

PIRKO TÕUGU

“Where did we go last weekend?”

Socialization of children through past-event
reminiscing in various cultural contexts



Department of Psychology, University of Tartu, Estonia

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Supervisors: Tiia Tulviste, *PhD*, Professor
University of Tartu, Estonia

Opponent: Birgit Leyendecker, Professor,
Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Germany

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LIST OF ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

The dissertation is based on the following original publications and manuscripts submitted for publication. In the text, the respective publication is referred to by its Roman number.

- I Tõugu, P., Tulviste, T., Schröder, L., Keller, H., De Geer, B. (2011). Socialization of past event talk: Cultural differences in maternal elaborative reminiscing. *Cognitive Development*, 26, 142–154.
- II Schröder, L., Keller, H., Tõugu, P., Tulviste, T., Lenk, M., Schwarzer, S., Rübeling, H., De Geer, B. (2011). Culture specific expressions of preschoolers emerging self: Narrative and iconic representations. *Journal of Cognitive Education and Psychology*, 10(1), 77–95.
- III Tõugu, P., Tulviste, T., Schröder, L., Keller, H., De Geer, B. (2012). Content of maternal open-ended questions and statements in reminiscing with their 4-year-olds: Links with independence and interdependence in European contexts. *Memory*, 20(5), 499–511.
- IV Tulviste, T., Tõugu, P., Schröder, L., Keller, H., De Geer, B. (submitted). Children's and mother's contribution to joint reminiscing in different sociocultural contexts: who speaks and what is said.
- V Tõugu, P., Tulviste, T., Kasearu, K., Talves, K. (submitted). Intergenerational transmission of the independent and interdependent dimension of self in three countries.

In Studies I and III the author of the dissertation participated in the collection of data, was responsible for encoding the Estonian data, and was mainly responsible for data analysis and the writing of the article. In Studies II and IV, the author of the dissertation participated in data collection, was responsible for the encoding of Estonian data, was involved in the discussion of the meanings of the results during the preparation of the article and participated in the write-up as the third and the second author, respectively. In Study V, the author was responsible for the proposition of research question and the write-up of the article as the first author.

INTRODUCTION

Everyone of us has a story to tell. The story is based on autobiographical memories that are recollected. The recollection and sharing of one's past is a process partially guided by the cultural context and as such, it is also socialized in childhood. The present dissertation focuses on mother-child reminiscing talk as an arena for the socialization of self in different cultural contexts.

Autobiographical memory and self

Autobiographical memory is episodic memory that is auto-noetic and forms a part of declarative memory (Tulving, 2002). Autobiographical memory is significant for the self-system as it provides self-definition and continuity of self across time (Conway, 2005; Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000; Nelson, 1993, 2003). Autobiographical memories constitute the basis of self-making narratives or one's life story that is created and presented in accordance with one's social and cultural context and the narrative practices of the context (Bruner, 2003; Demuth, Chaudhary, & Keller, 2011; McAdams, 2003). The narratives that are told about oneself are (part of) one's self and identity that are dynamically reconstructed in interaction based on the demands of the context and according to local interactive practices (Bamberg, 2009, 2010).

Recent theories suggest that autobiographical memory develops during the preschool years and is influenced by other cognitive attainments of the period (i.e. developing language skills, understanding of self and time etc.), as well as by social interaction (Fivush & Nelson, 2006; Harley & Reese, 1999; Nelson & Fivush, 2004; Reese, 2002). Nelson (1993) points out the narrative construction of memory and claims that during the preschool years parents and other adults play an active role in helping children to organize their experience and construct representations of past experience as narratives. The characteristics of such interactions vary in different cultural contexts, and, therefore, autobiographical memory is dependent on the value attached to such stories of oneself in the particular context and the socialization of reminiscing (Nelson, 2003).

Socialization of children

The socialization of children, both explicit and implicit, takes place in everyday interaction and is guided by the values and beliefs held in the particular context (Keller, 2007; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984; Pomerleau, Malcuit, & Sabatier, 1991; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Child development takes place in a developmental niche that includes the physical and social context of the child, the culturally regulated child care customs, and the ideas, beliefs, and attitudes of the caretakers (Harkness & Super, 2006). The role of language in cultural value transmission and internalization has often been stressed following the ideas of

Vygotsky. Vygotsky (1978) argued that language and interaction with the child provide children with culturally appropriate tools to guide their own thinking about the world and that children acquire the necessary abilities in interactions with more competent members of the society. Language and its use in interaction provides children with the means to construct meaning (Budwig, Użgiris, & Werstsch, 2000) and can have a profound effect on children's development of social understanding (Shatz, 1991).

Different language environments have been shown to display different conversational patterns and topics, and, thus, they provide children with different notions of self, agency, and others (e.g. Budwig, 2000; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). Budwig (2000) found that German mothers provide a more generic and joint focus to the ongoing activity while Euro-American mothers seem to be more child-centered and more frequently index the child as an independent agent. She also showed that cultural variation in children's self references stems from the conversational focus of their mothers (Budwig, 2000). Similarly, Japanese mothers point to shared experience during free play with their children more than European-American mothers while the latter make more references to individual experience (Dennis, Cole, Zahn-Waxler, & Mizuta, 2002).

Studies of child socialization have pointed out the importance of narratives, often in the form of personal every-day experience. Such stories have been highlighted for the de-contextualized language use that provides children with many opportunities for learning the cultural patterns of talking and development of language (e.g. Aukrust, 2002; Georgakopoulou, 2002; Snow & Beals, 2006). Experience with language use that is not limited to the here and now aspects of the situation have been identified as important for children's school performance (Girolametto, Weitzman, & Greenberg, 2012; Heath, 1982; Tulviste, 1993). Therefore, the importance of narrative development in preschool children has been stressed (e.g. Nicolopoulou, 2002; Peterson & McCabe, 1994). Miller and Moore (1989) pointed out the socialization aspects of personal stories for the narrator, who may re-evaluate the experience over time, and for the listening child, who is presented a model of what is tellable and how experience is recounted and who may derive an understanding relevant for their self-construal from the stories. The stories told in the child's presence, to the child, or with the child also offer culture-specific ideas about one's self and self-other relations (Miller, Fung, & Mintz, 1996).

Independence and interdependence as explanatory principles

In order to organize the observed cultural differences in the socialization of children, and the socialization of self, an overarching explanatory principle has been suggested in the form of orientation of the self. Markus and Kitayama (1991) were the first to observe systematic cultural differences in cognition, emotion, and motivation and proposed differentiation between independence-

oriented and interdependence-oriented self-construal as an explanatory framework. Since their original work, independence-orientation in self-construal has been understood to imply that individuals seek to develop and maintain independence of others by stressing their individuality and unique inner attributes. At the same time, interdependence carries the notion of defining oneself in terms of relationships to others, where harmony with the group rather than individualistic attributes is the ideal. Kağıtçıbaşı (1996, 2007) suggested the idea that socialization is aimed towards an autonomy-oriented and relatedness-oriented self. These concepts carry a similar meaning and are sometimes used interchangeably with independence and interdependence-orientation. Kağıtçıbaşı (1996, 2007) also suggested that in addition to the two particular types, a synthesis of the two is possible – an autonomy-relatedness orientation of self that meets new demands on a person in quickly changing societies due to social and economic change and urbanization.

Now, independence and interdependence or autonomy and relatedness are mainly treated as fundamental dimensions of one's self-construal in all socio-cultural contexts, but the relative emphasis on either of these dimensions varies (Greenfield, Keller, Fuligni, & Maynard, 2003; Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007). Independence or autonomy-orientation has been considered to prevail in child socialization in the Western urbanized contexts, where formal education is highly valued. Interdependence- or relatedness-orientation predominates in the self-construal of individuals in rural and Eastern settings or the Majority World, as Kağıtçıbaşı (2007) defines it. The synthesis of the two orientations could be found in recently urbanized centers of the Majority World with a tradition of an orientation towards interdependence (Kağıtçıbaşı, 1996, 2007). Recent theories have also proposed a new conceptualization of autonomy in terms of psychological autonomy and action autonomy (Keller & Otto, 2011). The authors argue that not only is the orientation of self different, but also the autonomy or independence fostered in children varies in cultural contexts. According to the authors, psychological autonomy reflected in the ability to voice one's opinions and preferences at an early age is considered important in Western urban contexts. In Non-Western rural contexts the child's ability of competent action and the ability to cooperate with other people from an early age or action autonomy is highly valued.

The explanatory concepts of independence and interdependence or autonomy and relatedness have been widely used in the past decades. At the same time, some criticism has been voiced. Studies have stressed lack of uniformity in parental beliefs in the Western world (Harkness & Super, 2006; Raeff, 2000), which shows that there is not only one 'Western mind' modeled according to the Euro-American individualistic ideas (Harkness, Super, & van Tijen, 2000). The stereotyping use of cultural templates, such as individualism and collectivism and independence and interdependence, has been criticized by Killen (1997) and Killen & Wainryb (2000). Matsumoto (1999) voiced concern about the conceptualization of independence and interdependence and Cohen (2009) drew attention to possible intra-cultural variance due to religion, region, and socioeconomic differences.

Socialization of reminiscing

Autobiographical remembering is a cultural practice (Wang & Brockmeier, 2002). The differences in the orientation of self towards independence and interdependence have been proposed as the explanatory principle for differences in the adult autobiographical memory (Conway, Wang, Hanyu, & Haque, 2005; Williams, Conway, & Cohen, 2008) and autobiographical memory socialization in children (Fivush, Haden, & Reese, 2006). Research has shown differences in autobiographical memory in adults in terms of content – the memory narratives of Euro-American children and adults have been found to concentrate more on the individual as compared to Chinese and Korean accounts that have a more social orientation (Conway et al., 2005; Han, Leichtman, & Wang, 1998).

In a similar vein, differences have been found in the socialization of autobiographical memory or *reminiscing talk*. First of all, reminiscing of past events is more common in the Euro-American than in the Asian context (Mullen & Yi, 1995) while similar frequencies of past-event talk have been reported for American and Polish mothers (Zevenbergen, Haman, & Olszańska, 2011). Furthermore, systematic differences in past-event talk with children in terms of structure and content have been established. Generally, the difference on the content level lies in the fact that different aspects of the self and other relation are stressed. The topics of the conversation are different as well as the amount of references to child's self and others (e.g. Wang & Fivush, 2005). For example, Chinese mothers focus on the social rather than the personal theme when talking to their three-year-olds about negative events while European-American mothers tend to stress the personal theme on such occasions (Wang & Fivush, 2005). In addition, while European-American mothers focus on the child's personal opinions stressing the individual experience, Chinese mothers are concerned with social rules in their past-event conversations (Wang, Leichtman, & Davies, 2000). Studies of structural differences have focused mainly on the elaborations in maternal speech. First, Fivush and Fromhoff (1988) classified mothers as elaborative or repetitive according to the number of elaborations (comments adding information in the form of statements or questions) and repetitions they use in reminiscing with their children. In later studies, the high elaborative style has been associated with more memory information provided by the child at the same time point and also better autobiographical memory at a later time point (Farrant & Reese, 2000; Fivush et al., 2006; Fivush & Nelson, 2006; Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1993). Cross-cultural comparisons generally seem to support the idea that mothers from independence-oriented cultural contexts tend to be more elaborative than mothers of other contexts. European-American mothers of 3-year-olds adopt a more elaborative style and use more evaluations than Chinese mothers who, instead, adopt a low-elaborative style (Wang, 2007; Wang et al., 2000) and use more repetitions when talking to their children (Wang & Fivush, 2005). Few studies have contrasted contexts other than Euro-American and Chinese. Schröder et al. (in press) has shown that Cameroonian mothers use a repetitive

style while mothers of children coming from contexts where the autonomy-relatedness oriented self or both independence/interdependence orientation in the self-construal are valued (e.g. urban India, urban Greece, and Costa Rica) display more hybrid styles in reminiscing interactions with their children. While concepts of independence and interdependence orientation in one's self-construal have been used as a general explanatory framework of differences in reminiscing socialization (Fivush et al., 2006), only Wang (2007) has related mothers' independent-oriented self-construal directly to their elaborative reminiscing style at the individual level.

AIMS OF THE DISSERTATION

The present dissertation aims at clarifying aspects of the understanding of self in relationships with others as reflected in the content of reminiscing conversations and by contrasting diverse cultural contexts to distinguish some cultural idiosyncrasies and universals in maternal style differences in past event talk. The presented studies cover a variety of cultural contexts that have not been studied earlier.

European contexts of Tallinn (Estonia), Berlin (Germany), and Stockholm (Sweden) are investigated through **Studies I–IV**. In addition, rural Nso (Cameroon) mothers and children participate in **Studies II** and **IV**. **Study V** concentrates on the self-construal of participants from Estonia, Germany, and Russia. Germany (Berlin) and Sweden (Stockholm) can be considered independent-oriented contexts as German and Swedish middle-class mothers have been shown to prioritize autonomy in child-rearing (Schröder et al., in press, Tulviste, Mizera, De Geer, & Tryggvason, 2007). Estonia and Russia were part of the Soviet Union and have undergone a period of instability and rapid societal change after being re-established as independent states. Theoretically, both of these countries could be considered autonomy-relatedness oriented (Kağitçibaşı, 2007). In addition, it has been found that Estonian mothers value autonomy in their children as highly as, for example, Swedes and Finns, but they have also retained many traditional child-rearing goals (Tulviste et al., 2007). Rural Nso in Cameroon is a rather traditional community of farmers, where interdependence or relatedness is prioritized (Schröder et al., in press).

Inclusion of European and African contexts provides an opportunity to study the understanding of self and other people in the socialization of reminiscing as dependant on the independence/interdependence orientation. A claim is made that when very different cultural contexts in terms of independence/interdependence orientation are contrasted (e.g. European capitals and rural Africa), the differences in socialization reflect the variation in the independence/interdependence orientation. At the same time, participants from rather similar contexts (mothers and children from European capitals) display cultural variation in the construal of self and the socialization of self, some of which is attributable to differences in conversational style or socio-economic history.

The differences in the European contexts of Tallinn (Estonia), Berlin (Germany), and Stockholm (Sweden) in frequency, structure, functions of structural elements, and content are addressed (**Studies I** and **III**). The same European contexts are also studied together with the African context of Nso, Cameroon for content and structure differences (**Studies II** and **IV**). **Study II** investigates the self and other relations as they are socialized in reminiscing and how they relate to children's developing understanding of self expressed by other means, such as drawings. **Study IV** addresses children's contribution to reminiscing and discusses the socialization of different types of autonomy (psychological and action) in past event talk with children in European and African contexts. **Study III** concentrates on the individual level connections between mothers'

independence/interdependence orientation and the reminiscing talk with their children in terms of the content addressed. The same study also concentrated on the interplay of structural and content elements of reminiscing. **Study V** addresses cultural variance in the self construal and the intergenerational transmission of values related to one's self-construal.

METHOD

Studies I and III utilized the same dataset of 38 mother-child dyads from Tallinn (Estonia), 36 from Berlin (Germany), and 42 from Stockholm (Sweden). Mothers were visited at home within four weeks of their child's fourth birthday. They were asked to reminisce with their children about two recent one-point-in-time events (e.g. visits to the zoo, amusement park, friends, parties etc). They were only provided with highly general information about the aims of the study and asked to interact with their children as they normally would. The child was not instructed in any way and no time limit was set to the interaction. The mother was given a tape recorder to record the interaction. In addition, mothers provided data concerning the socioeconomic status of the family and the social world of the child and completed a questionnaire concerning their orientation of self. Children were asked to copy and draw a triangle, a square, and a circle in order to assess their drawing abilities, and after that they were asked to draw their family and themselves on two separate sheets of paper.

In addition to the mother-child dyads from European contexts, **Studies II and IV** included an additional data-set of 33 mother-child dyads from Nso, Cameroon. The measures and the procedure used were similar to those described above.

In **Study V** a different data-set was used. This included 837 families, 293 of which were represented by three generations (grandmothers, mothers, and adolescents). The families were from three countries: Russia ($N = 227$), Germany ($N = 311$), and Estonia ($N = 299$). The data-set used is part of a Value of Children and Intergenerational Relations (VOC-IR) study conducted in those countries in 2002–2009. During the study all participants completed a wide range of questionnaires and provided much background information on the family history. Here, questionnaires addressing participants' self-construal (Independence/Interdependence) are of interest.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study I

Study I dealt with cultural differences in the frequency of reminiscing, the maternal reminiscing style, and its effects on children's memory contribution in European contexts with the aim to identify the possible universality of maternal style elements that predict children's memory contribution. The questionnaire data indicated that mothers of all three contexts – Berlin (Germany), Stockholm (Sweden), and Tallinn (Estonia) – value autonomy or independence over relatedness or interdependence. At the same time the importance ascribed to the value orientations differed – the autonomy to the relatedness ratio reported by mothers was significantly higher in Stockholm than in Berlin and in Tallinn, and also significantly higher in Berlin than in Tallinn. The European contexts revealed some differences in the frequency of reminiscing talk with children, as well as in the structural elements used by the mothers. Mothers from Tallinn reported less frequent reminiscing talk with children than mothers from Berlin. They also provided fewer memory elaborations than mothers from Stockholm and Berlin. Most importantly, Tallinn mothers used fewer statement elaborations than Stockholm and Berlin mothers and fewer verbal confirmations than Stockholm mothers. Mothers from all three contexts asked a similar amount of open-ended questions, and children of all three contexts provided a similar amount of memory information during past-event reminiscing. Yet, as the results of regression analysis showed, open-ended questions predict children's participation only in Tallinn. Maternal elaborative statements and verbal evaluations predict children's memory contribution in Berlin and maternal verbal evaluations in Stockholm. These results indicate that there are cultural differences in the maternal conversational style and that four-year-olds could already be sensitive to cultural patterns of talking and conversation-related norms.

Study II

Study II focused on the socialization of self in mother-child past event talk and children's representation of themselves in drawings in Berlin (Germany), Stockholm (Sweden), Tallinn (Estonia), and Nso (Cameroon). The aim of the study was to investigate whether the cultural differences in the two means of expressing one's ideas about the self would reflect the differences in the overall independence/interdependence orientation of the context. The results show that mothers from the European contexts have a significantly higher elaboration to the repetition ratio (open-ended questions addressed to the child divided by repetitive utterances by the mother) than mothers from rural Nso. European children contribute more to the reminiscing interaction than Nso children. Mothers and children referred to the child and self, respectively, more than to

others in European contexts, and these ratios were the highest in Stockholm. Nso mothers referred to the child more than others while Nso children mentioned others more than themselves. These child-other and self-other ratios were significantly lower than those in European contexts. Children's iconic representations of themselves differed in head height and body space. Children from Stockholm and Berlin depicted their heads significantly larger than children from Tallinn and Nso. Children from Berlin depicted themselves significantly bigger than children from Tallinn and Nso, children from Tallinn depicted themselves bigger than children from Nso. Stockholm children were similar to Berlin and Tallinn children. The Stockholm sample revealed a positive correlation between the thematic focus (child-other and self-other ratios) of reminiscing and the size of children's drawings. In the Berlin sample the drawing size was positively correlated to maternal elaboration to the repetition ratio and the number of children's elaborations. These results lend themselves to be interpreted in regards to the differences in independence/interdependence orientations of the contexts. When juxtaposing highly different contexts in terms of the independence/interdependence orientation, the variation in self and other socialization by mothers and in the expression of one's ideas about the self in conversation and drawings by children reflects these differences. At the same time, subtle differences appear also in very similar contexts (Berlin and Stockholm).

Study III

Study III addressed the cultural differences in the interplay of structure and content of maternal talk in past-event reminiscing by studying the content of maternal statements and open-ended questions in the European contexts. Another aim of the study was to identify the relationship between maternal independence/interdependence orientation and the mother-focus content in the reminiscing interactions at the individual level. Across samples, the most prominent content is talk about the non-social context followed by co-agency and child agency. There are differences in the structural elements of mothers' preferences in order to address a content category: Tallinn mothers ask the children to talk about themselves more often than they talk about child agency. Berlin mothers question their children about co-agency (themselves together with other people) more frequently than they talk about this content. At the individual level the content of mothers' reminiscing talk is to some extent related to the cultural orientations of mothers assessed by means of questionnaires. In the Berlin sample the higher is the independence/interdependence ratio of the mother the less she talks about other people and also asks the child fewer questions about other people. Stockholm mothers with a higher independence/interdependence ratio talk more about child agency. In Tallinn, both correlations exist on a trend level. The results of the study imply that even similar contexts display variations in interaction. Most importantly, self-

construal values are not translated into actions in a uniform manner even in very similar contexts. In addition, it seems that the connection between maternal value orientation and conversational content is also sensitive to the structural elements of maternal talk, e.g. mothers' preference for independence is manifested rather in what the mother herself talks about than what she asks the child about.

Study IV

Study IV investigated mothers' and children's contribution to joint reminiscing in four contexts: Tallinn (Estonia), Berlin (Germany), Stockholm (Sweden), and Nso (Cameroon). The aim of the study was to investigate the contribution of children in the context as compared to that of the mother; in addition, the content of reminiscing was addressed. Berlin mothers talk more than Tallinn and Nso mothers, and Stockholm mothers talk more than Nso mothers. Nso mothers ask children very few questions while Tallinn mothers, similarly to Berlin and Stockholm mothers, ask many open-ended questions. In Nso families the difference between mothers' and children's contribution to conversation in terms of total utterances is much bigger than in all others. Swedish children provide more unique memory information (i.e. the amount of information provided in addition to straightforward questioning) than children of all other contexts. European mothers include the non-social world in their memories and talk more about mental states and physical characteristics of the child and other people while Nso mothers talk extensively about their actions. Nso children reflect their mothers' focus on actions in past-event conversations, Tallinn and Stockholm children also talk more about actions than Berlin children. Tallinn and Stockholm children talk about mental states more than Nso children. Stockholm and Berlin mothers make personal judgments significantly more frequently than their Tallinn and Nso counterparts. The results indicate that larger cultural differences could be detected between the African and the European context while also the European contexts displayed several differences. The differences between rural Cameroonian and European contexts are the largest when the children's contribution is considered, which might reflect different ideas about children's socialization and involvement in conversation. Differences in the idea of autonomy socialized in the African and European context (action vs psychological autonomy) is also noteworthy.

Study V

Study V investigated inter- and intra-cultural variation in three generations (adolescents, their mothers, and grandmothers) and the intergenerational transmission of values related to one's self-construal in Germany, Estonia, and Russia. The aim was to identify the possible differences in the dimensions of independence and interdependence due to different socio-economic history and to put the universals of value transmission to a test. In Germany, all three

generations displayed a higher independence dimension of self-construal than participants from other countries, and the Russian participants had the highest scores in the interdependence dimension. Intra-cultural variation in the interdependence dimension was the most prominent when contrasting adolescents with the two older generations, and in the independence dimension when contrasting adolescents with mothers. Grandmothers' influence on mothers in both dimensions of self-construal was identified across the three countries. In Germany and Estonia also the influence of mothers on adolescents' interdependent dimension was identified. Grandmothers, but not mothers, have an effect on adolescents' independence dimension of self-construal. The results indicate relatively stable intercultural variation between the studied countries, which may be due to the socio-economic history of the contexts. The intra-cultural differences between the generations and the variability in the transmission of values could be attributed to either the socio-economic history of the countries or the roles that the participants have in the family. Here, once again one can see that participants from European countries (Germany and Estonia) display differences in the dimensions of the independence and interdependence dimension of self construal.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Universality of structure differences and functions of structural elements in maternal talk

As interaction is the arena where ideas and beliefs about the world are communicated explicitly and implicitly, a set of beliefs could indicate how, if at all, children are spoken to (Ochs, 1982). It appears that some structural differences of maternal reminiscing talk can be attributed to differences in the prominent independence/interdependence orientation in the particular culture. **Studies II** and **IV** compared contexts with a very different orientation towards independence/interdependence and revealed that differences in the maternal style are parallel to the differences in the prominent orientation of the context. In those contexts where independence or autonomy is valued over interdependence or relatedness the children's contribution seems to be of value, as open-ended questions show. Children are active and opinionated participants (**Study IV**). In the relatedness- or interdependence oriented context the ratio of open-ended questions to repetition in mothers' speech is much lower (**Study II**), which implies that mothers themselves seem to assume the task of providing important aspects of the event under discussion and expect their children to agree. This is also reflected in the low number of memory elaborations by children. Such a conversational pattern is in agreement with the idea that compliance and respect of authority are socialized in traditionally interdependence-oriented contexts (Georgas, 2006).

At the same time, when contrasting rather similar European contexts, some differences in maternal style still exist. Perhaps some of the differences in maternal elaborations can be attributed to the independence/interdependence orientation differences (Stockholm mothers valued independence over interdependence the most and Tallinn mothers the least) (**Study I**). Yet, the smaller number of maternal elaborations does not bring about a decrease in children's memory contribution as suggested by previous studies (e. g. Reese & Fivush, 1993; Reese et al., 1993). Therefore, a closer look at the differences in structural elements and the function of the elements is needed.

Some differences in the amount of maternal statement elaborations and verbal confirmations in the European contexts do exist while mothers of all the three contexts use a similar amount of open-ended question elaborations (**Study I**). This would suggest that the use of open-ended question elaborations brings about children's participation in terms of providing memory elaborations. And, indeed, **Study II** showed that when the ratio of Nso mothers' open-ended question elaboration to repetition ratio is low, the children's contribution is consequently also much lower than in other contexts. The role of open-ended question elaborations in helping children structure their memory narratives has also been pointed out in recent research (Cleveland & Reese, 2005; Farrant & Reese, 2000; Reese & Newcombe, 2007). At the same time, **Study I** shows that open-ended question elaborations predict children's participation only in Tallinn

(Estonia) and not in Berlin (Germany), and Stockholm (Sweden). Therefore, mothers and children do not display uniform interaction patterns even in the European contexts, and locally specific conversational styles should also be taken into account when drawing conclusions about mother-child interaction.

Content of maternal talk and the socialization of self-construal in diverse contexts

The beliefs and ideas concerning one's self are guided by the cultural context and communicated to children also implicitly. An expression of such ideas could be found in the content of reminiscing. Previous research has indicated that independence-oriented cultural contexts are more self-focused while the focus of the talk is more social in interdependence-oriented contexts (Wang & Fivush, 2005; Wang et al., 2000). Several of the studies included here build on and expand this idea. Indeed, when comparing the child-other (maternal variable) and self-other (child variable) ratios of European contexts with that of Nso, Cameroon, the differences tend to point towards the abovementioned line of explanation. Both the child-other and self-other ratios are the lowest in Nso (Cameroon) and the highest in Stockholm (Sweden), with Berlin (Germany) and Tallinn (Estonia) somewhere in between (**Study II**). The high similarity of cultural differences regarding the child-other and self-other ratios would imply that the ideas about self and other are socialized, and that the characteristics of the cultural context as independence- or interdependence-oriented provide a good explanatory concept.

Yet, when comparing also other aspects addressed in reminiscing talk, one might be inclined to replace the self-focus with the 'material' focus, as the non-social category was the content category most often referred to in maternal talk in the European contexts (**Study III**) and it was also the category where European-African differences were the largest (**Study IV**). A further attempt to distinguish and describe the cultural differences on the content level was made in **Study IV** that addressed the different types of autonomy socialized in child references by the mother. Keller and Otto (2011) suggested that the Euro-American focus on autonomy socialization lies in the attempt to bring up children who are psychologically autonomous, that is, they know their own mind and express their thoughts and opinions. At the same time, in many other countries of the world the focus is on action autonomy, which is the ability to carry out tasks and participate in various activities from a very early age. The results of **Study IV** reveal that such a focus could also be detected in maternal talk during reminiscing. Nso mothers stressed the activities and actions of children more than mothers with a European background while European mothers focused more on the cognitions, opinions, and intentions of the child than Nso mothers. The results of **Study IV** regarding personal opinions seem to second these ideas to some extent. Mothers from Berlin and Stockholm voice their own opinions and judgments more often than mothers from Tallinn and

Nso. Children reflect this tendency to some extent – Berlin and Stockholm children voice their opinions more than Nso children. Tallinn children, in contrast to Tallinn mothers, are as opinionated as their Berlin counterparts. This tendency might reflect the changes in the society towards more psychological autonomy support.

The fact that all of the studies included identified differences in the reminiscing style and content or self-construal in contexts that can be considered rather similar is noteworthy and should be highlighted. The differences are in many cases subtle and similarities much bigger, and, indeed, there is a lot that is universal in the development of children. Yet, the subtle differences point to the fact that cultural contexts are unique due to their socio-political history and conversational styles. Similarly, the results of **Study III** indicate that the relationship between values and the way they are translated into interaction are not uniform and the transmission of values is not uniform either (**Study V**). Thus, there is no single ‘Western mind’ (Harkness et al., 2000) and attempts to define cultures as independent and interdependent and oriented toward autonomy-relatedness would provide good heuristics for comparative studies, yet, it might lead to overlooking universality in child development as well as some of the specific characteristics of the contexts.

Limitations

Although recent theories of development stress the bi- or multi-directional nature of socialization (Goodnow, 1997; Kuczynski, Marshall, & Schell, 1997), the present dissertation only includes a modest attempt to assess children’s participation in reminiscing talk. **Study I** and **Study II** compared children’s contribution of memory elaborations in case of different cultural patterns of maternal talk, and **Study IV** assessed the equality of conversational partners in terms of input. As for the content, **Study IV** addressed the cultural prevalence of some content categories in children’s contribution and **Study II** examined the self-other ratio of children’s contribution. Children’s contribution in determining how mothers talk to them is largely underestimated in the studies included here. There are plans to address the issue in future research.

Also, while theories of socialization point to the role of beliefs in determining socialization aims and activities, mothers’ own understanding of reminiscing interaction and the beliefs and attitudes related to the importance of such interactions were not explicitly addressed in the planning and execution of the studies reported here. The inclusion of these points of interest would expand the understanding and interpretation of cultural variation in reminiscing socialization. Also, it remains to be seen what implications the differences in the maternal style described in the present studies carry for one’s construal of self and autobiographical memory in future longitudinal studies.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

While independence, interdependence, and a combination of the two in one's self-construal might provide some useful descriptive dimensions of cultures on a broad level, the use of only two characteristics to describe a culture would mean that many specifics in terms of the conversational style and practice are overlooked. When comparing cultures of very different orientations (European contexts vs Cameroonian) the differences in the maternal style and implications for the self-construal in terms of content addressed are in the expected direction. At the same time, intercultural diversity can be observed contrasting rather similar contexts. One should be attentive to those differences, as some differences in the patterns of the structure of interaction might bring about different consequences while others could be examples of local particularities of interaction and the conversational style.

Knowledge of diversity of styles and the meanings that typical interaction patterns carry in particular contexts and what implications they may have for the self-construal is of vital importance in planning and adapting interventions and developing school curricula. Interventions to improve children's self-narrative abilities and to prepare them better for preschool and school have been initiated for immigrant children. Yet, such interventions should not be initiated light-heartedly as changes in interaction styles might bring about changes in self-construal and may have unforeseeable implications for children's self-esteem.

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SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

„Kus me eelmisel nädalavahetusel käisime?” Laste sotsialiseerimine meenutusvestlustes erisugustes kultuurikontekstides

Igahel meist on oma lugu. See lugu ei ole alati täpselt ühesugune, vaid sõltub sellest, kellele me seda räägime ja miks. Samuti võime uutest kogemustest tulenevalt oma minevikule hakata hoopis teise pilguga vaatama. Oma lugu rääkides tugineme autobiograafilistele mälestustele. Autobiograafiliste mälestuste kujunemisel lapseas on mitmetel asjaoludel väga tähtis roll: oluline on piisav keeleoskus, ajamõiste tajumine, teatavad kognitiivsed oskused ning meenutusvestlused täiskasvanutega. Vestlused, mille käigus meenutatakse minevikusündmusi, aitavad lapsel paigutada neid samu sündmusi ajas ja ruumis, mõista nende olulisust ning tõlgendada kogemust enda jaoks. Meenutusvestlusi uurides on leitud, et need on sageli kultuuriti erinevad ning neid erinevusi nii vestluste sisus kui ka vormis seletatakse minapildiga seonduvate hoiakutega seotuse ning sõltumatuse suhtes. Läänemaailmas, kus väärtustatakse eelkõige sõltumatust, räägitakse lapsega palju ja detailselt ning keskendutakse lapse individuaalsele kogemusele. Sellest tulenevalt on ka täiskasvanuea mälestused põhjalikumad, pärinevad varasemast east ning neid on rohkem. Erinevalt Läänemaailmast väärtustatakse Aasia riikides eelkõige seotust ja minevikusündmustest räägitakse põgusamalt. Samuti keskendutakse pigem sotsiaalse sisuga kogemustele ning inimeste mälestused on hilisemad ja üldisemad.

Antud doktoritöö keskendub ema-lapse meenutusvestlustele kolmes Euroopa pealinnas – Berliinis, Tallinnas ja Stockholmis – ja Kamerunis, Aafrikas (**Uurimused I–IV**). Samuti uuritakse mina-pildiga seotud väärtuste variatiivsust kolmes põlvkonnas Eestis, Venemaal ja Saksamaal ning väärtuste edasikandumist ühelt põlvkonnalt teisele (**Uurimus V**). Väitekirjas kajastatud peamised tulemused ja järeldused on järgmised:

- Võrreldes Euroopa pealinnade emade vestlusi lastega Kameruni maapiirkonnas elavate emade vestlustega, võib märgata, et Kameruni emad räägivad vähem kui Berliini ja Stockholmi emad (**Uurimus IV**), nad kordavad oma sõnumit sagedamini (**Uurimus II**), nad küsivad lastelt vähem avatud küsimusi (**Uurimus IV**) ning keskenduvad sisuliselt rohkem teistele inimestele (võrreldes lapsega) (**Uurimus II**). Ka Tallinna emad räägivad vähem kui Stockholmi ja Berliini emad, samas küsivad nad lastelt palju avatud küsimusi (**Uurimus IV**). Euroopa pealinnade lapsed osalevad vestlustes aktiivsemalt (**Uurimus II, IV**) ning avaldavad rohkem oma arvamust (**Uurimus IV**). Samuti mainitakse Euroopa pealinnades sagedamini lapse mõtteid, tundeid, eesmärke, samas kui Kamerunis mainitakse eelkõige lapse tegevusi. Kõik need erinevused võiksid viidata asjaolule, et ka Euroopa pealinnade ning Kameruni maapiirkondade ema-lapse vestluste erinevusi võiks seletada emade erineva hoiakuga seotuse ja sõltumatuse suhtes, s.t. Euroopa pealinnades hinnatakse eelkõige sõltumatust ning

püütakse seda ka lastes kasvatada, samas kui Kamerunis hinnatakse eelkõige seotust ning rõhutatakse seda ka vestlustes lapsega.

Samas ka Euroopa pealinnade emade vestluses lapsega on mitmeid erinevusi:

- Tallinna emad räägivad lastega minevikusündmustest lühemalt kui Berliini ja Stockholmi emad ning harvemini kui Berliini emad. Samas panustavad lapsed vestlustesse samaväärselt (**Uurimus I**). Samuti ennustavad laste osalemist erinevad lausestruktuurid (avatud küsimused Tallinnas, emapoolsed jutustavad laused Berliinis ning kinnitused lapse poolt öeldule Stockholmis ja Berliinis). See annab alust arvata, et vestlusstiilid kolmes kontekstis on erinevad ning et lapsed on juba 4-aastaselt omandanud kultuurispetsiifilist vestlusstiili.
- Võrreldes Euroopa pealinnade ema-lapse meenutusvestluste sisu (**Uurimus III**), võib öelda, et emad kasutavad erinevate sisukategooriate puhul erinevaid lausestruktuure. Lapsest rääkides küsivad Tallinna emad eelkõige lapse käest avatud küsimusi, mitte ei räägi lapse tegemistest ise. Emade hoiakud seotuse ja sõltumatuse suhtes peegelduvad teatud teemakategooriate eelistamises. Mida enam eelistavad Berliini emad seotust sõltumatusele, seda vähem räägivad nad teistest inimestest ise ja seda vähem küsivad nad ka lapse käest küsimusi teiste inimeste kohta. Mida enam eelistavad Stockholmi emad seotust sõltumatusele, seda rohkem räägivad nad lapsest endast. Tallinna emade puhul on seosed hoiakute ja väljenduse vahel nõrgemad. Seega võib järeldada, et ka suhteliselt sarnastes keskkondades võivad hoiakud ja väärtused mõjutada suhtlemist erinevalt.
- Uurides Eesti, Saksamaa ja Venemaa teismelisi, nende emasid ja vana-emasid, selgub, et mina-pildi seotuse ja sõltumatuse dimensioonis on nii kultuuridevahelisi kui ka kultuuri-siseseid põlvkondade-vahelisi erinevusi (**Uurimus V**). Kõik kolm põlvkonda Saksamaalt hindasid sõltumatust kõrgemalt kui osalejad Eestist ja Venemaalt; samas Venemaa osalejad hindasid seotust teistest kõrgemalt. Kõigis kolmes riigis hindavad teismelised sõltumatust rohkem kui nende emad. Samuti ilmnevad erinevused hoiakute põlvkondadevahelises edasikandumises. Seega võib arvata, et nii üldine kultuurikontekst koos oma ajaloolis-majandusliku arenguga kui ka inimese roll perekonnas mõjutab seda, kuidas inimene väärtustab seotust ja sõltumatust.

Üldiselt võib öelda, et ema-lapse meenutusvestlused Euroopas ja Kamerunis erinevad oodatud viisil ning neid erinevusi saab seletada erineva rõhuasetusega minapildis. Samas võib ka Euroopa kontekstides leida mitmeid erinevusi nii vestluste sisus kui ka vormis (kui palju lastega räägitakse ning kuidas). See viitab asjaolule, et lisaks minapildiga seotud väärtustele on oluline arvestada ka erinevate riikide ajaloolist tausta, kombeid ja hoiakuid, mis puudutavad suhtlemist ning tavapäraseid suhtlemisharjumisi. Kõigest sellest sõltub, kuidas me ennast näeme, millise loo endast loome ning kuidas seda teistele räägime.

ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

CURRICULUM VITAE

Name: Pirko Tõugu
Date of birth: 17.05.1978
Citizenship: Estonian
E-mail: pirko.tougu@ut.ee

Education:

2006–2012 Doctoral studies, Institute of Psychology, University of Tartu
2004–2006 Master's studies, Institute of Psychology, University of Tartu
1999–2004 Bachelor studies in psychology (BSc) and English language and literature (BA), University of Tartu

Professional employment:

2012– researcher, Institute of Psychology, University of Tartu
2011–2012 researcher for the Doctoral School of Behavioural, Social and Health Sciences and Educo project
2007–2010 Södertörn University College, project *Autonomy Socialization: A Comparative study in Estonia, Germany, and Sweden*

Research interests:

Cultural differences in the socialization of autobiographical memory; peer interaction and language development.

Membership in professional organizations:

Estonian Psychologist Association

Publications:

1. Tulviste, T., Tõugu, P., Schröder, L., Keller, H., De Geer, B. (in press). Different faces of autonomy: Mother-child past event conversations across cultural developmental pathways. In T. Tchombe, A. Bame Nsamenang, H. Keller, M. Fülöp (Eds.) *Cross-Cultural Psychology Research: An Africa-Centric Perspective*, II. Limbe, Cameroon: Bukhum Communications.
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ELULOOKIRJELDUS

Nimi: Pirko Tõugu
Kodakondsus: eestlane
Sünniaeg: 17.05.1978
E-post: pirko.tougu@ut.ee

Haridus:
2006–2012 doktoriõpe, psühholoogia instituut, Tartu Ülikool
2004–2006 magistriõpe, psühholoogia osakond, Tartu Ülikool
1999–2004 psühholoogia (BSc) ja inglise keel ja kirjandus (BA),
Tartu Ülikool

Teenistuskäik:
2012– teadur, TÜ psühholoogia instituut, KTTDK
2011–2012 teadur KTTDK ja Educo projektide raames
2007–2010 Södertörn Högskola, osaleja projektis *Autonomy Socialization: A Comparative Study in Estonia, Germany, and Sweden*

Peamised uurimisvaldkonnad:

Kultuurilised erinevused laste autobiograafilise mälu sotsialiseerimises; laste omavaheline suhtlemine ja kõne areng.

Kuulumine erialastesse organisatsioonidesse:

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