Adaptation Experience of Russian-Speaking Immigrants in Canada

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Abstract : Immigrants in any country undergo an acculturation process which, in other words, means adaptation to other cultures. It can be divided into four strategies: integration (when an immigrant support home and host culture and language), assimilation (supporting only host culture and language), separation (supporting only home culture and language), and marginalization (an immigrant has no interest in supporting none of the cultures or languages). Canada has experienced a rise in the number of Russian speakers who are immigrating to Canada in the last couple of years. Although there are some studies on Russian-speaking immigrants, a small percentage of them have been focusing on their immigration experience in Canada. This is why the present study aimed to analyze the acculturation experience that Russian-speaking immigrants have when they move to Canada. One hundred participants have been surveyed on SurveyMonkey. They have been asked to share their life experience and opinion about their adaptation process, self-identity in terms of language use and cultural feelings, language preferences, and others. The results showed that Russian-speaking immigrants can successfully adapt to Canadian culture and society, and many of them feel at home being in their host country. Interestingly, such feelings have appeared after they spent some years in Canada. The study also found out that after the immigration, participants were more likely to focus on Canada's official languages (English and/or French). However, when they became comfortable with the lifestyle and the language, they switched their attention to Russian language maintenance and home culture preservation.