
CHANGING STORIES: THE EVOLVING NARRATIVES OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

With over 200 million international migrants, immigration is a phenomenon expanding globally at unprecedented rates, having central implications for education and psychosocial wellbeing. In this paper, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods from The Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study (L.I.S.A.) we analyze different patterns of interplay of achievement and affinitive themes in narratives of 400 recently arrived immigrant children from a variety of backgrounds – Chinese, Central American, Dominican, Haitian and Mexican. The Thematic Apperception Test, Card 1 and 2, is used as a tool to generate narrative data. The method for administering, coding and analyzing the narratives is described. We draw conclusions about the changing interpersonal concerns, anxieties, aspirations and definitions of achievement and success of the immigrant youth.

KEYWORDS: *projected narratives, immigrant youth, achievement motivation, mixed methods.*

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IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

Immigration is an arduous journey – it often means breaking family ties and social networks in the country of origin and entering a society that often does not welcome the new arrivals. The motivations of immigrants are closely tied to their aspirations and hopes for a better future and ensuring a better education for their children (C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). Recent data from a variety of studies using different methodological and analytical strategies, however, demonstrate disturbing trends—physical and psychological health, as well as academic achievement and aspirations of immigrant children can significantly decline with increased length of residency in the US. The optimism and determination that many families and children bring with them in coming to the US dissipate during the years of adapting to the US society, a trend that continues for the second generation (Kao & Tienda, 1995; Rumbaut & Cornelius, 1995; Steinberg, 1996; C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001; Vernez, Abrahamse, & Quigley, 1996).

With over 200 million international migrants, immigration is a phenomenon expanding globally at unprecedented rates, having central implications for education and psychosocial wellbeing. For example, by the middle of the 21st century, it is projected that the children of immigrants will make up a third of the school age population in the United States (Hernández, Denton, & Macartney, 2007). Therefore, there is a clear need to gain an understanding of the way in which the children themselves conceptualize their transitions to new schools and their achievement motivation, how they describe their aspirations and attribute success and failure in their new unfamiliar surroundings; and how these understandings change with time.

In the research in the field of achievement motivation of minority students, the conceptualizations and attributions of success of the students themselves have largely been neglected (Bempechat & Drago-Severson, 1999). Furthermore, traditionally achievement motivation has predominantly been defined in terms of individualism, independence from family and interpersonal relations, or a need for “competition with a standard of excellence” (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1953). This conceptualization of achievement motivation has been transposed to other cultures, and a preservation of a familial and/or communal sense of identity in some cases has been interpreted as an impediment for its development (Carter & Segura, 1979).

In other cases, theorizing about achievement motivation is undertaken in more relational and social terms, some of which employ ethnographic and qualitative methodologies, including projective techniques (Asakawa & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; De Vos, 1983; Novi & Meinster, 2000; Pollak & Gilligan, 1982; C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995). Research in achievement motivation from a feminist perspective, for example, has pointed out the gender bias of a model based on individualism and competitiveness, and has stressed the importance of paying attention to the intersection of gender/race and class in acknowledging multiple forms of achievement motivation (Hyde & King, 2001).

These writings have discussed the relevance of interpersonal interactions, cooperation, joint family goals, and the self-in-relation (Novi & Meinster, 2000) to expand the existing theory on achievement motivation. Relational ties can be an impetus and an essential ingredient of “affiliative achievement” (C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995; M. Suárez-Orozco, 1989). Such re-conceptualizations of the theory have led to an increased sensitivity to the diversity of definitions of culturally meaningful goals and achievement motivation, compared to a one-dimensional model based solely on individual success.

In this paper, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods from a sub-set of data from a larger study, we analyze different patterns of interplay of achievement and affinitive themes in narratives reflecting on the process of adaptation of recently arrived immigrant children from a variety of backgrounds. We focus on the conceptualization of achievement, success and motivation by children of different ethnic backgrounds and countries of origin, immigrating to the US. More specifically, we are interested in establishing the emic meanings of success in the new social and cultural space, in exploring the individual and relational dynamics of meanings of achievement for immigrant youth and in identifying how they change over time.

METHODS

The Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study

The Longitudinal Immigrant Student Adaptation Study (L.I.S.A.) is a five-year, interdisciplinary and comparative study designed to document educational attitudes, academic engagement and outcomes among recently arrived immigrant youth (C. Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). The participants are recently arrived immigrants from Central America (including El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua), China (Hong Kong, Mainland China and Taiwan), the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Mexico. The 400 participants in the L.I.S.A. study were recruited from seven school districts in the Boston and San Francisco greater metropolitan areas. The youth were between the ages of 9 and 14 at the beginning of the study – a developmental age of identity formation, especially critical when paralleled by ongoing cultural and ethnic identity transformation and disorientation that can accompany the process of immigration.

Cross-cultural research with immigrant youth is inherently challenging. It compels us to reexamine many of the traditional social science assumptions around validity and reliability and requires new approaches (McLoyd & Steinberg, 1998). There is a growing consensus in the field that mixed method designs, triangulating data, and contextualizing emerging findings, are essential to this kind of endeavor (Branch, 1999; Doucette-Gates, Brooks-Gunn, & Chase-Lansdale, 1998; Hammersley, 1996; C. Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008).

The L.I.S.A. study employed five major data collection strategies: (1) ethnographic observations; (2) structured interviews of students, school

personnel, and parents, (including projective methods such as the Thematic Apperception Test Cards 1 and 2); (3) psychosocial measures; (4) standardized academic achievement assessments appropriate for English Language Learners; and (5) academic records. Youth were observed and interviewed in their schools, their communities, and their homes. The longitudinal design allowed us to identify changes over time.

Cross-cultural research with the TAT

Cross-cultural research struggles to find research methods, which will support the researchers' commitment to preserve the complexity and uniqueness of each culture -- including within-culture differences, while at the same time assisting them in their attempt to organize that complexity into patterns, which are necessary to generate new knowledge. The methodological difficulties faced by cross-cultural researchers have been exhaustively noted and methods used for the purposes of research in a cross-cultural, comparative design have been critiqued from different perspectives (McLoyd & Steinberg, 1998; C. Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008).

Recently we have witnessed a rising interest in narrative, story-telling, and other communicative forms as tools for gathering data across cultures capturing alternative modes of thought and ways of conceptualizing the world (Bruner, 1990; Howard, 1991; Sarbin, 1986). Our method of analysis is informed by this "narrative turn" in the social sciences and multiple developments in narrative methods of analysis (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2008). This phenomenon has expanded the use of narratives in social science research, including a revival of interest in projective narratives (Cramer, 1996; De Vos & De Vos, 2004; Hermans, 1999). One method that is appealing in cross-cultural research because of its essence as a story-generating instrument is the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). The TAT, originally developed by Henry Murray and Christina Morgan at Harvard University (Morgan, 1995; Murray, 1943) is a projective test consisting of a set of 20 picture cards. The subject is simply asked to tell a story -- what happened before, what is happening now and how does the story end? What are the *dramatis personae* thinking and feeling? The logic behind this narrative task is that the interpersonal concerns and psychological motivations of each respondent are projected onto the situations depicted in the cards, since the ambiguity of the cards 'pulls' the respondent to infuse it with meaning. We understand the stories that are elicited by the cards as both reflecting a life and also as a construction. Children are drawing from cultural narratives when forming their responses and are also using the Cards creatively to formulate a story that is in resonance with their current situation and experience.

Originally grounded in psychoanalytic theory, the use of projective narratives is a method which has been widely used in cross-cultural research, and has been both celebrated as well as critiqued. Existing scholarship suggests that the TAT, when used in concert with other research tools (such as ethnography, in-depth interviews, and questionnaires) can offer powerful insight into subtle

culturally patterned concerns not otherwise garnered (C. Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2004; Vane, 1981). A host of culturally patterned concerns such as the familial patterns of achievement motivation among Koreans, the psychosocial patterns of shame and guilt among the Japanese, and Israeli changing attitudes towards the Kibbutz have all been analyzed by way of this unique tool in cross-cultural research (De Vos & De Vos, 2004). The TAT remains an important vehicle in cross-cultural research as it offers the potential to transcend some of the limitations of structured itemized questionnaires, which can carry the biases of the culture in which they have been composed. Offering drawings with ambiguous stimuli, on which the concerns of the unique world of the participant can be projected, it is open to preserving cultural complexity and allows contextualization of interpretations within that complexity. It requires, however, assessing its past misuse, a supplementation with other methods and further development of procedures of scoring and interpretation (Gieser & Stein, 1999). Limitations of the TAT have been pointed out (Dana, 1993, 1996; Vane, 1981).

The TAT also demonstrates promise as a research (and clinical) tool with children and adolescents (Chandler, 1990; Worchell & Dupree, 1990). The TAT pictures allow children to project their voices into the world, even in a situation that can be threatening. It values the children's creative potential, their imagination, as well as the "love for fantasy" (McClelland, 1999) of both the children and the researchers. The pictures of the TAT Card 1 and 2 have previously been shown to elicit responses from children of different ethnic backgrounds related to their interpersonal concerns, aspirations, definitions of achievement and success, as well as anxieties (C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995). We see this method as one that is less structured, more engaging as a result of its reliance on visual stimuli and thus more appropriate for youth. This is especially true for recently arrived immigrant youth who may find the interview situation with an adult somewhat intimidating and not conducive to openness.

In the present study, we have used the TAT as a source of narrative data, rather than as a psycho-diagnostic tool and thus have not applied pre-existing scoring schemes for its use as a clinical tool. As stated by Stein (1999), "in interpreting the TAT, the psychologist should not be evaluative, but should aim at understanding the person who told the stories". Additionally, the TAT is not used as a self-sufficient method, but is one of the multiple methodologies employed in the LISA study (C. Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). In this case the TAT narratives are used to supplement the information gathered through ethnographic work, structured interviews and other psychosocial and achievement assessment instruments.

Administration of the Cards

TAT Card 1 and 2 were administered as part of an initial extended structured interview in Year 1 and then again in Year 5 of the study. These particular cards were selected because they have been found to pull for achievement themes (Bellak, 1986; De Vos & De Vos, 2004; McClelland et al.,

1953). The bilingual research assistants were graduate students who were trained to administer the TAT following Murray's protocol (Murray, 1943), presenting it as a creative task. The students were asked to tell a story about the picture that had a beginning, middle and end, as well as what the characters are thinking and feeling. They were reminded to "tell a story," rather than describe the card and were encouraged to expand on their stories. Considering the large number of participating students and thus research assistants, in order to preserve the uniformity of administration, probes were kept at a minimal. The instructions were given in the native language of the children, after ensuring uniformity of the translations in the different languages.

Coding and scale development

We created a coding scheme based on inductive analysis of the narrative data. The first stage of method development was identifying salient themes elicited by the TAT card across cases, through a qualitative inductive coding procedure. The second stage consisted of a quantification procedure as a precursor to statistical analysis of distributions and inter-group differences in theme incidence. The third stage was also qualitative and included a re-contextualization of the defined categories within the narratives to refine the coding scheme and to identify relationships between themes.

The inductive coding approach is based on and builds upon a scoring method previously developed in research with immigrant and refugee children (C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 1995). Separate inductive procedures were used, and thus different final rating protocols were developed for Cards 1 and 2, based on the themes that they pulled for. The advantage of this approach is that it avoids imposing pre-existing theoretical concepts that have been formulated in cultures external to the ones being studied and captures themes that are relevant to these particular groups, faced with the experience of immigration. We did not assume that we have entered into the data analysis with no pre-existing theoretical frameworks.

In the tradition of previous TAT work (McClelland, 1961), our main research question focused on identifying conceptualizations of achievement motivation. We left the possibilities for defining success open to take into account the cultural differences in these definitions, relying on the initial qualitative analysis and inductive development of the coding scales through the analysis of the stories of all 400 children. We have used only manifest content supplied by the narrator, to avoid imposing universalized psychological constructs to phenomena that could be very local and culture-specific.

The list of recurring themes was narrowed to conceptual categories that were noted on a rating form. The stories were read, analyzed, and discussed by two raters who were blind to the group membership of the storyteller. Each story was scored for the presence or absence of each of the themes and themes' sub-dimensions under consideration. The raters scored twenty-five stories together, discussing the rationale for why each scale was scored in a specific manner for

each story. The rationale was articulated and noted in the emerging scoring procedures. Once these first 25 stories were scored, they scored another 20 stories separately. The inter-rater reliability was calculated for each scale (Kappa statistic ranged from 0.80 to 1.00).

Analysis of the TAT narratives

The analytical procedure we adapted for the TAT is in keeping with recent developments in narrative theory and qualitative data analysis methods (Maxwell & Miller, 1996). As Maxwell and Miller (1996) point out, we can discern two types of relationships within qualitative data: those of similarity/difference and those of contiguity. The respective analytic strategies, which identify these relationships within the data, are those of categorization and contextualization. The cited paper elaborates on the advantages of combining both approaches within the same study.

In our approach to the analysis of the TAT narratives, the strategy of categorization proceeded to quantification. After all stories were scored using the procedure described above, the incidence of each theme (based on presence or absence) was tallied for each group under consideration. Chi square analyses were conducted to check for significant differences between groups. The interpretation of the statistical findings of inter-group differences was elaborated through detailed intra-groups reading of the stories, i.e., concentration on one ethnic group at a time.

Contextualization consisted of an immersion in the flow of the narratives and the interrelationship between themes. This stage of the analysis brought us back closer to the life-worlds of the children, which includes cultural background and the situation of recent immigration. The stories were 're-integrated' into narrative wholes after the previous separation into themes through re-reading and preserving the narrative structure. Thus the meanings of the elicited themes were expanded upon through observing their interconnectedness and patterning within the narrative flow of each separate story, as well as within the ethnic group. This was especially important in explicating the relationships between the achievement and relational themes, which in the categorization stage had been captured predominantly as separate. Though in the categorization stage attempts were made to identify their concurrent existence, the categories pointed to the simultaneous appearance of both themes, but not to the nature of the relationship between them and to how this relationship is narratively integrated into a cohesive story and story outcome. Chronologically these were not clear-cut stages, but we went back and forth between them, the contextualization leading to refining of the categorization and the formulation of the scoring guide.

In the following pages we present our comparative and longitudinal findings relevant to the immigration experiences of the children in the LISA study. We discuss the findings, interconnecting the conclusions derived from the integrated quantitative and the qualitative analyses of TAT Card 1. Card TAT 1 was administered in Year 1 and Year 5 of the study. The children were ages 9-14 in Year 1 (mean age 11.3) and 14-19 in Year 5 (mean age 16.1).

The TAT Card 1 pulls for themes which emphasize achieving a goal, though interpersonal relations are also frequently invoked. Card 1 portrays a young boy gazing contemplatively at a violin on a table in front of him. This card has been well established as one that elicits achievement themes as participants typically tell stories about learning to play the violin (De Vos, 1983; De Vos & De Vos, 2004; C. Suárez-Orozco et al., 2004; M. Suárez-Orozco, 1989). For immigrants in particular, we have found that the tale about the process of learning to play the violin is a powerful metaphor for learning English as part of the migratory process (C. Suárez-Orozco et al., 2004). Since Card 1 portrays a solitary boy, and the themes of loneliness, sadness and inadequacy are strongly relevant to the immigrant children's experience in a new environment, they are projected onto the stories told. Card 2 portrays a farm scene, with a young woman holding books in the foreground and male and female figure in the background. It elicits more family and community oriented narratives. The themes identified for Card TAT1 and TAT2 through the analytic procedure described above are presented in Table 1; selected distributions of these themes are presented in Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 1
Inductively derived themes for TAT Card 1 and Card 2.

TAT1	TAT2
• Story Theme	• Story Theme
• Definition of Success	• Definition of Success
• Attribution of Success	• Attribution of Success
• Resolution of Story	• Resolution of Story
• Concerns with Adequacy	• Source of External Pressure
• Engagement in Task	• Interpersonal Relationships
• Source of External Pressure	• Expressed Affect
• Expressed Affect	• Decision
• Impediment	• Noted Themes
• Broken Violin	• Helping Scale
• Helping Scale	

Thematic Apperception Card 1

Table 2

Across group and longitudinal comparisons for selected themes from TAT Card 1; *** p <0.001; ** p <0.01; * p <0.05 Dom – Dominican, CA – Central American

TAT Card 1 Chi ²	YEAR 1						YEAR 5						ALL Children Longitudinal Changes %					
	Across group comparison %			Across group comparison %			Across group comparison %			Across group comparison %								
	Chinese	Dom	p	CA	Haitian	Mexican	p	Chinese	Dom	p	CA	Haitian		Mexican	p	Year 1	Year 5	p
Theme: Achievement	32.1	27.2	30.7	52.1	38.4	***	45.6	43.1	58.2	53.7	49.3	*	35.9	49.5	***			
Definition: High success	15.2	7.3	1.3	2.7	8.1	*	10.3	5.2	12.7	4.9	20.3	n.s.	7.1	11.3	n.s.			
Definition: Mastering Task	38.0	25.6	32.0	37.0	31.4	*	32.4	20.7	23.6	26.8	20.3	n.s.	32.7	24.7	n.s.			
Attribution: Personal Effort	43.0	30.5	17.3	37.0	31.4	***	54.4	34.5	50.9	34.1	40.6	n.s.	31.9	43.6	****			
Positive Resolution	72.2	68.3	54.7	28.8	53.5	****	64.7	62.2	61.8	24.2	58.0	****	55.9	57.4	n.s.			
Inadequacy	29.1	40.2	40.0	49.3	27.9	*	52.9	37.9	50.9	53.7	44.9	n.s.	37.0	47.8	***			
Disengagement from Task	13.9	13.4	22.7	43.8	23.3	****	42.6	15.5	25.5	39.0	34.8	***	23.0	31.6	*			
Parental Pressure	11.4	3.7	5.3	8.2	8.1	*	20.6	1.7	5.5	4.9	11.6	****	7.3	9.6	n.s.			
Happy	13.9	13.4	16.0	6.8	29.1	***	13.2	27.6	16.4	2.4	20.3	*	16.2	16.8	n.s.			
Sad	22.8	46.3	64.0	50.7	48.8	****	27.9	34.5	30.9	39.0	34.8	n.s.	46.3	33.0	****			
Helping Self	41.8	23.5	22.7	28.8	26.7	****	50.0	36.2	49.1	34.1	47.8	n.s.	28.7	44.3	****			
With the Help of Others	25.4	33.3	33.3	11.0	31.4	****	11.8	14.0	16.4	9.8	18.8	n.s.	29.2	15.5	****			
N	78	81	75	73	86		68	58	55	41	69		393	291				

Conceptualizations of success and resolutions of stories

The narratives told by the immigrant students as a whole reflect the high value placed on education by the children and their families and the importance of effort and perseverance in mastering a task. Their optimism is particularly strong in the first year of the study, when the children have recently arrived in the United States. Over a third of the narratives center around this definition of success as learning or mastering the task at hand (32.7% in Year 1 and 24.7% in Year 5, $p=ns$). High goals, such as great fame and excellent mastery are less often invoked in the projected plots (7.1% in Year 1 and 11.3% in Year 5, $p=ns$), since the children are focused on the immediate necessity to learn in the new land. When such stories occurred, they were more likely to be told by a Chinese participant (15.2% in Year 1). The stories also include performative definitions of success, which in addition to performing at a concert, include taking a test, finishing homework, or other short-term event that has to be dealt with.

Most of the stories contain positive resolutions, and this is true both in the stories from Year 1 (55.9%) as well as those from Year 5 (57.4%). While most of the groups of children tell stories with positive resolutions, it is striking how different the Haitian stories are in this regard, compared to the other groups. Haitian children have dealt with more trauma and violence in the time preceding their immigration and more challenges after arriving (C. Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). For most of the other children however, the positive resolutions persist for Year 5 ($p = ns$), over time the stories become fraught with concerns about impediments to success and failure. Far more stories in Year 5 are left hanging with no resolution or with resolutions that seem contrived and disconnected from the flow of the narrative. The optimism of immigration continues to be projected, though it is less likely to sustain positive academic engagement. The protagonists in the narratives face many impediments, yet they are unwilling to give up the wish for a positive outcome. This is evident in the Year 5 narrative told by Lotus in the next section, as well as in the following story - the exaggerated resolution is only loosely connected with the beginning of a narrative that, overall, is infused with disorientation and mistreatment.

There was once a boy that had just arrived from Mexico. He did not know English. When he arrived in school, the teacher did not help him in his studies. So he became depressed and started getting poor grades. Then one day, the teacher got mad at him and threw a piece of meat on his desk. The boy felt very sad, started studying very hard. Twenty years later, he became a doctor, having overcome his impediments. He had 10 children and all attended the university. (Mexican boy, 11 years old, Year 5)

Impediments to success

Over time, there are significantly more narratives in which the protagonist is concerned with inadequacy (increasing from 37.0% to 47.8% $p < 0.01$). Through a qualitative perspective we can see that the characteristics of the perceived inadequacy also change. In Year 1, concerns about the boy's ability to learn the violin frequently involve an external or accidental impediment to success (e.g., not knowing English in a new land, the violin accidentally being broken). By Year 5, the narratives shift to internal barriers, including disinterest, concerns with capabilities and talent, and expressions of the boy's disappointment with himself. In Year 1, the concerns are about impediments in the process, while in Year 5 they shift to doubts about ability. Similarly, in Year 1 the prevalent impediments are poverty and lack of knowledge, in Year 5 they become lack of desire and lack of focus.

“Lotus”

He was a violinist who was in an inter-schools competition. He was going to compete very soon. His violin was broken. He could not compete. He was very poor, and he could not buy another violin. He went to many stores; he finally found someone to repair (his violin). On the competition day, he overslept. He could not go to the competition at the end. (Chinese girl, 13 years old, Year 1)

This Latino boy really wants to learn his violin well. However, he does not have any talent. Also, his parents force him to learn the violin. He feels really overwhelmed. He does not know what to do. He just sits there. Earlier on, his violin teacher yelled at this boy. His parents want him to learn. He also wants to learn but he still does not do well even though he has tried hard. He is thinking how he can play it well. In the future, he should play the violin well. (Chinese girl, 18 years old, Year 5)

In the stories that Lotus tells above, we see this shift in the way she explains the protagonist's struggles with academics, which resonate with her own struggle with the English language. In the first story, the problems are framed mostly as external and manageable. Even though the final resolution is not one of success, the repair of the violin is achieved through finding a helper. With time and with accumulating tension, however, by Year 5 the source of the problem has shifted to an internal one, based on the absence of “talent” and leading to immobilization – mirroring Lotus' own the doubts about her capabilities and skills (C. Suárez-Orozco et al., 2008). She can overcome this self-doubt only by trying harder.

Similarly, while in the first narrative from Sophia the barriers that the protagonist faces are others' lack of knowledge, in the second narrative, told 5

years later, the unsuccessful attempt to learn the violin is explained through the protagonist “not having the capacity to learn”.

“Sophia”

The “movie” is about a boy who had a violin and the violin broke. The violin had a broken string and the boy didn’t know how to fix it. And he couldn’t find the part to fix it. He asked his parents and he felt very sad because they could not help him. The boy went to a violin repair shop, but he couldn’t have it fixed because they charge too much to fix it. So he sold all of his stuff and took his savings. When he had all of the money he needed, he took the violin to the same shop and they fixed the violin. (Central American girl, 12 years old, Year 1)

He is thinking that it's difficult for him to learn the violin. It looks like he has two homeworks (sic) and so it looks like he's going through stress. Because maybe they are pressuring him. Maybe he doesn't like it or it does not interest him to learn to play and it's necessary for him to learn. He will try to learn and if not he will have to speak the truth and admit that he does not have the capacity to learn to play. (Central American girl, 17 years old, Year 5).

The emotional valence of many stories from Year 1 is mainly one of sadness, reflecting the experience of loss due to immigration (46.3% in Year 1, particularly evident for the Central American group, 64%). The prevalence of sadness decreases with time (33.0% in Year 5), and this is confirmed also by the structured depressive symptoms questionnaires employed by the LISA study (C. Suárez-Orozco, Todorova, & Baolian Qin, 2006). The prevalent mood shifts to anger, frustration and boredom in Year 5 – sleepiness or fatigue are often projected to the pictures. The sense of disengagement has increased in the Year 5 narratives (from 23.0% in Year 1 to 31.6% in Year 5). In general, through the qualitative analysis, we see that the stories in Year 5 seem less lively, less emotional, and less creative. That the children are putting less creativity into the narrative task itself could be a symbol of disengagement, as can be seen when comparing the narratives from Maria in Year 1 and Year 5.

“Maria”

He feels bad because he doesn’t play the violin well. He told his mom that when he gets up in front of class to play his classmates put their hands over their ears. But he practices and practices and then he learns to play well and he again plays in front of the class and this time they applaud him. He’s happy. (Mexican girl, 10 year old, Year 1)

The boy doesn't know how to play his violin. (Pause). He is bored. He is trying to think. He will learn. (Mexican girl, 15 year old, Year 5)

Social relations

During the first years after arrival, the stories of immigrant youth often reflect a mobilization of social resources; the protagonist seeks help and support to learn to play the violin. We can assume that the themes of searching for help reflect the increased need of support in the new country immediately after immigration. Longitudinally, however, within the five years of the LISA study, we observe that the narratives of the immigrant children begin to project a greater degree of alienation from sources of social support, including parents and teachers, and discouragement about the possibility of receiving help in difficult situations. It is striking how depopulated of characters other than the protagonist the stories become. In Year 1, the protagonist needs help, asks for it, and is often able to find it. In Year 5, the protagonist is mostly on his own: even when there is no explicit statement that help is unavailable, it is telling that the participants introduces fewer people into the story or at most project a dilemma about whether to ask for help. With time, individualistic achievement stories become more relevant, as plots in which the protagonist achieve for oneself increase from 28.7% in Year 1 to 44.3% in Year 5. At the same time, stories in which the protagonist achieves success through the participation of others decrease from 29.2% in Year 1 to 15.5% in Year 5 ($p < 0.001$).

He is thinking. He feels frustrated because maybe he doesn't understand what he is looking at, what he is doing, and there is no one helping him. He thinks he is not going to do well. He is on his own. Before he was also on his own without anybody to help him. If there is no one helping him now, there was no one helping him before, either. If someone would help him it would be better. He would be better because this way he could get better grades and feel better. (Central American boy, 13 year old, Year 5)

Parental pressure to learn to play the violin is a strong element in the Chinese stories, compared to any of the other groups – the parent are often portrayed as forcing the child to study against his wishes. While in Year 1 the child is unhappy with parental pressure because he would prefer to be doing another activity, in Year 5 the parents are seen as impeding the child's self-realization and satisfaction. The response to the pressure can have more of a hostile edge to it, or the youth can be portrayed as affirming his independence and own goal. This is evident for example for Li, a Chinese boy, who has shown high levels of academic and extracurricular achievements, including acceptance to Ivy Leagues colleges at the end of our study. Many of his successes have been accomplished with the on-

going support and involvement of his parents, yet through the projected narratives it becomes clear how much stress this has also caused.

“Li”

The child's parents wanted him to learn violin. He was very happy in the beginning and wanted to learn. So he participated in violin class at his school. He practiced and practiced then he hurt his hands. His parents still wanted him to practice. He couldn't bear it anymore. He was very angry in the picture because he wanted to stop but his parents didn't think so. He thought about it, realizing that it could be helpful for him if he learned the violin. He then continued to practice. (Chinese boy, 14 year old, Year 1)

James' parents are both world-renowned musicians. Even though he has no natural talent himself, they coerced him into playing the violin. Today his instructor gave him a very different piece to play and he failed miserably doing so. Now he is contemplating his future, staring deep into the bridge of the violin asking it hard answers it cannot produce. Later he goes to his parents to have a family discussion about this and although reluctant. They come to the conclusion that it's best for James to concentrate on what he feels he can do well instead of something that his parents want him to. (Chinese boy, 19 year old, Year 5)

On the other hand, a revered mentor is also a very central character in many of the Year 1 Chinese stories (usually it was a wise old man or teacher). In Year 5 however, there are hardly any mentors or teachers as characters in the narratives. For the Chinese group, the theme of achievement with the help of others has decreased from 25.4% in Year 1 to 11.8% in Year 5. Here is an example of a Year 1 story from a Chinese immigrant girl:

Xiao Ming bought a violin one day. He looked at the violin feeling that the violin was so beautiful, so he wanted to learn how to play it. One day, he carried his violin and went to look for teachers all over the place. Three years later, he ran into an old man who knew how to play the violin. The old man taught him. The boy learned how to play violin and later became a famous violinist. He shared half of his wealth with the old man. He loved his violin very much and he felt that the old man was very likable. (Chinese girl, 10 year old, Year 1)

Thematic Apperception Test Card 2

Table 3

Across group and longitudinal comparisons for selected themes from TAT Card 2;

*** $p < 0.001$; ** $p < 0.01$; * $p < 0.05$ Dom – Dominican, CA – Central American

TAT Card 2 Chi ²	YEAR 1				YEAR 5				ALL Children						
	Across group comparison %				Across group comparison %				Longitudinal Changes %						
	Chinese	Dom	CA	Haitian Mexican p	Chinese	Dom	CA	Haitian Mexican p	Year 1	Year 5	p				
Theme: Achievement	26.9	16.7	15.8	8.5	15.1	***	26.9	18.6	28.6	32.6	20.3	***	16.7	24.8	n.s.
Theme: Both Ach. & Relation	47.4	37.2	47.4	28.2	43.0	***	55.2	37.3	28.6	9.3	33.3	***	40.9	34.7	n.s.
Definition: Education	42.3	17.9	44.7	15.5	24.7	***	50.7	28.2	26.8	27.9	36.2	***	29.0	35.0	n.s.
Attribution: Personal Effort	37.2	25.6	28.9	7.0	26.9	***	62.7	33.9	39.3	28.6	33.8	***	25.5	40.8	***
Positive Resolution	64.1	39.7	39.5	4.2	51.6	***	68.7	54.2	51.8	18.6	50.7	***	40.9	51.0	n.s.
Duty	5.1	3.8	3.9	5.6	8.6	n.s.	32.8	20.3	5.4	16.3	7.2	***	5.6	16.7	***
Poverty	38.5	19.2	10.5	11.3	14.0	***	13.4	10.2	14.3	9.3	20.3	n.s.	18.7	13.9	n.s.
Hard Work	38.5	26.9	27.6	18.3	20.4	*	55.2	35.6	42.8	16.3	14.5	***	26.3	33.7	*
Community Involvement	33.3	14.1	15.8	11.2	10.9	***	46.3	23.8	25.0	11.9	7.2	***	16.5	23.6	***
Family Involvement	42.3	46.2	49.9	33.8	49.5	n.s.	37.4	59.3	41.1	34.9	47.8	***	44.7	44.6	n.s.
Helping Self	20.5	24.4	28.9	9.9	14.0	***	40.3	22.0	28.6	23.3	29.0	***	19.4	29.3	***
To Help Others	25.6	3.8	9.2	4.2	10.8	***	34.3	25.4	23.2	2.3	20.3	***	10.9	22.4	***
N	78	78	76	71	93		67	59	56	43	69		396	294	

Definitions of success and resolution of story

The importance of education in the eyes of immigrant children cannot be underestimated, and this is confirmed further through the narrative projections to Card 2. The immigrant children often define success as progressing in education – in 29% of the all the stories told to the TAT Card 2 and 35% in Year 5. When they see the books in the girl's hand illustrated in the Card, they project stories of love of books and reading, as well as enjoying the library. Similarly to TAT Card 1, many of the stories have positive resolutions consistently in time (40.9% in Year 1 and 51% in Year 5 $p = n.s.$). While the Chinese children tell stories with positive resolutions in 64.1% of the cases in Year 1, unfortunately this is true for only 4.2% of the Haitian children.

The farm scene that Card 2 portrays is sensitive to dilemmas and contradictions in the children's values and visions of life paths. These dilemmas can be evident in the first year of the study, but more often appear in the fifth year. The value of education is usually confirmed, but even for the most successful students, we glimpse the pressure and stresses created by their academic lives.

We see an example of this in Li's narratives below, projected to Card 2. We can read his first narrative in the context of the knowledge we have about Li's academic achievements, as well as in the context of the perception of parental pressure projected to TAT Card 1 we discussed in the above section:

There were two sisters growing up together. When it was their teenage years, one decided to go to college, and the other decided to work on a farm. This sister had to wear a school uniform and study all day long. The other sister wore beautiful clothes, rode on the horse, went to different places, and made money by working on the farm. This sister (in uniform) envied the other sister very much. However, she felt that studying was more useful and she could contribute to the world. So she continued to study. (Chinese boy, 14 year old, Year 1)

We're in ancient Egypt. Nile River valley even though these people don't look particularly Egyptian. We have fertile ground, which needs strong bodies to toil on them. It needs strong masculine men to work. Women are delegated to domestic areas. This young woman looks fondly at the field. She can be a student only. Not working in the fields, but the society thinks she is not strong enough to handle the field work, although this is not true. She obeys tradition and studies hard and likely become yet another generation of educators. (Chinese boy, 19 year old, Year 1)

Another example is revealed by Rosa, who is a girl who arrived from Mexico at age 14, and has consistently been academically successful. Her initial

narrative projected to Card 2 shows a straightforward affirmation of the role of education in the goal of achievement. With time, the narrative becomes more nuanced and the internal dilemmas around education and future life choices are being revealed. She projects this tension on to the picture: two life paths are contrasted, one with its reliance on a man for support, the other centered on hard work, independence, and education. In the way Rosa frames the story, the girl who took the path of immediate gratification comes to a dead end, while the one who focused on hard work has the preferred future.

“Rosa”

In this story, the older woman did not study and had to rely on her husband for support. He must work very hard to support her and the baby. She is expecting. The young girl wanted to study so she can rely on herself and become important. She will study to be important and self-reliant. (Mexican girl, 14 year old, Year 1)

This is the story of two good friends, Rosalinda and Ana. Rosalinda liked parties and dancing. Ana liked school and family. When they grew up, Rosalinda fell in love with a handsome man and left home without finishing her studies. Ana was sad. She could no longer share as much with her friend because she was so busy working, plowing and doing heavy chores. Rosalinda got pregnant, had children and her life did not change. Ana graduated from the university and now works in computers -- no longer doing strenuous work. (Mexican girl, 19 year old, Year 5).

Social relations

Since there are three people portrayed in Card 2, it pulls for achievement in a relational context. For example, stories interweaving achievement and relational themes were told by 40.9% of the children in Year 1 and 34.7% in Year 5 (the χ^2 however did not reach statistical significance). Parents were included in 44.7% of all the narratives told to TAT Card 2 in Year 1; the wider community was included in 16.5% in Year 1 and 23.6% in Year 5 ($p < 0.01$). The types of relationships portrayed were different across the ethnic groups. For the Chinese children for example, a central theme is the commitment to community – education is seen as a path to helping one’s community. The community was a central theme of the Chinese narratives in 33.3% of the cases in Year 1 and in 46.3% in Year 5. For the Latino groups, parents and family members were more often invoked. Within these relationships, an interplay of affiliative and achievement themes are prevalent and manifest themselves in a variety of forms.

There are a few stories which propose that the protagonist is studying in order to leave the farm and not have to do the hard work. But more often, they

reflect a desire to improve the conditions and people's lives; thus, achieving with the purpose of helping others is a theme in 10.9% of the narratives in Year 1 and increases to 22.4% in Year 5. For the Chinese children, this often happens through introducing new technology. Thus, technology is seen as liberating the farmers from the difficulties, and the protagonist is the one to bring in the technology, after having achieved a good education.

She (the young girl) saw that those people working very hard. It was a long, long time ago. Then she decided that she needed to help these people not letting them work so hard. She wanted to design tractors to plant the field not using the horse and hands to plant the field. She studied many, many things, then she realized her dream. These people were very grateful to her, and she felt happy too because she had realized her dream. These people did not have to use horses and hands to plant anymore. (Chinese girl, 10 year old, Year 1)

Through the process of contextualization of the theme success defined as "Helping or teaching", we noticed that a number of these youth recounted narratives whereby help is offered spontaneously by the protagonist of the story - most prominent for the Haitian group of children (19.7%). In such narratives, the narrator implies that success has been achieved when she has been able to offer help. This help can take on a variety of forms including improving living conditions for others, facilitating the resolution of a relational problem, giving advice, or teaching someone new skills. There are several stories in which the child interprets the people in the field as slaves in which case she/he is saddened by their plight and offers instrumental help, prayer or conversation.

She came back from church and stopped to say Hi to these two poor farmers. And the woman is thinking what she is going to have food later and what she can offer that nice young woman. (Haitian girls, 12 year old, Year 1).

Social awareness

The stories portray an awareness of social inequality and injustice, which increases with time. A major conflict that appears for these children is between the duty to stay on the farm or to leave for the city for an education, often tied to a conflict with the parents, who want the child to work, while the child wants to study. The children frequently express gratitude for the farmer's hard work, as well as appreciation of the sacrifices their parents have made so that the child can study and acquire an education, giving them an opening to a better job and future. The child frequently describes how hard the parents have worked to ensure an education for their children, how they have found ways to save money for the

child's education. Many of the children see their education as a route which will help their parents get out of poverty. Poverty is a salient theme (present in 18.7% in Year 1), and when the parents cannot afford to pay for the child's education, the child both works and studies at the same time.

The girl is about to go to school. She's happy. Her dad is sowing seeds and her mom is resting. She's poor and has a chance to study. Her parents are proud of her. The girl is thankful to her parents because they used their earnings to help her go to school. (Mexican girl, 11 year old, Year 1).

Persistence in working to overcome poverty can be said to one of the main plots of the TAT Card 2 stories. The child sees this situation as unjust and sad, showing high awareness of class differences. The love for studying is frequently denied by poverty, resulting in not being able to afford to buy books or the get an education more generally. The theme of having no money to continue the studies, especially to continue into college comes up frequently.

In some stories, particularly from the Chinese group (13.4%), there is also an awareness of gender discrimination, in the sense that the youth are sensitive to the fact that (particularly in the face of financial burdens) it is the girls that are more often denied an education. The girls that do succeed to acquire an education when barriers are placed in front of them come back to help other girls.

Long time ago, people said that girls should not study and they can only stay home to mind the house chores. There was a girl who studied very well. When the men saw her, they reproached her for not marrying a rich man, but to study. She talked back to the boys, "Why couldn't girls study? Girls are human; so are the boys." She then went to study in foreign country and got a Ph.D. She went back to the village and taught the other girls to prove to the other people that girls can study. (Chinese girl, 13 year old, Year 1).

DISCUSSION

We have listened to the stories projected to the TAT drawings by immigrant children to gain an understanding of their adaptation in a new country, in particular as related to the conceptualizations of achievement and relationships from the perspectives of the children themselves. We have seen that the Thematic Apperception Test, when used as a narrative tool, mirrors the concerns, emotions and social relations of these children. The combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis of the projected narratives has been particularly useful in identifying several nuances of the interplay of affiliative and achievement themes and their longitudinal shifts. We have conducted a detailed analysis of the nuances of interpersonal relations as relevant to success, elicited by this narrative method

through techniques of narrative analysis, categorization, quantification and further contextualization.

The combination of TAT Card 1 and TAT Card 2 was also fruitful, as the two cards pulled for different and mutually complimentary themes. To TAT1 the children more easily project their concerns of the classroom, when many are becoming increasingly disengaged, stressed or overwhelmed. Thus TAT1 elicits more stories of the protagonist in need of help (and able to find it to a different degree). With its more relational content TAT2 elicits stories of community and family involvement, appreciation, obligation and conflict. TAT2 stories position the protagonist as empowered through education, and as the agent of help. While TAT1 allows a projection of the need for assistance, TAT2 allows the protagonist to see him/herself in an empowered position of offering assistance and succeeding in order to support others. This could be interpreted in developmental terms as gaining independence and at the same time social awareness, with TAT2 being able to elicit these dynamics. As children develop, they invoke more stories of individualized achievement, as well as duty to community, of social injustice, gender and race issues.

Unquestionably, the overwhelming definition of success that emerged in all these stories was that of learning and acquiring an education. The stories told by immigrant children reflect the importance of education, optimism and perseverance – the optimism of immigration persists through the several years of the study. However, the reality of hardships and challenge faced in the process of immigration does not reduce the optimism, but it becomes less convincing. The role of others either to motivate or facilitate in achievement emerges frequently in the narratives of immigrant youth.

While many similarities emerged for all immigrant children, the affiliative and achievement patterns are different according to ethnic group. For example, the relationships evoked by the Chinese children were mostly related to the community, while for the Latino groups the central relationships are those within the family. The Haitian group has faced the most trauma and discrimination, and thus tells stories which are least empowered, with fewer positive resolutions, fewer sources of support and almost no changes with time.

Undoubtedly, some of the shifts in the narratives, particularly the greater extent of individuation, can be attributed to developmental processes. Our previous work however, comparing longitudinal changes in narratives, with generational changes (non-immigrant, first generation and second generation immigrants), illustrates that developmental explanations are not sufficient (C. Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2006). Many of the shifts that we observe in the stories are due to the context of immigration itself. These immigration related processes are sometimes empowering and at others alienating and stressful for these youth.

CONCLUSION

The current study has theoretical implications, as it illustrates the intricacies of adolescent development in different cultural contexts, particularly in the context of changing cultural environments. Additionally, it illustrates the power of this specific combination of methods including projected narratives, narrative analysis, quantification and further contextualization of the inductively derived themes. And, importantly, it presents valuable information for educators and counselors working with immigrant youth. Children's perceptions of absence of adequate support in the classroom can have important ramifications for psychological well-being and academic outcomes. At the same time, their striving for education, awareness of community and family responsibility, and of social justice issues can be fostered for optimal development and well-being.

Immigrant children arrive in their host countries with optimism, a love for learning, and a strong motivation for education, which is often a means of giving back to parents and extended family. Their understandings and strivings for success are embedded in relational networks, which include parents, mentors, peers and community. For this optimism and enthusiasm to be sustained, attention needs to be paid to the nuances of affiliative achievement and goals. In environments not conducive to these, negative academic, psychosocial and health consequences can ensue. Understanding these definitions and patterns are important in order to sustain youth's optimism and well-being.

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