11. Intercultural Experiences of Finnish Expatriate Children

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International migration is a diverse and complex phenomenon. One of its contemporary features is temporariness. Contemporary migration includes millions of short-term migrants involved with global working life, such as expatriates and their family members (see, e.g., Ward & Kagitcibasi 2010). An expatriate is defined in this research as an employee working temporarily abroad. Due to globalization, the number of internationally mobile employees has increased worldwide (see, e.g., Warinowski 2011a). As work goes global, more expatriates and their families are in transitions, either in expatriation or repatriation.

This chapter discusses a study (see Warinowski 2012) that examined the consequences of a global working life and international mobility in the lives of children of Finnish expatriates. The study investigates expatriation and repatriation, caused by a parent's global work, as cultural transitions for the children. My aim in the study is to understand the construction of children's experiences in those cultural transitions. Thus, this chapter contributes to migration research, childhood studies, and studies on multicultural education.

Approach to Finnish Expatriate Children's Cultural Transitions

Scholars have examined expatriates extensively. However, expatriates typically move with their families, including a spouse and often at least one child. Expatriate studies have shown that expatriates' family members face more challenges and stress than the expatriates themselves (Shah & Lund 2007; Haslberger & Brewster 2008). Nonetheless, it was not until some time ago that other members of expatriate families began to get some attention in the expatriate research field (e.g., Halsberger & Brewster 2008). The view on children in the expatriate studies has been that of "luggage" that the adults must take with them when they move (Selmer & Lam 2004, 432). In Finland, the concept of *matka-*

laukkulapsi (luggage child) has been used especially in regards to missionary children. In childhood studies, this concept is considered as inappropriate because the metaphor of luggage emphasizes the passive role of a child in transitions (Warinowski 2012, 31—32).

On the other hand, there is a long tradition of studying children who move because of their parent's work, especially in the United States and Japan. This research has been done in a quite self-sufficient way, disconnected from the research on expatriates or other research fields. Among the concepts that appear in the previous research, the most common are U.S.-based "Third Culture Kids" (TCK) and "Global Nomads." Both terms refer to children who have been raised elsewhere than their country of citizenship because of a parent's work-related expatriation (e.g., Bell-Villada & Sichel 2011, 3). I am using the concept of "TCK research" to refer to all the separate studies that have previously been done concerning expatriate children (Warinowski 2012).

There have been several difficulties within TCK research (see Warinowski 2012). One of the challenges is that TCK research deals with conceptual fluidity. TCK research has also been nation-centric and, thus, context-specific in its nature. European studies on TCK have been scarce. There has been a shortage of TCK studies in Finland too, until Warinowski's 2012 study, which this chapter is based on. Many studies have concentrated on English-speaking children who have several advantages: a language to communicate globally, a vast international school network, and large and lively expatriate communities all over the world. The situation of a Finnish child of an expatriate is different from that of an English-speaking child (Warinowski 2011b).

The current study examines the consequences of macro-level phenomena — global working life and international mobility — on a micro level, in the life of a child. I examine children with the concept of expatriate children (EC), which has not been used regularly in previous studies (Warinowski 2011b, 2012). The concept of EC refers to children who move temporarily abroad with their families because of a parent's work (Warinowski 2012). I associate the concept of expatriate in this study with the concept of children in order to emphasize this macro-level linkage to expatriates' work and international mobility.

The situation of EC as an internationally mobile group does not only concern traditional "cultural" issues, such as ethnicity and language, but also social class, as it is an important factor shaping EC's experiences. Expatriates are typically highly-skilled and most expatriate families represent the middle class. Thus, compared with other migrant children in transition, EC do have certain advantages. Their families are typically well-to-do, and the children have opportunities to travel and obtain intercultural experiences, and, consequently, to develop a global mindset. Families also have many resources to draw from to support their children. (Warinowski 2012.) The various challenges that these children face are less known by scholars.

In this chapter, "cultural" refers especially to the various cultural contexts of living. During cultural transitions, EC undergo diverse, simultaneous changes of different forms (Nette & Hayden 2007; Grimshaw & Sears 2008). Almost everything in an EC's life is changing in expatriation and repatriation processes. These changes include, in the

case of Finnish EC, school and schooling system, peers, language, as well as the country of residence (Warinowski 2012). The family is the only permanent context during the transitional processes, though not even the family is unchanging. Thus, cultural learning is much needed in these transitions.

This study uses a childhood study approach to investigate children's experiences linked with international mobility. The above-mentioned linkage between macro (international mobility) and micro processes (children's experiences) is typical for childhood studies (e.g., Alanen 2009). Furthermore, I define children in this study according to the childhood study approach (e.g., Uprichard 2009) as 0—18-year-old children and adolescents. I use child-centric research methods and conceptual approach to children, which are also linked to childhood studies. I also employ central concepts of childhood studies, such as agency and experience. I consider EC as active participants: instead of just "adjusting," they are actively learning, doing, acting, participating, and constructing their identities in specific social contexts. EC are not just "luggage" adults take with them when the parents are dealing with the processes of international migration.

EC face dual transitions between the country of citizenship, Finland, and the country where their parents are assigned to. Here, I define these two transitions — expatriation and repatriation — as cultural transitions that EC undergo. Although there has been extensive research on cultural transitions in general, the focus has tended to be on one transition only (e.g., König 2009), and the expatriation research has generally focused on the expatriation stage (Szkudlarek 2010). Thus, only a few previous studies emphasize both transitions. These studies consider sojourners' (Sussman 2002) or children's (Kanno 2000; Fail, Thompson & Walker 2004; see also, König 2009) cultural identities in the processes of expatriation and repatriation. The present study recognizes both expatriation and repatriation as dual overlapping cultural transitions for EC.

Expatriate Children's Intercultural Experiences

Mobility is widely known to be a stressful experience for adults (e.g., Oishi, Krochik, Roth & Sherman 2012). Transitions can have even more severe and long-lasting effects on children as compared to adults, because these transitions take place at a highly impressionable developmental age (Nette & Hayden 2007; Grimsaw & Sears 2008). For instance, as a long-term consequence of cultural transitions, children can have difficulties in identity construction (e.g., Nette & Hayden 2007). Also, the roles of children and adults are different in the family. Children normally lack control over moving. Thus, mobility is bound to be a more demanding, even traumatic experience for children (Oishi et al. 2012, 153). Studies on cultural transitions have mainly focused on adults (Dobson 2009). In the field of migration research, the importance of investigating migrants' experiences, and especially migrant children's experiences, has recently been discussed (e.g., Gaytán, Carhill & Suárez-Orozco 2007; Dobson 2009). Besides migration

research, this study draws inspiration from the childhood study approach. Children's own views, voices, and experiences have been at the centre of childhood study approaches (see, e.g., Alanen 2009).

This study concentrates on the cultural transitions of expatriation and repatriation with a special focus on intercultural experiences of EC. Experiences can be examined at least from three viewpoints: narrative, phenomenological, and sociocultural (Warinowski 2012). The current study combines sociocultural and phenomenological views on studying experience. Both approaches highlight two concepts, contextuality and agency (Warinowski 2012), which are also central in childhood research. In this study, the cultural contexts of transitions are important, and I see children as active participants in these contexts.

According to the socio-cultural view on experiences, EC's transitional experiences can be seen as socially and culturally constructed (Tardif-Williams & Fisher 2009; Warinowski 2012). From this viewpoint, cultural learning is considered focal. Thus, EC's experiences are associated with cultural learning. EC's experiences are learning experiences which comprise three dimensions: emotional, social, and cognitive (Illeris 2002, 2007). Accordingly, as noted above, I analyze EC's intercultural experiences as emotions, actions, and identity (Warinowski 2012).

Previously, I have investigated parents' views on their children's adaptation to cultural transitions of expatriation and repatriation (Warinowski 2012). According to my findings, parents' impressions of EC's adaptation were extremely positive. In this chapter, I examine children's own views on their transitions to find out whether children also found transitions as purely positive experiences. Thus, the aim of this chapter is to understand the construction of Finnish EC's experiences in the cultural transitions.

Data and Methods

The data consist of interview data with self-report measures gathered from children. I used the childhood study approach in the data collecting.

Participants

Eight children participated in this study. The criteria for the interviewee selection were the following: (1) they were enrolled in a comprehensive school after repatriation in a Finnish city, (2) they attended a local school both abroad and after repatriation, instead of an international school, (3) they had lived abroad in a European or a North American city, and (4) during the expatriation, they were at least three years old. There were two criteria for the parents: they were both Finnish (born in Finland) and the father of the

family had been an expatriate while living abroad. Thus, these children were quite typical concerning their background and adjustment processes (see Warinowski 2012). The children were between the ages of 9 and 15 years and most of them (n = 6) were girls. The children's background information can be seen in Table 23.

Table 23. Children's background information[1]

Child	Age: Study Moment	Age: Expatriation	Age: Repatriation	Years of Living Abroad	Years from Repatriation	Continent Where Lived	Type of Class in Current School
Amanda	14–15	4–5	6–7	2–3	Over 3	Europe	Language class
Matilda	**12–13**	**8–9**	**8–9**	**Less than 1**	**2–3**	**North America**	**Finnish class**
Julius	14–15	8–9	10–11	1–2	2–3	North America	Finnish class
Simo	**8–9**	**6–7**	**6–7**	**1–2**	**1–2**	**Europe**	**Language class**
Anniina	8–9	4–5	6–7	2–3	2–3	North America	Language class
Helmi	8–9	4–5	6–7	1–2	1–2	North America	Finnish class
Elli	**12–13**	**6–7**	**10–11**	**Over 3**	**Less than 1**	**North America**	**Language class**
Emma	8–9	4–5	6–7	1–2	2–3	Europe	Language class

According to the survey data of parents of 333 EC that I analyzed previously, the parents' general views on their children's adjustment to transitions of expatriation and repatriation were extremely positive (Warinowski 2012). Moreover, according to the parents of the interviewees for this study, the children had the average amount (which was small) of adjustment problems (Warinowski 2012, 164).

As this study concerned children and their personal experiences, I took research ethics into account during the whole research process. For example, I used pseudonyms in presenting the findings (e.g., Table 23). I secured the anonymity of the children, for example, by using categories instead of specific data (see Table 23). I received consent for participating in the study from the parents, but also from the children. In the beginning of every interview, I explained what kind of a study this was and what the children's rights were. For example, the children gave consent for the pseudonyms used for them. (Warinowski 2012.)

[1] Bold text: the children whose experiences are represented more thoroughly in the findings (see also Data analyses).

Methods

The primary way of collecting data with EC was personal interviews conducted in 2009. I applied the childhood study approach during the data collection. I designed the methods for collecting data to be child friendly, motivating, and innovative (Punch 2002; Mason 2006; Taylor & Coffey 2009). I mixed different methods in the data collection (Mason 2006; Liebenberg 2009). I used an applied stimulated-recall approach in the interviews. In addition, I utilized computer-operated visual stimuli (Liebenberg 2009). A PowerPoint presentation of 34 slides with focal words, pictures, and smileys formed the frame for the interview. I showed the PowerPoint presentation from my laptop while sitting in the child's room, usually on the bed. This made the interview more structured and easier to answer, and the laptop made the situation more relaxing for the children. I divided the structure of the interview into three viewpoints on transitions:

1. Chronological process (in Finland, abroad, in Finland)
2. Cultural contexts (home, school, other significant places)
3. Dimensions of experience (emotions, actions, and identity).

A self-report measure for one of the dimensions of experience, cultural identity, complemented the interview. I saw children's identities as contextual and situational (e.g., Weinreich 2009). I used the conception of intercultural identity as a theoretical standpoint (see, Kim 2008). In Kim's (2008) integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation, she critiques the static perspective on cultural identity and emphasizes the complex and evolving nature of identity and its systemic account. According to her, intercultural identity is an extension of cultural identity. Intercultural identity represents the phenomenon of identity adaptation.

Because the children were seen as active participants in the interview situation, it was logical that they used the self-report measure. The children were treated as active constructors of their identity, and, thus, they could make their own identity visible and, at the same time, rebuild their identity. The situations concerning identity construction in the PowerPoint presentation were the following:

1. Abroad (expatriation)
    - at home
    - at school
    - at another place (hobby, shopping etc.)
2. In Finland (repatriation)
    - at home
    - at school
    - at another place.

According to the hybrid view on intercultural identity, EC are seen as negotiating their identity situationally. Their identity is not simply fixed with one or two cultures, but shifts in-between them. In the scale designed as a self-report measure, "interculturalness" can be seen concretely and visually by a space between flags at both ends of the scale (see Figure 6).

The children estimated their identity in relation to Finland and the country where they had lived abroad at the same time. The question was "What did you think at home/at school/at another place?" In the PowerPoint slide, flags of Finland and the country in which the family had lived abroad were presented with a 9-point scale (Finnish 4 =completely Finnish, 3F, 2F, 1F, 0, American/European 1, 2A/E, 3A/E, 4A/E =completely local in North America or Europe) (Figure 6). I had three alternatives/countries where the children had lived: the United States, France, or the United Kingdom. A child had only two flags on her/his scale: the Finnish and the flag of the country where (s)he had lived abroad (Figure 6). The children chose one of the rankings in each context and situation. After that, they explained in the interview why they chose that ranking. I used the ranking as a stimulus for the interview.

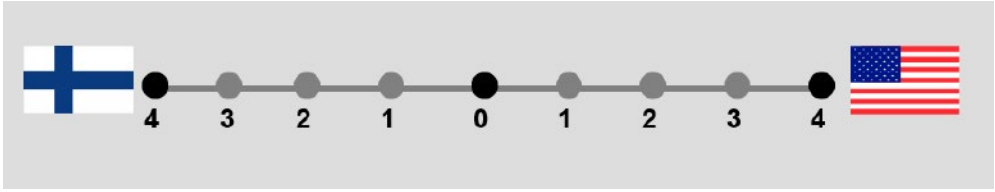

Figure 6. An example of the self-report measure of the interview

Data Analysis

I analyzed the interview data using an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009). I found themes for all three categories of experiences. When reporting the findings, I included only themes that at least half of the children mentioned. (Warinowski 2012). These main themes and their subthemes can be found in Table 24.

I present the findings of the IPA in the following sections by focusing on one child's experiences (see, e.g., Smith 1999). These children are Elli for emotions, Simo for actions, and Matilda for identity.

Table 24. Main themes and subthemes of the interviews

Dimension of Experience	Main Themes	Subthemes
1 Emotions	1.1 Sense of longing	Longing linked with peer relations Longing linked with family relations (relatives) Ambivalence of emotions
	1.2 Home as a space and an emotion	Feeling of home Details of physical space Living abroad as a form of travelling
2 Actions	2.1 Significant places	Park as a significant place Schoolyard as a significant place
	2.2 Active agency	Child's active agency Hobbies Minor role of ICT in child's actions Mother's active agency
3 Identity	3.1 Identity linked with language	Identity linked with media Identity conceptually hidden
	3.2 Identity linked with peer relations	Peer relationships with local children Experience of otherness

Expatriate Children's Intercultural Experiences

I present next the findings on EC's intercultural experiences in transitions of expatriation and repatriation. The findings are divided into three parts (children's emotions, actions, and identity) according to the three dimensions of experiences.

Expatriate Children's Emotions

Emotions defined deeply EC's transitions. The two main themes concerning emotions were (1) a sense of longing and (2) home as a space and an emotion. This section focuses on Elli, who was a 12-year old girl at the time of data gathering.

Sense of Longing

Children's experiences were defined by a sense of longing. The sense of longing had three subthemes: (1) longing linked with peer relations, (2) longing linked with family relations (relatives), and (3) the ambivalence of emotions.

(1) Peer relations were in the core of EC's longing. Peer relationships are important cultural contexts in transitions for EC in general (see, Dixon & Hayden 2008; Weeks, Weeks & Willis-Muller 2010). The finding that peer relations were at the core of EC's longing corresponds with previous studies (e.g., Dixon & Hayden 2008; Hervey 2009). Longing for peers was especially associated with repatriation, like in Elli's case, but also with expatriation, like in Anniina's case. Children missed friends who were living in the country from where they had moved away.

Almost equal in centrality for the children was longing linked with relatives (2). EC longed especially for their grandparents while living abroad. Previous studies have found that connections to relatives are important for EC (e.g., Oksanen 2006; Hyvönen 2009). Grandparents' support in transitions can also be important for children, as they can offer continuity and safety for their grandchildren (Rotkirch, Söderling & Fågel 2010), which are the two things that EC desperately need in transitions. Elli stated one solution for the longing for her grandparents: "They visited us sometimes. We arranged even an own apartment for the granny and grandpa in the building next to us." This kind of support was only possible because of the families' economical resources linked with their social class.

The third subtheme was (3) the ambivalence of emotions. As noted before, according to the parents, transitions were positive experiences for the children. The children mentioned positive things about the transitions in the interviews, but they also had negative feelings about them. In other words, EC's emotions were ambivalent. Elli told about her feelings after repatriation as follows:

> *And now I would want to move back there more than anything. I am still kind of sad. But in the beginning when we moved, I cried many evenings, because I didn't want to be here. Also in the morning I was grieving. And I think that if a child moves to America they should stay there, otherwise there will be horrible consequences. It is not so nice to suffer that you have to live in Finland.*

Elli's experiences concerning repatriation were very negative. Probably she was also depressed. The parents' overtly positive view on their children's transitions is not, thus, completely realistic.

Home as a Space and an Emotion

The theme "Home as a space and an emotion" also had three subthemes: (1) the feeling of home, (2) the details of a physical space, and (3) living abroad as a form of travelling.

(1) The feeling of home was an important theme in EC's transitional experiences. Home becomes visible in transitions; the meaning of home is activated when moving away from "home" (Vilkko 2010). EC's feeling of home was twofold in its character. First, home was experienced emotionally, as a sense of home. This concept is associated with

a sense of belonging, which is defined as a feeling about where the "home" is situated (Nette & Hayden 2007, 437). The sense of home was especially directed towards the home abroad, as in Elli's case, but it could also be targeted towards home in Finland. Second, the children saw home as a physical space (Vilkko 1998), as the house or the apartment where the family lived. For Elli, the idea of home as a physical space intertwined with its aesthetics. In Elli's case, renovating the apartment while living abroad contributed to her positive feelings about home. The emotion and physical space of home were intertwined in Elli's experiences. Also, her adjustment to living abroad or in Finland and the appreciation of the aesthetics of her home went hand in hand. When she enjoyed her living arrangement, she thought highly of her home, and vice versa. Renovating supported her adjustment.

(2) Details of a physical space were important for EC. For example, Elli explained how the ugliness of the green carpets in the apartment was a major issue for her. For her, it was the aesthetics of the space that counted. Also Julius mentioned carpets. He appreciated the soft wall-to-wall carpets which was quite new to him while living in North America. A swimming pool or a bath tub could also be something special for the children while living abroad. The children in this study were highly detail-oriented.

The third theme was (3) living abroad as a form of travelling. Elli told about her first time living abroad in the following way: "We were there just like being on an outing." She was then under school age. During her second time living abroad, she was of school age and her experience of living abroad was different. Elli argued that the school was the place that attached her to the environment. Elli was, thus, in agreement with Bruner (1996), who argues that the school functions an entry to the local culture.

Expatriate Children's Actions

In analyzing the actions in EC's experiences, (1) significant places were focal. Additionally, the discussion about the children's (2) active agency was significant. It is Simo, a 9-year old boy, whose actions, participation, and agency are in focus.

Significant Places

EC's actions connected to places had great subjective significance for them. Two significant places outside home were frequently mentioned in the interviews, in addition to home: (1) parks and (2) the schoolyard. Interestingly, both spaces for children's active participation were outdoor places.

(1) Parks were significant places for the EC while living abroad. They are important places for children in general (e.g., Hill & Wager 2009), especially in urban environments. The children had lived in a European or North American city where natural environ-

ments were scarce. Thus, the children could connect with the nature by spending time in parks. Perhaps playing outdoors is even more important for Finnish EC because of cultural traditions which emphasize outdoor-living during childhood (e.g., babies often sleep outside). During his interview, Simo told about his time in a park in the following way: "With mom we were spending awfully lot of time there in the park, in a large nearby park." In the park, Simo was playing in the playground, for example, climbing, walking in a forest-like environment, and playing with the ball.

(2) The schoolyard was another significant place for Simo. Even though the schoolyard was a tiny urban space, it offered natural experiences. Simo narrated his actions in the schoolyard as follows:

> *Well, at very first alone, when I wasn't familiar with it, I looked at all kinds of places there in the yard, even though it was a pretty boring asphalt yard. I just looked at places, looking for insects in that one green spot, where plenty of trees and something like that were.*

Thus, the schoolyard does not need to be overly rich and nature-like. An urban space can offer stimulus for children too. Details, like insects, are also important to children in an outdoor environment.

Active Agency

As mentioned above, the children were active agents in their families and beyond. Agency was a central concept in constructing EC's experiences. The theme of active agency had four subthemes: (1) the child's active agency, (2) hobbies, (3) the minor role of computer technology in the child's actions, and (4) the mother's active agency.

Concerning Simo's (1) active agency, a gradual process of enlarging his agency can be seen. First, Simo was an observer in the schoolyard. He "watched," "looked for," and "found" (cf. Gallacher & Gallagher 2008). After a while, he "walked," "played," and "climbed." These actions were quite similar to the park context described above. Localizing the park and the schoolyard as significant places in EC's interpretations can be explained particularly through children's actions and agency. EC's agency was mostly defined as activities typical for children.

Interestingly, two EC also had situations of decision-making that are typically included in the field of adults' agency only. The children had adult-like power in decision-making in two cases, when the family decided about the house abroad and about the repatriation time. One of these "overly active agents" was Matilda. She told about her agency in the following way: "In the last part (of living abroad), I had to decide if we are still two years (abroad). But then I didn't want to be there anymore." The two overly active children told that they regretted afterwards the big decisions they had made, and blamed themselves for the decisions. I call this kind of a phenomenon "over agency."

Simo's agency also connected with (2) hobbies. For him, swimming was an important hobby. Hobbies especially defined the time after repatriation. Interestingly, hobbies were not transnational: there was a lack of continuity between the children's hobbies while living abroad and after moving back to Finland. Living abroad, hobbies were connected to the school context, which was not the case in Finland. Many of the interviewed children lived in North America, where extracurricular activities in the school context are common. This is not the case in Finland, where hobbies are typically arranged outside the school.

When thinking about children's contemporary life especially in the context of international transitions, the use of computer technology could have significant role in EC's life. However, (3) computers had only a minor role in the children's actions. This result can have something to do with the time of data gathering (2009). Currently, the role of computers could be bigger in EC's experiences, as computer technology is highly developed and the use of social media has become more central in children's everyday life.

Not only were the EC active but also their (4) mothers had active agency. The mothers' role was especially important in supporting the children's interaction with peers, giving emotional support, and enhancing language learning. The time shared by the mother and the child was significant for the children. The mothers' active role is especially typical for middle-class families. Their activity is crucial in social reproduction of the middle class (e.g., Reay 2005). Therefore, this finding is associated with the social class of expatriate families. Interestingly, the children did not talk about their fathers a lot. However, the fathers were the expatriates and, thus, the reason behind the transitions. It was the fathers who made these children to become EC. Because of their expatriate role as the breadwinner of the family, working for long hours while living abroad, and not forgetting the middle-class family ideal with an active mother, the fathers' role was small in the children's interviews. The role of the father could be more active if the data were gathered now: female expatriates are becoming more and more common (e.g., Harris 2004) and the fathers' role in their children's lives are becoming more diverse in Finland (Mykkänen & Aalto 2010).

Expatriate Children's Cultural Identity

Concerning the identity dimension of EC's experiences, two main themes emerged. These two themes were (1) identity and language, and (2) identity and peer relations. I focus here specifically on 12-year old Matilda's cultural identity construction.

Identity and Language

Links between cultural identity and language are focal in sociocultural, phenomenological, and postmodern approaches towards identity. Some TCK studies (e.g.,

Grimshaw & Sears 2008) have also reported this intertwining. This connection was obvious for the Finnish EC. It was not only "languages" but also smaller differences that mattered for the children. For example, it was important for the children's identity whether American English or British English was used at school in Finland. This was especially important for Elli. Instead of using the concept of English, she used the term "American," pointing to the language spoken in North America. The theme "identity linked with language" had two subthemes: (1) identity linked with media and (2) conceptually hidden identity.

The children (1) linked identity with media. TV channels targeted to children were important for children especially in North America. Channels targeted to children working 24/7, such as Disney Channel and Cartoon Network, were something different from the Finnish TV scene. TV channels were also important for language learning in a motivating way. In this context, too, computers were mentioned rarely.

In one sense identity and language did not connect: children did not know any of the English or Finnish concepts (TCK, global nomad, *matkalaukkulapsi*) used for them as a group. In this sense, their (2) identity was conceptually hidden from the children. Not knowing a grouping concept which could explain one's experiences causes a situation where a child sees her/his problems as personal without links to a group of people sharing the same kinds of challenges (see Baker Cottrell 2011).

Identity and Peer Relations

The children's cultural identities were also constructed in their peer relationships. Scholars have underlined the significance of peer relationships for children's identity construction (e.g., Root 2003). Peer relations are especially central in identity construction in the context of cultural transitions (Prinstein & Dodge 2008, 8—9). The theme of identity and peer relations had two subthemes: (1) peer relationships with local children and (2) experiences of otherness.

(1) Peer relationships with local children are especially typical for Finnish EC. For Matilda, identity construction took place particularly in the school context (cf. Hammack 2008). As a matter of fact, she discussed issues of embodiment and race as follows: "Since I was so awfully different. For example, my best friend was dark. Pretty many were dark and I was awfully the 'captain of a lime ship.'" This Finnish saying shows the physical difference that Matilda felt while living abroad. But for Matilda, dissimilarity was a positive experience and a resource. She described the situation like this: "I was sort of quite popular because I was a foreigner and like that." Being a white, middle-class child had some advantages for Matilda. While Matilda experienced dissimilarity positively, also (2) experiences of otherness were reported. For example, after repatriation, Elli had strong feelings of otherness. EC can be "hidden migrants" (cf. Pollock & van Reken 2009). They do not look different from the dominant population but think and feel differ-

ent. While others see them as Finns, their experiences can bear more resemblance to migrants than native-born children.

The data about EC's identity was gathered not only by interviewing but also through self-report measures (Table 25). The first finding concerning this set of data was that the children of different ages can nicely utilize the self-report measure. The children were acting as agents in their own identity construction also in the interview situation. There was one interesting exception, a 9-year-old girl Emma, who expressed her critical opinion on this measure. When asking about her identity in a specific situation, she answered: "I didn't think anything of that, because little children don't think things like that." Second, there was variation in the EC's self-evaluations in Table 25. Thus, their situational identity varied across time and place. Most of the children did not estimate their identity as being "totally Finnish" after repatriation. Consequently, the situational nature of the children's identity negotiation was captured by these results. EC's identities appeared as situationally constructed, in other words, contextual and dynamic (cf. Kim 2008; Weinreich 2009).

Table 25. Children's own contextual identity assessments[2]

	EXPATRIATION: Places			REPATRIATION: Places		
NAME	HOME	SCHOOL	OTHER PLACE	HOME	SCHOOL	OTHER PLACE
Amanda	Finnish 4	Finnish 1-2	Finnish 2	Finnish 4	Finnish 4	Finnish 4
Matilda	**Finnish 4**	**Finnish 4**	**Finnish 4**	**Finnish 3**	**Finnish 4**	**Finnish 4**
Julius	Finnish 2	Finnish 0-1	Finnish 1-2	Finnish 3-4	Finnish 3-4	Finnish 4
Simo	Finnish 4	Finnish 1-2	Finnish 3	Finnish 4	Finnish 3-4	Finnish 4
Anniina	American 4	American 3	American 4	Finnish 2-3	Finnish 3	Finnish 4
Helmi	American 3	American 3	American 3	Finnish 4	Finnish 4	Finnish 4
Elli	Finnish 3/0	American 4	American 4	American 3	0	Finnish 3
Emma	Finnish 1	0	Finnish 1	Finnish 1	Finnish 1	Finnish 1

The third finding concerning the children's identity was that there were two separate groups among the interviewees (Table 25): a "monocultural" Finnish group and a hybrid, intercultural group. Amanda, Matilda, Julius, and Simo belonged to the quite stable Finnish group. This group was operating only on one side, the Finnish side, of the scale (Table 25, see Figure 6). Anniina, Helmi, and Elli formed the hybrid intercultural group. Interestingly, they all had lived in North America. This group was operating on both sides, Finnish and North American, of the scale (Table 25, see Figure 6). As an exception for these two groups, Emma had a group of her own (Table 25).

[2] Scale: Finnish 4 (=completely Finnish), 3F, 2F, 1F, 0, American/European 1, 2A/E, 3A/E, 4A/E (=completely local in North America or Europe).

Conclusions and Implications

My aim in the current study was to understand the construction of EC's experiences in the cultural transitions of expatriation and repatriation caused by parents' work. I focused on children in expatriate families. I used the childhood study approach to investigate the children's experiences linked with international mobility. Studying the micro level effects of international mobility is important.

I based this study on the findings of the data gathered from the children. According to the previous data gathered from the parents, the children's adaptation in the context of expatriation and repatriation was seen as remarkably successful. This data brought up other aspects beside the parents' positive impressions. According to the children, their experiences had not only positive but also negative tones. Thus, ambivalence is the concept that describes the EC's experiences aptly. Another necessary concept to describe the EC's experiences is agency. Theoretically, I localized the children's experiences along three dimensions: emotions, actions, and identity.

The main finding from the first dimension of experience, emotions, was that the children experienced emotional ambivalence. Comparing these results with the parents' views, it seems that the parents do not notice or understand their children's emotions in the context of expatriation and repatriation. Thus, parents should concentrate on supporting the children's feelings of continuity and emotional well-being during these transitions. Also linked with emotions, the children's experiences were characterized by a sense of longing. They missed their peers and relatives, especially their grandparents. Relationships are dynamic and, thus, continuity is important. Putting a relationship aside in expatriation and reviving that relationship after repatriation can be difficult. Previous studies have reported EC having problems with reestablishing peer relationships after repatriation (e.g., Hervey 2009). Therefore, it is important to keep in touch with friends in Finland while living abroad in order to ease repatriation. In this study, visiting friends abroad after repatriation was one method that the EC used to cope with the sense of longing. Home was seen as an emotional feeling, as a sense of home, and, at the same time, as a physical space. Concerning home as a physical space, small details were important to the children. Parents should remember that small things matter to their children. The finding of the twofold nature of the home, mental and physical, has also been used in in Vilkko's (1998, 2010) studies. Vilkko also mentions an extra dimension for the home: social nature. ECs discussed this viewpoint when they told about their longing for peers and family members.

Considering the second dimension of EC's experiences, actions, the park and the schoolyard appeared as significant places for the children. Both of these places can be seen as natural environments in an urban context. Further research could reveal whether the importance of natural environments for Finnish EC links with childhood in general, with expatriate childhood, or with cultural (Finnish) traditions. According

to this study, children should also have the possibility to enjoy natural environments while living abroad in urban environments.

The EC were active agents concerning their transitions. This agency was mostly participation typical for children. However, there were cases in which the children participated in a way that is usually typical for adults only. In these cases, the children had adult-like power in decision-making, such as when deciding about the house abroad or the repatriation time. I call this phenomenon as "over agency." Supporting EC's agency in transitional contexts should be embraced. At the same time, parents should make age-appropriate boundaries for their children's agency.

The third dimension was cultural identity. I used Kim's (2008) view on intercultural identity as a theoretical standpoint. According to the findings, EC's identity linked with language (e.g., Grimshaw & Sears 2008) and peer relationships (e.g., Root 2003). EC's identities appeared as situationally constructed (e.g., Weinreich 2009) and dynamic (e.g., Kim 2008). The EC's identities were also intercultural in nature (cf. Kim 2008). The EC identities found in this study were parallel to the contemporary view on identities as processual and contextual (e.g., Kim 2008; Weinreich 2009). I identified the EC's identity construction as a process where the child was an active agent in his/her social context.

The children's situational identities were made visible by the self-report measure that supplemented the interviews. The measure was innovative, motivating, and child-centric. Even though Emma had some critical remarks about the visual measure of using flags and scales, the self-report measure proved to be a practical instrument to work with intercultural children when studying their identities. However, further studies are needed to validate this self-report instrument. Based on this measure, I identified two main identity groups of the EC: the monocultural Finnish group and the hybrid intercultural group. Importantly, I found that the identity of all participants in this study was conceptually hidden from themselves. The children did not know any of the concepts used for them in public or academic discussions.

We need concepts to make an identity visible. I have used here the concept of EC (expatriate children) as a general concept for these children, which links them to the work and family context of the parent, and includes both the expatriation and repatriation processes. When considering the children's identity, some of them have intercultural identities, and, therefore, the concept of intercultural children might be useful when referring to them. In the school context after repatriation, these children are return students. This concept could be updated to cover also the EC. (See, Warinowski 2012, 2014.) The concept *per se* is not an issue, as long as there are words that help EC's identities become visible to other people — especially to themselves. Not having any group concept that could explain the EC's experiences makes the children's problems, such as depression, only personal. Without a suitable identity concept, there is no link to a group of people sharing a similar transitional situation and challenges, which could help make sense of their experiences (see Baker Cottrell 2011). The problems and negative

emotions during expatriation and repatriation are not children's personal challenges (their own "fault"), but caused by the transitional processes.

After repatriation to Finland, EC mostly enroll in regular comprehensive schools. In Finnish comprehensive schools, EC are now a hidden group of students. Theoretically, EC are a special group linked closely to other intercultural students and intercultural education. In practice, they are not seen as a specific group of students. Therefore, there is an urgent need to broaden intercultural education to cover all students, not just migrants. EC can be defined as "hidden migrants" after repatriation (cf. Pollock & van Reken 2009). Their experiences can bear more resemblance to migrants than Finns, and, as a matter of fact, many of them are defined as migrants in official statistics when they move back to Finland. Still, others see them only as Finns. EC are situated in a specific space, at the intersection of the stereotyped categories of migrants and Finns. Thus, EC could have an overarching role in bringing these categories together and challenging the borders between the two all too fixed categories.

I gathered the data for this study in comprehensive schools after repatriation. The ex-post-facto design of this study can be seen as its main limitation. When studying a process, the data should be gathered gradually during the process. For practical reasons, which linked with the long duration of the processes and the global scale of the study, this was not unfortunately possible.

This study is located at the intersection of the cultural categories of social class, ethnicity, and language. The middle-class status brings many advantages and several resources to expatriate families. Still, the children of these families can experience challenges, even trauma. Every child should be seen and supported regardless of their background. Families do support their children, but that is not enough. EC should also be seen outside the family.

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