self-identification in ethnic terms is only taken into consideration to the extent that proof of ethnic German heritage must be given for individuals to be able to resettle in Germany.
Instead, looking at the immigrants’ self-identifications in the quantitative study,it emerges a highly fragmented picture; references to administrative terminology are barely present, being featured only in the following example:

> M124 Поздний переселенец
> M124 Late resettler

[14]Original text: Als „Aussiedler“ beziehungsweise „Spätaussiedler“ werden Personen bezeichnet, die seit dem Jahr 1950 als „deutsche Volkszugehörige“ (s. u.) aus den (ehemals) kommunistischen Staaten Ostmittel-, Südost- und Osteuropas in die Bundesrepublik Deutschland emigriert sind

As for the rest of the responses, a considerable number of them feature references to so-called *Russlanddeutsche*, an umbrella term with no administrative validity but widespread in German public discourse, often employed as an endonym by those identifying as ethnic Germans from the territories of the FSU:

> M2 Русская немка
> M2 Russian-German

> M17 Deutsch mit russlanddeutschen Wurzeln
> M17 German with Russian-German roots

> M84 Потомок поволжских немцев
> M84 Descendant of Volga Germans

However, throughout the category "Mixed," pre-established identity labels are by far not as relevant as the immigrants' expression of a *mixedness* which, albeit not conceived by immigration policy, provides them with the chance to create an identity out of their *in-betweenness* by cutting loose from institutional labels.
The analysis of the multiple identities expressed by the participants allows to regard their condition of *in-betweenness* as a framework of reference for the formation of a collective identity. The latter inference is sustained by insights from the qualitative study, where the narrative of mixed identity as a shared condition among immigrants from the FSU both to Germany and to Israel is well represented. The following example from the qualitative corpus points at how identity categories are actively questioned by the immigrants themselves, advocating for the immigrants' right to self-determine their identity without having to be referred to preexisting categories by the receiving society. It stems from an interview with MDE22F. Her parents emigrated to Germany in the 80's as Spätaussiedler, receiving German citizenship upon immigration. MDE22F was born in Germany, but her family moved back to Russia for occupational reasons. Although she reports spending the most significant years of her life in Russia and expresses emotional attachment to that phase, she never held Russian citizenship. Upon moving back to Germany to enroll at university, she reports experiencing feelings of foreignness to the country of which she is a citizen. The following excerpt exemplifies the condition of MDE22F:

> MDE22F: Also, eigentlich habe ich mich dort sehr zuhause gefühlt [...] da ist so meine ganze Jugend eigentlich und Kindheit [...] als ich nach

Deutschland gekommen bin, habe ich eigentlich schon gedacht, dass ich relativ schnell mich einleben würde, und so oberflächlich war das auch so [...] aber man hat's halt gemerkt so kulturell, manche Dinge, die man anders gemacht hat, sind dann aufgefallen [...] ich war sozusagen nicht wirklich zuhause - eigentlich Ausländerin in Deutschland. Aber dadurch, dass eben keine Sprachbarriere oder so existierte, ist das jetzt nicht so schwierig gewesen, also ich fühle mich jetzt hier auch zuhause [...] ich habe einigen Leuten gar nicht gesagt, dass ich in Russland aufgewachsen bin, weil ich gedacht habe, dass man dann irgendwie so gleich ein bisschen komisch gesehen wird. Dann habe ich das einmal einer Person einfach sehr lange nicht gesagt und ich habe da gar nicht mehr dran gedacht. Wir kannten uns schon lange und haben uns auch richtig gut verstanden [...] und dann hat sie das gemerkt so, dass ich eigentlich aus Russland komme und dass ich da fast mein ganzes Leben verbracht habe. Und dann war es für sie richtig komisch, also für sie war das so, dass plötzlich ein anderer Mensch irgendwie vor ihr steht. Also ich glaube, dass es generell so ist, wenn man es am Anfang sagt, dann ist man halt gleich so irgendwie kategorisiert glaub ich. [...] also ich finde, das ist ein sehr großer Vorteil, den ich hab, eigentlich, dass ich im Ausland aufgewachsen bin [...] aber es ist vielleicht irgendwie zu einengend, also wenn man eine Person kennenlernt und dann direkt hört, die ist aus, keine Ahnung, Paraguay oder so, dann hat man sie so als Paraguayaner abgestempelt und dann ist das, alles was danach was man über sie kennenlernt gehört dann dazu [...] aber eigentlich hat die Person ja auch Facetten, die gar nicht damit zu tun haben.

MDE22F: well, actually I really felt at home back there [...] There I spent my whole childhood and teenage years [...] once I came to Germany, I did think I would adjust quite swiftly, and on a superficial level it was the case [...] but there were some culture-related things which I did in a different way and which might have stood out [to people]. [...] in a way, I wasn't really at home - I was actually foreign in Germany. But because there was no language barrier, I would say it wasn't too difficult to adjust, and now I do feel that I belong here, too. [...] there have been times when I didn't tell somebody that I grew up in Russia, because I thought they would immediately start looking at me weirdly. Once I avoided telling it

> to somebody for a very long time and at some point I forgot about it. We had been knowing eachother for a long time and got along really well with eachother [...] and then she noticed that I'm actually from Russia and that I spent there almost my whole life. And it was really weird to her, as if a completely different person was standing before her. I believe that generally, if you say it straight at the beginning, then you immediately get categorized, in a way. [...] I think it's a great asset to me to have been raised abroad [...] but it's somehow too limitating, like, when you get to know somebody and then immediately learn that they are, I don't know, like from Paraguay, then you kind of label them as Paraguayan, and then everything you get to know about them afterwards somehow gets put in relation to it [...] althout that somebody actually has many facets which have nothing to do with that.

Recounting her own immigration experience, MDE22F stresses how predefined identity categories can negatively affect relationships with the surrounding society, even in cases when integration runs smoothly, as in her example. With her account, MDE22F shows that, while navigating between different identity categories – Russian, German and Russian-German, – she does not feel the need to fully identify with any of them in order to socially situate herself. In fact, externalizing affiliation to any of the aforementioned categories could even be detrimental, as she illustrates above.

MDE22F recounts how she and her family do not identify as "russlanddeutsch," although both of her parents reportedly did grow up within a Russian-German Mennonite community. MDE22F describes her cultural practices as follows:

> MDE22F: Meine Kultur ist auch überhaupt nicht russlanddeutsch, sondern eher russisch. Also Russlanddeutsche sind ja auch eher konservativer [...] also meine Eltern sind ausgetreten aus der Gemeinde als sie geheiratet haben und [...] sind schon gerne nicht mehr dort, gerade weil sie merken, dass da einfach sehr stark die Freiheit eingeschränkt wird.

> MDE22F: My culture is not Russian-German at all, but rather Russian. I mean, Russian-Germans are generally more conservative [...] my parents left the community when they got married [...] they're happy to have left it,

> especially because they notice how freedom is subject to huge limitations there.

Thus, while she and her family currently live in Germany and all have German citizenship, MDE22F perceives herself as situated in or emotionally related to Russian cultural practices. At the same time, during her childhood in Russia, she reports having experienced othering by her peers on account of the Germanness which was attributed to her:

> C.: Gab es Momente in Russland, in *** [hidden for privacy reasons], als du dich deutsch gefühlt hast? Oder anders als die anderen Leute?
> MDE22F: Eigentlich nicht, oder, ach, ich glaube Leute haben manchmal, also unsere Schule war ziemlich klein und dann haben Leute das halt gewusst dass man aus Deutschland ist und haben dann so gefragt, ah bist du die Deutsche? Hilf mir mal mit meinen Deutschhausaufgaben, solche Sachen. [...]
> C.:An was haben Sie gemerkt, dass du Deutsche bist?
> MDE22F: Meistens am Namen, also dass ich halt nicht Russin bin.

> C.: Have there been times in Russia, in *** [hidden for privacy reasons],in which you felt German? Or different to other people?
> MDE22F: not really, or, well, I think some people did sometimes, I mean, our school was kind of small and then some people knew that I'm from Germany and would ask stuff like, are you the German girl? Give me a hand with my German homework, or stuff like that. [...]
> C.: How would they know you're German?
> MDE22F: Mostly because of my name, because I'm, well, not Russian.

MDE22F's account of her self-identification and adaptation path provides a concise overview of how mixed the identity practices of post-Soviet migrants are. Despite having German citizenship, she identifies with Russian cultural practices; while in Russia, she was categorized by some of the surrounding people as German. Moreover, although her family's emigration to Germany was regulated by immigration policy within the Spätaussiedler framework, neither she nor her family perceive themselves as belonging to a *russlanddeutsch* community. Among other things, her case illustrates "the role of external identification in self-identification" (Jenkins 2008:98). In

fact, while what Jenkins (2008:106) calls “the categorising gaze of others” does not always correspond to one’s (or one group’s) self-identification, being subject to this gaze allows the individual (or group) in question to consciously construct and state their identity by means of this very difference between internal and external identification. Therefore, the dialectic between the self and others is essential to the emergence and renegotiation of identity.

Admittedly, the experience of in-betweenness and the perception of identity as of one made up by elements of all the sociocultural contexts which are biographically relevant to the immigrants characterizes all migration phenomena; however, in-betweenness is especially relevant to *post-Soviet identities* in view of the qualities defining the post-Soviet itself; as hinted in Section 6.1, the post-Soviet is characterized by

> [...] a certain feeling of being caught in-between: [...] between two times (past future), between two systems (Soviet/post-Soviet) [...] The post-Soviet threshold, the post-Soviet transitionality and in-betweenness thus has a peculiar nature-it does not provide any cues about the direction to follow, it does not channel one’s identificatory process. (Oushakine 2000:995)

Not only in view of the many different ethnic groups inhabiting the territories of the FSU but also because of the transition from the Soviet regime to what came after it, migration phenomena from the FSU subsume complexities which are not easily found in other sociocultural contexts and which are still far to being fathomed in research.

The *in-betweenness* of immigrants from the FSU to Israel and Germany can be appreciated especially well in a linguistic perspective, looking at the language practices of the immigrants and on their attitudes towards their biographically relevant languages. The next section deals with such linguistic aspects.

6.3 Sociolinguistic aspects

6.3.1 Representation of language practices

This section analyzes the participants' answers to the following questions of the quantitative questionnaire:

11. Как бы Вы оценили свои знания русского языка?
11. How would you rate your knowledge of Russian?

14. Как бы Вы оценили свои знания немецкого/иврита?
14. How would you rate your knowledge of German/Hebrew?

19. Как часто Вы общаетесь на русском языке дома с семьей?
19. How often do you speak Russian at home with your family?

20. Как часто Вы общаетесь на русском языке с близкими друзьями?
20. How often do you speak Russian with your close friends?

21. Как часто Вы общаетесь на русском языке с коллегами?
21. How often do you speak Russian with your colleagues?

22. Как часто Вы общаетесь на русском языке в соцсетях?
22. How often do you communicate in Russian on social media?

23. Как часто Вы пользуетесь русскоязычными СМИ?
23. How often do you consume Russian-speaking mass media?

as well as excerpts from qualitative interviews dealing with language practices.
Some of the above questions have relevant implications for language attitude issues and are also discussed in Section 6.3.3.
It is essential to bear in mind that, in view of how the questionnaire is structured, it does not yield linguistic information documenting the immigrants' language use on which base, e.g., a language variety of Russian-speaking immigrant communities in Israel and Germany can be inferred or even reconstructed and analyzed. In fact, while the diasporic varieties of Russian undoubtedly are a subject deserving attention in research, the main objective of this study does not consist in describing the

characteristics of the Russian language spoken in post-Soviet immigrant communities outside of the FSU. The latter has been tentatively done e.g. by Remennick (2003b) and Perelmutter (2018), who respectively write about "HebRush" and "Israeli Russian" or "IR" with regards to the language use of Russian-speaking immigrants living in Israel. The qualitative corpus collected through fieldwork in Israel and Germany is rich in materials allowing for the description of Russian in the diaspora in a comparative perspective to what Perelmutter (2018:521) terms "MSR," i.e. Modern Standard Russian; an outline on the main linguistic features of Russian in the diaspora is provided in Section 6.3.2 providing indications for future research engaging with lexical, morphosyntactical and pragmatic features of Russian in the diaspora.

Answers to the above questions offer insights into the individuals' reflections on their usage of Russian, Hebrew and/or German according to the context and kind of interaction, thus aiming to analyze the immigrants' "individual language policy". The latter is described by Nguyen (2022:1) as "a kind of policy which individuals discursively construct and apply to themselves in their every-day language practices, beliefs and management." Thus, in this section, the focus is less on the immigrants' actual language use than on the immigrants' representation of it; "representation" is employed in this study after the reading of the term provided by Krefeld & Pustka (2010:11), who describe it as "the form of organization of individual knowledge [...] and the changes thereof". [15]The concept of representation is central to this study because language attitudes, i.e. one of the two main phenomena at investigation, are to be located within the realm of *representation* as it has been described by Pierre Bourdieu in his seminal work *Langage et pouvoir symbolique*:

> la représentation que les agents se font du monde social et, plus précisément, la contribution qu'ils apportent à la construction de la vision du monde, et, par là, à la construction même de ce monde, à travers le travail de représentation (à tous sens du terme) qu'ils ne cessent d'accomplir pour imposer leur vision du monde ou la vision de leur propre position dans ce monde, de leur identité sociale.[16] (Bourdieu 2001:300)

[15]Original text: "Organisationsform des individuellen Wissens" (Dorsch 2009:853) und dessen Veränderungen"; the authors refer to the following: Dorsch, Friedrich. 2009. Psychologisches Wörterbuch. Bern: Verlag Hans Huber.

[16]"the representation which agents make of the social world and, more precisely, the contribution which they make to the construction of worldview and thus to the construction of the world itself, through the representation – in any sense of the term – which they need to accomplish in order to impose their

That is, language attitudes are one of the many bricks which people have at their disposal to construe their worldview and therefore ultimately the world itself, to paraphrase Bourdieu (2001). But while they are thematically close to language attitudes, immigrants' representations of language practices are not in the same domain as language attitudes. In fact, speakers' statements on their language practices, including judgment on their command of a given language as well as reflections on the contexts in which they use it, are not to be considered "evaluative responses" (Soukup 2012:214) of the kind that are usually analyzed in research on language attitudes. In fact, research on language attitudes *proper* does not focus on speakers' self-assessment of language competence but rather on "people's reactions towards different ways of talking" (Soukup 2012:212) and, in general, people's feelings and thoughts towards a given language variety and its speakers. When looking at questions 11 and 12 of the questionnaire on assessment of language competence in Russian and Hebrew/German, a line needs to be drawn between attitude and self-assessment. In the case of questions 12 and 15 of the questionnaire addressing the participants' liking of Russian and Hebrew/German, they clearly address an attitude, i.e. an evaluative stance or emotional disposition towards a given language variety, whereas self-assessment of language skills is a powerful resource in the context of language learning by which learners are empowered and allowed to discover in which directions the language learning process could take them. In view of the latter, the line between self-assessment and language attitudes is of methodological character; as described by Forsberg et al. (2021:150),

> [s]elf-assessments can be used as a starting point for collecting language attitudes and information on standard language ideologies present in participants, by combining these with follow-up questions triggering reflection on the assessments.

This quotation summarizes a significant aspect in the study methodology. In fact, the sociolinguistic section of the questionnaire (i.e. section 3, starting with question 11) begins by addressing the participants' self-assessment of Russian and Hebrew/German skills and then goes on to elicit their attitude towards these languages and delve into their views on issues regarding e.g. language maintenance.

worldview or their view of their own position in this world, of their social identity", translation by the author of this study

Thus, questions 11 and 14 as well as the rest of the questions mentioned at the beginning of this section aim at obtaining a picture of the daily language practices within immigrant communities from the FSU. Background information on the language use of the immigrants provides fundamental context for the discussion on the immigrants' language attitudes in the next section.

After this clarification, the analysis of the participants' representations of their language practices begins by looking at question 11. From the answers to the question "How would you rate your knowledge of Russian" unsurprisingly emerges the highly significant role of Russian in the participants' lives; this is *unsurprising* because native or near-native knowledge of Russian was one of the main criteria for participant recruitment.

An analysis of the data yielded by question 11 provides the figures reported in Tables 6.23 and 6.24. As is evident from Tables 6.23 and 6.24, the absolute majority

Grade	**Frequency (%)**
1	–
2	–
3	2.56
4	18.67
5	78.77

Table 6.23: Self-assessment of Russian competence, Israel-based respondents

Grade	**Frequency (%)**
1	–
2	0.81
3	2.43
4	15.95
5	80.81

Table 6.24: Self-assessment of Russian competence, Germany-based respondents

of participants self-assesses their command of Russian as "excellent" (grade 5). In general, no prominent divide exists between the Israel-based respondent population and their Germany-based counterparts.

Data on the participants' self-assessment of Russian knowledge becomes more revealing when looking at grades other than 5. Of the 391 Israel-based participants, 73 rated their command of Russian with grade 4 ("very good"); grade 3 ("good") was

chosen by 10 people. As concerns the Germany-based respondents, 59 out of 370 rated their command of Russian with grade 4; 9 rated it with grade 3; and 3 rated it with grade 2 (“poor”). As is visible from the above tables, there is no occurrence of grade 1 (“unsatisfactory”) in any of the respondent populations. A conspicuous portion of the respondents rating their Russian skills with grades other than 5, which in my interpretation equals a native command of Russian, is either non-native of Russia or emigrated to Israel/Germany more than a decade before the interview took place. The length of immigrant life clearly is a factor influencing language attrition, described by Seliger (1985:4) as follows:

> [l]anguage attrition will refer to the phenomenon, commonly found among bilinguals or polyglots, of erosion in the linguistic performance of a first or primary language which had been fully acquired and used before the onset of bilingualism.

After years or decades of socialization in an environment where Russian is not the most prominent language, attrition in Russian competence is naturally to be expected – of course to different extents according to the contexts in which Russian is employed by the immigrants. In the case of Israeli-based respondents, most respondents rating their command of Russian with a grade lower than 5 were born outside of Russia (53 out of 83 respondents). Of these 53, the majority (28) was born in Ukraine, 6 were born in Belarus and 3 in Israel,to name some of the most frequent countries of birth. A similar picture emerges for Germany-based respondents, where 39 of 71 total respondents were born outside of Russia, of which 14 in Ukraine, 9 in Kazakhstan and 4 in Belarus, to name the most frequently appearing countries of birth.

Looking at Russian-born immigrants rating their Russian competences with a grade other than 5 – “excellent,” 23 out of 30 immigrants to Israel emigrated more than a decade before 2021, i.e. the year in which the questionnaire was administered; among Germany-based participants, 20 out of 32 emigrated to Germany starting from 2011. In both cases, the long duration of their stay in the receiving society is a factor explaining the degree of erosion – albeit relative, as Russian-born participants tend to rate their Russian language competence better than participants born in other countries of the FSU or elsewhere.

Both among Israel-based and Germany-based respondents,Ukraine is the most fre-

quent country of birth for immigrants rating their Russian competence with a grade other than 5 – “excellent” or even other than 4 – “very good”.
If taken alone, this piece of information on the immigrants’ self-assessed Russian competence is not particularly informative nor surprising; furthermore, as it lies in the domain of representation and is not an objective snapshot of the participants’ actual language practice, it is to be taken critically and acquires relevance only when paired with information on the immigrants’ language attitudes, especially when looking at the reasons behind the self-assessment, which are addressed at questions 12 and 13:

12. Do you like Russian?
12. Нравится ли Вам русский язык?

13. Why? Explain briefly, using no more than three words
13. Почему? Объясните коротко, используя не более трех слов

These questions and all the others concerning language attitude are discussed in Section 6.3.3, which takes up the self-assessments by contextualizing them against the backdrop of the participants’ language attitudes. However, at this stage, the topic of (represented) language practices is still treated separately from language attitudes since this section pursues the main objective of reconstructing the significance of Russian as well as of Hebrew and German (discussed in the following) in the communicative daily life of the participants. Put within the broader context of the immigrants’ language attitudes, information on the immigrants’ representations of their language practices is indispensable for understanding the immigrants’ integration process in the receiving society; for a thorough critical discussion on the term “integration” I refer back to Section 2.2.
From data presented in the above tables emerges the central role of Russian in the lives of immigrants from the FSU to Israel and Germany. This finding resonates with those of research on the Russian-speaking diaspora regardless of the host country; as an example,Isurin (2011:212) notes that, among Russian immigrants to the US, Israel and Germany, “all three groups predominantly have daily contact with the native language and most of the participants maintain Russian as the language of communication with their partners”. The issue of L1 maintenance is expanded upon in the next section on language attitudes.
Looking at L2 competence also is highly significant to appreciate the dynamics of acculturation taking place in the immigrants’ lives and which are discussed in Section

6.4. The following tables illustrate the participants' self-assessment of, respectively, Hebrew and German language competence.

From Tables 6.25 and 6.26 emerges that FSU immigrants to Germany tend to eval-

Grade	Frequency (%)
1	6.14
2	15.09
3	29.16
4	30.43
5	19.18

Table 6.25: Self-assessment of Hebrew competence

Grade	Frequency (%)
1	6.76
2	9.46
3	28.38
4	27.84
5	27.57

Table 6.26: Self-assessment of German competence

uate their competences of German more positively than FSU immigrants to Israel do with Hebrew competences. This might be at least partially affected by factors which are treated in Section 6.1, such as the entity of geographic segregation of immigrant groups in Israel which might possibly account for a lesser degree of Hebrew usage and therefore a lower self-assessment of Hebrew command. An additional aspect to be considered lies in the structure of Ulpan language program for new olim subsidized by the State of Israel. In fact, as is illustrated in the examples of ZIL32F and MIL27M in Section 6.1, olim are often divided into Hebrew language classes based on the first language spoken. Thus, olim from the FSU are often grouped together and at times even taught Hebrew by Russian-speaking teachers, which might further accentuate the impression of a segregated community and does not generally foster an effective Hebrew learning process. This is highlighted by Lefkowitz (2004), who describes the challenges posed to the ulpan system altogether by the immigration wave subsequent to the fall of the Soviet Union: as Lefkowitz (2004:139) portrays it, "[t]he system was being stretched [...] in the early 1990s, as Russian immigrants filled ulpanim to capacity." Such language-based segregation in ulpan classes clearly is counterproductive; the following excerpt from Lefkowitz (2004)'s account of an immersive ulpan

experience which he carried out during fieldwork concisely summarizes the struggles of immigrants from the FSU grouped together within the ulpan framework:

> Teachers were frustrated because the Russian students appeared to reject the ulpan's language-immersion pedagogical structure. Students chattered in Russian throughout class periods and often interrupted language drills to confer among themselves (in Russian) to come up with a correct answer. They also displayed great interest in discussing topics the Israeli instructors found unacceptable: Russia, Russians, Russian language, and Russian military service. (Lefkowitz 2004:140)

Nevertheless, the ulpan pedagogy has undergone a reformation process in the last decade and a half, with the aim of enabling the immigrants "to learn adequate Hebrew" (Eglash 2010) and offering them the resources to acquire "a vocabulary that will allow them to function in daily life" (Eglash 2010); and in spite of any possible shortcomings with respect to effective Hebrew learning, participation in ulpan programs is noted by Muchnik & Golan (2011:122–123) to positively affect the integration process of immigrants from the FSU in Israel.
Comparing Table 6.25 and Table 6.26, the fact that evidently more Germany-based respondents assess their command of German as excellent than Israel-based respondents do with Hebrew can be explained by taking into account the relevance of the identity category *russlanddeutsch* among Germany-based respondents. In this respect, the fact that more Germany-based respondents tend to rate their command of the language of the receiving country as excellent than their Israel-based counterparts might be due not only to the aforementioned shortcomings of the ulpan system – every state-subsidized language learning program certainly is exposed to challenges, – but also and most significantly to the importance of German language maintenance among so-called Soviet Germans as opposed to Soviet Jews. Moreover, knowledge of German at least on a B1-level is one of the requirements to emigrate to Germany with a recognized *Spätaussiedler* status, while no language criteria apply for aliyah to Israel. In spite of these differences, the divide in self-assessed L2 competences is evident but not extraordinary.
While L2 language competences might vary between Germany-based and Israel-based respondents, tendencies in daily usage of Russian and Russian maintenance are uniform between both respondents populations. Tables 6.27 and 6.28 below illustrate

responses to the following question:

19. How often do you speak Russian at home with your family?

As for many others in the questionnaire, this question is based on a 1-to-5 Likert scale; in this case, 1 equals the value "never" and 5 equals the value "daily". As is

Grade	Frequency (%)
1	1.53
2	2.56
3	6.14
4	6.39
5	83.38

Table 6.27: Usage of Russian within family context, Israel-based respondents

Grade	Frequency (%)
1	5.95
2	3.78
3	7.57
4	5.68
5	77.03

Table 6.28: Usage of Russian within family context, Germany-based respondents

often the case with scaled questions comparing the answers of two or more respondent groups, the most conspicuous differences are to be located at both extremes of the scale, as questions relying on a Likert scale are often exposed to response biases such as "extreme and non-extreme response styles" (Liu et al. 2017:1). From a comparison of Table 6.27 and Table 6.28 emerges that Israeli-based respondents tend more evidently to using Russian in their daily life communication with their families than their Germany-based counterparts. Though not a substantial one, this difference in Russian usage patterns can be visualized in the following density histograms.
In general, from Figure 6.8 and Figure 6.9 emerges that both respondent populations have a tendency to frequently (i.e., daily) use Russian for communication with family members.
This high presence of Russian in daily life can be noted not only within the family context but also with friends, colleagues and beyond. From an analysis of responses to question 20 "How often do you speak Russian with your close friends?" emerge

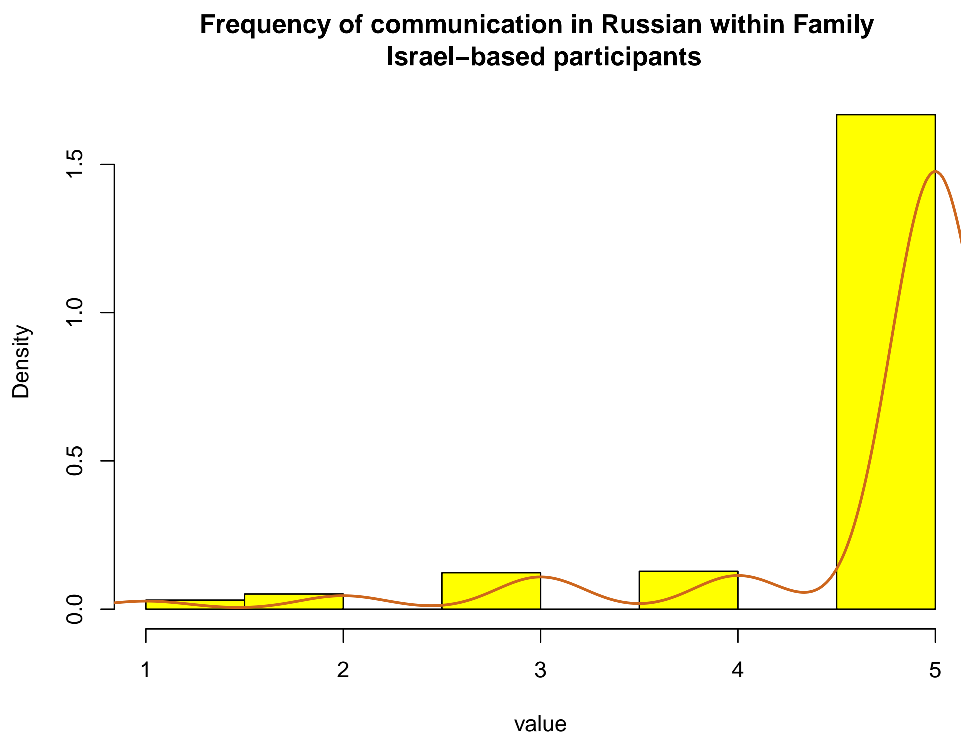

Figure 6.8: Frequency of family communication in Russian, Israel-based respondents

similar tendencies as for communication within the family, as can be observed in Tables 6.29 and 6.30. While the frequency of communication in Russian with friends is

Grade	**Frequency (%)**
1	0.26
2	3.32
3	9.21
4	15.09
5	72.12

Table 6.29: Usage of Russian with friends, Israel-based respondents

less high than it is the case for communication with family members, what remains constant is the difference between Israel and Germany; in fact,respondents based in the former country tend to employ Russian with friends more often than respondents based in the latter country.

A context where the presence of Russian is remarkably less present than in the contexts discussed above is the professional sphere; the difference between commu-

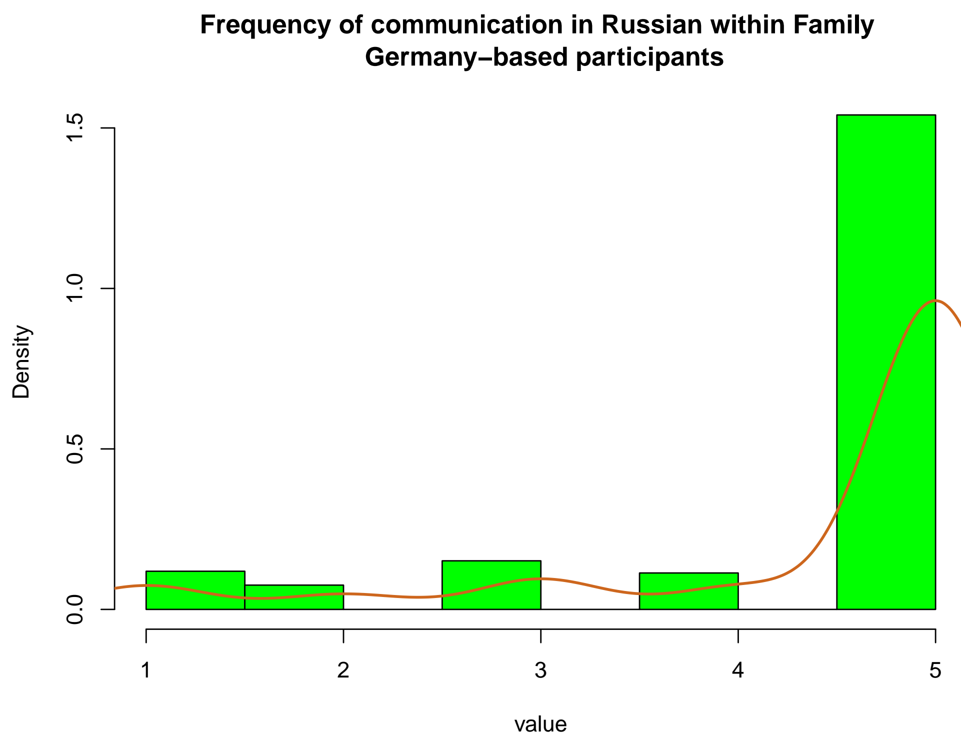

Figure 6.9: Frequency of family communication in Russian, Germany-based respondents

Grade	Frequency (%)
1	2.43
2	4.32
3	13.24
4	20.54
5	59.46

Table 6.30: Usage of Russian with friends Germany-based respondents

nication tendencies of Israel-based and Germany-based respondents remains present and is even broader in this case, consisting of approximately 24 percent points for grade 1 and 20 percent points for grade 5. The values are visible in Tables 6.31 and 6.32. The boxplots in Figures 6.10 and 6.11 are helpful to visually perceive the difference between Tables 6.31 and 6.32, between which there is only a partial overlap of response tendencies around grade 3.

Overall, based on the corpus data, usage of Russian seems to be more present in the daily life of Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel than to Germany; in both cases, the less familiar the context is (i.e. work context), the less likely will be for

Grade	Frequency (%)
1	9.97
2	15.09
3	24.04
4	13.04
5	37.85

Table 6.31: Usage of Russian within professional sphere, Israel-based respondents

Grade	Frequency (%)
1	33.51
2	23.24
3	18.38
4	7.03
5	17.84

Table 6.32: Usage of Russian within professional sphere, Germany-based respondents

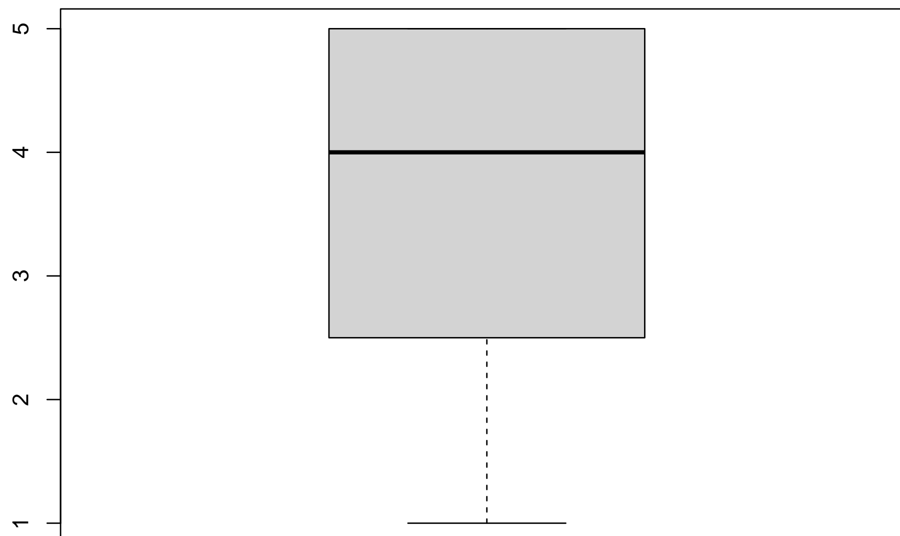

Figure 6.10: Frequency of professional communication in Russian, Israel-based respondents

immigrants to employ it daily. As for other aspects examined within this study, demographic and geographic factors can be hypothesized to play a role in this pat-

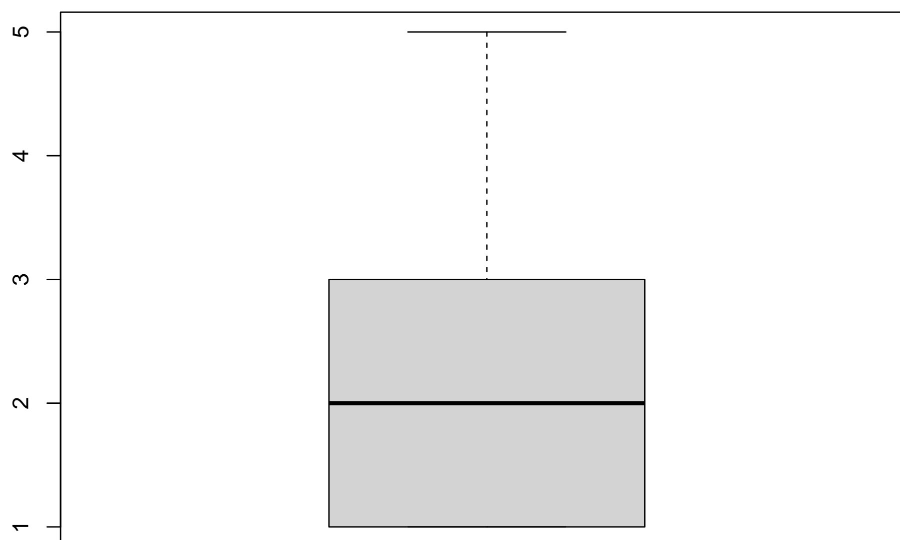

Figure 6.11: Frequency of professional communication in Russian, Germany-based respondents

tern. Once again, geographic segregation of immigrants from the FSU appears to be a far more widespread phenomenon – and to a far more problematic extent, from the points of view of integration perspectives and social welfare – than in Germany; the issue of segregation is discussed at length in Section 6.1. Thus, in line with the tendency identified in Table 6.25 and Table 6.26 that FSU immigrants to Israel evaluate their Hebrew competences lower than their Germany-based counterparts evaluate their German competences, the aspects observed in the above tables and graphs can be assumed to add to the overall difference between Russian-speaking immigrant communities in Israel, who tend to live an arguably more "segregated" life, and the same communities in Germany, where orientation to German values and command of German appear to be more widespread.

At this point, there are several disclaimers to be introduced. First of all, the data collected in this study offer insights into the attitudes, linguistic and cultural practices of mostly first to first-and-a-half generation immigrants, for whom communication in Russian – and the degree of language maintenance, which is examined further

below – can be expected to be a more essential practice than to FSU immigrants in the section generation and beyond. It is highly likely that the results would have varied significantly if second generation immigrants had been included in the (both qualitative and quantitative) study, too; it can be expected that a higher degree of language attrition and, to some extent, 'culture attrition' (in terms of loss of identification with the values of the culture of their or their relatives' country of birth) will be found among immigrants with a comparatively long duration of stay in the receiving country and even more so among second generation immigrants than it is the case for first and first-and-a-half generation immigrants. However,time of exposure to a language is not the only factor affecting language attrition, as is highlighted in Ben-Rafael & Schmid (2007). In fact, factors like attitude and ideology have been observed by Ben-Rafael & Schmid (2007) to play a more crucial to language maintenance (as opposed to attrition) than the frequency of exposure to a language.

The second and possibly more critical disclaimer which needs to be introduced regards Israel's state language policy. In fact, results from the comparison between Israel and Germany as to the communication routines of their Russian-speaking immigrant communities which are presented here point the researcher's attention at the influence of national language policies and ideologies on the speakers' actual language practices. In the 1990s,when immigration from post-Soviet states was at its peak, a change of directions in Israel's language policy resulted in "providing for mother tongue teaching and reinforcing second/foreign language education" (Ben-Rafael & Schmid 2007:210), thus giving the many different immigrant communities and native ethnic groups of Israel a legitimization to engage with their L1 and/or heritage language, as opposed to the previously widespread ideology of Hebrew as the language marking the immigrants' "new Israeli identity" (Ben-Rafael & Schmid 2007:210) which "new migrants were strongly encouraged to learn and adopt" (Ben-Rafael & Schmid 2007:210) to the detriment of their L1. These factors are not just background information but they provide a realistic explanation for the tendencies which are examined within this study. With this in mind, the question must be posed as to whether Israel's language policy and the treatment of Russian, along with other languages such as French, as a "language of special significance" (Spolsky 1997:144) whose maintenance is encouraged, has not exacerbated language-based segregation in those social contexts and geographical areas in which it already was present. Or if it hasn't exacerbated it, the next question one should pose is whether it hasn't had

the effect of providing a formal justification for the already existing segregation.
The term "segregation" with reference to Russian-speaking migration to Israel does not by any means describe a reality of absolute, institutionally imposed separation between the domains in which Russian-speaking immigrants live, work, socialize and speak and those where the Hebrew language and Israeli culture are dominant. In fact, the latter description does not entirely apply to Israel, whose society is highly diverse from an ethnic and linguistic point of view. Moreover,"Israeli culture" is itself a highly multifaceted construct, which can hardly be circumscribed and which contains elements from the cultures of all countries in which olim had been living prior to aliyah. However, analyzing data from this study and reviewing the literature, it emerges clearly how the social interactions of first and first-and-a-half generation Russian-speaking immigrants in Israel mostly happen with in-groups, i.e. fellow Russian-speaking immigrants, whereas the same is not given among Russian-speaking immigrants to Germany.
These observations bring to the fore a number of controversial aspects. Firstly, if ideology is a strong motivator of language learning and maintenance, as is theorized in language learning highlighted in several studies (e.g., Ben-Rafael & Schmid 2007 and Everhart Chaffee et al. 2020), one could be led to expect that ideological motifs such as the Zionist cause or the reappropriation of Jewishness (see Section 6.2.6.2 would constitute a strong motivating factor for olim from the FSU to learn Hebrew. Instead, while this expectation might apply to other immigrant groups in Israel, it only partially applies to immigrants from the FSU, whose religious practices and Jewish identity were erased under the Soviet regime. The following excerpt from the interview with SIL39F, protagonist of the case study on page 162, presents an example for the absence of a Jewish identity and religious practices in her family:

> SIL39F: Постепенно интерес какой-то к корням, к культурному аспекту еврейства у меня возник, поэтому я пошла учить иврит, еще будучи в Екатеринбурге. У нас в университете был курс, он был бесплатный. Туда могли не только студенты ходить. Я не была студентка, и я все-равно туда ходила. Вот два года на этот курс, достаточно неплохо там азы какие-то выучила, самое начало начала иврита. Мне было интересно. Мне было интересно читать, слушать музыку, смотреть кино, еще что-то, и как-то с этим феноменом знакомиться, потому что советские евреи — они, как бы, мало что сохранили от своего еврейства, да? И там бабушка с дедушкой не

> были конечно же никак религиозными, они не знали никаких праздников, ничего.
>
> SIL39F: Gradually, I developed a certain interest for my roots, for the cultural aspects of Jewry, so while I was still living in Yekaterinburg I started to learn Hebrew. Our university offered a free class. It was open to everyone, not just students. I wasn't a student, and I still took it. I took this course for two years and I learned the basics pretty well, like the very beginnings of Hebrew. I found it really interesting. I enjoyed reading, listening to music, watching movies and so on, and just getting to know this phenomenon, because Soviet Jews, well they hardly preserved anything of their Jewishness, right? And of course my grandma and grandpa weren't religious at all and didn't know about any holidays or anything.

A second paradoxical aspect regards the situation in Germany where, in spite of the absence of an overt national ideology in terms of ethnonational identity and in spite of the fact that only a small number of participants self-identify as "German" (see Table 6.20), immigrants appear to have securer competences of German than their Israel-based counterparts have of Hebrew. This allows to infer that, while ideology – intended also as motivation – is a key factor for language learning as well as integration in the receiving culture, it is not the only one, nor is it the most decisive one.
A significant difference in the demographics of post-Soviet migration to Israel and Germany resides in its scope. Statistics cited under Table 6.5 estimate that at least 3.5 million immigrants from the FSU currently live in Germany (data collected before February 24th, 2022), which would account for 4,2% of the total population of Germany. At the same time, immigrants from the FSU account for approximately 20% of the total population of Israel (see Ben-Rafael et al. 2006); the Russian-speaking population of Israel is the most prominent minority group after Israeli Arabs who, according to Striedl (2022:261), account for 21.1% of the population of Israel. In view of their demographic prominence over the total population, it even appears problematic to label immigrants from the FSU, just like Israeli Arabs, a "minority group". However, in the case of both groups, their demographic prominence does not seem to prevent segregation, to be understood as residential segregation – discussed in Section 6.1 – as well as linguistic segregation, the two of which are evidently intertwined. Myhill (2004:189) describes the entity of segregation in Israel:

> A significant feature of the language situation in Israel as opposed to, e.g., the United States and Canada regards segregation. In Israel, Jews, Muslims, Christians and Druze live almost completely segregated from each other – that is one village will be Jewish, a neighboring village Muslim, the next Druze, etc. There are a few mixed cities (e.g. Jerusalem, Haifa, Acre) but [...] even there different groups are almost completely divided into separate neighborhoods [...] This situation is supported by an ideology according to which it is normal for members of different religious groups to live in separate communities and it is abnormal to move into a community associated with a different religious group.

What Myhill (2004:189) describes concerning the language situation in Israel does not apply to Germany, where geographic – i.e. residential – segregation, while it is present (see Glitz 2012), is not as extended or visible as it is in Israel; nor is it supported by ideological motifs related to religion. These observations, along with data presented in this study, indicate that Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel are linguistically segregated from native speakers of Hebrew to a degree which does not apply to Russian-speaking immigrants to Germany. The latter divide is visible when looking at the participants' consumption patterns of social and mass media consumption which are addressed at questions 22 and 23 of the questionnaire.
The following Tables 6.35 and 6.36 present data from responses to question 22 "How often do you communicate in Russian on social media?". The tendency highlighted in the tables is the same as is discussed for most questions analyzed in this section; the presence of Russian is more influential in the everyday lives of Israel-based respondents than it is the case for their Germany-based counterparts.

Frequency grade	**Respondents, %**
1 (never)	1.79
2	3.58
3	9.21
4	13.81
5 (every day)	71.61

Table 6.33: Frequency of Russian communication on social media, Israel-based respondents

During netnography (see Section 5.3.3), I was able to explore in depth the online communication of Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel and Germany, discovering

Frequency grade	**Respondents, %**
1 (never)	1.89
2	5.68
3	15.68
4	19.19
5 (every day)	57.57

Table 6.34: Frequency of Russian communication on social media, Germany-based respondents

that, while the majority of Facebook groups targeting immigrants from the FSU to Israel employ Russian as their only language of communication, German is widespread especially in Facebook groups targeting so-called *Russlanddeutsche*. Even within the scope of the quantitative questionnaire, which is formulated in Russian in all of its parts, there are several occurrences of German answers among Germany-based participants, while Hebrew is only used by one respondent among the Israel-based participant population.

The tendencies outlined here are in line with data presented by other studies; as an example with reference to Russian-speaking migration to Germany, a study by Tikhomirova (2021) shows that, when offered to choose between answering a questionnaire in Russian or in German, the majority of the respondents are comfortable answering it in German, and about 40% of the respondents assess their German skills as "fluent;" moreover, Tikhomirova (2021:134)'s study shows that participants in a 2016 survey carried out by the Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom tend to consume more German-speaking than Russian-speaking information resources on the internet. Similar tendencies have not been observed in Israel, where, as noted by Kopeliovich (2011), "[t]he evidence of flourishing cultural life, media, politics, public services and business held in Russian is abundant" among first-generation immigrants from the FSU and Russian is highly present in the public sphere.

A comparative study by Elias & Lemish (2011) similarly highlights a stronger "need for speedy adoption of the host language" among FSU immigrants to Germany as well as "a much stronger assimilative pressure enforced on Russian-speaking immigrants to Germany in comparison with Israel" (Elias & Lemish 2011:1261). In their study, Elias & Lemish (2011:1261) found that "newcomer families in Germany decide[d] not to subscribe to Russian television channels to create a linguistic atmosphere that encouraged use of the new language."

While second-generation immigrants are largely excluded in the design of this study, including them into a study comparing the media consumption behavior of first and second-generation immigrants to Israel and Germany would add complexity to the picture, with the likely result that the consumption of Russian-speaking media can be expected to sink in the second generation.

Media consumption behavior is highly significant to detect the cultural orientation of the respondents. In her study, Tikhomirova (2021) highlights an overlap between the language of mass media consumption and the immigrants' political orientation. Based on the language preferences of the respondents, Tikhomirova (2021:130) identifies two immigrant categories, i.e. "the conservative, Russian-oriented 'patriots' and a more cosmopolitan, German- or Europe-oriented faction." In Tikhomirova's (2021:129–130) view, the divide between the two categories is also generational, as she observes that the Russian-oriented group is mostly made up of so-called "latecomers" aged 55 or above, while the German-oriented group arguably mainly includes young-adult FSU immigrants as well as middle-aged *Spätaussiedler* from Russia and Kazakhstan.

This study does not aim to produce a typology of Russian-speaking immigrants but rather to examine the immigrants' attitudes providing empirically grounded interpretations of these attitudes, seeking as far as possible to avoid stylization of the participants. While Tikhomirova's study (2021) has a solid data basis and provides a compelling analysis, it appears to create a dichotomy between two subgroups of immigrants without taking into account whether they hold this dichotomy for valid, which step is essential within the scope of a Grounded Theory approach such as the one towards which this study is oriented.

However methodologically different, most studies on the media consumption behavior of immigrants from FSU countries highlight that Russian media outlets are present in Germany, Israel and all other popular destination for Soviet and post-Soviet migration, obviously including the U.S. and Canada.

Question 23 of the questionnaire addresses precisely the consumption of Russian-speaking mass media for information purposes. Both in Israel and Germany, there are several Russian-speaking media outlets available.While Russian state television and other resources produced in Russia are largely available abroad, too, there are also Russian-speaking media outlets produced in Israel and Germany.

Examples for popular Germany-based Russian-speaking media outlets are the pri-

vate TV channel *OstWest* as well as the Russian-speaking version of the *Deutsche Welle* broadcaster, named "DW na russkom," i.e. "D[eutsche] W[elle] in Russian." Russian-speaking newspapers and magazines published in Germany with a limited circulation are often available in grocery stores selling goods from countries of the former Soviet Union.

Looking at Israel, however, the presence of Russian-speaking media outlets is arguably far more visible than in Germany, befitting the demographic prominence of Russian-speaking immigrants over the total population. Kopeliovich (2011:117) describes the situation of Russian in Israel as one of "strong vitality" also due the following Russian-speaking media outlets, among others:

> Israeli Russian TV channel (Israel+) broadcasting Russian programmes with Hebrew subtitles; several original TV channels from Russia available in Israel; the state radio station REKA offering 12 hours daily of programming in Russian and a commercial station Pervoye Radio (The First Radio); the popular newspaper Vesti and multiple smaller newspapers and magazines. (Kopeliovich 2011:117)

Responses to question 23 "How often do you consume Russian-speaking mass media?" are approximately in line with the tendencies identified throughout this section; however, data presented in Tables 6.35 and 6.36 below do not show as substantial a divide between Israel-based and Germany-based respondent communities as the above observation could lead to assume.

Frequency grade	Respondents, %
1 (never)	10.49
2	18.16
3	14.32
4	11.25
5 (every day)	45.78

Table 6.35: Frequency of consumption of Russian-speaking mass media, Israel-based respondents

While the consumption frequency of Germany-based respondents appears to be concentrated more densely around average values (2 to 4), the consumption behavior of Israel-based respondents is slightly more polarized, with 10.5% of the respondents claiming to never consume Russian-speaking media outlets and almost 46% stating

Frequency grade	Respondents, %
1 (never)	5.99
2	18.26
3	19.35
4	15.26
5 (every day)	41.14

Table 6.36: Frequency of consumption of Russian-speaking mass media„ Germany-based respondents

to consume them on a daily basis.

An essential aspect to be taken into account when interpreting the latter data is language maintenance, which is studied in Section 6.3.3. In fact, while a finding discussed in Section 6.3.3 is that the respondents' attitudes towards maintaining Russian are largely positive in both samples, these attitudes do not offer direct insights into the degree of action taken by the immigrants to actually preserve their Russian skills and/or pass them on to their children. Again, the participants' representation of their language practices are by no means to be taken as an objective account of their actual language practices. As is expanded upon in the next section, language maintenance presents great challenges especially among immigrants to Israel.

In Section 6.1 I illustrate that, among Israel-based immigrants, the average duration of stay is 18.5 years, while Germany-based respondents are slightly newer to Germany, with their average duration of stay amounting to 14.7 years. The latter aspects must be kept in mind when analyzing sociolinguistic data, especially in view of the correlation between length of stay in the receiving country and the possibility of L1 erosion.

The next section draws on existing studies to briefly deal with the language practices of speakers of Russian in the diaspora.

6.3.2 Some reflections on *language*. Russian in the diaspora

Within the scope of this study, language attitudes are not only the central subject of investigation, but they serve at the same time as an analytical tool for the study of the way in which speakers of a language situate themselves in society, how they develop a feeling of belonging to a group and how borders between groups are created;

the latter aspects are subsumed under the label "social identity." Both language attitudes and social identity are discussed by means of an empirically grounded analysis within this chapter, besides to a detailed terminological clarification at the beginning of this study in Chapter 2.

As is illustrated in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.1.1, language attitudes are a fairly popular topic in sociolinguistic research, although their potential for the study of the *socio* in *sociolinguistics* is far from being exhausted. As I observe in Section 4.2.1, studies focusing on language attitude generally appear to dwell on a descriptive level, merely describing what speakers think about specific language varieties and microlinguistic (e.g., morphosyntactical) features and all too often leaving out the significance of the attitudes for the speakers' life in a given social environment. This can be observed in several of the studies cited in Sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.1.1. It is worth noting that by the term "microlinguistic" I refer to the definition of it formulated by Trager & Smith (1957), in whose terms microlinguistics refers to "linguistics proper - - phonology and morphemics" (Trager & Smith 1957:8) and to all the formal aspects pertaining to language intended as a system. The complementary side to microlinguistics is 'macrolinguistics', seen by Trager & Smith (1957) as "the study of language in all its aspects" (Matthews 2007).

By contrast, the perspective offered within this study is one mainly focusing on the social significance of language attitudes, whereby language is not regarded as a formal system but broadly as 'national language', i.e. as a language employed for communication by individuals and groups of people situated within a social and cultural context where a national language plays a significant role for different reasons (see Section 2.5).In the case of the subject at the center of the study, the Russian language plays a highly significant role in Germany and especially in Israel insofar as these two countries are popular destinations of the Russian-speaking diaspora. My view of language within the scope of this study has profound implications for its methodology and for understanding the relevance of its findings. Therefore, drawing again on Trager & Smith's (1957) terminology, this study has a so-called *metalinguistic* perspective in the sense that it deals with "what people talk about and why, but also [...] how they use the linguistic system, and how they react to its use" (Trager & Smith 1957:82).

Against this backdrop, it is clear that this study focuses not on attitudes towards specific microlinguistic features of e.g. Russian, Hebrew or German, but on atti-

tudes towards these languages intended as compounds of meaning, broadly speaking. Therefore, while providing an account of the language attitudes of Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel and Germany, this study does not aim at describing or reconstructing the language use of the speakers; in other words, this study employs language attitudes – a macrolinguistic subject, by Trager & Smith (1957) – to target microlinguistics, but metalinguistics.

This choice implies that highly compelling questions regarding the actual language use of the participants of this study are largely left out (see Chapter 7; and while data collected within this study would allow to investigate the question whether such a variety as "Russian in the diaspora" exists, doings so would extend beyond its scope. The latter question might be reformulated as follows: does the Russian spoken in Russian-speaking communities abroad (e.g. in Israel and Germany, among others) structurally differ from Russian spoken in Russia and if yes, to which extent? Answering this complex question would involve a thorough discussion on several aspects, e.g. the extent to which Russian spoken in Russia differs from Russian spoken in other FSU countries and why, which indicates once again how an analysis of these aspects would rather require a study in its own right than be confined to a meager section of a study dealing with language attitudes.

However, based on available literature as well as on insights from data collected for this study, it is possible to provide a rough sketch of "Russian in the diaspora" which can be helpful for future studies dedicated to this topic.

Observations presented in this sections are mainly based on data collected in Israel because phenomena allowing to identify a possible variety of Russian abroad have been observed more consistently during interviews in Israel; although this section does not state that there does exist a variety of Russian in Israel, problems of residential segregation as well as the high concentration of speakers of Russian over the total population of Israel (see Section 6.1) make the existence of such a variety more probable than in Germany.

While giving an account of the status of Russian in Israel, Perelmutter (2018) states that Russian spoken by Russian-speaking immigrants in Israel constitutes a variety in its own right. As Perelmutter (2018) claims,

> Israeli Russian (IR) is quite different from Modern Standard Russian (MSR). IR is a spoken and sometimes written vernacular which formed under the influence of Hebrew. It exhibits such phenomena as lexical

> code-mixing, code-switching, phonological and morphological adaptation of Hebrew lexical elements into the Russian matrix, adoption of Hebrew intonation contours, etc. (Perelmutter 2018:520)

However, Perelmutter (2018) did not carry out interviews with participants and substantiates the main statement of her article mainly by quoting examples from blog posts or other literature on Russian in Israel (see Remennick 2003b, Naiditch 2000 and Naiditch 2004). Until today, the linguistic and suprasegmental characteristics of Russian in the diaspora have been but sparcely described and analyzed. One of the most thorough accounts of language contact and language interference phenomena among Russian-speaking émigrés has been written by Andrews (1999). In his work titled *Sociocultural Perspectives on Language Change in Diaspora*, Andrews investigates language change among Soviet immigrants in the United States by focusing mainly on the following aspects: language attitude, language change in lexicon and morphosyntax and developments in phonology and intonation.
In Andrews' description of Soviet immigrants' language behavior, "the most overt differences between émigré speech and the language of the motherland are [...] borrowings and other examples of lexical interference" (Andrews 1999:105). The same can be said about the language use of both Israel- and Germany-based interview participants; lexical borrowings from German and Hebrew are especially visible but not surprising, for that matter; in fact, they generally regard terms referring to e.g. artifacts, daily-use objects and administrative practices for which a corresponding word is either lacking in Russian or is cognitively not as quickly available as the German or Hebrew term. Examples from the interview corpus are presented in the following; borrowings are in bold.

VIL31M: Если, допустим, грубо говоря, пойти работать сюда в **канион**
VIL31M: Let's say, as an example, like, you'd start working here in the **kanyon**

KIL25F:Она социальный работник в **ревахе** у нас была
KIL25F: She was a social worker in our **revakhah**

BDE34F:Я училась в школе, потом закончила специальный, ну **фах-аби**сделала
BDE34F: I went to school, then I finished a special – well, I got a **Fachabi**

In the first example, VIL31M employs the Hebrew term for mall קניון "ḳanyon" instead of the Russian term торговый центр; since it refers to a place of daily relevance, it can be understood how the Hebrew term "ḳanyon" is broadly available in the lexicon of immigrants – possibly regardless of their first language.
Daily-life salience of a concept or object and therefore of the word used to refer to it naturally is one of the criteria determining the entrenchment of a borrowing in the speaker's lexicon; this resonates with the reflections shared by Backus (2014:26), who argues that frequency of usage of a word determines its entrenchment in the speaker's lexicon and is one of the main cognitive determinants of borrowing. The latter is observable in the second example, where the interviewee employs the Hebrew term "reṿaḥah" elliptically for מחלקת הרווחה "maḥleḳet ha-reṿaḥah," literally "welfare division," in this context meaning social services dedicated to children's well-being. The fact that "maḥleḳet ha-reṿaḥah" is a fixed expression in Hebrew and one which occurs particularly frequently in the participants' daily life suggests that the Russian equivalent is unlikely to be available in the participant's lexicon, besides from the fact that the expression describes something characteristic for the functioning of Israeli welfare system and which could possibly lack an equivalent in Ukraine, KIL25F's country of birth (see Backus 2014:44 ff. for a discussion on the borrowing of formulaic sequences).
The third example stems from an interview with a Germany-based participant who employs the German word "Fachabi" to describe her high school diploma; the term "Fachabi" designates a specific type of high school diploma in the German school system and therefore lacks a direct equivalent in Russian. Of the three examples, above, that of BDE34F is the only case of phonological adaptation; whereas both IIL44F and KIL25F pronounce the borrowed words according to Russian phonology, BDE34F pronounces the compound noun "Fachabi" ("Fach" plus "Abi[tur]") with a glottal stop between the two parts of the compound. This might lead to wonder whether BDE34F's example presents a case of lexical borrowing or of code-switching instead, the difference between the two arguably being that "in codeswitching each item is internally grammatical by the rules of its language; there is no morphosyntactic integration. The grammars of both languages are equally active and there is no asymmetry [...] [u]nlike in borrowing, the noun is not integrated into the patterns of the language of the determiner" (Rothe 2014:214).
Evidently, the above examples open a Pandora's box demanding a far more thorough

examination than allowed within the scope of this study.
Further aspects which appeared to me salient during the fieldwork phase are of morphosyntactical and intonational character as well as in the field of discourse structure.
The following example features morphosyntactical peculiarities to be observed in participant R., a second-generation speaker of Russian, born in Israel to a family of Azerbaijani and Ukrainian descent. Perelmutter (2018) does not explicitly state which immigrant generations her description of Israeli Russian applies to; however, the generational aspect is highly relevant, as it can be expected that language use will differ between first/first-and-a-half generation and second generation immigrants. In most cases, second generation immigrants are more likely to show signs of erosion of, in this case, Russian, as well as a higher influence from Hebrew or German, i.e. the languages most frequently employed by the surrounding society; these observations resonate with Fishman's (1966) and Veltman's (1983) view of language shift as of a "three-generation process" (Portes & Hao 1998).
Elements of interest for the current analysis are in bold in the example below:

> RIL25M:прикольно [...] просто стоять **смотреть** выше ***газускую ракету летит**
> RIL25M: It's cool [...] to just stand there and look at a rocket from Gaza flying over your head

In the above excerpt from the interview with RIL25M, the interviewee is recounting his experience during military service in the Gaza envelope, an area of Israel within about 7 kilometres of the Gaza Strip. In his description of watching rockets being launched during military attacks, RIL25M employs the clause structure typical of Hebrew after verbs of perception in which the verb is followed by a direct object plus a participle describing the state in which the object is situated or the action associated with it. Using the basic Hebrew perception verb **לראות** "lir'ot," i.e. "see," the Hebrew equivalent of his wording would be as follows:

- לראות טיל טס מעזה
- lir'ot til tas mi'aza
- to see a rocket fly from Gaza

Examples of consistent calques from Hebrew or German are not to be found in any

interview with first or first-and-a-half generation immigrants who participated in the study.However, several Israel-based first generation interview participants with a time of permanence in the country higher than 5 years show signs of simplification in the structure of Russian relative clauses, as in the following example from an interview with KIL25F:

C.: А у тебя есть израильские друзья?
KIL25F: Да, а у меня они появились вот совсем недавно, **с** вот этой **учебой**, **что** я сейчас вот учусь

C.: Do you have Israeli friends?
KIL25F: Yes, I made [Israeli friends] recently in the program that I'm studying

As noted by Serdobolskaya & Paperno (2006:5), "[c]olloquial Russian, unlike standard Russian, allows the complementizer *chto* to relativize any argument position;" in the example above, KIL25F employs a simplified relative clause with the inanimate relative pronoun "chto," which in Russian also has the function of a subordinating conjunction. While the latter simplification might look like a calque from Hebrew prefix **-ש** "she-" functioning both as relative pronoun and subordinating conjunction, it cannot be excluded that K.'s construction of a nonstandard relative clause is due to influences from colloquial Russian. Influences from colloquial Russian in Russian spoken by Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel have been described by Perelmutter (2018), who cites stereotypical attitudes about what she terms Israeli Russian that "it is a surzhyk, smes' 'mix', i.e., a non-prestigious variant or a diglossic Low" of Russian (Perelmutter 2018:522). While Perelmutter (2018:522) observes that the "stereotypical attitudes" which she quotes "do not necessarily reflect reality," it is worth questioning how usage of a lower variant of Russian – similar to what Sidorova (1990) describes as *prostorechie*, i.e. "simple speech" – can coexist with the generally high level of educational attainment among post-Soviet immigrants to Israel.
As regards intonation patterns, especially during Israel-based interviews I encountered examples for intonation patterns assimilating to Hebrew prosody, a field in which Naiditch (2000:277) also observes high influences from Hebrew on Russian. As stated above, this section cannot provide an in-depth analysis of microlinguistic phenomena; however, I did and do perceive a significant difference between Standard

Russian intonation – to which I was exposed throughout studies in Russia – and intonation commonly to be found in the speech of my interviewees during fieldwork in Israel; and while my perception is one of a scholar not focusing on phonological and suprasegmental phenomena, studies on phonology and intonation of Russian spoken in Israel (as e.g. Orel 1994, Verschik 2007, Naiditch 2000, Perelmutter 2018) resonate with this perception. Furthermore, it is possible that intonation patterns among Russian-speaking immigrants in Israel have influences from so-called Odessa Russian, a regional variety spoken in the Ukrainian city of Odessa which is characterized by a "'sing-song' intonation [...] the result of a Yiddish substratum" (Andrews 1999:129), similarly to Jewish Russian. The latter sing-song intonation was found in the speech of several study participants regardless of whether or not they are from Odessa, similarly to what Andrews (1999:130) notes in his study: "[m]any of my young-adult informants, regardless of their cities of origin, told me that their parents and other adults often 'accused' them of having adopted an Odessa accent, even if they had had little or no exposure to Odessa speakers."
As regards discourse structure, the adoption of Hebrew discourse markers is relatively widespread among veteran first-generation immigrants and even more so in the speech of second generation immigrants, understandably. The following examples illustrate the employment of Hebrew discourse markers "beseder ("alright") and "ke'ilu" ("like"). In the first example, "beseder" is pronounced according to Russian pronunciation, whereas in the second example – stemming from a second-generation speaker – "ke'ilu" is pronounced in Hebrew.

KIL25F: Ну окей, он знает русский **— беседер**. Это саморазвитие.
KIL25F: Well, he knows Russian – beseder. It's self-development.

RIL25M:Мы готовим, да **כאילו** все мы готовим, русскую, израильскую [кухню], все
RIL25M: We cook, yes, like, we cook everything, Russian, Israeli [cuisine], everything.

The above observations only provide a rough sketch of the phenomena possibly pointing at the existence of a language variety of Russian spoken among Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel; however, in order for the question to be answered whether such a variety as "Israeli Russian" exists, further in-depth studies with a solid empirical basis are necessary. Furthermore, it needs to be asked to which extent the Russian

language spoken in the diaspora can be described as a variety consistently different from Modern Standard Russian, as advanced by Perelmutter (2018) for Russian in Israel, by Andrews (1999) for Russian in the United States, by Kostandi et al. (2020) for Russian in Estonia and by Mustajoki et al. (2020) in their volume on Russian in post-Soviet countries. This section offers hints for researchers willing to engage with these questions in depth; to this aim, data from my fieldwork study is made available for future research.

6.3.3 Language attitudes

This section builds the analytical core of this study. It draws on responses to the following questions in the questionnaire:

12. Нравится ли Вам русский язык?
12. Do you like Russian?

13. Почему? Объясните коротко, используя не более трех слов
13. Why? Explain briefly, using no more than three words

15. Нравится ли Вам немецкий/иврит?
15. Do you like German/Hebrew?

16. Почему? Объясните коротко, используя не более трех слов
16. Why? Explain briefly, using no more than three words

17. Насколько Вам важно передать русский язык своим детям?
17. How important is it for you to pass on Russian to your children?

18. Насколько Вам важно, чтобы Ваши дети знали немецкий/иврит?
18. How much do you care for your children to know German/Hebrew?

as well as on data collected during interviews on field.
Since many aspects crucial to the understanding of language attitudes are related to language practices, the discussion in this section expands on issues addressed in the aforegoing section like, e.g., self-assessment of L1 and L2 competence as well as context of L1 use.
From an analysis of responses to question 12 emerges that respondents from both

countries have a predominantly positive attitude towards Russian; on a scale from 1 to 5, almost 75% of the Israel-based respondents evaluate their liking of Russian with 5. Comparable values are to be observed among Germany-based respondents, where a very high (5) liking of Russian is even more frequent (approximately 83%) than among their Israel-based counterparts. The following Tables 6.37 and 6.38 provide an overview of the percentage frequencies.

Liking grade	**Frequency (%)**
1	0.51
2	2.05
3	5.37
4	17.14
5	74.94

Table 6.37: Liking of Russian in %, Israel-based respondents

Liking grade	**Frequency (%)**
1	0.81
2	1.08
3	3.78
4	11.35
5	82.97

Table 6.38: Liking of Russian in %, Germany-based respondents

Taken as they are, these data have a limited significance; after all, it is fairly expectable of participants in a study targeting mostly native and near-native speakers of Russian to have a positive attitude towards Russian. Yet, zooming into the data and factoring in more parameters, e.g. country of origin, self-identification etc. , revealing and/or unexpected phenomena come to the surface.

Among Israel-based respondents, a large number (142 out of 360) of those who evaluate their attitude towards Russian as positive and very positive (4 and 5) self-identifies as Israeli or Jewish. The latter outcome might seem surprising, as one could be led to infer that participants self-identifying within this category would have an ambivalent attitude towards Russian or to preferably dissociate itself from the stigma which Russian and Russian-speaking olim encounter in Israel as of not being Jewish enough. A predominantly positive attitude towards Russian does not conflict with the participants' self-identification within the category "Israeli/Jew"

rather than within the category “Russian and FSU” but instead can be observed to be a crucial aspect of immigrant identity regardless of ethnonational self-identification and of the receiving country. In fact,self-identification as e.g. Russian-German or German does not seem to correlate with a lesser degree of emotional attachment to Russian; attitudes towards Russian are mostly positive across all identity categories among FSU immigrants to Germany, too.
Nevertheless, when comparing language attitudes towards Russian between both participant populations, there is a significant divide as to a highly positive (5) rating of Russian; 8 percent more of the Germany-based participants tend to have a highly positive attitude towards Russian than the Israel-based respondent population, where there is a significant concentration of language attitudes around the value 4 – which is, of course, still positive, but less outstandingly so. This divide might be explained or at least better understood when looking at the reception of FSU immigrants in the two receiving countries; based on work by major researchers in this field (e.g. Panagiotidis 2021, Remennick 2007 and Al-Haj 2019) as well as on data collected within the scope of this study, the reception of FSU immigration to Germany arguably is not as problematic as FSU immigration to Israel, which is exposed to a significantly higher degree of stigma and/or ideological tension. This tension becomes clear both in qualitative interviews and questionnaire responses to question “*b” of the questionnaire, which is discussed at length in the next section on sociocultural aspects and which reads as follows:

> *b. At the beginning of 2020, the Sephardic Chief Rabbi stated approximately the following: “immigrants from the former USSR are *goyim* and communists”. Describe your reaction to this statement using no more than three words

That an overall positive attitude towards Russian is present even when the participants’ ethnonational self-identification does not fall into the category “Russian and FSU” arguably points at the fact that immigrant identity is composed by several facets which acquire relevance according to the context within which immigrants operate and socially situate themselves; the latter identity dynamics apply to any individual but can be observed especially well in the context of migration, i.e. when people navigate different sociocultural and linguistic universes simultaneously. Therefore, while self-identifying as e.g. German, an FSU immigrant to Germany

can at the same time have a highly positive attitude towards Russian, also based on the fact that most social interactions which are relevant to him or her take place in Russian.

The tight relationship between language attitude and social identity becomes especially clear when looking at responses to question 13 as to the reasons behind the respondents' attitudes towards Russian.

Within the answer corpus, the following attributes are especially frequently used by respondents to describe the Russian language and/or their attitude towards it:

- богатый (bogatyĭ), i.e. "rich"
- великий (velikiĭ), i.e."great", often juxtaposed to могучий (moguchiĭ), i.e. "mighty"[17] The expression has been attributed to both Ivan Turgenev and Leo Tolstoy and made its way into the phraseology of everyday speech. During Soviet times, it was used as a patriotic catchphrase to advocate Russian as the one and only official language of the Soviet nationhood[...]In post-Soviet times, it even made its way into popular culture, as in the case of Vladimir Vinokur's renowned comedy sketch about the great and mighty Russian *mat* Lucchetti (2021b:62).
- ёмкий (ёmkiĭ), i.e."concise"
- красивый (krasivyĭ), i.e. "beautiful"
- многообразный (mnogoobraznyĭ), i.e. "multifaceted"
- родной (rodnoĭ), i.e. "native"
- яркий (iarkiĭ), i.e. "vivid"

Russian is not only described with attributes but also in terms of the values and cultural artifacts and practices which speakers associate with it, as in the following examples:

Y153. Естественная культурная среда
Y153. Natural cultural environment

W306. Родной, Пушкин, Достоевский
W306. Native, Pushkin, Dostoevsky

[17] As I note in Lucchetti (2021b), the collocation "velikiĭ i moguchiĭ" with reference to the Russian language is to be read within the "rhetoric of the 'velikiĭ i moguchiĭ russkiĭ i͡azyk,'" i.e. "great and mighty Russian language." The adjective "great" does not entirely render the meaning of "velikiĭ," which refers to outstanding greatness in the sense of (even moral) quality.

W69. Вырос в Союзе
W69. I grew up in the [Soviet] Union

Y67. Могучий правильнй есть мат
Y67. Mighty, correct, it has *mat*

The above examples and many more in the quantitative corpus show that a positive attitude to Russian is explained by the participants not with hints to linguistic aspects, i.e. by conceptualizing Russian as an abstract linguistic entity, but in fact as the ensemble of values, actions, connections, emotions, cultural practices etc., which are all subsumed within its realm. The Soviet Union, classics of Russian literature such as Pushkin, Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, and Russian traditional obscene vocabulary – *mat* –, among other things, are mentioned by several participants, thus hintin at a shared conceptualization of Russian. From an analysis of the questionnaire responses emerges that speakers of Russian *in the diaspora* associate with it a cultural environment (see Y153) which appears to be invested with a particularly significant role especially since emigration. This role can be defined as symbolic, as in Bourdieu's observations on the symbolic power with which language and other constructs of cultural significance come to be invested in society:

> But on a deeper level, the quest for the 'objective' criteria of 'regional' or 'ethnic' identity should not make one forget that, in social practice, these criteria (for example, language, dialect and accent) are the object of mental representations, that is, of acts of perception and appreciation, of cognition and recognition, in which agents invest their interests and their presuppositions, and of objectified representations, in things (emblems, flags, badges, etc.) or acts, self-interested strategies of symbolic manipulation which aim at determining the (mental) representation that other people may form of these properties and their bearers. In other words, the characteristics and criteria noted by objectivist sociologists and anthropologists, once they are perceived and evaluated as they are in practice, function as signs, emblems or stigmata, and also as powers. (Bourdieu 1992:232)

The latter quote is especially instructive because it indirectly highlights the relevance and even the essence of language attitudes; studying language attitudes is

significantly less about language or linguistic features than it is about understanding what *mental representation* people have of a language and why, i.e. what this mental representation is symbolic of and which “self-interested strategies” people pursue with it.

In multilingual contexts – i.e., virtually, all contexts – language becomes the bearer of social distinction, i.e. an instrument for categorization of the surrounding society; so much so that separating the mental representations which individuals and groups have about a language from the representations which they have about the speakers of the same language becomes impossible. This might lead to emotional conflicts especially when a given language comes to have a “bad reputation” based on political or other circumstances happening in the countries or societies in which the language is spoken. The latter is illustrated in the following excerpt from an interview with MIL27M, the protagonist of the case study on page 152:

> MIL27M: Все вот, я как только сюда приехал, мне говорят русские, которые здесь давно, «разговаривай только на иврите, »[...] чтоб русский забыть. [...] Есть люди, которые действительно пытаются забыть все это свое, там где они родились, свой язык и так далее. [...] Я не могу как бы взять и забыть. Потому что я на этом вырос, я книжек столько прочитал, столько песен послушал, столько всего сказал и мне сказали на этом языке, и я его просто так возьму и вычеркну из жизни, там? Да? Я не могу сказать что я люблю Ро— там, нет, я люблю Россию, но я ненавижу текущую власть, потому что она все испортила.

> MIL27M: When I first arrived here, all the Russians who had been living here for a long time kept telling me, “speak only Hebrew!” [...] and that I should forget Russian [...] There are people who really try to forget everything about their life, where they were born, their language and so on [...] I can’t up and forget it, because that’s what I grew up with, all the books I’ve read, all the songs I’ve listened to, everything I’ve said and have been told in this language, should I simply go and delete it from my life? I can’t stay that I love Ru– well, I do love Russia, but I hate the current political power”

In the above excerpt, MIL27M appears to link the recommendations he receives from other olim from the FSU who moved to Israel before him to stop using Russian

with the negative reputation that Russian allegedly has in Israel because of political and/or ideological reasons. At the same time, he recognizes the high emotional value which Russian plays in his life as a language which to a great extent informs very significant moments in his life.
His portrayal of Russian combines two approaches of expressing language attitudes which are to be found in the quantitative corpus, too; on the one hand, Russian – or other languages, but especially Russian as the L1 of most respondents – is described with attributes linking it to the cultural heritage somehow related to it, as can be seen in examples Y153 to Y67 above; on the other hand, it is described in highly personal, sometimes even embodied terms, as can be seen in the wording used by MIL27M "я на этом вырос", i.e. "I grew up on it;" like for many other respondents, Russian plays an existential role for MIL27M even if his political views are not aligned with Russian politics. The fact that the current political situation in Russia automatically comes into play whenever the Russian language is addressed points back at the symbolic power of which language is a carrier, as underlined by Bourdieu (1992:232); a power which is ultimately about categorizing people with the aim, as Bourdieu (1992) words it, "to make and unmake groups":

> Struggles over ethnic or regional identity — in other words, over the properties (stigmata or emblems) linked with the origin through the place of origin and its associated durable marks, such as accent — are a particular case of the different struggles over classifications, struggles over the monopoly of the power to make people see and believe, to get them to know and recognize, to impose the legitimate definition of the divisions of the social world and, thereby, *to make and unmake groups* [my emphasis]. What is at stake here is the power of imposing a vision of the social world through principles of di-vision which, when they are imposed on a whole group, establish meaning and a consensus about meaning, and in particular about the identity and unity of the group, which creates the reality of the unity and the identity of the group. (Bourdieu 1992:221)

Performing language attitudes (introduced in Section 2.7.1) is one of the ways in which groups are made and unmade based on the symbolic value which speakers associate with one or more language varieties and its/their speakers. This can be clearly observed when zooming in on negative attitudes towards Russian which, al-

though less widespread among study participants, are still present and shape the immigrants' negotiation of social identity, as is shown in the above example of MIL27M.

Those who evaluated their liking of Russian as negative to neutral (1 to 3) often have ideological, political and moral explanations for doing so; the following are examples for responses to question 13 as to the reasons behind the language attitudes:

- W315. РФ аннексировала Крым ("The Russian Federation annexed Crimea")
- W367. Язык оккупантов ("Language of occupiers")
- Y84. Я украинка ("I am a Ukrainian woman")
- Y212. Язык коммунистов ("Language of Communists")
- Y130. Язык ненависти ("Language of hatred")
- Y352. Русский - язык пропаганды ненависти и войны ("Russian is the language of propaganda, hatred and war")

The respondents' comments acquire an even deeper significance if data about their respective places of birth and self-identification are factored in. Respondent W315 was born in Kharkiv, Ukraine and self-identifies as Ukrainian, as do Y84 and Y352. Respondent W367 was born in Homyel, Belarus and self-identifies as Belarusian. Respondent Y130 was born in Kharkiv, too and self-identifies as Jewish. Respondent Y212 was born in Odessa, a city known for its rich Jewish heritage, and self-identifies as Jewish. His profile appears to echo the reactions to the controversial statement by Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef mentioned above and analyzed in detail in 296.
With the exclusion of Y212, all the above examples for possible reasons behind a negative attitude towards Russian are somehow related to Russia's annexation of Crimea and the conflict following it, which was ongoing as a frozen conflict for several years before Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. These examples also highlight the importance of questioning the term "post-Soviet" to group people from the countries of the FSU, since what can be inferred from the above attitudes is that, while a native or near-native command of Russian is a unifying element for many immigrants from the FSU, its political and cultural heritage does not necessarily come along with it, and certainly not for all immigrants. In fact, while some do mention the Soviet Union as a cultural reference or even as an identity-shaping element, Section 6.4 shows that the *Soviet* and the *post-Soviet* are being negotiated

and their relevance massively transformed through the experience of migration.
It is not only migration which brings to the fore processes of identity (re-)negotiation but also political events in the countries of the FSU which confront individuals with the necessity to take a stand; the latter is especially visible when observing the transformations taking place in the online communities where participant recruitment for this study was carried out, especially in the time range since the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. This date can be regarded as a turning point in many respects,not last from a linguistic point of view. As hinted at in Section 5.3, several Facebook groups whose names formerly contained the adjective русский "russkiĭ," i.e. "Russian," substituted it with the adjectives русскоязычный "russkoi͡azychnyĭ" or русскоговорящий "russkogovori͡ashchiĭ" so as to be inclusive of all Russian-speaking people, regardless of their nationality, thus dissociating themselves from Russian statehood. Furthermore, with different intensities throughout the Russo-Ukrainian war since 2014, Russian-speaking Ukrainians have been questioning their "linguistic loyalties," in Kurkov's (2022) wording, increasingly turning to learning and/or speaking Ukrainian as what can be interpreted to be a political act.
The latter aspects point once again at how the study of language attitudes – and especially of their transformations – is indicative of and essential to understanding the boundary-making and social categorization processes at play, especially when it comes to groups of people from countries of the FSU who at a superficial level appear to share uniform linguistic and cultural practices and whose attitudes, in fact, reveal the turmoil happening under the surface.
Having Russian as a native language is occasionally perceived by the immigrants as a handicap in that the sole fact of speaking it conflicts with or otherwise directly affects their self-perception; the following examples are particularly illustrative:

W68. Выражаю им себя
W68. I express myself with it

Y59. Ограничивает самоидентичность
Y59. It limits [my] self-identification

As can be inferred from the example Y59, the participant deems that his *Russian-speakingness* puts actual constraints on his identity; thus, while he was born in Odessa, his statement leaves room to assume that the fact of speaking Russian draws

a line between him and other citizens of Ukraine, automatically putting him into a category which he doesn't appear to be able to change in the eyes of others. The usage of a given language is described by the immigrants as defining their identity, whether willing or not.

The symbolic function which Russian acquires for migrants from the FSU entails several conflicting aspects; if, on the one hand, Russian allows its diasporic speakers to form a community and thus shape a sense of belonging away from the familiar context of the country where they were born and raised, on the other hand speaking Russian comes to be regarded as an ideologically laden act, especially against the backdrop of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict spanning at least a decade; and while some might decide to turn away from speaking Russian, others might explicitly commit themselves to maintaining it out of several reasons. At any rate, the main factor of conflict consists in the fact that, in most of the countries of the FSU, ethnonational self-identification and linguistic practice do not coincide; the latter has been observed with reference to Ukraine by Eras (2022:3) but this observation can be extended to the many post-Soviet countries in which Russian is still widely spoken. Additionally, the heritage of the Soviet Union as of a multiethnic and multilingual empire *on paper* in which, however, the Russian language and Slavic ethnicity occupied the highest position in the unwritten hierarchy contributes to shaping the image of Russian spoken outside of Russia as of a postcolonial burden or, as respondent W367 above puts it, of a "language of occupiers." Thus, while ethnic minorities experienced discrimination in the FSU, these discriminations are carried along with emigration, and affiliation with the Russian language is instrumentalized to create borders between groups.

Data analysis shows that, among migrants from the FSU to Israel and Germany, neither Hebrew nor German are exposed to the same symbolic and ideological tension as Russian is. The following insights are drawn from answers to questions 15 and 16 of the questionnaire regarding, respectively, the participants' attitude towards Hebrew or German and the reasons for the attitude,similarly to the above analysis of attitudes towards Russian.

From an analysis of responses to question 15 emerges that highly positive attitudes (grade 5) towards Hebrew are more frequent than highly positive attitudes towards German, as is illustrated by the figures in Tables 6.39 and 6.40.

The immigrants' attitudes towards German appear to be concentrated around the more hedged values 3 and 4.Looking into the motifs behind the grades is helpful to

Liking grade	Frequency (%)
1	2.56
2	3.32
3	19.18
4	27.88
5	47.06

Table 6.39: Liking of Hebrew in %

Liking grade	Frequency (%)
1	2.97
2	4.59
3	23.51
4	28.65
5	40.27

Table 6.40: Liking of German in %

appreciate this difference. Positive attitudes towards Hebrew (grades 4 and 5) are generally explained by the immigrants with ideological motifs or with references to Jewish heritage, as in the following examples:

AB259. Язык предков
AB259. The language of [my] ancestors

AB285. Наш язык.
AB285. Our language

AB295. Ивритом создан мир
AB295. The world was created with Hebrew

AB334. Прикольный библейский
AB334. Cool and Biblical

AB360. Язык моего народа
AB360. The language of my people

AB376. Еврей должен знать
AB376. A Jew should know [it]

As can be inferred from the above quotations, widespread motifs behind a positive or highly positive attitude towards Russian are the respondents' Jewish heritage, with the implication that knowing Hebrew enables them to create a connect to their Jewish ancestors. Examples AB295 and AB334 include references to Hebrew as the language of the Torah and as the language in which the creation of the world has been first portrayed, based on the respondent's opinion.
Such ideologically based attachment to the main language of the receiving society is not to be observed among Germany-based participants; examples are presented below.

Z207. Язык новой родины
Z207. Language of [my] new homeland

Z228. Bekannte Dichter
Z228. Renowned poets

Z232. Deutsche Herkunft
Z232. German origin

Z252. язык предков
Z252. Language of [my] ancestors

Z253. язык Шиллера и Гёте
Z253. Language of Schiller and Goethe

Z261. Свобода. Muttersprache
Z261. Freedom. Mother language

Z294. возможность европейской интеграции
Z294. Possibility of European integration

Z332. Германия — страна кормилец
Z332 Germany is [my] nourisher country

Z333. Язык хорошей жизни
Z333. Language of [my] good life

While some respondents express a positive attitude towards German based on their "German origin" (see examples Z232 and Z252), from the responses emerges that German is conceived as an instrument for communication in a *new* homeland (Z207) rather than in a historic homeland, while the latter conceptualization appears to be more widespread among Israel-based participants. Moreover, German is seen by the respondents as a tool enabling them to live a comfortable, free life (Z261, Z333) in a country by which they feel nourished (Z332). Moreover, a positive attitude towards Germany is related by the respondents to cultural references like Schiller and Goethe. On a side note, references to Schiller and Goethe seem to fulfill the same role in the respondents' explanations of their attitudes towards German as the one played by Pushkin, Dostoevsky and other classics of Russian literature, while the only literary reference quoted in this context by Israel-based respondents is the Torah.
An essential observation which must be regularly made in the analysis of language attitude data is that the attitude itself, whether it is positive or negative, has very little to do with a language. In fact, as noted by Edwards (2009:57), " 'language' attitudes are, in fact, attitudes towards certain groups of people;" since language is intrinsically social, attitudes towards it have first and foremost a sociological significance. This becomes especially clear when looking at negative attitudes: in fact, although Hebrew and German are languages with many typological differences, these differences do not seem to play the least roles in the respondents' conceptions: both Hebrew and German are often characterized with similar adjectives, such as "poor" (бедный "bednyĭ"),"rude"(грубый, "grubyĭ"), "strange" (странный, "strannyĭ"), and "logical" (логичный, "logichnyĭ").
The similar motifs behind a negative characterization of Hebrew and Russian seems to be related to the non-nativeness of these languages to the respondents uttering these attitudes as well as, generalizing, to the distance which speakers perceive between their self-identification and the predominant culture of the receiving society. In fact, when the self-identifications of the respondents with predominantly negative to neutral (grades 1 to 3) attitudes towards Hebrew and German are factored in, it emerges a correlation between a low level of emotional attachment towards these languages and self-identification tendencies as "Russian and FSU," "Mixed" or "Other," rather than self-identifications in terms of the main ethnicity of the receiving society, i.e. "German" for Germany and "Israeli/Jew" for Israel. The latter is concisely illustrated in Figure 6.12 and Figure 6.13.

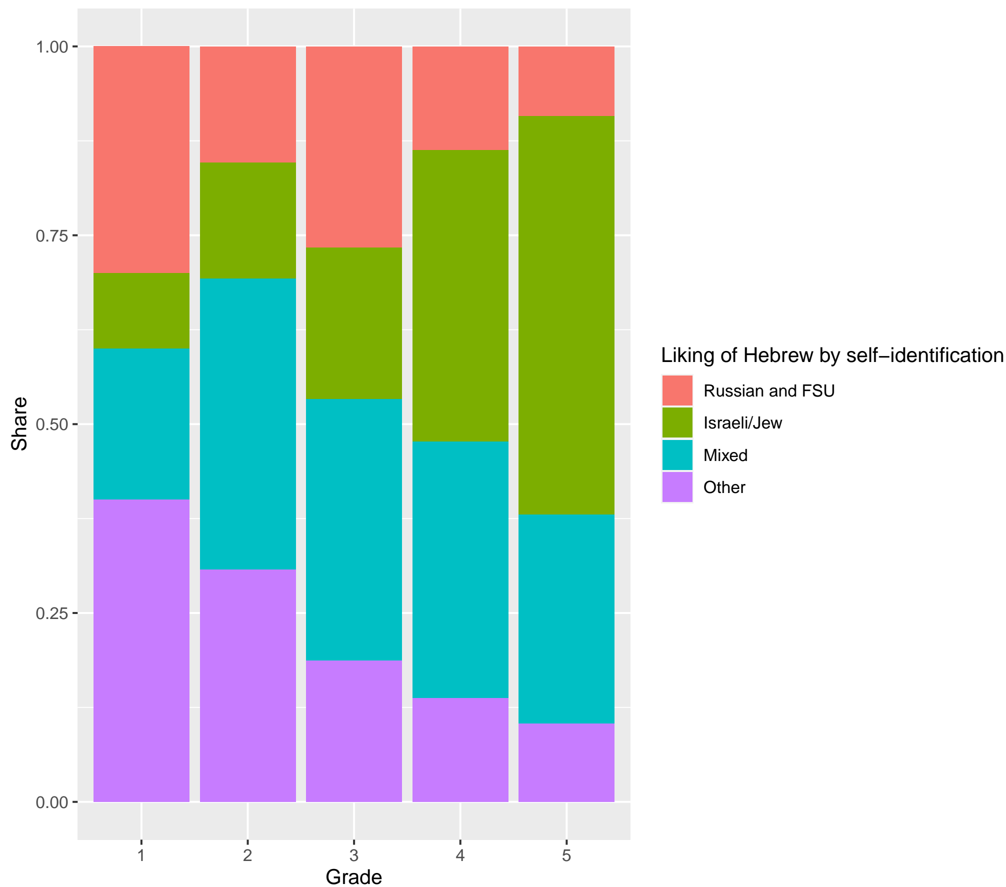

Figure 6.12: Attitude towards Hebrew by self-identification

As is visible in Figure 6.12, a low evaluation of attitudes towards Hebrew appears to go hand in hand with self-identifications within the category "Russian and FSU," whereas the highest evaluation of attitudes towards Hebrew is assigned by respondents whose self-identifications fall within the category "Israeli/Jew." Similar results are to be found for Germany-based respondents, where a low liking grade of German is associated with a self-identification other than "German," although the data does not allow to identify an unequivocal correlation but rather, for both respondent population, points at possible interrelationships.

At any rate, Figure 6.12 and Figure 6.13 add to the observation that the immigrants' lack of identification with the most widespread ethnonational identification in the receiving society (i.e., "Israeli/Jew" for Israel and "German" for Germany) is projected onto attitudes towards the language of the receiving society, too.

Although the latter tendency can be observed for both immigrant groups, a difference

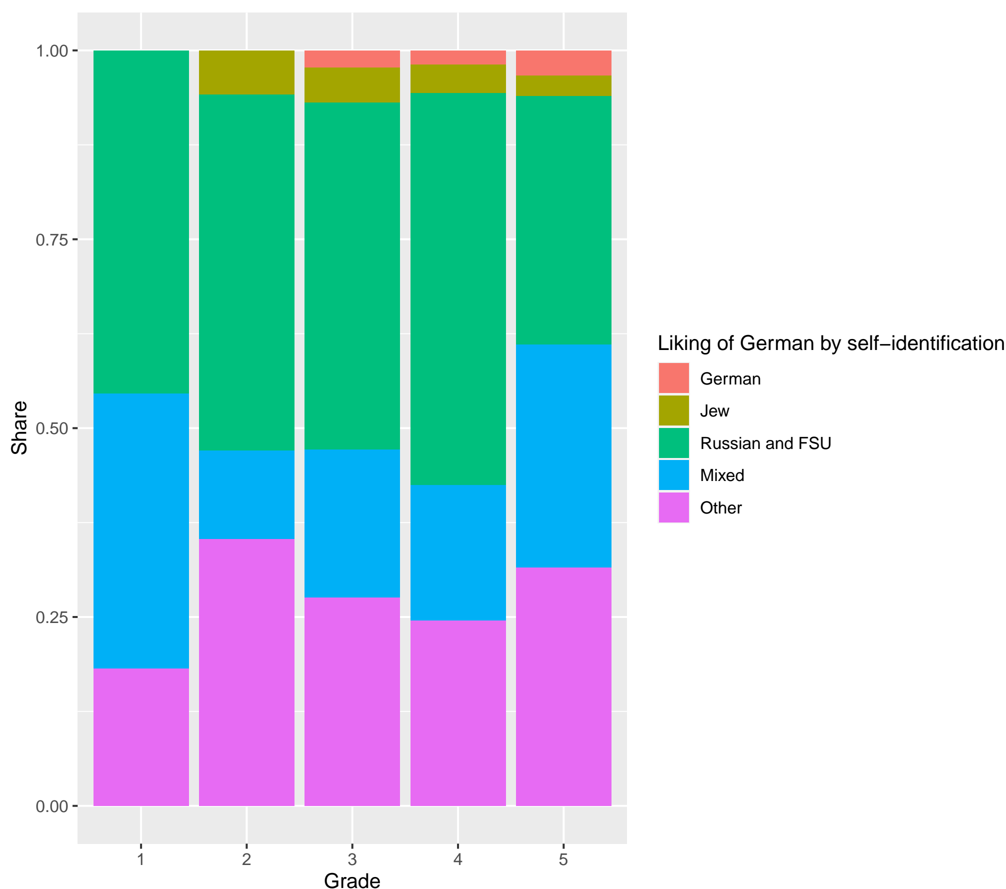

Figure 6.13: Attitude towards German by self-identification

in attitude patterns can be identified by adopting a slightly different perspective on the dataset, which in turn points at the high influence which the selected type of visualization can have on data analysis. In fact, the visualization employed in Figure 6.12 and Figure 6.13 does not allow to compare effectively the attitude patterns of different categories, since the shares of each identity category for each attitude grade appear as stacked atop of each other. Instead, the following representations of language attitude by self-identification allow for a more nuanced analysis, resulting in the observation that Israel-based respondents identifying within the category "Russian and FSU" tend to value Hebrew less positively than Germany-based respondents with the same self-identification category.

Once again, it needs to be noted that the purpose of quantitative data analysis within this study is not to identify undeniable causal correlations; firstly, even within the realm of quantitative data, which are often portrayed as the only *objective* way of

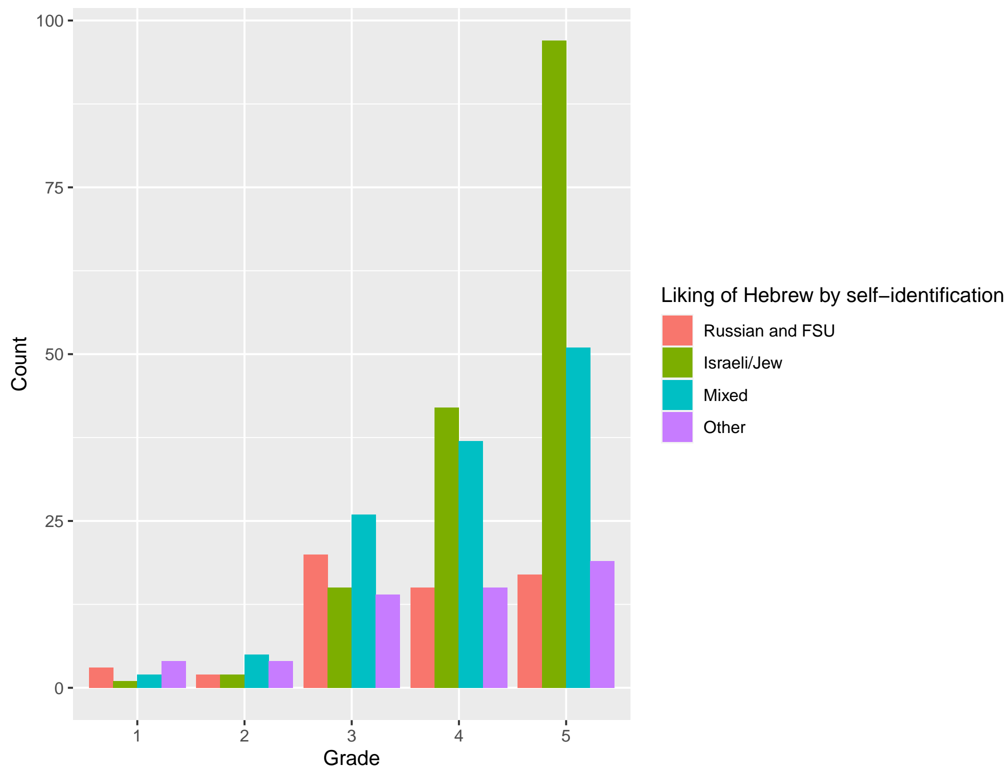

Figure 6.14: Attitude towards Hebrew by self-identification: alternative visualization

doing social sciences, it is questionable whether there exists anything objective and undeniable; furthermore, while quantitative data are extremely helpful to identify tendencies, they do not provide keys to identify, let alone understand, relationships of cause and/or effect; yet the latter are essential within a Grounded Theory approach, i.e. to the aim of generating theory of sociological significance. These considerations reinforces the decision of employing a mixed-method approach and having quantitative data undergo qualitative analysis, too, as in the above example of investigating the reasons behind possible differences in language attitude patterns.
In general, the case of language attitudes as they are analyzed in this study shows that, while some of their aspects are quantifiable, their significance is best fathomed by adding in a qualitative approach, along the lines of the following statement by Bryman (1992) that

> [q]uantitative research is especially efficient at getting to the ‘structural’ features of social life, while qualitative studies are usually stronger in terms of ‘processual’ aspects. These strengths can be brought together in a single

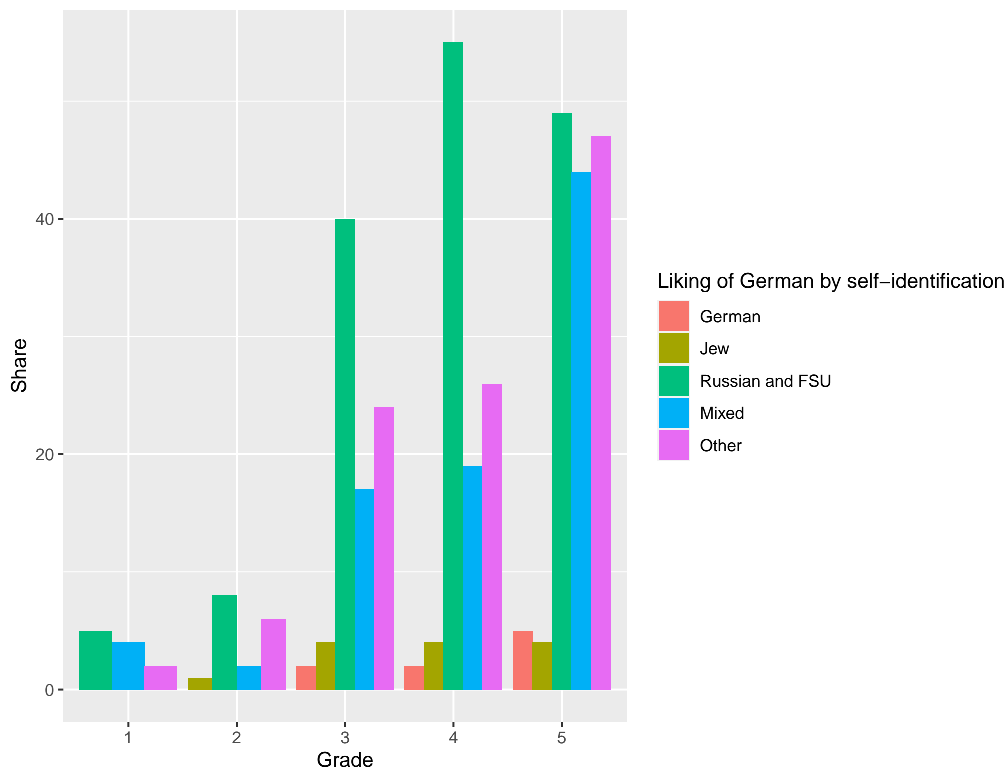

Figure 6.15: Attitude towards German by self-identification: alternative visualization

study. (Bryman 1992:60)

Therefore, observations around Figure 6.14 and Figure 6.15 serve to highlight that, when working with quantitative data in the social sciences, the kind of information which they yield is in most, if not all, cases a matter of the angle which the scientist decides to take. It is necessary to reflect on these aspects so as to not be misled into believing that quantitative data, or rather their meaning, can never be questioned. Demographic data and issues of identity and language discussed in this chapter provide an essential backdrop to interpret the meaning of language attitude data analyzed in this section. Thus, the fact that Israel-based participants self-identifying within the category "Russian and FSU" tend to grade their liking of Hebrew more poorly than Germany-based participants with the same self-identifications value their liking of German could be conditioned by demographic differences between FSU migration to Israel vs. Germany and the sociocultural implications thereof. As highlighted in 6.1, FSU immigrants to Israel appear to be exposed to more acute problems of social segregation than it is the case for FSU immigrants to Germany. While an

in-depth interpretation of the interrelation between language attitudes and sociocultural aspects is provided in 6.4, I argue that this difference in attitudes towards L2 both overall and depending on self-identification category is not random and that it has to be read within the bigger context of the dynamics of integration into Israel vs. Germany.

Returning to the attributes which respondents most often associate with Hebrew and German, another facet needs to be considered besides the conceptualization of both languages in terms of “foreign,” regardless of the languages’ typological characteristics; that is, individual respondents tend to project onto these languages feelings and experiences which they have had in Israel and Germany and which are less related to a certain language than to the immigrants themselves dealing with the broad spectrum of issues which life in a new country involves. From data emerges that the participants’ attitudes towards Hebrew and German sometimes coincide with widespread cultural stereotypes about Israel and Germany, as can be inferred from the examples below; the first example stems from the Israel-based corpus, the second one from the Germany-based corpus.

AB211. не слишком формальный
AB211. Not too formal

Z120. präzise und harte Sprache
Z120.precise and hard language

Observing how immigrants conceptualize the languages of their receiving country is highly indicative of several aspects, among which the environment in which most of their communicative exchanges take place, the interactions which the immigrants have with native speakers and the extent to which they feel “at home” in the new country. AB211 expresses a folk opinion on the topic of formality in language, which as such does not rest upon linguistic expert knowlege. In fact, the Hebrew language has all linguistic resources necessary to express formality, like all world languages with their typological, morphosyntactic and other differences. AB211 points the researcher’s attention not towards the degree to which formality can be expressed in the Hebrew language but rather towards the fact that, if the respondent perceives Hebrew as an informal language, this might mean that she is predominantly exposed to informal speech. A plethora of factors could be hypothesized as to why this is the case; at any rate, it appears likely that the respondent is used to employing Hebrew in

contexts in which formality is not necessary or common, which excludes universities, and many other institutions. Based on her experience with Hebrew interactions, the author of AB211 carries out a generalization regarding the Hebrew language as a whole, while at the same time evoking the idea of לצנוח ולזרום "litsnoaḥ ve-lizrom" which is discussed by Striedl (2022:228) as being closely associated with "Israeliness." Striedl (2022:50) explains the expression as follows:

> The expression *litsnoaḥ ve-lizrom* 'parachute and flow' refers somewhat jokingly to a flexible strategy in response to unknown conditions where one finds oneself after parachuting into enemy territory. This metaphor expresses the conviction that flexibility is a key element for reaching one's goals and for surviving.

As will be shown in the next section, informality is often associated with Israeli culture among Russian-speaking immigrants – and beyond, too: in fact, as Striedl (2022) shows, the use of slang and informal language is employed by speakers of Hebrew with different ethnic backgrounds as a strategy to cope with the topical "social constraints" (Striedl 2022:229) of Israel such as "obligatory military service, religious and family values, marital conventions and laws, inter-group and inter-ethnic relations and the contrast of center and periphery" (Striedl 2022:229). Additionally, Striedl (2022:229) observes that, especially within Israeli society, the use of informal language "functions to circumnavigate hierarchies and to establish informal relations and group-solidarity." It is against this backdrop that the statement by AB211 acquires particular significance, indicating that the respondent possibly has gained awareness of the role of informal language in certain situations of life in Israel.

As regards the utterance by Z120, it also seems to echo with stereotypes regarding Germans, who are often portrayed as precise, efficient and straightforward (see Macdonald 1997). While strongly present in the data collected within this study, overlap between attitudes towards language and attitudes towards cultures or societies is to my knowledge a largely understudied phenomenon in language attitude research, which – the title is self-explanatory – focuses on language as a subject of attitudes rather than on interactions between language attitudes and attitudes towards other subjects. Some exceptions of the last decade are Lehnert et al. (2018) and Stępkowska (2021), while most language attitude research is oriented towards speakers' evaluations of other speakers' speech in terms of e.g. accent, prosody and

other mostly phonologic, lexical and morphosyntactic features (see, e.g., Marchand 2010). The participants' responses offer a broad range of examples for the relationship between language attitudes and (even stereotypical) attitudes towards culture; this relationship is expanded on in the next section. Corpus materials can be made available to researchers willing to further explore this relationship as well as the topic of stereotypes from a sociolinguistic point of view.

Question 17 concerning issues of language maintenance presents aspects which are both relevant to language attitude and to language practices, which are discussed in the aforegoing section. Again, it must be remarked that asking immigrants how important they deem it to pass on Russian to their children does not yield information about the actual success of language maintenance strategies; instead, question 17, along with most of the questions in section 3 and 4 of the questionnaire, is situated within the domain of attitude, i.e. of representation and evaluation.

Tables 6.41 and 6.42 below present responses to question 17 "How important is it for you to pass on Russian to your children?",

Grade	Rate (%)
1	6.39
2	2.81
3	14.07
4	21.48
5	55.24

Table 6.41: Attitudes towards passing on Russian to children, Israel-based respondents

Grade	Rate (%)
1	4.32
2	1.62
3	10.00
4	15.41
5	68.65

Table 6.42: Attitudes towards passing on Russian to children, Germany-based respondents

Against the backdrop of the patterns discussed in Section 6.3.1 after which the Russian language occupies a more prominent role among Israel-based participants, it seems surprising to discover how, while in both populations more than half of the respondents have a highly positive (5) attitude towards passing on the Russian language

to their children, this attitude is evidently more widespread among Germany-based respondents. Although this finding does not allow to make generalizations about attitudes towards language maintenance in the Russian-speaking diaspora in general, there are some observations to be made which can help understand and contextualize this finding. In his study about maintenance of Russian in Germany, Brehmer (2021:855) finds that there are reasons to “hypothesize that the perspectives for long-term maintenance of Russian as a heritage language in Germany are better than for Russian heritage speaker communities in other countries” due to “institutional support and the size of the community.” That institutional support to heritage languages is arguably broad in Germany is regarded by Brehmer (2021:880) as a consequence of “a change in language policy in Germany which favors a reevaluation of linguistic superdiversity in educational settings and tries to counterbalance a monolingual habitus that has dominated official language ideology in Germany for a long time.” I do not fully subscribe to the latter position and deem it worth referring to Adler & Beyer (2018:229), who note that “[t]here are only a few [...] regulations for dealing with the heritage languages [...] but not on a systematic basis and, again, still less with a national consensus” and that, in spite of the implementation of policies on a regional basis, “Germany is still basically monolingual in German” (Adler & Beyer 2018:239). At the same time, when comparing institutional support of heritage language maintenance in Germany and Israel, it emerges that initiatives fostering the maintenance of Russian in Israel are largely dependent on private associations and individuals, while “the stance of official Israeli institutions [is one] ranging from indifference to open antagonism” (Kopeliovich 2011:117–118). During fieldwork in Germany, it wasn’t rare to encounter speakers of Russian whose children attend programs for Russian maintenance with some level of institutional subventioning; one example is the case of PDE35F born in Kazakhstan and residing in Germany, where her child attends Russian-speaking daycare at the Jewish Community kindergarten. On the other hand, fieldwork in Israel provided several examples for the importance of grassroot initiatives for the maintenance of Russian, as in the case of KIL25F discussed in Section 6.2.6.3 and elsewhere, whose family manages a private Russian-speaking kindergarten with a Russian-speaking library created thanks to donations by members of the city’s Russian-speaking community.

Another important aspect to be factored in is the attitude which the receiving society has towards Russian and its maintenance among immigrant communities; the

following excerpt stems from an interview with informant RIL25M, an Israeli-born speaker of Russian living in the city of Haifa, one of the cities with the highest concentration of immigrants from the FSU. While self-identifying as Jewish, he reports having mostly Russian-speaking friends and being interested in maintaining Russian as his heritage language. In the following, RIL25M provides insights into what, in his view, Israelis usually associate with Russian:

> RIL25M: Единственные русские слова, которые зашли у людей, вообще это все קללות ["qlalot," Hebrew for "swear words"] это то что люди знают, в смысле, в армии, не в армии, неважно где, это то, что они знают [...]
> C.: А ты думаешь, что израильтяне вообще интересуются русской культурой или советской историей или, я не знаю, русским языком?
> R.: Абсолютно нет, не, в смысле есть может быть, может быть кто-то, может быть кто учится, это интересно, но абсолютно нет, нет, вообще. Я уверен, что вообще не интересно, как бы ты русский — может смеять ему. В смысле, он марокканец, скажем, он будет смеять. Я буду с ним смеять, ты марокканец, как бы все, всмысле גזענות ["giz'anut," Hebrew for "racism"]такая, но он צחוק ["tzḥok," Hebrew for "joke," "kidding"].

> RIL25M: The only Russian words which people are familiar with, in general it's all swear words, it's all people know, I mean, whether in the army, outside of the army, doesn't matter where, this is what people know [...].
> C.: Do you think that Israelis are interested in Russian culture, or Soviet history or, I don't know, the Russian language?
> RIL25M: Not at all, I mean maybe, there might be somebody, somebody who studies it, it's interesting, but in general not at all. I am sure people don't care at all, like, if you're Russian – they're gonna laugh at it. I mean, let's say, a Moroccan guy will make fun of it. And I will make fun of him, like everyone is a racist, but it's kind of a joke.

Based on the observations by RIL25M, the Russian language does not have a privileged status in Israeli society; in his view, the negative connotation of Russian in the visual and auditory linguistic landscape of Israel corresponds to a negative perception of Russian speakers in Israeli society in general. This brief excerpt is significant in that it provides insights into societal dynamics of inclusion and exclusion based on

conflicts constructed on language; the example by RIL25M is one of many examples made by informants during fieldwork showing how language is instrumentalized in order to mark an in-group vs. out-group boundary not only between the immigrant community and the receiving society but also within the Russian-speaking immigrant community itself.

As regards the reception of the Russian language in Germany, it appears complex to discuss whether its status is relatively privileged, i.e. in comparison to Israel, as comparative studies on the status of Russian and its speakers in several destinations of the Russian diaspora are missing; to my knowledge, the only exception is constituted by Elias & Bernstein (2007). The scarce treatment of this topic in research to date offers an occasion to outline some of its main aspects. While Slavic Studies are well represented at German universities, with most middle-sized to large universities offering programs centered around Russian and other Slavic languages, the same can't be said for Israel, where teachers of Russian have been reported to be "the last to be hired and the first to be fired" (Muchnik et al. 2016:70), with "no training programs for new teachers of Russian in Israeli universities and teaching colleges" and the Russian language being currently taught at only five Israeli universities (Muchnik et al. 2016:70).

An additional aspect to be taken into consideration are cultural events about Russia, its language and culture as well as other languages and cultures of the FSU. While specific Russian and FSU authors might be renowned in both countries, there is a significant difference in terms of the publics to which these authors appeal. As an example, Berlin-based writer Vladimir Kaminer writes his texts in German and is popular among both FSU immigrants and the rest of the population of Germany; on the other hand, the prominent Russian-Israel author Dina Rubina writes in Russian and, while her novels have been translated to many languages, in Israel they are mostly read by the Russian-speaking population.

Another aspect to be factored in and which is discussed more extensively in Section 6.4 are stereotypes associated with immigrants from the FSU in the two countries. As noted by Panagiotidis (2021), while the reception of Spätaussiedler and Kontingentflüchtlinge in Germany is punctuated by both positive and negative stereotypes, they are "exposed to less manifestations of racism than citizens and migrants of color or than people classified as muslims," to cite Klingenberg (2019:151). The external perception of these two groups of FSU immigrants in Germany is summarized by

Panagiotidis (2021:142) as follows:

> Sie gelten als „unauffällig“, gleichsam „unsichtbar“. Sie kommen aber aus „dem Osten“, mehr noch, aus „Russland“, einer Region, die in Deutschland (und allgemeiner „im Westen“) traditionell das Objekt massiver Vorurteile, Stereotypen und (kolonialer) Projektionen ist [...] Seit dem Zeitalter der Aufklärung ist „Osteuropa“ in der westlichen Vorstellung eine Art Zwischenwelt – nicht ganz „Orient“, aber eben auch nicht ganz Europa, [...] ein Hort der Rückständigkeit. [...] [I]n Bezug auf die jüdischen Zuwanderer [wurden] aus der ehemaligen Sowjetunion im öffentlichen Diskurs gerade nicht die überkommenen antisemitischen Topoi über „Ostjuden“ aufgerufen, sondern positiv besetzte philosemitische Stereotype über jüdische Bildungsbürger, Kulturschaffende und Intelligenty. Positive Stereotype prägten auch zunächst den Diskurs über die Russlanddeutschen, deren – vermeintlich vorbildliche – deutsche Identität im offiziellen und publizistischen Diskurs oft hochgradig stereotyp dargestellt wurde und zum Teil immer noch wird.[18]

Positive stereotypes about Russian speakers are barely present in public discourse in Israel, where they are often negatively portrayed, with an emphasis on “their involvement in criminal activities, immoral sexual behaviour and their lack of respect toward law and order” (Elias & Bernstein 2007:24); especially women are subject to harsh shaming,“emphasizing their non-Jewishness or presenting them as women whose behaviour was different from the expected norms of a ‘Jewish wife and mother’ ”(Elias & Bernstein 2007:25). This highly negative portrayal of women in Israel society has contributed to the emergence of the stereotype of Russian-speaking immigrant women to Israel as prostitutes (Lemish 2000). This stereotype is reappropriated by

[18]My translation: “They are regarded as “unremarkable,” almost “invisible.” But they come “from the East” and, what’s more, from ”Russia,” an area which both in Germany and generally in ”the West” has traditionally been the subject of massive prejudices, stereotypes and (colonial) projections [...] Since the Age of Enlightenment, “Eastern Europe” has been pictured in the West as some kind of world-in-between – not quite like “Orient,” but also not quite like Europe, [...] a haven of backwardness. [...] As to Jewish immigrants, outdated Soviet antisemitic topoi about “Eastern Jews” were abandoned and substituted by positive philosemitic stereotypes about educated Jewish citizens, artists and intellectuals. Positive stereotypes also initially shaped the discourse about Russian Germans, whose allegedly exemplary German identity was – and partly still is – often subject to a highly stylized treatment in institutional and journalistic discourse.”

Russian-speaking Israeli women, who discuss it intensively in a popular Facebook group named רוסיות בלי חוש הומור וחבריהן ("Russian women with no sense of humor and their friends").
Also, this stereotype is referred to by female participant ZIL32F from Belarus,whose case is discussed extensively on page 135:

> ZIL32F: אז זהו, התביישתי איזה תקופה שאני רוסייה. כי אין להם כל כך שם טוב בארץ. הרוסיות שרמוטות וכל ה--את יודעת. ואז לא לוקחים אותך ברצינות
>
> ZIL32F: The thing is, for some time I was ashamed of being a Russian [woman; "Russian" is used here with the meaning "Russian-speaker"]. Because they don't have a good reputation in Israel. "Russian women are whores" and all that stuff, you know. So they don't take you seriously

The above observations lead to assume that the Russian language enjoys a more positive reception in Germany than in Israel, which could contribute to explaining why the will to pass on Russian to children is 13 percent points lower among Israel-based than Germany-based respondents. It would be highly informative to conduct studies comparing attitudes of the receiving societies towards Russian before and after February 24th, 2022, as the Russian invasion of Ukraine can be hypothesized to have affected the perception of Russian speakers in Western countries.
While the above observations provide significant input to interpret the difference between Israel-based and Germany-based respondents, it should not be over-interpreted. Firstly, it consists in 13 percent points around value 5, but the response patterns are less divergent around the other values of the scale. Secondly, a bigger and more varied sample – e.g. comparing first, first-and-a-half and second generation speakers of Russian – would result in a more reliable dataset.
That response patterns to question 20 should not be overinterpreted can be inferred from the qualitative corpus, too; in fact, when asked questions regarding the passing on of Russian to children, all interview participants from both countries expressed highly positive attitudes towards the topic, defining Russian as a language which "is enriching for children" (from the example of VIL31M and IIL38F illustrated in Section 6.2.6.3) and which, to different extents for each participant, is a carrier of identity. The latter is exemplified by the case of JDE22M, who self-identifies as Russian and moved to Germany with his family at the age of 7:

> C.:Stell dir vor, du hast in 10 Jahren Kinder. Ist dir dann wichtig, dass die Kinder Russisch können?
> JDE22M: Ja, tatsächlich ja, tatsächlich würde ich sagen, dass da bei mir, dass es mir persönlich wirklich wichtig ist, dass wenn ich dann irgendwann Kinder habe, dass die auch Russisch lernen, weil – ich sag mal so, sie sollen ja auch ihre Großeltern kennenlernen und sich dann nicht nur mit Händen und Füßen mit denen unterhalten, sondern ganz normal mit ihnen sprechen können. Und ich finde auch, quasi, wenn die Eltern oder Großeltern aus einem anderen Land kommen, ist es ziemlich wichtig auch diese Sprache zu lernen, mindestens in den Grundzügen zu lernen. Dass man halt weiß, ja, hier und da liegen meine Wurzeln, da komme ich her, weil Sprache und Herkunft sind für mich persönlich untrennbar miteinander verbunden [...] deswegen würde ich auf jeden Fall Wert darauf legen, dass meine Kinder Russisch lernen würden, auf jeden Fall.
>
> C.: Imagine you'll have kids in 10 years. Would you want them to be able to speak Russian?
> JDE22M: Yes, actually yes. I would actually say it would be really important to me for my kids, whenever I will have any, to learn Russian, because – I mean, they are supposed to get to know their grandparents and not to communicate with them with sign language, but to be able to talk to them properly. And I also believe that, if your parents or grandparents come from another country, it's very important to also learn this language, at least some basics. So that you are aware of where your roots are, of where you come from, because language and heritage are inseparably connected to each other in my view [...] so I would definitely want for my kids to learn Russian, definitely.

From data on speakers' attitudes towards Russian as well as from the latter examples emerges a picture in which emotional attachment to Russian is high in both respondent populations, but the societal conditions for the maintenance of Russian are not equally favorable in Israel and Germany. The abundance of negative stereotypes about immigrants from the FSU is likely to be connected to the strong demographic presence which this group has in the population of Israel; moreover, problems of segregation on a residential and other levels as well as the limited offer of courses

on the Russian language at different educational levels pose additional challenges to the disruption of such stereotypes, which therefore appear more pronounced than in Germany – where they are present, too, as discussed by Panagiotidis (2021).
Both Israel and Germany, while being populated by millions of people born outside of the countries, are surprisingly oriented towards a monolingual policy where learning the respective national languages is essential in order to take part in social life; naturally, though, command of Hebrew is not essential in those segregated areas of Israel where an immigrant from the FSU can use in Russian on most occasions of daily life. An example for this is to be found in the Hadar neighborhood in the city of Haifa, where immigrants from the Soviet Union constitute the main population group next to Israeli Arabs (see Freeman & Wood 2015 and Nathansohn 2017). During my first stay in Haifa, my accommodation was in the Hadar neighborhood, where I became aware of the fact that Hebrew competences are not strictly necessary for life in the area and communication in Russian is more than sufficient on many occasions. Nevertheless, outside of such segregated contexts, knowledge of Hebrew is essential to ensure a good quality of life and access the job market.
The essential role of Hebrew and in general the largely monolingual prevalence for life in Israel appears paradoxical in view of "the special status of Israel as a diverse nation of immigrants from around the world" (Muchnik et al. 2016:11): as they note,

> One might have expected that in such a situation, a multilingualism policy would be implemented, with a respectful maintenance of all the languages of the various communities. However, since the first settlement at the end of the nineteenth century and during the first decades since the establishment of the State of Israel, the ideology was to promote the use of Hebrew as a unifying language.This policy changed with the massive immigration from the Former Soviet Union beginning in the 1990s, yet instead of creating a liberal pluralistic society, it perpetuated the identities of ethnic groups as differing from mainstream society, emphasizing the polarity between them. (Muchnik et al. 2016:11–12)

Thus, Muchnik et al. (2016) observe that changes in Israel's language policy after the so-called "Great Aliyah" of the 1990s which had originally been planned to "strengthen[...] cultural pluralism" (Ben-Rafael & Schmid 2007:210) in reality had the effect of reinforcing the boundaries between immigrant groups speaking different

languages and having different cultural heritages. Future research should investigate the causes behind this reinforcement of in-group and out-group boundaries following the new language policy orientation of Israel, so as to develop language policy models actually contributing to the "strengthening of cultural pluralism" (Ben-Rafael & Schmid 2007:210) in the future.

As unknown and complex as these reasons might be, a monolingual tendency in language policy can be identified in both countries. In Germany, as an example, in spite of the so-called *multikulti* ideology which has been advertised by several institutions, it can be observed how "learning German is made possible, facilitated, but also forcefully imposed, perspectives of permanent residency are dependent on attendance or even successful completion of integration courses."[19] (Schirilla 2013:17).

Traces of these monolingual forces can be detected in the respondents' answers to question 18, the last question to be analyzed in this section:

18. How much do you care for your children to know German/Hebrew?

For this question, the same disclaimer must be introduced as for the ones discussed before: responses to this question, while they do not provide information about children's actual knowledge of German or Hebrew, are a valuable indication of the parents' motivation for their children to integrate in the receiving society, behind which motivation could be the parents' perception of societal pressures for linguistic adaptation, among other things. The following example from an interview with SIL39F, protagonist of the case study on page 162, provides an insight into the divide which can be found to exist between the immigrants' attitudes towards their children's language competences in the receiving language of the country and the children's actual language learning process.

> C.: А дети уже в совершенстве знают иврит, или как?
> SIL39F: Далеко нет. Моему сыну больше дается иврит, у него по-лучше. А вот у дочери не очень хорошо. Они не читают книжки на иврите просто так, чтобы сами почитать. Они читают на русском, дома мы общаемя на русском и очень много русских в школе, вот. Поэтому иврит у них не очень хороший. Я пытаюсь как бы их уговорить, чтобы дома мы занима-

[19] Original German text: "Das Erlernen der deutschen Sprache wird ermöglicht, unterstützt, aber auch erzwungen, dauerhafte Aufenthaltsperspektiven hängen vom Besuch bzw. erfolgreichen Abschluss der Integrationskurse ab."

> лись и разговаривали, но они говорят: нет, мы приходим домой, мы хотим отдыхать.
>
> C.: What about your kids, do they already speak perfect Hebrew?
> SIL39F: Not at all. My son is better at Hebrew, he speaks it better. But as to my daughter, she doesn't speak it that well. It's not like they would read books in Hebrew in their free time.They read books in Russian, at home we speak Russian and there are lots of Russians [referring to speakers of Russian] at their school. That's why their Hebrew is not that good. I do try to convince them to practice Hebrew and speak it at home, but they go like: no, once we come home, we want to relax.

The above excerpt is particularly interesting for the study of the divide between language policy and actual language practice in Israel and, in general, in all countries receiving conspicuous amounts of immigrants. While it is expected of olim that they attend Hebrew courses, most of which are subsidized for 18 months since the date of aliyah, issues of segregation – like the high concentration of speakers of Russian in one city, one neighborhood or one school – present a concrete hindrance to acquisition of Hebrew competences and conflict with the immigrants' motivation to integrate and learn the language. Motivation appears particularly high when it is projected by the immigrants upon their children and their future in the receiving society, as in the topic of question 18.
Responses to the question are illustrated in Table 6.43 and Table 6.44 below.

Grade	Respondents, %
1 (very low)	3.32
2	1.02
3	4.60
4	7.67
5 (very high)	83.38

Table 6.43: Attitude towards children learning Hebrew, Israel-based respondents

The participants' response behavior is very similar between the two countries, with slightly less respondents from Israel having a very positive attitude towards their children learning the language of the receiving country than it is the case for Germany.While such a slight difference in figures does not call for interpretation, one aspect yielded by qualitative interviews is that, in Israel, integration into society is

Grade	Respondents, %
1 (very low)	2.97
2	1.62
3	3.78
4	5.68
5 (very high)	85.95

Table 6.44: Attitude towards children learning German, Germany-based respondents

sometimes perceived by the participants as not fully compatible with the maintenance of Russian and of other features of the heritage culture. Based on fieldwork observations, on quantitative data about sociocultural aspects (discussed in Section 6.4) and on literature, speaking Russian can be treated as an out-group marker in Israeli society, where Jewishness is a key attribute to citizenship and immigrants from the FSU are often subject to the stereotype of being not jewish enough, which is addressed by question *b in Section 6.4.
The next excerpt addresses precisely the implicit conflict between the immigrants' heritage from the FSU and the societal expectation of Jewishness or Israeliness for life in Israel. It stems from an interview with SIL32F born in Russia and living in Haifa.

> C.: А если у тебя когда-нибудь в будущем появятся дети,то было бы важно тебе сохранить и передать им русский?
> SIL32F: У меня есть ребенок, так что... Ему 13 лет, он знает 4 языка, и мне важно, чтобы он на всех четырех одинаково хорошо говорил. Хотя у нас здесь тоже были споры с его папой, потому что он очень сильно был за то, чтобы интегрироваться в израильскую культуру [...] наш сын ходил в русскую школу в Германии, и он [отец] говорил, лучше бы ходил в еврейскую школу, чем тратил время на русскую. И когда он проводит слишком много времени в России, его [отца] это тоже немножко напрягает, что он сильно орусеет [...].
> C.: Да, ну твоему мужу [...] более важен идеологический аспект чем тебе?
> SIL32F: Да, это однозначно. Ему важны еврейские праздники, он даже сукку собирает на Суккот, и на Песах он соблюдает полный Седер, то есть все как надо. Ему это интересно, ему это важно [...] ему очень важна самоидентификация, а мне как раз... не просто жить без какой-то определенной айдентити, но я чувствую что ее нет просто. Мне сложно ее как-то

привязать к себе. И не русская и не израильтянка и не немка и не — я просто вот какое-то вот собрание всего того, чего мне мир дал.

C.: Should you have kids in the future, would it be important for you to maintain and pass on Russian to them?
SIL32F: I have a kid, he's 13 years old and he speaks four languages, and it's important to me that he speaks them all well, even though in this respect I've had some arguments with his father, because he would really like for him to integrate in Israeli society.[...] When we were living in Germany, our son went to Russian school, and my husband said he'd better go to a Jewish school than waste time at a Russian school, and that when he spends too much time in Russia he might russify himself too much, and this stresses him out.
C.: So your husband cares more about the ideological aspect than you do?
SIL32F: Yes, definitely. Jewish holidays are really important to him. He even builds a sukkah for Sukkot and observes the full Seder at Pessakh, like, everything according to the rules. He's interested in it, and he cares for it [...] identity is important to him, but to me... it's not like I want to live without a certain identity, but I just feel like I don't have one. It's difficult for me to attach to myself some identity. I'm neither Russian nor Israeli nor German nor... I'm just like a collection of everything which the world gave to me.

In the above example, family language policy appears to be a heated topic creating conflicts. SIL32F, who is a non-halakhic Jew, is married to a halakhic Jew with whom she has a problematic relationship. The maintenance of Russian is one of the points of conflict in the couple as, in the eyes of SIL32F's husband, both parents should direct their child towards learning Hebrew for him to fully become a member of Israeli society. With regards to membership in Israeli society, the aspect of Jewishness also appears to play a role for her husband, whereas at another point of the interview SIL32F reports not being religious.
It is especially immigrants from the FSU to Israel who find themselves within a peculiar limbo: while deeply attached to the Russian language and Soviet or post-Soviet (depending on their time of emigration) cultural heritage, immigrants experience an inner conflict in view of their will to socially situate in Israel, and are aware of stereo-

typical attitudes towards Russian as the symbol of values not completely compatible with Israeliness.
Conflicts of this kind appear less present among immigrants to Germany, where learning German is generally regarded as an asset but does not conflict with the idea of Germanness as strongly as it is the case in Israel.
In order to better understand the significance of question 18 as well as of all questions discussed in the sociolinguistic section of the questionnaire, the next section deals with sociocultural aspects of immigrant life in Israel and Germany, thus rounding up on the relationship between language attitudes and the immigrants' social identity.

6.4 Sociocultural aspects

This section deals with an analysis of all questions included in the fourth and last part of the questionnaire, i.e. the one collecting sociocultural data. All questions of the section, i.e. from 24 to *b, are treated here with the exception of 30, which is treated in Section 6.1.4. Similarly to the sociolinguistic section of the questionnaire, which collects data about the participants' representations of their language practices as well as on their attitudes towards Russian, Hebrew and German, this section collects data centered around the participants' views and evaluations of certain aspects and constructs. By analyzing the participants' attitudes towards culturally relevant constructs, e.g. Israeli culture and German culture, as well as by studying their responses about life (including political life) in the receiving country, the possibility of reemigration, and their position in the receiving country, this section pursues the aim of reconstructing the elements making up the participants' social identity or, in Tajfel & Turner's wording, "those aspects of an individual's self-image that derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself as belonging" (Tajfel & Turner 1979:40).
The starting question of the analysis is 24, i.e. "Name no more than three words which you associate with Germany/Israel." Question 24 is analyzed in comparison to question 25: "Name no more than three words which you associate with your or your relatives' country of birth."
As with many others in the questionnaire, questions 24 and 25 can be analyzed both from a quantitative and a qualitative point of view. The qualitative analysis is centered around word clouds showing the most frequently named words by the

respondents. The minimum frequency of each word was set to three to obtain a manageable quantity of data illustrating the most salient associations of the respondents with both their countries of immigration and their countries of birth – or their relatives' countries of birth, as in the cases of second generation immigrants to Israel and Germany.

Figures 6.16 and 6.28 present word clouds for question 24. In 6.16 and 6.28 as

Figure 6.16: Associations with Israel by word frequency, Israel-based respondents

well as in the wordclouds throughout this chapter, higher frequency is pictured by darker shades and greater dimensions: the more frequent one word is among the respondents' answers, the darker its shade and the bigger its dimensions will be. Function words have been excluded from the corpus, as well as punctuation and the word это ("ėto") often functioning as copula in Russian (Kagan 2016). Misspellings or alternative spellings have been referred back to the standard spelling, of the word e.g. надежность ("nadezhnost'," "hopefulness") to надёжность ("nadëzhnost'"). For the sake of synthesis, the list below includes ten of the most frequently cited words among Israel-based respondents, while the word cloud includes 65 words; discussing

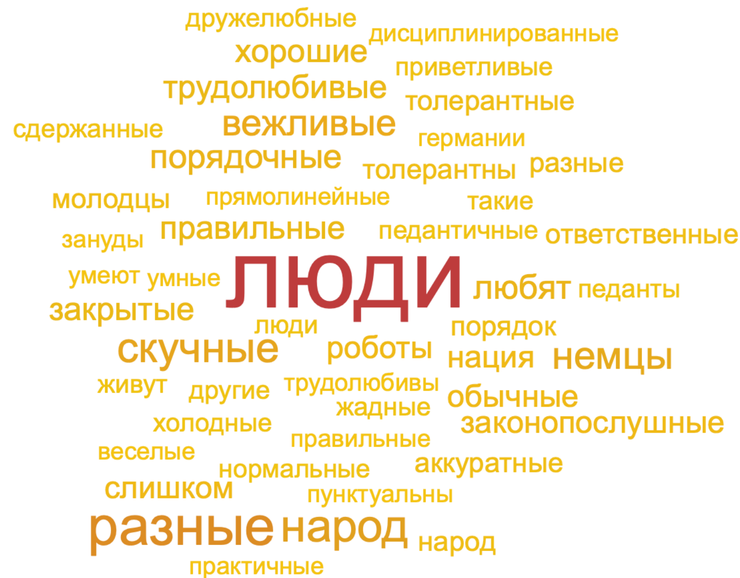

Figure 6.17: Associations with Germany by word frequency, Germany-based respondents

each one of them in detail would go beyond the scope of this study. Participants describe Israel in the following terms:

- дом “dom,” i.e. “house/home;” 67 occurrences
- море “more,” i.e. “sea;” 51 occurrences
- солнце “solnt͡se,” i.e. “sun;” 43 occurrences
- жара “zhara,” i.e. “heat;” 35 occurrences
- страна “strana,” i.e. “country;” 32 occurrences
- родина “rodina,” i.e. “home country,” “motherland;” 30 occurrences
- свобода “svoboda,” i.e. “freedom;” 28 occurrences
- семья “sem’i͡a,” i.e. “family;” 26 occurrences

The following list, in turn, presents the 10 most frequently cited words among Germany-based respondents out of 57 featured in the word cloud.

- порядок “poriadok,” i.e. “order;” 88 occurrences
- стабильность “stabil’nost,” i.e. “stability;” 32 occurrences
- бюрократия “biurokratiia,” i.e. “bureaucracy;” 24 occurrences
- пиво “pivo,” i.e. “beer;” 16 occurrences
- свобода “svoboda,” i.e. “freedom’” 15 occurrences
- чистота “chistota,” i.e. “cleanliness;” 15 occurrences
- пунктуальность “punktual’nost,” i.e. “punctuality;” 14 occurrences
- дом “dom,” i.e. “house/home;” 14 occurrences

There is hardly any overlap between the above lists except for two elements: the words “svoboda” and “dom” are present in both of them, although with very different frequency rates. In the case of words associated with Israel, from them emerges the picture that Israel-based respondents feel at home (“dom,” “rodina,” “sem’ia”) in Israel, value its landscape (“more;” also, from the word cloud пустыня “pustynia” “desert;” пальмы “pal’my” “palms;” природа “priroda” “nature”) and find the warm weather to be a salient characteristic of the country. The above lists and the word clouds allow to elaborate on the participants’ sense of belonging to the receiving country and the elements which are crucial for this sense of belonging, as well as on their self-positioning in the receiving country. Thus, based on Figure 6.4 as well as on Figure 6.16, FSU immigrants to Israel see the country as a place with which they associate largely positive feelings on different grounds; on the one hand, Israel is pictured as the country where they have found a home away from home and which has offered them a freedom (свобода “svoboda”) which they weren’t granted in the country in which they were living before emigration, as is to be seen in the analysis of questions 25 and 28, among others.Other salient traits of Israel in the respondents’ views have to do with widespread behavioral patterns in Israel society, like e.g. readiness to help each other (взаимопомощь “vzaimopomoshch’”), benevolence (доброжелательность “dobrozhelatel’nost’”) and openness (открытость “otkrytost’”). Further salient traits reside in Jewish and Sionist values (еврейство “evreĭstvo”“Jewry;” сионизм “sionism” “Zionism;” вера “vera” “faith;” религия “religiia” “religion”). Other salient traits regard Israeli politics, as in the case of mentions of the Army (армия “armiia”) and of the war (война “voĭna”). In spite of the fact that war is present among the immigrants’ associations with Israel, this does not seem to negatively

affect the participants’ perceived safety (безопасность “bezopasnost’”), which could also be correlated with the quality of healthcare (медицина “meditzina”) in Israel as opposed to the country of residence before emigration.
Words which seemingly refer to problematic aspects of life in Israel are the following: балаган “balagan” “chaos;” бардак “bardak” “mess;” грязь “gri͡az’” “dirt.”
Looking over to Germany, from the participants’ associations with the receiving country emerges a highly different picture to the one seen for Israel. As emerges from both Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.28, the most prominent word in the immigrants’ description of Germany is order (порядок “pori͡adok”), as opposed to the chaos which Israeli-based respondents ascribe to Israel.On a side note, the term “balagan” for chaos is used both in Russian (балаган) and in Hebrew (בלגן) with very similar meanings; is of common usage in Hebrew, being situated in frequency class 13 of the Hebrew corpus within the Corpus Collection of the University of Leipzig (LCC).Other frequently used terms to describe Germany are roughly situated within the same semantic domain of order, like e.g. stability (стабильность “stabil’nost’,” see Figure 6.4), punctuality (пунктуальность “punktual’nost’,” see Figure 6.4), accuracy (аккуратность “akkuratnost’”), orderliness (порядочность “pori͡adochnost’”), lawfulness (законность “zakonnost’”). Germany is described in terms of a country providing the immigrants with comfort (комфорт “komfort,” удобство “udobstvo”), a sense of being protected and provided for (защита “zashchita,” достаток “dostatok,” уверенность “uverennost’,” забота “zabota,” благополучие “blagopoluchie”) as well as of offering perspectives (перспективы “perspektivy,” надежность “nadezhnost’,” возможности “vozmozhnosti”), also due to the role of law and rules (законы “zakony,” правила “pravila,” справедливость “spravedlivost’”). As to aspects which could be considered as negative, respondents mention pedantry (педантичность “pedantichnost’”), bureaucracy (бюрократия “bi͡urokratii͡a”), taxes (налоги “nalogi”) and boredom (скука “skuka”). Terms from the administrative sphere also occur several times in the corpus, like e.g. Ausländerbehörde, Kündigungsfrist, Termin, Ordnungsamt; these possibly point at the high level of inference which administration has in the immigrants’ lives, as outlined in Section 6.1.
From the analysis of responses to question 24 can be generalized that, when asked to mention what they associate with the receiving country, immigrants act differently than it is the case for questions regarding the participants’ attitudes towards Russian, German and Hebrew. In fact, while one can observe how language attitudes

have less to do with a certain language and more with people's thoughts about other people who happen to speak that language, the same cannot be said about attitudes towards a country. The respondents' associations with Israel or Germany, which provide information about their attitudes towards the countries, are based on the respondents' experiences in the countries and what they perceive to be salient traits of the country's main culture.

This observation is highly indicative of the meaning of studying language attitudes for sociolinguistics and in an interdisciplinary perspectives. As has been seen in this study, languages are often instrumentalized by people and the institutions which they make up to draw boundary lines between in-groups and out-groups, often to the purpose of preserving in-group integrity and negotiating the amount of external interference which the group can tolerate. Thus, the study of language attitudes is an invaluable instrument to understand the categorization mechanisms by which people live in society.

As different as they might be, what the characterizations of Israel and Germany share is the property of being diametrically opposed to the descriptions which the immigrants provide of their or their relatives' country of birth, addressed by question 25. The list below illustrates the ten most frequent associations with an FSU country mentioned by Israel-based respondents; the corresponding word cloud can be viewed in Figure 6.18.

– родина "rodina" (see Figure 6.4); 50 occurrences
– детство "detstvo," i.e. "childhood;" 38 occurrences
– снег "sneg," i.e. "snow;" 17 occurrences
– культура "kul'tura," i.e. "culture" (in the sense of "culturedness"); 17 occurrences
– холод "kholod," i.e. "cold;" 16 occurrences
– страна "strana" (see Figure 6.4); 16 occurrences
– бедность "bednost'," i.e. "poverty;" 15 occurrences
– друзья "druz'i͡a," i.e. "friends;" 15 occurrences
– дом "dom" (see Figure 6.4); 14 occurrences
– природа "priroda," i.e. "nature;" 12 occurrences

Figure 6.18: Associations with FSU countries by word frequency, Israel-based respondents

The words mentioned in Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.18 are indicative not only of how immigrants look back to the FSU country from which they or their relatives emigrated to Israel but also of the reasons behind their emigration. Comparing Figure 6.18 and Figure 6.16, it emerges how the FSU country of birth is obviously conceptualized as motherland ("rodina") as well as a country of which the respondents have childhood memories. The climatic differences between Israel and FSU countries are of course particularly salient, as the cold weather and snow are mentioned relatively often with reference to the FSU.The most informative differences between the participants' conceptualizations of Israel and the FSU, however, are situated within the domains of culture, economics and politics. On the one hand, FSU countries – among which Russia and Ukraine are the most frequent countries of birth – are described in terms of their "culturedness;" hints to Russia and Ukraine's literary traditions are particularly frequent also in responses to question 13 addressing language attitudes towards Russian, whereas Hebrew is described as a "poor" language.

Cultural events and artifacts of cultural value are also often mentioned by immi-

grants during interviews; in the following excerpt, respondent SIL39F from the case study on page 162 illustrates what she misses about Russia:

> C.: А есть что-то в России, что ты все еще любишь и по которому ты скучаешь?
> SIL39F: Да, безусловно, конечно [...] конечно, культура. Это что-то очень сильное, что мне не хотелось бы потерять и хочу, чтобы мои дети это не потеряли, вот. Потому что там есть очень много ценных всяких вещей.
> C.: А ты можешь назвать некоторые этих ценных вещей?
> SIL39F: Ну, не знаю. Русская литература например.
>
> C.: Is there anything you still like or miss about Russia?
> SIL39F: Yes, definitely, of course [...] of course, its culture. It's something very strong which I wouldn't want to lose or for my children to lose, because it has a lot of valuable things to it.
> C.: Could you name some of these valuable things?
> SIL39F: I don't know, well, Russian literature for example.

However, besides to the seemingly positive associations discussed above, most of the words mentioned by Israel-based participants appear to shed light on highly problematic and unpleasant aspects of their lives in the FSU, like e.g. extreme poverty (нищета, antisemitism (антисемитизм), totalitarianism (тоталитаризм), dictatorship (диктатура), lawlessness (беззаконие), corruption (коррупция), "limitless criminality" (беспредел), disruption (разруха) and the feeling of being trapped in a hopeless situation (безысходность; тюрьма). Vladimir Putin is mentioned four times, being thus situated approximately in the same frequency class as terms describing negative emotional states, like страх i.e. "fear"; грусть i.e. "sadness;" печаль i.e. "sadness;" тоска i.e. "anguish." Political aspects such as concerning Vladimir Putin as well as USSR, which is also mentioned by participants, are expanded upon at questions 26 to 29.

A slightly different perspective on the FSU emerges from respondents by Germany-based immigrants, in spite of an evident degree of overlap with answers provided by Israel-based immigrants. The most frequently mentioned terms are summarized in Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.19.

– родина "rodina" (see Figure 6.4); 47 occurrences

– коррупция “korruptsi͡a,” i.e. “corruption;” 28 occurrences
– детство “detstvo,” i.e. “childhood;” 17 occurrences
– бедность “bednost’,” i.e. “poverty;” 16 occurrences
– семья “sem’i͡a” (see Figure 6.4); 16 occurrences
– друзья “druz’i͡a,” i.e. “friends;” 16 occurrences
– душевность “dushevnost,” i.e. “wholeheartedness;” 14 occurrences
– диктатура “diktatura;” 12 occurrences
– дом “dom;” 10 occurrences
– красота “krasota,” i.e. “beauty”; 9 occurrences

Figure 6.19: Associations with FSU countries by word frequency, Germany-based respondents

From the above list and from Figure 6.19 emerges that political aspects of life in the FSU are more present among the immigrants’ associations than it is the case in the descriptions carried out by immigrants to Germany. At the same time, participants

mention the "wholeheartedness" of the people in their countries of birth as opposed to the surrounding society in Germany, which is described by some in Figure 6.4 as self-centered (эгоизм "ėgoizm") and indifferent (равнодушие "ravnodushie").
Questions 26 and 27 address political life in Germany and Israel; they are analyzed in comparison to questions 28 and 29 addressing political life in the FSU.

Satisfaction	Respondents,%
1 (very low)	18.67
2	20.20
3	40.92
4	17.39
5 (very high)	2.81

Table 6.45: Satisfaction with political situation in Israel

Satisfaction	Respondents,%
1 (very low)	4.95
2	7.14
3	34.34
4	40.66
5 (very high)	12.91

Table 6.46: Satisfaction with political situation in Germany

Based on Table 6.45 and Table 6.46, the degree of satisfaction with the political situation of Israel is clearly lower than among Germany-based respondents. Although neither respondent population expresses particularly high (5) levels of satisfaction with the political situation in the receiving country, grades around 4 and 5 are considerably more frequent among Germany-based respondents, whereas most responses by Israel-based participants are concentrated between the values 1 and 3.
An analysis of question 27 addressing the reasons for attitude towards political life in Israel and Germany allows to identify the following five most frequently named descriptions for Israel; more are visible in Figure 6.20.

– коррупция "korruptsii͡a," i.e. "corruption;" 20 occurrences
– бардак "bardak," i.e. "chaos;" 20 occurrences
– религия "religii͡a," i.e. "religion;" 16 occurrences
– выборы "vybory," i.e. "elections;" 15 occurrences

– демократия “demokratii͡a,” i.e. “democracy;” 15 occurrences

Figure 6.20: Associations with political situation of Israel by word frequency

Thus, the low degree of satisfaction with Israel’s politics is mainly due to the perceived corruption in the country, a perception which was especially widespread during Benjamin Netanyahu’s fourth term (2015 to 2020), in the course of which Netanyahu was indicted on corruption charges. In fact, references to Netanyahu are present throughout the answer corpus of question 27, in which he is referred to as Биби “Bibi,” as Netanyahu is often called in Israel, and Бибик “Bibik,” a russianized equivalent of Bibi. All in all, the participants’ evaluations of their satisfaction with Israeli politics, paired with the words mentioned by them to describe their views, bring to the surface the picture of a chaotic situation due to repeated elections. In fact, between 2019 and 2021, four elections took place; Khanin (2021:234) terms it a “two-year electoral marathon”. At the same time, repeated elections could be considered by some the expression of a democratic culture missing in Russia and other countries of the FSU. From the participants’ descriptions emerge further relevant topics affecting their perception of Israeli politics, such as religion, in terms of the

political weight of Haredi Jews, often perceived by survey respondents and interview participants as an interference in secular statehood. This ideological tension between Orthodox Judaism and the secular heritage of Soviet and post-Soviet migration to Israel is a highly significant issue and is expanded upon in the discussion of question *b.

As regards the participants' perception of the political situation in Germany, the list below features the five most frequently used words; the respective word cloud is visible in Figure 6.21.

- демократия "demokratii͡a," i.e. "democracy;" 20
- стабильность "stabil'nost," i.e. "stability;" 26
- политика "politika," i.e. "policy;" 10 occurrences, of which 6 in cooccurrence with социальная "sotsial'nai͡a," i.e. "social;" and 3 in cooccurrence with миграционная "migratsionnai͡a," i.e. "[related to] migration."
- свобода "svoboda," i.e. "freedom;" 7 occurrences
- беженцы "bezhentsy," i.e. "immigrants;" 7 occurrences

While Germany is described in terms of democratic values, its immigration policy and Germany's reception of refugees within the context of the 2015 refugee crisis are perceived by immigrants from countries of the FSU as highly problematic topics. This is highlighted in the 2016 survey carried out by the Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom (Koneva & Tikhomirova 2016) which is mentioned in Section 6.3.1. In their survey, Koneva & Tikhomirova (2016) show that approximately three quarters of the participants, who were recruited among so-called "Russian-speaking Germans", think that there could be terrorists among refugees and half of the participants are in favor of closing the borders to further refugees. Moreover, Panagiotidis (2021) illustrates that support for the populist far-right party *Alternative für Deutschland* ("Alternative for Germany," in short AfD) is particularly high among both Spätaussiedler and Kontingentflüchtlinge; next to AfD, a tendency can also be identified towards the party *Die Linke* ("The Left"), often described in German political discourse as an extremist party[20] representing populist positions.

As different as their attitudes towards the political situation in Israel and Germany

[20]See the following work by political scientists Eckhard Jesse and Jürgen Lang: "Die Linke - der smarte Extremismus einer deutschen Partei," published in 2008

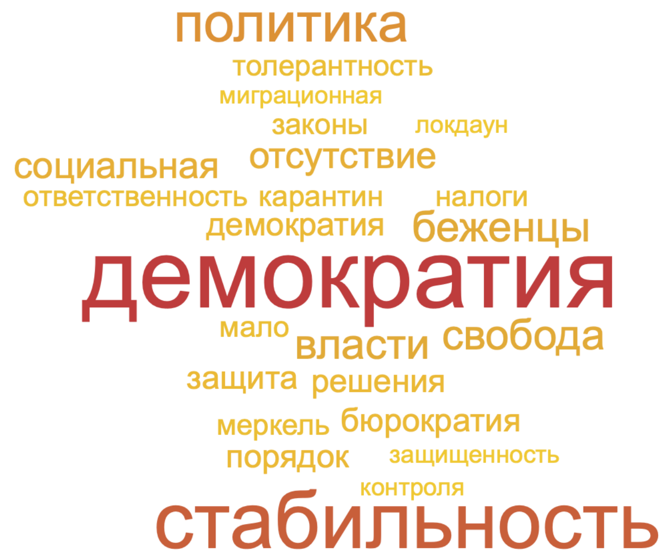

Figure 6.21: Associations with political situation of Germany by word frequency

may be, an analysis of responses to question 28 shows that participants from both countries have similar attitudes towards the political situation in FSU countries (see Table 6.47 and Table 6.48 below).

Satisfaction	Respondents,%
1 (very low)	50.38
2	18.16
3	26.34
4	4.86
5 (very high)	0.26

Table 6.47: Satisfaction with political situation in FSU, Israel-based respondents

The distribution of evaluations is similar between both countries, although German-speaking respondents overall express slightly higher satisfaction with the political situation of the FSU. As to the reasons behind the participants' evaluations, they are visible in the wordclouds at Figure 6.22 and Figure 6.23, whose content is examined in the following. The first four most frequently mentioned words are the same

Satisfaction	Respondents,%
1 (very low)	47.80
2	21.43
3	21.70
4	6.59
5 (very high)	2.47

Table 6.48: Satisfaction with political situation in FSU, Germany-based respondents

Figure 6.22: Associations with political situation of FSU by word frequency, Israel-based respondents

in both respondent populations; they are the following:

– Коррупция “korruptsii͡a,” i.e. “corruption;” 50 occurrences for Israel and 132 for Germany

– Диктатура “diktatura,” i.e. “dictatorship;” 38 occurrences for Israel and 80 for Germany

– Путин “Putin,” i.e. Vladimir Putin; 16 occurrences for Israel and 32 for Germany

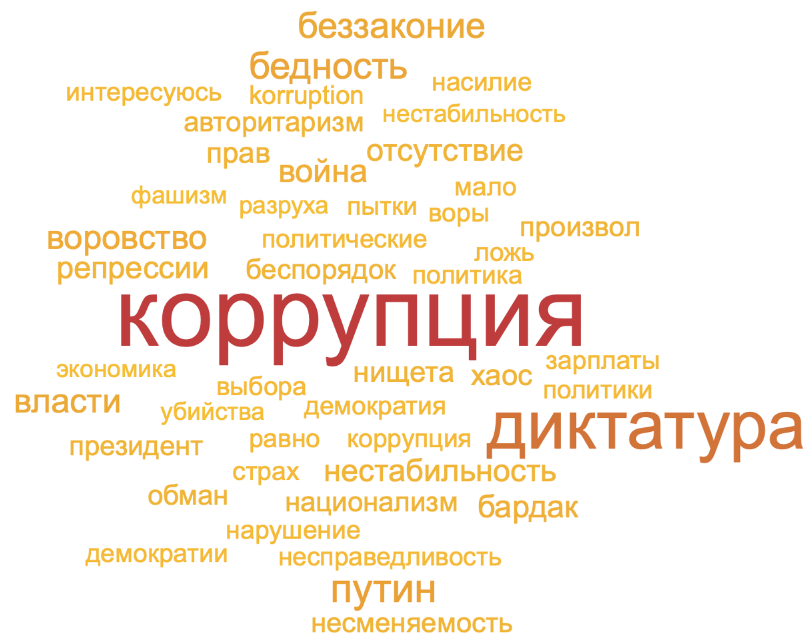

Figure 6.23: Associations with political situation of FSU by word frequency, Germany-based respondents

- Бедность “bednost” i.e. “poverty;” 14 occurrences for Israel and 26 for Germany

The similarity in frequency patterns is unequivocally indicative of contemporary Russian politics and how they are perceived by the Russian speaking diaspora. Interestingly, there is an evident overlap between the participants’ description of the political situation in Russia (and other countries of the FSU) and their associations with Russia (and other countries of the FSU) in general, pointing at the fact that the political dismay is so salient that it becomes one of the first thoughts coming to the participants’ minds when asked to describe their country.

Specific political events and the general political situation in Russia, Ukraine and other countries of the FSU are mentioned by several respondents as the main reasons behind their decision to emigrate. However, political motifs appear far more salient push factors for emigration among FSU immigrants to Israel than to Germany, supporting the assumption that emigration from the FSU to Israel is more of a political and ideological move than emigration to Germany. In fact, while sev-

eral examples of political emigration are to be found in interviews with Israel-based participants, there are no examples of this kind among Germany-based participants. Within the scope of this study, what I term *political emigration* does not refer mainly to emigration on the grounds of political persecutions, but it rather coincides with what Fomina (2021:8) refers to as "politically motivated emigration," including especially "disillusioned emigrants [...] being dissatisfied with the political situation in the country [...] even though they have not directly experienced persecutions."
An incisive example for this condition of disillusionment is provided in the below example of PIL45M living in Israel.

> PIL45M: Когда убили Немцова, я все время работал с Немцовым [...] в Петербурге, ну я решил что мне уже просто там делать нечего, и что уже мне не нравится эта страна.
> C.: Так что ты сюда переехал [...] по каким-то идеологическим причинам?
> PIL45M: Идеологические в том числе, ну [...] обстановска в России, она поускорила просто этот процесс.
> C.: Думаешь что это напрямую связано с тем, что убили Немцова?
> PIL45M: Для меня да, для меня это было ключевое. Это было февраль месяц [...] я не помню. Я утром проснулся, вышел в коридор покурить. прочитал новости, начал собираться, в мае я уже был здесь.
>
> PIL45M: When Nemtsov was killed, I had been working with him all the time in Saint Petersburg [...] and then I decided that I have nothing left to do there and that I don't like that country anymore.
> C.: So your decision to move here [...] was ideological, or...
> PIL45M: Yes, among other things. [...] the situation in Russia accelerated this process.
> C.: Do you think the decision of moving to Israel was directly connected with the assassination of Nemtsov?
> PIL45M: Yes, it was the key event to me. It was february [...] I don't remember [the exact day]. I woke up, went to smoke a cigarette, read the news and started packing my things. In may, I was already here.

Another case of "disillusioned emigrants" is presented in the example of SIL39F (see section 6.1.4), whose decision to emigrate was similarly prompted by a series of politically relevant events regarding her partner and described by her in the following:

SIL39F: Он пилот [...] потом государство аннулировало свидетельства пилотов [...] [сотен] человек [...] есть формальные причины, которые -- сказали, что это не достоверный документ. На самом деле суть очень простая: люди учились не в говударственном в чем-то, а в частом, а это конкуренция [...] потом кто-то там из чиновников рассчитывал получить взятки, а он их не получил [...] очень несправедливая ситуация [...] и мой муж на себя взял инвестигационный вопрос, и он полтора года или два занимался только этим [...] мы суд за судом и суд за судом просто сталкивались каждый раз с этой системой и поражались, насколько все, просто когда судья может, просто прямо глядя в глаза, спокойно, не меняясь в лице, сказать тебе то, что абсолютно не является правдой, что абсолютно не законно, противоречит логике, и судья говорит тебе это и ты не можешь с этим ничего сделать совершенно. В какой-то момент мы друг другу сказали: хорошо, очередной суд мы идем, мы уверены в своей правоте на 100%, и не только в правоте, а то что по документам и по закону у нас все хорошо. Если сейчас мы не выиграем тот суд, мы готовимся к тому, чтобы уехать из страны, потому что жить здесь нельзя больше. Это очень место опасное и с тобой могут сделать что угодно. В это же время происходили тоже всякие нехорошие истории вокруг меня [...] мы решили уехать и мы очень быстро собрались и уехали.

SIL39F: He's a pilot [...] at some point the government revoked the pilot licenses [...] of hundreds of people [...] the formal reason is that, well, they said it's a fake document. But the actual motif is very clear: these people didn't study at a state institution but at a private one, and there is a kind of rivalry [...] one of the state officials must have expected to get a bribe which he didn't [...] a very unfair situation [...] my husband took upon himself all of the investigative effort and he fully engaged with this thing for one and a half or even two years. [...] and trial after trial, every time we became aware that there is a system, and we were shocked how everything works, when the judge looks you straight into the eyes with no change in his facial expression and tells you things which are evidently not true and not legal and simply not logical, and the judge tells you these things and there is nothing at all you can do about it. At some point we told each other: alright, we will go to the next trial, we are a hundred percent

> confident in our rightness and that we did everything by the documents and by the law. If we won't win the trial, we will get ready to emigrate, because it's not possible to live here anymore. It's a very dangerous place, they can do anything they want with you. At the same time, several people around me had some unpleasant stories happening [...] so we decided to leave, packed our stuff straight away and left.

The frustration of SIL39F with Russian governmental institutions, exacerbated by her husband's experience being reportedly unjustly deprived of his pilot license, is described by SIL39F as the direct trigger of their decision to emigrate as soon as possible.
At the beginning of the interview, S. labels aliyah waves since the fall of the Soviet Union as "cheese aliyah" (сырная алия "syrnai͡a alii͡a"), an expression which is employed among Russian-speaking immigrant communities in Israel next to the expression "Putin's aliyah" (путинская алия "putinskai͡a alii͡a") to designate not just the aliyah wave from a chronological point of view but also the main reasons behind emigration, which are mainly related to the political climate of Russia. SIL39F describes the "cheese aliyah" as follows:

> SIL39F: После санкций, в России перестал появляться сыр из Европы нормальный [...] и рассказывают иногда, что люди сюда приехали в Израиль потому что там не стало нечего вкусно поесть.

> SIL39F: With sanctions, there was no more good cheese from Europe in Russia [...] so sometimes they say that people started to come to Israel because there was nothing tasty to eat in Russia anymore.

The expression "Putin's aliyah" is so widespread among Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel that it even has a dedicated Wikipedia article in Russian titled Путинская алия "Putinskai͡a alii͡a" and is widely discussed in the Russian-speaking media of Israel. It is also reflected upon in literature (see Muchnik et al. 2016); the decay of Russia's politics under Putin is even addressed in the landscape of Israel, as is visible in the following picture of a drawing in the sand on Tel Aviv's seashore which was made by passers-by on January 26th, 2020, about 10 days after the proposal by Vladimir Putin of several substantial amendments to the Constitution of Russia, which sparked heated reactions in Russia and among the Russian-speaking diaspora

in Israel, too.

Figure 6.24: “Putin is a thief”, Tel Aviv seashore, January 26th, 2020

In my understanding of the term, disillusioned immigrants are not only people who decide to emigrate based on an abstract dissatisfaction with politics in their current country, but also based on a more concrete and daily-life relevant dissatisfaction, based on the immigrants’ own evaluation of their life in the country as unsafe or unpleasant for different reasons; as I note in Section 2.1, while migration can be considered “a move from human insecurity to human security” (Sirkeci 2009:3), insecurity does not necessarily have to be a forcing factor – in the sense of forced migration, i.e. the one happening out of force majeure reasons such as wars, natural catastrophes etc.– leaving people with no choice but to emigrate or leading them to regard themselves as refugees, rather than migrants. The boundary between what to call forced migration and any other kind of migration is admittedly blurry, an issue concerning the terminology of migration research in general and one of the problematic aspects implied when working in a highly interdisciplinary field; in fact, as referred to in Section 2.1, it is necessary to question the term “forced migration: in order to constantly remind oneself during the research practice that “to migrate, when applied to human beings, implies at least some degree of agency, of independent will” (Turton 2003:11–12). The thin line between so-called “disillusioned immigrants” and what could be regarded as cases of forced migration is made manifest by the next

example from an interview with HDE00M living in Germany. For safety reasons, age is not disclosed.

> HDE00M: Я отношусь к ЛГБТ-коммунити [...] я вырос в деревне в Чечне. [...] Родителям я не сознался до сих пор потому, что меня бы убили. Родители, они бы сделали все, чтобы я умер. Это не адекватно, не знаю, в 21-ом веке... но в Чечне, [...] например, я говорю, я гей, да? Приходит пять человек, полицейские, они тебя заводят в подвал, они тебя избивают, бьют шокером и говорят: выдавай всех людей, которых ты знаешь геев. И представь себе, под пальцы гвозди суют и ты выдашь все. Ты подставляешь всех людей, все люди страдают. [...] В моей жизни была ситуация, когда меня шантажиолвали. Я был в седьмом классе, меня шантажировали три года, пытаясь меня моими фотографиями, хотя там ничего такого не было. Но в Чечне это совершенно опасно [...] в Германии, то что я заметил, да? Уважают выбор человека, уважают выбор сына и детей. Моя мама и русские — нет, они не такие.
>
> HDE00M: I am part of the LGBT community [...] I grew up in a village in Chechnya. [...] I still haven't come out to my parents because they would kill me. My parents would do everything for me to die. It's not normal, like, in the 21st century... but in Chechnya, [...] as an example, if I'd say [openly] I'm gay, right? Then what would happen is, five people, who actually are policemen, would come and bring you to a basement, beat you up, hit you with a taser and go like: give us the names of all the gay people you know. And imagine like they poke nails under your fingers and you will give out everything. You screw up everyone and everyone suffers. [...] It happened to me that I got blackmailed. I was in seventh grade, they blackmailed me for three years with my pictures, even though there was nothing special. But it's very dangerous in Chechnya [...] in Germany, what I noticed is that the individual's choice is respected, the choice of a son, of children. My mum and Russian people are not like that.

The latter excerpt from the interview with HDE00M is a further example on the one hand of the weight of political aspects for the decision to emigrate and on the other hand of what immigrants see in the receiving country – in the case of this study, Israel and Germany – which they cannot find in their home country.

Other political events of dramatic relevance for FSU immigrants to Israel and Germany are those following the 2013 Euromaidan and the Russo-Ukrainian conflict; the latter is addressed in examples of the explanations provided by respondents to their attitude towards Russian, which is conceptualized by some respondents as a "language of occupiers" or evaluated negatively on account of the Russian annexation of Crimea. The events leading to the Euromaidan and the Russo-Ukrainian war are cited by KIL25F, whose case is mentioned in Section 6.2.2.1, as the factors triggering the family's decision to leave Ukraine by exploiting the father's Jewish heritage as a way out of the country and into Israel:

> C.: А почему вы решили переехать в Израиль?
> KIL25F: Папа еврей, в другую страну нам было бы сложно уехать. Мы просто хотели уехать. Нам просто нужно было уехать, потому что, знаешь, в Украине уже произошли многие изменения [...] знаешь, такой бардак в стране. Майдан уже был, когда я уже была в Израиле, то есть только-только начало вот этого всего было, и папа смотрит на это как бы все [...] и так надо валить из страны, и что будет, страна просто развалится, ее просто разносят на части, и вот ну мама рассказывала, что вот за 2 месяца мы собрали чемодан и вылетили оттудаво, мы приезжаем а весной на 2011 год [...] потом Майдан начинается, война.
>
> C.: Why did you decide to move to Israel?
> KIL25F: My dad is Jewish and it would have been hard to emigrate to any other country. We simply wanted to leave. We just needed to leave, because, you know, a lot of changes were starting to happen in Ukraine [...] you know, a lot of chaos in the country. The Maidan took place when I was already living in Israel, that is, it was all only starting to begin, and then my dad observes everything [...] and so we decided we need to get the heck out of the country, and what will happen, the country is falling apart, they're breaking it down to pieces, and mum told me that it only took us two months to pack our stuff and leave from there. We arrived in 2011 and then [...] the Maidan started, and then the war.

The year 2011, during which KIL25F and her family decided to leave Ukraine, was filled with political upheaval in Ukraine, as former Prime Minister Yulia Timoshenko

was arrested “allegedly on false charges” (Sagramoso 2020:267) and Russia intensified pressures on Ukraine to join the Eurasian Customs Union and move away from European influence.

As stated above, political and ideological motifs are present in the emigration stories of participants from both countries, but appear especially pronounced among FSU immigrants to Israel. This can be observed also within the context of emigration from Russia to Israel following the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine; studies on these migration phenomena are necessary to critically tackle the thin boundary line between “forced” and “unforced” migration which is addressed above.

Question 30 regarding the evaluation of life quality improvement since emigration and question 31 regarding the immigrants’ desire of further relocation are discussed in Section 6.1.4. In view of the relevance of these questions within this discussion, it is helpful to recall the analysis outcomes. In spite of the lesser degree of segregation and the higher degree of social mobility opportunities, FSU immigrants to Germany have a relatively neutral attitude towards life quality improvements since emigration, whereas FSU immigrants to Israel tend to have more emotional attitudes towards the same question, with their answers being far more polarized (i.e. concentrated around very low or very high values) than it is the case in Germany (see Table 6.17). Moreover, Table 6.18 shows that a far higher percentage of Israeli-based respondents does not (values 1 and 2) wish to relocate in the future than it is the case among Germany-based respondents. These results, put against the background of the entire analysis, highlight a higher level of emotional attachment to the receiving country among FSU immigrants to Israel than it is the case for FSU immigrants to Germany. Looking back to Table 6.19 and Table 6.20, a higher attachment to the receiving country among Israel-based respondents can be inferred from their self-identification tendencies: more than 40% of the Israel-based respondents self-identify within the category “Israeli-Jew,” whereas the most widespread self-identification category among Germany-based respondents is “Russian and FSU.”

From the latter observations around questions 30 and 31 as well as from the analysis presented in this chapter emerge several tendencies pointing at different aspects seemingly contradicting each other. A possible interpretation for the higher level of emotional attachment to what one could name “typically Israeli values” (intended as self-identification within the category “Israeli/Jew”) might reside precisely in the fact that the Israeliness and/or Jewishness of Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel

is overtly questioned in Israeli public discourse; emotional stances of the immigrants voicing their in-groupness in Israel – in spite of dramatic segregation issues – can be regarded as a reappropriation of their Jewish identity, as highlighted in Section 6.2.6.2. A critical discussion of the analysis presented in this chapter is presented in Chapter 7.

Information yielded by questions 30 and 31 is completed by responses to question 32 on the possible countries of relocation and question 33 on the possibility of reemigration back to FSU countries.The following list reports the five most frequently named countries of possible relocation which were named by respondents from Israel; the respective word cloud is presented in Figure 6.25 and includes all options named by the participants.

– Canada, 65 occurrences
– USA, 35 occurrences
– Europe, 20 occurrences, of which: Central Europe, 1 occurrence; Western Europe, 1 occurrence
– Germany, 16 occurrences
– Russia, 13 occurrences

For comparison, the following list reports the five most frequently named countries of possible relocation named by respondents from Germany, with the respective word cloud to be found in Figure 6.26.

– Switzerland, 29 occurrences
– USA, 25 occurrences
– Spain, 17 occurrences
– Canada, 17 occurrences
– Italy, 14 occurrences

As emerges from the above lists, the US and Canada are among the most frequently named countries of possible relocation in both respondent populations. It is remarkable that, just like Germany features as a popular country of possible relocation among FSU immigrants to Israel, the latter country is also mentioned quite frequently (11 occurrences) as a possible country of relocation.

Figure 6.25: Countries of possible relocation, Israel-based respondents

A tendency to be noted is that FSU immigrants to Israel are more strongly oriented towards relocation overseas, with Canada hitting 65 occurrences, whereas FSU immigrants to Germany tend to look more consistently for relocation options within Europe, with Switzerland leading the top-five list above.
Among the possible relocation countries of respondents from both groups are also countries which have become popular destinations for Russian refugees fleeing from Russia after February 24th, 2022 and especially after Putin's announcement of "partial mobilization" of the population on September 21st, 2022. Examples for such countries are Turkey, Cyprus and UAE.
Referring back to Table 6.18, 25% (Israel) to 29% (Germany) of respondents express a high (4) to very high (5) degree of relocation desire, in spite of moderate to high improvement in life quality since immigration to Israel and to Germany (see Table 6.17). Moreover, not only relocation but also reemigration (i.e. return migration to countries of the FSU) desires are expressed by respondents from both countries; in view of the limited entity of research on return migration to Russia and the FSU (see,

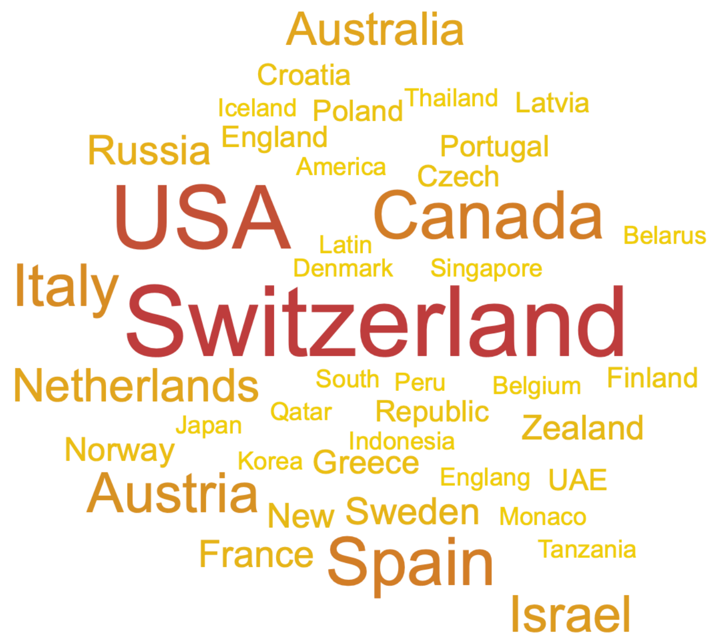

Figure 6.26: Countries of possible relocation, Germany-based respondents

e.g., Panagiotidis 2021:217–218), future research is highly necessary to determine the extent to which return migration is widespread among immigrants from Russia and other FSU territories.

At any rate, Russia and countries of the FSU are named as possible relocation destinations even before question 33 explicitly addressing the respondents' plans to reemigrate. In fact, Russia is mentioned as a country of relocation by 13 respondents from Israel and 11 respondents from Germany.

Looking at responses to question 33 "Are you considering moving back to the country where you or your relatives where born?" is helpful as a preliminary step towards filling the research gap about tendencies in return migration to Russia and other countries of the FSU, a topic which is especially gaining momentum since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Data is presented in the following Table 6.49 and Table 6.50, from which emerges that thoughts of reemigration to Russia and other FSU countries are less widespread among Israel-based respondents.

Specifically, about 20% more Israel-based respondents rate their desire to reemigrate

Grade	Respondents,%
1 (very low)	64.19
2	17.65
3	9.21
4	2.30
5 (very high)	6.65

Table 6.49: Consideration of return migration, Israel-based respondents

Grade	Respondents,%
1 (very low)	44.23
2	23.35
3	17.03
4	8.52
5 (very high)	6.87

Table 6.50: Consideration of return migration, Germany-based respondents

to their country of birth as very low (1) than it is the case for Germany-based respondents. While there doesn't appear to be a tendency towards a very high (5) reemigration desire, a comparatively broad divide can be noted between the two respondent groups around rates 3 and 4, where Germany-based respondents are ahead of their Israeli-based counterparts by six to eight percent points.

In spite of the higher readiness of Germany-based respondents to consider reemigration, I didn't encounter any such case among interview participants, be it from Germany or from Israel. Nevertheless, it is necessary to investigate the possible reasons behind the desire to reemigrate. In her study on reemigration of Russian immigrants from several countries, among which Germany, Ivanova (2017:156) finds that the most frequent reasons behind reemigration are, in decreasing order of frequency, termination of study program or working contract, family issues, legal constraints, nostalgy of home and lack of stable occupational perspective. While these aspects do not emerge from the quantitative survey, one aspect addressed by it which might be significant to identify possible patterns of reemigration plans is educational attainment of the respondent population which, as shown in Table 6.12, is very high among immigrants to both countries, especially when compared to the nationwide educational attainment level of Israel and Germany.

A major divide between educational attainment of respondents and average educational attainment of the receiving country is to be found in Germany, where 72.9%

of respondents have tertiary education against 31.2% of the population of Germany. Thus, FSU immigrants to Germany are exceptionally overqualified when compared to the overall level of educational attainment in Germany. In their study on return migration intentions among Estonian immigrants to Finland, Pungas et al. (2012:17) note that "over-education in the host country labour market is clearly associated with an elevated willingness to return;" another relevant aspect which Pungas et al. (2012:17) highlight is that "host country education leads to better prospects for social integration;" among Germany-based participants, the mean age at immigration is 27.5 years old (see Table 6.5), i.e. one at which the majority of immigrants can be expected to already have received some level of university education in the home country. Put against the backdrop of findings by Pungas et al. (2012), these data might explain the more distinct intentions of return migration among FSU immigrants to Germany. Nevertheless, the latter is but an attempt to speculate on *possible reasons* behind a *possible pattern* and should be taken with a grain of salt, as it is highly problematic to identify causal relations within the relatively limited data corpus collected for this study.
A further aspect to be considered when examining willingness to relocate or reemigrate is the degree of emotional attachment to the receiving country which, as already discussed in Table 6.18, is found to be far higher among FSU immigrants to Israel than to Germany.
Information on different patterns of emotional attachment can also be extrapolated from responses to questions 34 and 35 of the questionnaire:

> 34. Complete the following statement using no more than three words: "Germans/Israelis are... "
> 35. Complete the following statement using no more than three words: "Russians are... "

A summary of responses to question 34 as to a description of "Israelis" and "Germans" is to be found in the wordclouds of Figure 6.27 and Figure 6.28.
Questions 34 and 35 aim to detect the attributes which respondents ascribe to the receiving society on the one hand and to their country of birth on the other hand, implicitly addressing what the respondents view as "core values" (in the terminology of Schwartz 2006, "basic values" of Israeli, German, Russian etc. cultures.) Referring back to the discussion about Schwartz' cultural value theory on page 181, cultural

Figure 6.27: Description of Israelis, Israel-based respondents

values “express shared conceptions of what is good and desirable in the culture, the cultural ideals” (Schwartz 2006:139). Responses to questions 34 and 35 allow to study the participants’ attitudes towards what they identify as the cultural values widespread in Israeli, German, Russian etc. society – i.e., the *cultural value orientations* (Schwartz 2006) of these societies, defined as “[t]he rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices, symbols, norms, and values prevalent among people in a society [which] are manifestations of the underlying culture” (Schwartz 2014:548). The latter definition reinforces the importance of studying attitudes – be it language attitudes or attitudes towards any other component of societal life – in order to understand the dynamics of societal life.

Looking at the words most frequently used by Israel-based respondents to describe Israelis, the following characterization emerges:

– шумные “shumnye,” i.e. “loud;” 50 occurrences

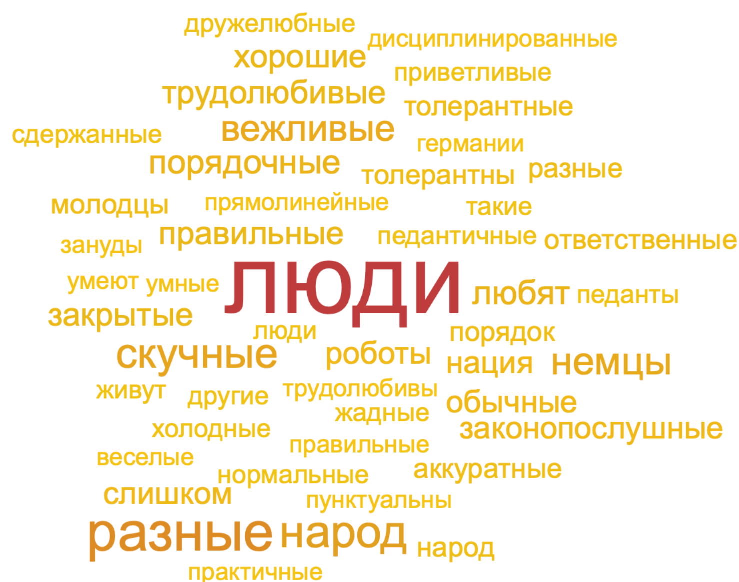

Figure 6.28: Description of Germans, Germany-based respondents

- наглые "naglye," i.e. "insolent"[21]; 26 occurrences
- открытые "otkrytye," i.e. "open;" 22 occurrences
- свободные "svobodnye," i. e. "free;" 19 occurrences
- отзывчивые "otzyvchivye," i.e. "responsive," "attentive," "sympathetic;" 16 occurrences

whereas Germans are characterized as follows:

- скучные "skuchnye," i.e. "boring;" 12 occurrences
- вежливые "vezhlivye," i.e. "polite;" 10 occurrences
- порядочные "pori͡adochnye," i.e. "orderly;" 8 occurrences
- правильные "pravil'nye," i.e. "correct;" 7 occurrences
- закрытые "zakrytye," i.e. "closed;" 7 occurrences

[21]In Israeli culture, חוצפה (English *chutzpah*) is the insolent, upfront behavior of somebody overstepping a norm or ignoring good manners.

From the above characterizations of Israelis and Germans emerge two diametrically opposed pictures which naturally have implications for the immigrants' negotiation of their own place in society and which, when put in relation to the participants' description of "Russians" at question 35, clearly appear to exert an influence on the way how FSU immigrants position themselves towards their country of birth.
According to Figure 6.2.3, Israelis are described as loud, open and sympathetic; moreover, from Figure 6.16 emerges that Israelis are conceptualized as kind-hearted (добрые "dobrye," доброжелательные "dobrozhelatel'nye," приветливые "privetlivye"), emotional (эмоциональные "ėmot͡sional'nye," экспансивные "ėkspansivnye"), easy-going (забавные "zabavnye"). The Russian equivalent of the Hebrew term *chutzpah* is often associated with Israelis, too, as their straightforwardness (непосредственные "neposredstvennye") in communication is at times perceived by participants as inpolite (безкультурные "bezkul'turnye," невоспитанные "nevospitannye"). All in all, participants appear to have a highly positive image of Israelis; negative attributes (such as e.g. chaotic, "balaganisty;" goofs, "razdolbai;" crazy "sumasshedshie") are rare to be found in the response corpus, are often used with a humorous undertone and are in any case outweighed by positive attributes (such as generous "shchedrye," compatriots "zemli͡aki"). Throughout the corpus, references to shared features between the respondents themselves and how they view Israelis are to be noticed, like in the aforementioned case of земляки "zemli͡aki" i.e. "compatriots" and as is evident from mentions of свои "svoi," i.e. "my people;" родные "rodnye," i.e. "family." The following examples from the corpus also offer insights into the expression of emotional closeness in the respondents' views of Israelis:

AV105. Своя громкая семья
AV105. My loud family

AV123. Близкие мне люди
AV123. People close to me

On the other hand, while the respondents' descriptions of Germans do not yield a negative picture, emotional attachment to Germany is virtually absent in responses by Germany-based immigrants, even among those whose self-identification falls within the category "German" (which, however, is the least frequent of all the study, including only 2,43% of Germany-based participants; see Table 6.20). Throughout the

Germany-based response corpus, there are no examples in which Germans are described in terms of, e.g., family, relatives or close people.
The latter observations acquire further significance when put against the backdrop of how respondents from both countries conceptualize "Russians" (question 35). It is worth noting that question 35

> 35. Complete the following statement using no more than three words: "Russians are..."

refers to "Russians" first of all because the Russian Federation is the most frequent country of birth in both respondents populations; the formulation of the question is admittedly problematic, but it was chosen mostly for "economic reasons" in view of the latter observation. Secondly, as is addressed in Section 6.2.2.1, the label "Russian" is frequently employed in the Russian-speaking diaspora to designate not ethnic Russians but Russian-speaking individuals. While an uncritical usage of the label "Russian" is in no way to be endorsed, the question was formulated so as to appear to the reader as concise and straightforward as possible, which aim always involves a degree of simplification, as explained in Section 6.2.1. Furthermore, using the label "Russians" allows to cross-analyze the participants' responses with their self-identification categories and examine their responses to question 35 in function of their self-identifications. Moreover, reactions to a politically incorrect usage of the label "Russians" have a highly informative value in that they point at processes of national identity building and renegotiation of the Soviet heritage in FSU countries other than Russia, which in the discourse of Ukraine, Georgia and other FSU countries is conceptualized as a colonialist intruder.
The following examples are especially illustrative of decolonializing reactions to the label "Russians." Participant AW135 from Israel was born in the Ukrainian city of Kharkiv which he, however, writes according to the Russian-speaking spelling of "Kharkov."

> AW135. Фашисты нацисты бандиты
> AW135. Fascists Nazis bandits

In the above example, it can be inferred that the participant refers to Russians in terms of their occupation of Ukrainian territories.
In the following example, the respondent chooses to correct the question to fit her

self-identification, instead of positioning herself negatively towards "Russians" as in the example of AW135 above. Israel-based participant AW261, born in the Ukrainian city of Kamianske (formerly Dniprodzerzhynsk, in her spelling "Dneprodzerzhynsk") states the following:

> AW261. Украинцы- моя семья
> AW261. Ukrainians are my family

Similar reactions to the label "Russians" are to be observed among Germany-based participants, too. The following example is a response by participant AU71, who extends her answer far beyond the three words posed as a limit in question 35:

> AU71. Я не русская, я — кыргызстанка. Но о русских в России могу сказать, что они хоть и прямолинейные, ужасные шовинисты — делят людей по этнической принадлежности, даже находясь здесь в Германии. Часто ещё любят говорить о чем-то, в чем поверхностно/вообще не разбираются.
> AU71. I am not Russian, I am Kyrgyz. But about Russians in Russia I can say that they might be straightforward, but they are horrible chauvinists. They divide people by ethnic belonging, even here in Germany. Moreover, they often like to talk about things which they know little or nothing about.

In her response, AU71 appears to implicitly refer to personal experiences of receiving a racist treatment by Russians in Russia. The above question offers her an occasion to reappropriate her Kyrgyz identity outside of Russia, where Kyrgyz and other Central Asian immigrants frequently face racist attacks (see Berger & Zavisca 2020).
The following response is a further example of critical positioning towards Russia, expressed by participant AU354 from Kharkiv:

> AU354. Русские-агрессоры и захватчики. ПРИМЕР — Крым 2014г.Грузия — 2008,Приднестровье — 1992 (это не считая 2 Чеченские войны, внутренние вопросы), Абхазия.
> AU354. Russians are aggressors and occupiers. EXAMPLE: Crimea 2014. Georgia 2008, Transnistria 1992 (without counting the two Chechen war, internal problems) and Abkhazia.

In the above example, the participant lists some of the conflicts originating after the fall of the Soviet Union with a major involvement of Russia to substantiate his negative attitude towards Russians.

A visualization of the most frequent responses to question 35 is offered in form of wordclouds in Figure 6.29 and Figure 6.30.

Figure 6.29: Description of “Russians”, Israel-based respondents

While the subject at the center of question 35, i.e. “Russians,” is the same for both respondent groups, attitudes vary heavily between the two groups. Israel-based respondents appear to conceptualize “Russians” in a more detached and negative way, whereas attitudes appear to be more emotional and positive among Germany-based respondents. The following list includes some of the most frequently occurring words among Israel-based respondents:

- злые “zlye,” i.e. “bad;” 15 occurrences
- умные “umnye,” i.e. “intelligent;” 11 occurrences
- холодные “kholodnye,” i.e. “cold;” 10 occurrences

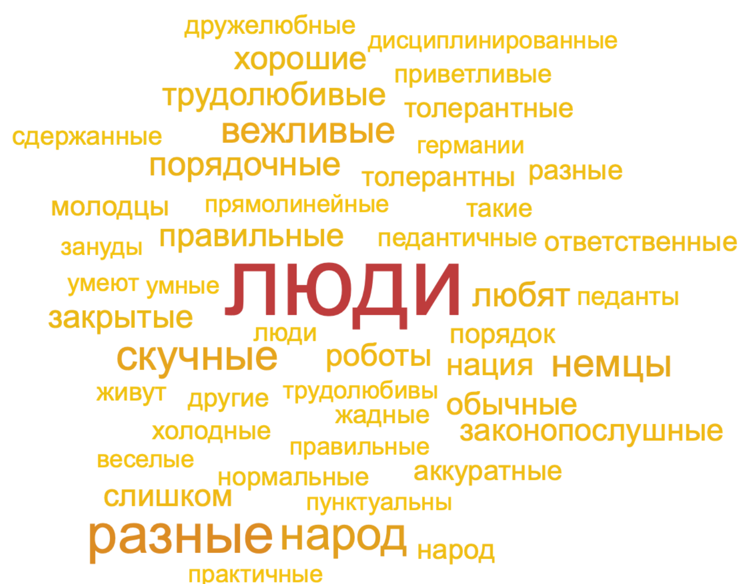

Figure 6.30: Description of “Russians”, Germany-based respondents

– завистливые “zavistlivye,” i.e. “envious;” 7 occurrences
– недовольные “nedovol’nye,” i.e. “unhappy;” 6 occurrences

whereas the following list offers an overview of the most frequently occurring words among Germany-based respondents for comparison:

– душевные “dushevnye,” i.e. “sincere”, “emotional”; 14 occurrences
– добрые “dobrye,” i.e. “good;” 12 occurrences
– открытые “otkrytye,” i.e. “open;” 9 occurrences
– сильные “sil’nye,” i.e. “strong;” 7 occurrences
– веселые “veselye,” i.e. “fun;” 7 occurrences

Descriptions of the *motherland* and, in general, of the cultural values associated with Russia function as a mirror of the immigrants’ paths in the receiving country. Similarly to what has been observed about language attitudes, attitudes towards Russia and its culture seem to have less to do with the participants’ views of Russia itself

than with the way in which participants situate themselves between two worlds: between countries of the FSU, where the majority of the participants was born and raised, and a new life in Germany and Israel.

Predominantly negative attitudes towards Russia among Israel-based respondents are highly indicative of patterns of social identity formation among FSU immigrants to Israel, a destination for the many "disillusioned emigrants" (see Section 3.4) whose emigration from Russia and the countries of the FSU is to a significant extent politically motivated. When analyzed comparatively, the above lists suggest that Germany-based respondents project onto Russia the positive associations of which they are at a lack for Germany, which they describe with similar neutral to negative attributes as those employed by Israel-based respondents to describe Russia.

In Israel, a considerable portion of society is Russian-speaking – approximately 20% according to Ben-Rafael et al. (2006). On the one hand, patterns of segregation (see Section 6.1) are far more widespread among Russian-speaking immigration to Israel than to Germany, which has negative effects on the integration processes of olim in terms of their construction of a social identity compatible with the values of the receiving society (see Section 2.2 for a discussion of the term "integration".) On the other hand, though, this could lead to infer that the Russian language, Russian-speaking cultural artifacts and other familiar practices from the immigrants' countries of birth are so present and easily accessible in the receiving society that there is no necessity nor space for the emergence of a longing for Russia or a nostalgic picture of it.

The same cannot be stated for Germany, where the Russian language and Russian-speaking cultural events have far less public visibility than in Israel. A further factor to be considered when interpreting the largely positive attitudes of respondents towards Russia is the comparative lack of emotional attachment towards Germany – visible, among other things, in a very low degree of self-identification within the category "German", – for which an evidently high emotional attachment to Russia can be interpreted as a compensation mechanism. In other words, a lacking self-identification with the cultural values of the receiving society goes hand-in-hand with mostly positive attitudes towards Russia and self-identification in terms of closeness to the "sending" society. On a side note, the attribute "sending" is widespread in migration research (see, e.g., Joppke 2011), although its literal meaning evidently does not apply to the migration phenomena examined in this study, as the vast ma-

jority of its participants were not *sent* into emigration as if upon invitation by the governments of their countries of birth; rather, they were sent into it by their own recognition that emigration could allow them to "move from human insecurity to human security" (Sirkeci 2009:3).
Attachment to the "sending" society without attachment to the receiving society, however, has dramatic consequences for the social identity of the immigrants; Joppke (2011:1) even goes as far as to argue that "the sending society is an obstacle to integration" in any scenario, even when immigrants do show some degree of attachment to the receiving society. It is worth recalling the definition which Park & Burgess (1969:375) provide of assimilation, which is close to the meaning of integration salient within this study (see Section 2.2), as "a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life." (Park & Burgess 1969:375).
In the case of post-Soviet migration, attachment to the sending society and a lack of interest for the culture of the receiving society are two factors tightly connected to the condition of *in-betweenness* which characterizes many immigrants from FSU countries. However, a big question which still remains to be clarified is which kind of relationship there is between the two aforementioned factors and the condition of in-betweenness as a salient characteristic of post-Soviet migration (see Section 6.1.2 and the terminological discussion in Section 2.8). Are the former a cause or a consequence of the latter? Which other factors come into play when attempting to understand the in-betweenness of post-Soviet immigrants? Is it a condition affecting only (or mostly) immigrants from FSU countries, or is it a phenomenon to be observed in other migration contexts, too? Can this condition be tackled? If yes, how?
The above observations add to the highly complex picture of migration from FSU countries to Israel and Germany; a picture as complex as it is made up of many fragments seemingly contradicting each other, as my analysis attempts to show. Far from receiving an ultimate answer, these questions – and their significance for migration studies – are discussed in Chapter 7.
The next and last question of the survey which remains to be addressed regards Israel-based respondents and has been mentioned several times throughout this chapter; it is the following:

*b. At the beginning of 2020, the Sephardic Chief Rabbi stated approxi-

> mately the following: "Immigrants from the former USSR are goyim and communists". Describe your reaction to this statement using no more than three words.

The above question refers to a statement which sparked vast public backlash when it was issued by Yitzhak Yosef and published by several Israeli media outlets, among which the renowned newspaper Haaretz which, on January 7th, 2020, published an article titled as follows Rabinowitz (2021):

> הרב הראשי לישראל: חלק מהעולים גויים גמורים, קומוניסטים ושונאי דת
>
> The Chief Rabbi of Israel: a part of the olim are goyim beyond repair, Communists and religion-haters

The above article was published at the time of my fieldwork phase in Israel and was addressed in interviews by several participants. Articles featuring Yosef's statements were published in several Russian-speaking media outlets of Israel, too, and rapidly started circulating in the Facebook groups of Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel, where they were heavily discussed. Yosef is known to be affiliated with the Haredi political party *Shas* (Khanin 2021:237); the positions represented by Shas often collide with those represented by right-wing secularist party *Yisrael Beiteinu* led by Russian-speaking Avigdor Lieberman, a central figure for the so-called "Russian Street"[22] of Israel.
The statement by Yitzhak Yosef was chosen as a topic of discussion for the questionnaire precisely because it is related to one of the most dramatic issues concerning post-Soviet immigrants to Israel and their place in Israeli society, namely the societal questioning of their Jewishness and therefore of their righteous permanence in Israel. As illustrated in Section 6.2.3, post-Soviet immigrants to Israel are exposed to ideological expectations which are not to be found among their Germany-based counterparts. A thorough discussion of the reasons behind ideological pressure on and expectations of immigrants in Israel and how these differ in Germany would involve a comparative analysis of the state ideologies of Israel and Germany which would, however, extend well beyond the scope of this study. A source of information regarding this question is Silbereisen et al. (2016) which can provide valuable insights for future research.

[22]See Section 6.2.3

The spectrum of reactions to questions *b is representative of the reactions prompted by the statement at the time of its publication.The most frequently occurring words in the respondents' reactions are visible in Figure 6.31 and discussed in the list below.

Figure 6.31: Reactions to statement by Rabbi Yitzhak Yossef

- возмущение “vozmushchenie,” i.e. “shock”; 25 occurrences
- отвращение “otvrashchenie,” i.e. “disgust;” 15 occurrences
- гнев “gnev,” i.e. “wrath;” 15 occurrences
- прав “prav,” i.e. “[he is] right”; 14 occurrences
- смех “smekh,” i.e. “ridicule;” 11 occurrences

While most respondents report negative reactions ranging from shock to ridicule, some of them are of the opinion that “he is basically right,” as in the response of AX307 (Russian В основном он прав). While responses along these lines might

express the views of religious Russian-speaking Jews genuinely supporting a strict application of Halakhic law (see Section 6.2.6.2), there is reason to assume that they are a means by which respondents dissociate themselves from other Russian-speaking inhabitants of Israel on the grounds of the negative stereotypes about Russian-speaking immigrants which are widespread in Israel; as is illustrated in Section 6.2.6.2, the self-identification category "Israeli-Jew" is particularly widespread among Israel-based respondents, which might appear puzzling in view of the fact that so-called Soviet Jews are often pictured as atheistic (see Klіueva 2021). While the image of the atheistic Soviet Jew is widespread among Soviet Jews themselves (see the example of SIL39F in Section 6.3.1), one must not forget that the emergence of this perception of Soviet Jewry is a direct consequence of Lenin and Stalin's anti-religious campaigns targeting several religious minorities of the Soviet Union, among which the Jews (see Chapter 3 for an overview); and that if Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel are viewed today as "not Jewish enough" by Yossef and other exponents of the ultra-Orthodox community, under the Soviet regime they were persecuted precisely on account of their religious and ethnic *diversity*: as concisely expressed by Kliueva (2021:1193), "being Soviet meant precisely not to distinguish oneself in any possible respect, and above all the following: political views, ethno-national identity, religion, worldview"[23].

Thus, not only can expressions of agreement with Yossef's statements be regarded as a way to reappropriate for oneself Jewish identity by taking on a cynical and even somewhat offensive stance towards non-Halakhic olim from the FSU; they are also highly reminiscing of inter-group conflicts among Jews under the Soviet regime where, as noted by Weinberg (2008),

> many Soviet Jews championed the communist cause and eagerly participated in the campaign against Judaism [...] for every rabbi such as my grandfather who sought refuge in the United States in 1923, there was another Soviet Jew, such as my grandfather's brother-in-law, who stayed behind and took advantage of the opportunities the Soviet regime offered to nonreligious Jews. (Weinberg 2008:120–121)

The above observations about question *b and responses to it allow to argue that,

[23]Original text: Действительно, быть советским означало не выделяться, в том числе политическими взглядами, национальностью, религиозностью, мировоззрением

especially among Russian-speaking immigrants to Israel, the question of belonging is a highly explosive one, even wreaking havoc inside the Russian-speaking population of Israel and being instrumentalized to create further segregation, to some extent. In fact, approving reactions to Rabbi Yitzhak Yosef's statement on olim from the FSU appear to echo with observations made by interview participants during fieldwork. The following excerpts are taken from an interview with VIL31M whose case is referred to in Section 6.2.6.3. During the interview., VIL31M illustrates his impression that, within the community of Russian-speaking olim in Israel, people tend to want to put on their fellow olim a similar pressure as the one they have had to endure themselves before and upon emigration.

> VIL31M: Есть конечно здесь к сожалению такие люди морально очень слабые, [...] которые на призыв о помощи говорят: «ой, не успели приехать, они уже там просят, ой,там мы там перетерпели столько, вы тоже типа должны это все пройти», есть, но к счастью их меньшеньство.

> VIL31M: Sadly, here there are some morally weak people ... who in response to somebody's call for help go like: "these guys have barely arrived and they're already begging, we've endured so much, you will also have to go through it yourselves!," but thankfully these people are a minority.

According to VIL31M, this purported lack of solidarity between Russian-speaking olim is one of the biggest hurdles to their integration in Israel and is seen by her as a contributing factor to the comparatively low social status of olim from the FSU in Israel, which VIL31M describes as a country with a particularly rigid social hierarchy.

> VIL31M: Еще есть важный момент, который я постоянно обдумываю.В Израиле очень жесткая вертикаль, она гораздо жеще, даже чем в коррумпированной Украине [...] чтобы человеку с низкого уровня, да? Подняться даже на среднюю — это сверхусилие [...] люди, которые находятся на среднем уровне, они не заинтересованы в том, чтобы люди сниза поднимались [...] и это тоже проблема израильского общества и ментиалитета,а если умножить его на проблемы менталитета русскоязычных, то для большего количества русскоязычных — это вообще непреодолимое препятствие. Больше 90% процентов [русскоязычных] людей [...] оно занимает вот эту среднюю нишу рабочую.

> VIL31M.: There is another important aspect which I keep thinking about. Israel has got a very rigid social hierarchy, much more rigid than in corrupt Ukraine [...] for somebody from a low level to climb up even to a middle level, it's a superhuman effort [...] people who are on the middle level have no interest in letting people on the lower levels rise up [...] this is a problem of Israeli society and mentality, and if you add this to the problems of the mentality of the Russian-speaking people then it's basically an insurmountable obstacle. More than 90% of the people [Russian-speaking immigrants] occupy this average occupational niche.

His impressions and thoughts, as with the attitudes of all other respondents cited in this study, are not to be taken uncritically as pieces of some objective truth; instead, they are seen as indicative of psychological and societal processes relevant not just in the informants' lives, but most importantly in the networks in which they are active. VIL31M is not a sociologist, he does not represent an expert perspective. When VIL31M and other informants describe Israel as a strongly hierarchic society, what they are doing by sharing their insider perspectives with an out-group in a privileged position – a researcher, in this case – is pointing the researcher's attention to what they perceive as the most explosive problems of the Russian-speaking population of Israel. In the interview setting, interviewees sometimes perceive the researcher as a vicarious figure through which their issues, preoccupations and interests are communicated to the world outside of their communities, specifically to the academic and institutional world. Thus, when talking to the researcher, many of the immigrants present themselves as ambassadors of their own community; as Striedl (2022) points out, this is a fairly common phenomenon in qualitative research in the social sciences. The next excerpt shows how VIL31M sees the lack of reciprocal support as a specific characteristic of *Russians*, a designation by which he – and many other interviewees both in Israel and Germany – refer to people who have been socialized in countries of the FSU:

> VIL31M: Русские совершенно по другому принципу существуют, их тянет к друг другу в основном, но терпеть они друг друга не могут [...] Это очень легко объясняется тем, что люди — кого ты ни спросишь здесь, и меня и * [name hidden for privacy reasons], если ты спросишь любого другого русскоязычного жителя Израиля, кто живет здесь уже какое-то время,

> он тебе скажет, что первый человек, который его обманул или подставил или кинул его на деньги — это русскоязычный. Такое очень тяжело себе представить, чтобы это сказал там араб про араба, или чтобы это сказал итальянец про итальянца [...]. В Израиле это особенно бросается в глаза.

> VIL31M: Russians are just different, they are drawn to each other, but at the same time they can't stand each other. It's easy to explain this by just mentioning that, whoever you'll ask here, be it me or * [name hidden for privacy reasons], if you ask any other Russian-speaking citizen of Israel who has been living here for some time, they'll tell you that the first person to deceive them, to frame them or cheat them out of their money was another Russian-speaking person. It is difficult to imagine the same behavior among, say, Arabs or Italians [...] In Israel, this is quite evident.

What VIL31M describes in the above excerpt, namely a lack of inter-generational solidarity and cohesive behavior among the Russian-speaking olim communities of Israel, is by no means a sole prerogative of post-Soviet societies. It is a phenomenon which, under circumstances of social inequality, can be observed across world countries and which was described by Magni (2021) as *selective solidarity*. In Magni's words,

> when economic inequality is high, citizens lose faith in the existence of opportunities to climb the social ladder [...] By inducing the belief that citizens lack opportunities to improve their condition through personal effort, I expect inequality to make individuals more discriminating regarding who should receive help. Inequality therefore strengthens the already popular opinion that native citizens should be prioritized to receive welfare over immigrants. (Magni 2021:1360–1362)

Since most of the participants in both the qualitative and the quantitative survey are not natives citizens of either Israel or Germany, paraphrasing Magni's statement one could state that, in conditions of socioeconomic inequality, immigrants who arrived in the receiving society at an earlier date see themselves as entitled to more privileges than immigrants who arrive after them. Further observations on aspects concerning social mobility are illustrated in Section 6.1.

This chapter has provided an in-depth analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected to understand the role of language attitudes among immigrant communities and what language attitudes reveal about the immigrants' self-positioning and external perceptions in society. The outcomes of this highly dense analysis are summarized and critically discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Concluding discussion

In this chapter I provide an overview of the results of this study, the novelties it brings forth, its limitations and the impulses it offers for future research.

The central finding of this study is that the study of language attitudes allows a *grounded* analysis of the way in which those who express the language attitudes situate themselves and others in society. The attribute "grounded" is a reference to Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]), a methodology described in Section 4.3 by which the development of theory of sociological relevance is grounded in the empirical reality of data. This finding was obtained through empirical analysis of data about the Russian-speaking immigrant communities of Israel and Germany and has far-reaching theoretical and methodological implications.

Theoretical implications concern first and foremost the concept of language attitude which, as I illustrate in Section 4.2.1, is often treated in sociolinguistics as a predictor of language behavior. From the data analysis presented in Chapter 6 emerges the insight that regarding attitudes as predictors of behavior is not only incorrect – in fact, attitudes are subject to frequent changes depending on the social context – but also not purposeful in that it hampers the depth of analysis (see Section 4.2.1). Moreover, data analysis shows that attitudes towards language are less about language – typically understood in traditional sociolinguistics as a structured system with phonological, morphosyntactic, lexical and further characteristics – than they are about people associated with a language (see Section 6.2.6.2).

From the participants' attitudes emerges the view of language as a symbolic complex employed not just for verbal interaction purposes but most significantly for drawing

in-group vs. out-group boundaries. The latter symbolic function of language is especially visible in the context of migration, where social groups with different cultural values (see Schwartz 2006) come into close contact with each other. In fact, multilingualism is involved whenever migration takes place, and talking about language is generally a vicarious way of talking about its speakers, carrying out what I term "performing language attitudes" in Section 2.7.1. It follows that language attitudes should not be regarded as predictors of language behavior; instead, they provide information about the dynamics of social identity, whose significance – next to other sociological aspects – should be taken into greater consideration in sociolinguistic studies, as argued in Chapter 4.
Methodological implications of the above finding are tightly interconnected with theoretical implications, just as theory and methods are regarded as two sides of the same coin. Following a Grounded Theory approach, the choice of methods to be employed for the study of language attitudes is highly dependent on the quality of the phenomenon studied. Therefore, since attitudes about language bring to the surface the articulate dynamics of how people situate themselves and others in society, studying them requires an approach characterized by flexibility and openness (Glaser & Strauss 2006 [1967]). Since language attitudes are a complex phenomenon of sociolinguistic and social-psychological relevance, a combination of qualitative and quantitative enables to explore its complexities as thoroughly as possible.
This study departs from the following two central research questions presented in Chapter 1:

Q1 What do Russian-speaking young adult immigrants to Israel and Germany think about their biographically relevant languages (Russian, Hebrew, German, etc.)?

Q2 What do their language attitudes reveal about their process of integration in the receiving society and their social identity?

As regards Q1 about the language attitudes of Russian-speaking immigrants in Israel and Germany, this study identifies several noteworthy patterns discussed especially in Section 6.3.3. Quantitative data presented in Tables 6.37 and 6.38 show that attitudes towards Russian are generally positive across both participant populations; however, Israel-based participants tend to have a more moderate stance towards Russian, which is associated by several participants with negative feelings towards Russia's politics (see Section 6.3.3). The latter aspect points at the importance of

the figure of the “disillusioned emigrant” (Fomina 2021) in post-Soviet migration to Israel. In fact, the ideological component plays a dramatic role among immigrants to Israel, many of whom left their countries of origin due to perceived unsafety, mistrust in politics and dissatisfaction with growingly authoritarian governments in several so-called post-Soviet countries (see Chapter 3 and Section 6.4). The importance (and the weight) of ideological aspects in immigration from the FSU to Israel is also visible in the immigrants’ attitudes towards Hebrew, which is described by several participants as the language of ancestors and the language of the Jewish people par excellence, thus manifesting the participants’ emotional attachment towards it. On the other hand, the “weight” of ideology resides in the fact that, since immigrants from the FSU to Israel are exposed to a high societal pressure questioning their rightful belonging in Israeli society, declared positive attitudes towards Hebrew and Israel are not necessarily an expression of their successful integration in Israel but rather part of a mechanism for coping with these pressures. In fact, while ideology is often considered a strong motivator of language learning and maintenance, in Section 6.3 I illustrate that ideological motifs such as the Zionist cause or the reappropriation of Jewishness (see Section 6.2.6.2) do not result in a stronger motivation to learn and use Hebrew. Moreover, negative attitudes towards Russian are not only related to the motifs of the “disillusioned emigrant” (Fomina 2021) but also arguably a manifestation of the coping mechanism against ideological pressure requiring them to desovietize themselves in order to be accepted in Israeli society.

The ideological pressure to which FSU immigrants to Israel are exposed is exemplified by the following statement by Israel’s sephardic Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Yossef to which the participants were asked to react in question *b of the online survey: “immigrants from the former USSR are goyim and communists.” The participants’ reactions of outrage are part of their “reappropriation of Jewishness” (see Section 6.2.6.2). Self-identification within the category “Israeli/Jew” and “Mixed” can be interpreted as a double act of rebellion. On the one hand, it is an act of rebellion against identity constraints imposed on minorities under Soviet policy, by which ethnonational identity was ascribed to people in the “fifth paragraph” of the Soviet passport, thus delegitimizing their own self-determination. On the other hand, it is an act of rebellion issues of structural discrimination which immigrants – not only from the FSU – encounter in Israel: a high percentage of olim from the FSU is regarded as non-Jewish according to Halakha, resulting in their exclusion from several essential practices of

life in Israel, including e.g. marriage. Instead, the study participants create their own categories of belonging, in which it is possible to be Russian-speaking and Jewish or Israeli at the same time. By sharing their self-identifications in a survey, the participants advocate for the recognition of “multiple identities” (Al-Haj 2019) as one facet of Israeliness.

Language is invested with a highly significant role especially in view of the sensitiveness of categories such as religion and ethnonational belonging. In fact, while the latter categories are instrumentalized both in Soviet policy and in the immigration policies of the receiving countries, immigrants use language as an identity-defining element to distinguish and position themselves favorably in the new environment, as shown in Section 6.2.6.3.

Attitudes towards Russian are revealing of complex identity dynamics; while most of them are positive across both respondent groups, instances of negative attitudes towards Russian – defined by some in terms of “language of propaganda, hatred and war” (see Section 6.3.3) – point at the fact that conflicts between countries of the former Soviet Union are carried along in immigration, becoming part of the immigrants’ baggage in the new environment.

That language attitudes should not be considered a predictor of or correlating to language behavior is evident in the fact that, while most Israel-based participants have a high level of emotional attachment towards Hebrew, their language use in Israel is mainly monolingual in Russian. This is also due to the characteristics of the state-subsidized ulpan system, in which olim are grouped based on their first language and often taught Hebrew in their first language, which evidently hinders socialization in Hebrew in and outside of the classroom. Immigrants’ low degree of usage of Hebrew in daily life (see Section 6.3.1) is also conditioned by segregation, an explosive issue in Israeli society. As is shown in Section 6.1.3, FSU immigrants are often concentrated in the same residential areas; many of them reside in cities of Israel’s periphery, where chances of social mobility are especially low. While residential segregation is also present in Germany, its extent is not comparable to that of segregation in Israel, which plays a dramatic role in integration issues.

While attitudes towards German are largely neutral (see Section 6.3.3) and self-identification in terms of “German” is extremely rare among Germany-based participants (see Table 6.20), the latter self-assess their knowledge of German more positively than Israel-based participants’ self-assessment of Hebrew knowledge; moreover,

usage of Russian in several contexts of interaction is comparatively limited among Germany-based participants (compare e.g. Table 6.30 with Table 6.29). This reinforces the insight that the frequently assumed correlation between language attitude and language use is incorrect. At the same time, participants' relatively broad usage of German e.g. in the professional sphere does not necessarily point at a smoother integration for FSU immigrants to Germany, but is a result of the "monolingual habitus" (Adler & Beyer 2018:229) of Germany's language ideology.

Summarizing, question Q1 on the language attitudes of immigrants from the FSU to Israel and Germany can be answered as follows: attitudes towards Russian are generally positive, with some exceptions motivated by ideology. Attitudes towards Hebrew are mostly concentrated around positive values (4 and 5), while attitudes towards German range around neutral values (3 and 4). In spite of evident typological differences between Hebrew and German, negative associations with these languages are expressed with similar attributes (see Section 6.3.3), which once again points at the fact that "[s]tatements about language are never only about language – and they are never only statements" (Gal & Irvine 2019:1). Thus, descriptions of German and Hebrew as "poor," "rude" or "strange" languages are less related to characteristics of the languages than they are to conceptualizations of their speakers on sociocultural grounds.

The above considerations show how interrelated language attitudes and social identity are, as answers to question Q1 also partially answer Q2 "What do the immigrants' language attitudes reveal about their process of integration in the receiving society and their social identity?." Among Germany-based participants, a lack of emotional attachment towards German, analyzed jointly with the low degree of self-identification as "German," highlights the difficulties which immigrants encounter in a country which, in the case of Spätaussiedler, is described in immigration policy as their historical home country. In Section 6.4 I illustrate that FSU immigrants to Germany describe Germans as self-centered and indifferent; besides evoking stereotypes, such characterizations reflect a perceived disinterest of German society for its Russian-speaking population, which is also addressed by Germany-based interview participants and can be detected in policy-makers' description of Spätaussiedler integration as "smooth and silent adaptation" (BAMF 2019b:6). While, as shown by Panagiotidis (2021), post-Soviet migration to Germany is indeed more privileged and less problematic than migration from other contexts, cases such as that of intervie-

wee BDE34F (see Section 6.1.2) show that much still needs to be done to achieve immigration policies with a stronger focus on the immigrants' self-identification and needs, which can be expected to result in a higher perceived life quality across diverse groups in society. The immigrants' difficulties at identifying with the "cultural values" (Schwartz 2006) of German societies are understandable especially against the poor performance of Germany in terms of social support network and civic engagement (OECD 2022).

On the other hand, the language attitudes of Israel-based participants point not only at the issues addressed above (i.e. segregation and ideological tensions) but also at the immigrants' high degree of embeddedness in the social context, visible in the example of interviewee SIL39F (see Section 6.1.4) and in the descriptions of Hebrew presented in Section 6.3.3. In fact, Israel performs exceptionally well in such criteria as "social connections and life satisfaction" (OECD 2022). While these findings might appear to conflict with the issue of residential segregation in Israel, it hints at the complexity of post-Soviet migration, which presents at least as many facets as the identities subsumed in it. The significance of Jewish/Israeli identity for post-Soviet migration is tightly interconnected with the strong ideology of Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, resulting in the conceptualization of Israel as "home" (see Section 6.4); conversely, conceptualizations of Germany as "home" are far less frequent among German-based respondents.

Section 6.4 highlights one of the salient traits of post-Soviet migration: ambiguity, a trait closely related to the in-betweenness which, according to Oushakine (2000), characterizes *the* post-Soviet in general. Respondents from both Israel and Germany describe Russia and other FSU countries as evoking childhood memories and a feeling of home and wholeheartedness (compare Figure 6.18 with Figure 6.19). At the same time, images of "home" are marred by sociopolitical issues such as poverty, corruption and unlawfulness. Negative associations are more strongly present among Israel-based respondents, to whom political disillusionment is a major push-factor for emigration; the example of SIL39F is highly illustrative of this disillusionment, as she reports feeling that her life is worth more since she emigrated to Israel: "it's as if every single person were worth more here" (see page 162). At the same time, however, Israel-based participants are generally not satisfied with political life in Israel and regard corruption, chaos and the growing role of religion as problematic. Many immigrants share a condition in which Russia and other FSU countries are no longer

home, but at the same time Israel cannot be called home, either, among other things because of the low degree of interest and acceptance for Russian-speaking olim in Israeli society. This condition is illustrated in a statement by interviewee ZIL32F on page 135: "I can't find my place. It doesn't matter how long I live here and what I do, I'll always remain the Russian."

Among immigrants to Germany, the condition of in-betweenness takes on the form of nostalgia; Russia and other FSU countries are partially idealized and attributed those qualities which immigrants perceive as missing in Germany, such as warmth in relationships, openness and hospitality. These characteristics point at difficulties in establishing contacts with German-speaking society, which are addressed above and discussed in Section 6.1. Moreover, the topic of refugees is perceived as a threat by FSU immigrants to Germany. A right-wing political trend can be identified among them which is especially visible in the voting patterns of so-called "Russlanddeutsche": based on to Panagiotidis's analysis, there exists "a statistically significant correlation between post-Soviet migrants and percentage of votes for AfD[1]"[2] (Panagiotidis 2021:177).

In view of the above considerations, studying the topic of social identity is essential in post-Soviet migration in that, with the fall of the Soviet Union, the social and cultural rootedness of millions of people fell apart, too; this study shows that, in many cases, emigration represents a possibility for people to search and find a new value system for orientation in society. And while Russian, in spite of many conflicts, to a significant extent still retains the role of lingua franca of the countries of the FSU (Pavlenko 2008b), it also is one of the few remaining elements of Soviet heritage; thus, *talking about Russian*, i.e. "performing language attitudes" through it (see Section 2.7.1) is a crucial element in the quest for an identity. Although it is not the central topic of this study, the language spoken in the post-Soviet diaspora (see Section 6.3.2) also bears the signs of this quest for identity; especially among immigrants to Israel, code-mixing between Russian and Hebrew is so strongly present as to allow for the identification of an "Israeli Russian" variety whose name clearly resembles the mixed self-identifications ("multiple identities" according to Al-Haj 2019) of immigrants.

[1]AfD stands for "Alternative für Deutschland," i.e. "Alternative for Germany," an extreme right wing political party in Germany.

[2]My translation. Original German text: "ein statistisch signifikanter Zusammenhang zwischen postsowjetischen Migranten und hohen AfD-Stimmenanteilen."

This study illustrates that the language attitudes of Russian-speaking immigrants in Israel and Germany are full of seeming contradictions, just as their attitudes towards their first culture and the culture of the receiving society; these contradictions are only seeming in that they fully reflect the ambivalence intrinsic to the post-Soviet. Just like many other notions containing the prefix ”post-”, “post-Soviet” is highly problematic: it subsumes a world “before” which is lost and a world “after” which is yet to be invented. Or is it not? Is the post-Soviet over, as argued by Eggart (2022), or is it still ongoing, preceding an epoch ruled by new values? What determines the end of an era and the beginning of another? Does Russia’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine mark a turning point putting an end to the post-Soviet? These questions have an exceptionally high topicality and need to be addressed in future research.

While this study departs from questions of sociolinguistic interest, society is its target dimension (as illustrated in Section 4.1). The study of language attitudes has far-reaching impact beyond sociolinguistics, which regards them as correlates of language competence, thus ignoring the dimension of identity to which language attitudes are tightly connected. This study represents a first step towards unraveling the potential of language attitudes for research in sociolinguistics, social psychology and sociology; its interdisciplinary perspective points at the importance of defining the methods based on the quality of the data, rather than forcing the data into confirming ready-made hypotheses. It suggests that, since attitudes are subject to change, understanding them can be helpful for the study of linguistic, social and cultural change. Especially in the context of migration, which is characterized by multilingualism and multiculturalism, studying immigrants’ attitudes towards languages as well as towards the receiving society can provide a basis to envision migration policies more respectful of the immigrants’ identity, allowing them to feel at home in the receiving society.

As this study is highly experimental and original in its approach, further research is necessary to reach a full-fledged understanding of e.g. how language attitudes can be included in the development of immigration policies, to cite only one of the several possible fields of application of the insights provided by this study. Moreover, as this study focuses on the post-Soviet context, further research is necessary to verify whether and to which extent what is here described as “the distinguishing features of post-Soviet migration” are also to be found in other migration phenomena, leading to a thorough discussion on the validity of the term “post-Soviet” which is long overdue

in scholarship.

This study relies on a broad data corpus whose potential cannot be exhausted in one study; the author plans to make the data corpus available for use in future studies in different fields. One of the possible applications of the data corpus could be e.g. directed towards discovering whether a variety of Russian in the diaspora – such as so-called “Israeli Russian” hypothesized by Perelmutter (2018) exists and, if yes, whether its characteristics are comparable to those of such varieties as Surzhyk. Another highly significant question which, however, could not be tackled in this study is the relationship between language attitudes and language ideologies as well as their influence on language policies in the countries of the former Soviet Union. The latter question is especially significant in view of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and how the war is being processed by Russian-speaking migrants in several countries, including but not limited to Israel and Germany. Fieldwork knowledge gained both before and after the beginning of Russia’s war against Ukraine on February 24th, 2022 points at processes of renegotiation of private language policies, i.e. of the way in which individuals decide against employing Russian in public in order to convey a clear political message to the surrounding society. These dynamics once again highlight the identity-defining function of language as a symbol of group borders; it is highly necessary to carry out research on the sociolinguistic consequences of the war, including comparative perspectives on before vs. after it. Moreover, it is also necessary to conduct further comparative studies on migrants form the FSU speaking languages other than Russian as their first language, since Russian has been occupying a central position to the detriment of other languages which are essential for communication among communities of migrants from the FSU. Furthermore, an impulse for future research provided in this study relies in implementations of work on virtual fieldwork (see Section 5.3.3), which has been gaining increasing relevance since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, pointing researchers’ attention at the importance of flexibility.

Lastly, in view of the plethora of societal transformations and conflicts raging in the so-called post-Soviet space, this study calls for further engagements with these conflicts and how they surface in people’s language attitudes, while at the same time advocating a view of researchers as agents carrying a social responsibility towards the field they study and the people inhabiting it.

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