



# The Cultural Psychology of Acculturation

Dr. Jozefien De Leersnyder



**BAPS Early Career  
Award Address**

**75<sup>th</sup> BAPS@ KU Leuven  
June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022**

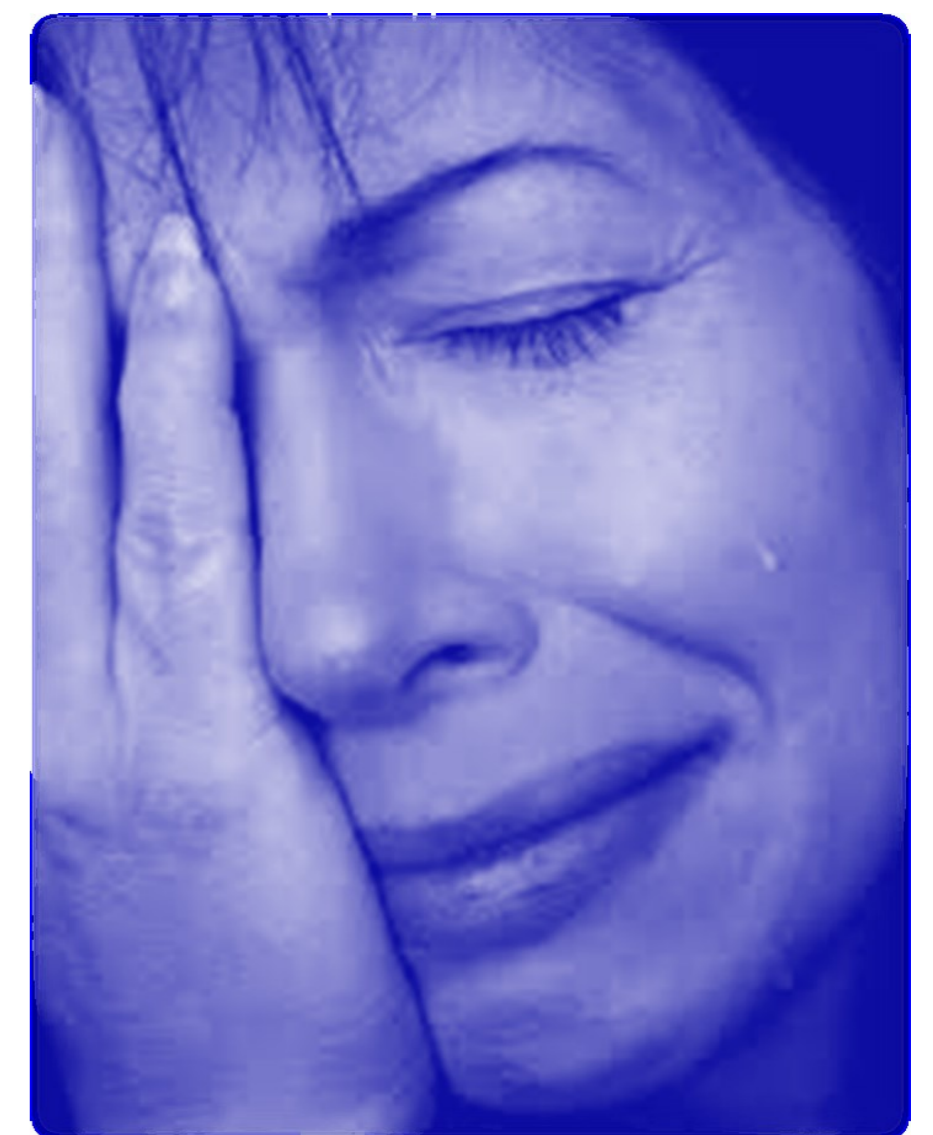
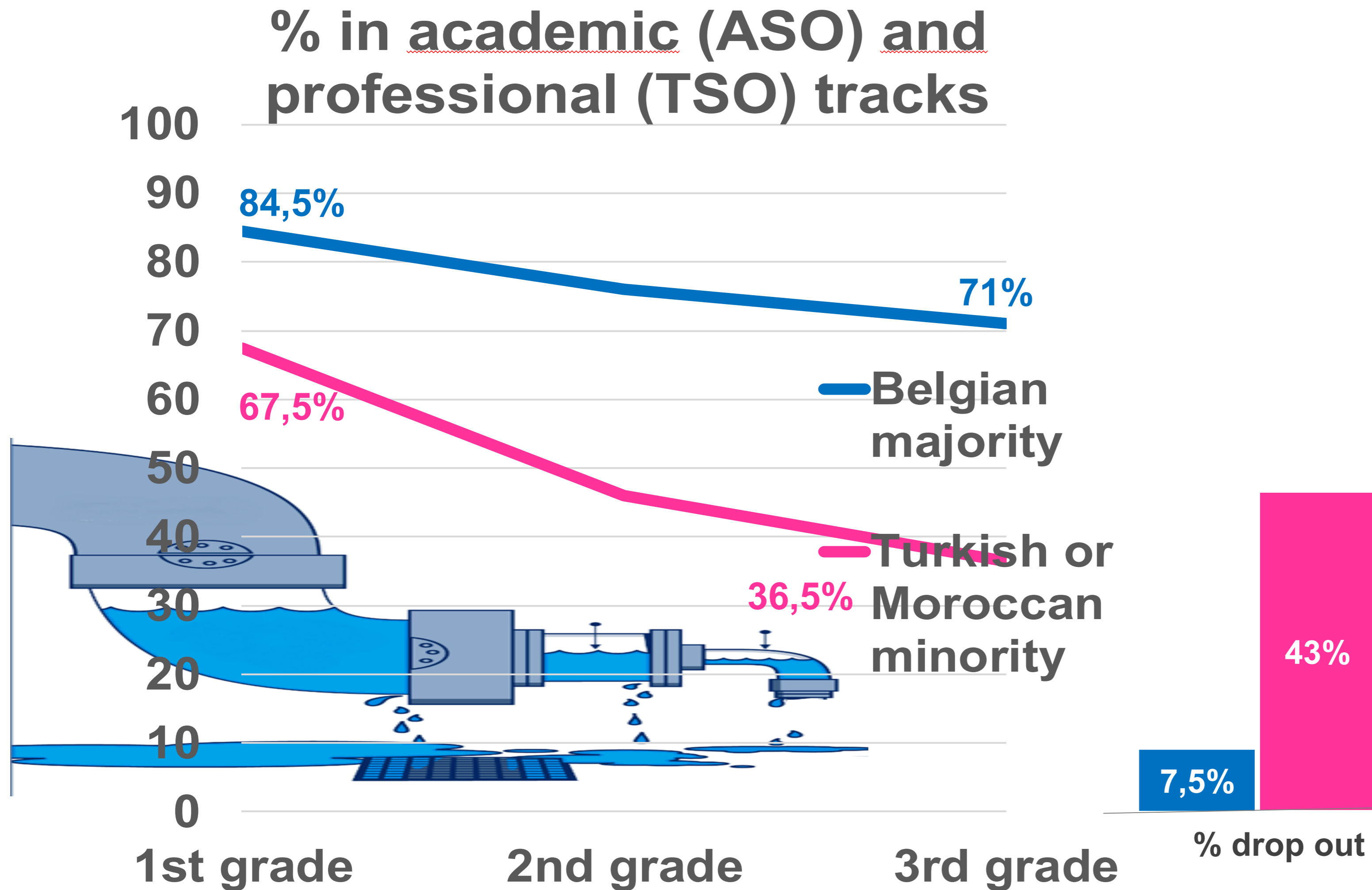
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1/3

1/2



# Structural inequalities



**Societal puzzle:** How can we ensure *all* people to thrive? What (invisible) psychological barriers to well-being and achievement need to be clarified or removed?

1. Psychology of in/exclusion by how with diversity



Routledge  
Taylor & Francis Group

Check for updates

See BAPS 2022 invited symposium on School Climates earlier today

2. Psychology of acculturative change to a new/other context

Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin



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### Where Do My Emotions Belong? A Study of Immigrants' Emotional Acculturation

Jozefien De Leersnyder, Batja Mesquita, Heejung S. Kim

First Published February 28, 2011 | Other | Find in PubMed

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211399103>

Article information

Altmetric 0

#### Abstract

The emotional experiences of people who live together tend to be similar; this is true not only for dyads and groups but also for cultures. It raises the question of whether immigrants' emotions become more similar to host culture patterns of emotional experience; do emotions acculturate? Two studies, on Korean immigrants in the United States (Study 1) and on Turkish immigrants in Belgium (Study 2), measured emotional experiences of immigrants and host group members with the Emotional Patterns Questionnaire. To obtain a measure of the immigrants' emotional similarity to the host group, their individual emotional patterns were correlated to the average pattern of the host group. Immigrants' exposure to and engagement in the host culture, but not their acculturation attitudes, predicted emotional acculturation.



# Acculturation:

Changes in the original culture patterns that result from continuous first-hand contact with another culture



Berry, 1997;  
Ryder, Alden & Paulhus, 2000



It is important to me to maintain the Turkish values and traditions



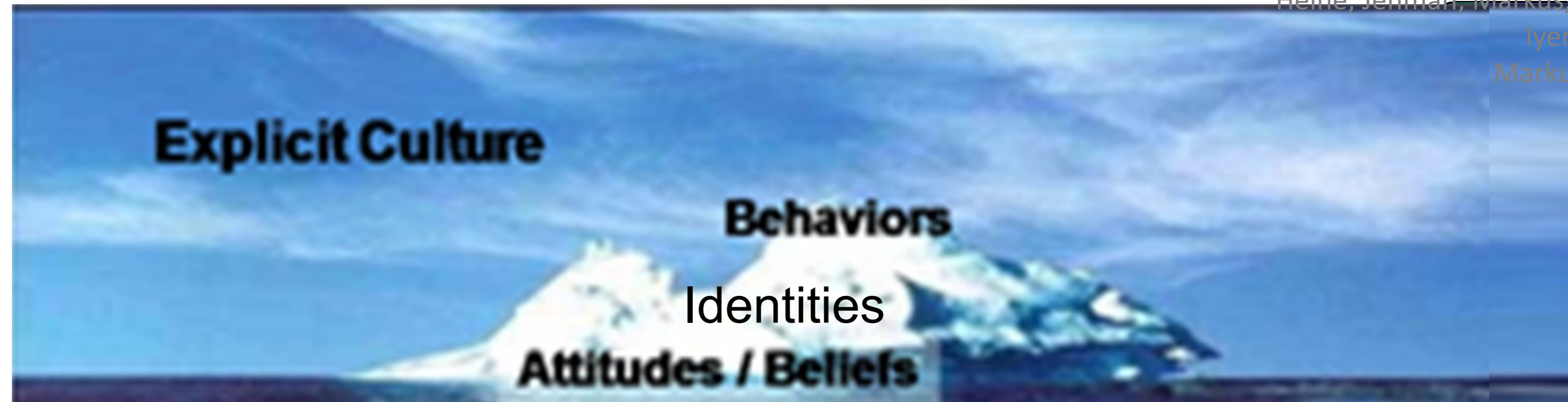
I am interested in having contact with Belgians



Ayşe

I identify as a Turkish Belgian





Heine, Jehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999

Iyengar & Lepper, 1999

Markus & Kitayama, 1991

Mesquita, 2003



**Explicit Culture**

**RQ1: Do other psychological processes also acculturate?**

**RQ2: What is the interplay between acculturation in different domains?**

**RQ3: What are exact micro-processes of acculturative change?**

**RQ4: How do different acculturative processes affect thriving?**

**Insights from cultural psychology**

Self-concept

cognitive

Personality

emotional patterns

Implicit Culture

Mesquita, 2003  
Morris & Peng, 1994  
Singar & Lepar, 1999  
Singar & Kitayama, 1991  
Singar & Leersnyder, 2019  
Singar & Imada, 2010







# Acculturation of emotion



Batja  
Mesquita

Heejung  
Kim

Alba  
Jasini

Fattana  
Mirzada

Özlem  
Kayacan

# Acculturation of self-construal



Erdem  
Yilmaz



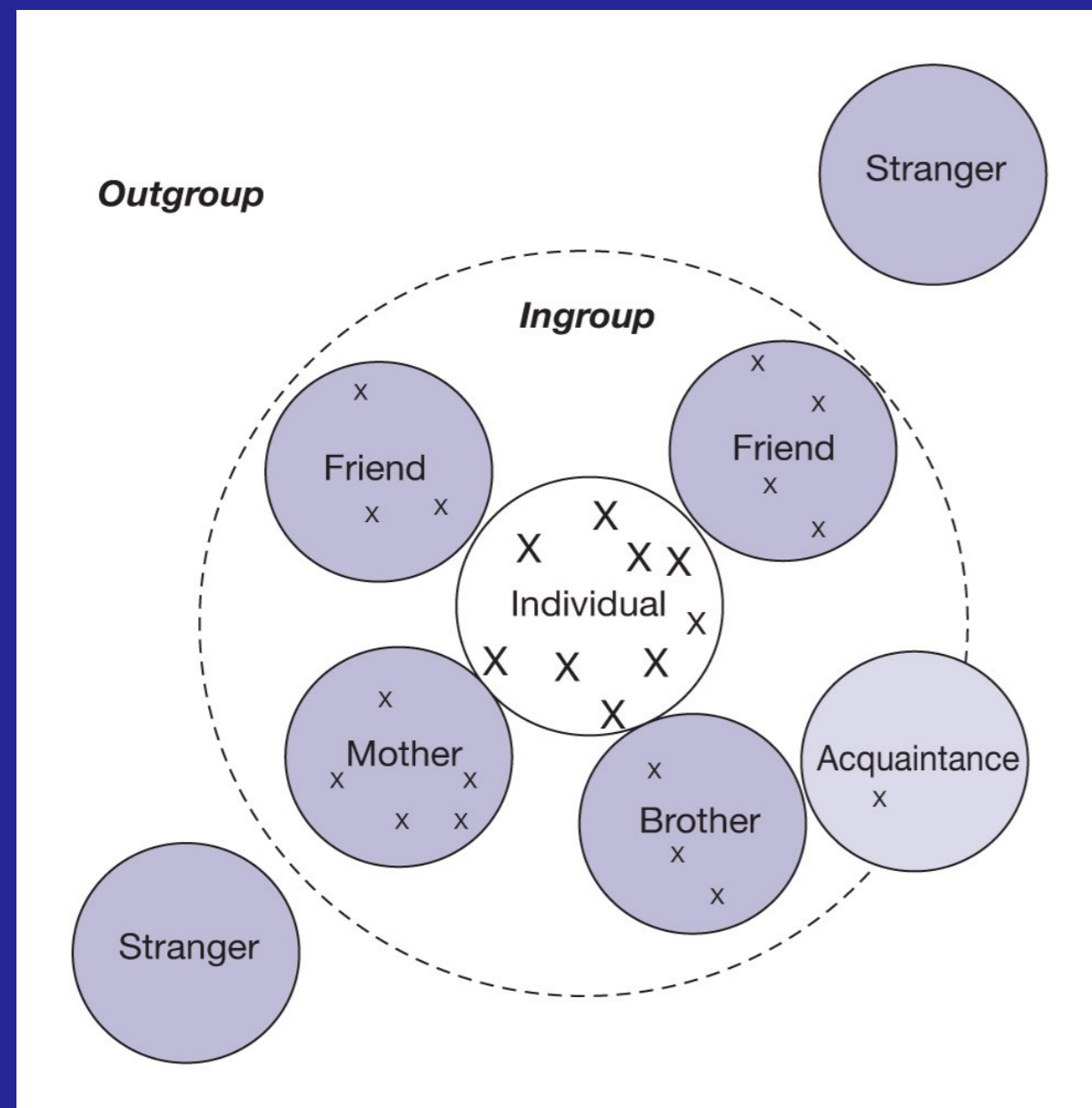
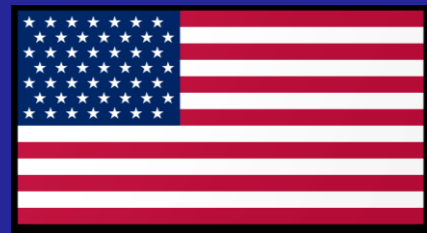
Karen  
Phalet



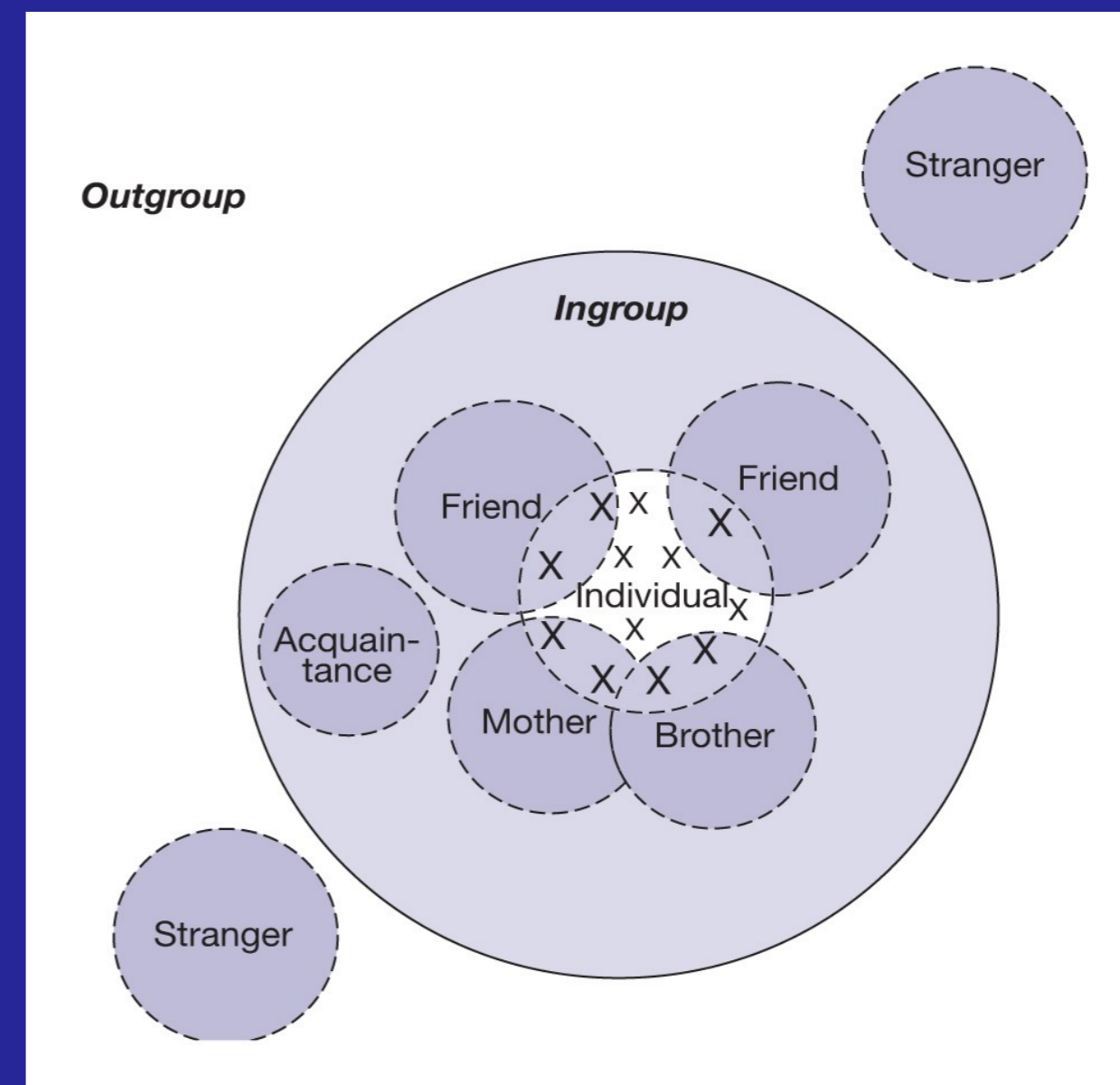
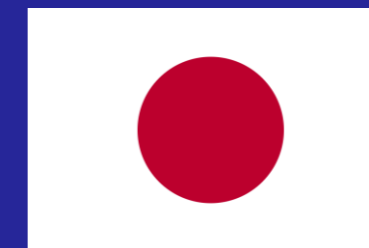
Derya  
Güngör

# There are systematic cultural differences in self-construal that are in line with differences in the most central values and concerns

Independent self



Interdependent self



Markus & Kitayama, 1991  
Kagitcibasi, 2006  
Vignoles et al., 2016



De Leersnyder (Ed.), *forthcoming book Cambridge*

De Leersnyder, Boiger & Mesquita, 2020

Kitayama, Mesquita, & Karasawa, 2006

Mesquita, De Leersnyder, & Boiger, 2016

Tsai, Knutson, & Fung, 2006

Tsai & Clobert, 2019

**There are systematic cultural differences in people's patterns of emotional experience that are in line with culturally salient concerns**

See also: De Leersnyder, J., Koval, P., Kuppens, P., & Mesquita, B. (2018). Emotions and concerns: Situational evidence for their systematic co-occurrence. *Emotion (Washington, D.C.)*, 18(4), 597–614.

See also: De Leersnyder, J., \*Mirzada, F., & Mesquita, B. in preparation. *What are emotions about? The central role of cultural concerns in emotional experience*. Manuscript in preparation.

# ACCULTURATION OF EMOTIONS



# ACCULTURATION OF EMOTIONS



angry



Not at all

A bit

Extremely



Belgian team

angry



Not at all

A bit

Extremely

# Studies: Overview


## Cross-sectional self-report

Koreans adults  
in US

 **n = 47**  
72% first generation

 **n = 44**  
Matched on age, gender, and education

Turkish adults  
in Belgium

 **n = 144**  
41% first generation

 **n = 83**  
Matched on age, gender, and education

## 3y longitudinal

Minority youth  
in Belgium

 **n = 1258**  
1st - 3rd generation

 **n = 980**  
Matched on age, gender, and education

## Social network

Minority youth  
in Belgium

 **n = 514**  
1st - 3rd generation

 **n = 980**  
Matched on age, gender, and education


## Cross-sectional self-report

Koreans adults  
in US

 **n = 47**  
72% first generation

 **n = 80**  
Matched on age, gender, and education

Turkish adults  
in Belgium

 **n = 144**  
41% first generation

 **n = 223**  
College students

## Experiments priming culture


### Self-report

Turkish Belgians

 **n = 84**  
100% second generation

### Behavioral coding

Turkish Belgians

 **n = 56**  
50% first generation

# Emotional Patterns Questionnaire

**Describe an emotional situation that matches a prompt, varying across:**

**Valence** (positive vs. negative emotions)

**Social Engagement** (Autonomy vs. Relatedness/Community)

**Relationship Context** (Home vs. Work/School)

**Example prompt:**

Please think about an occasion at your work or school in which you felt bad about yourself (e.g. you were angry, frustrated,...):

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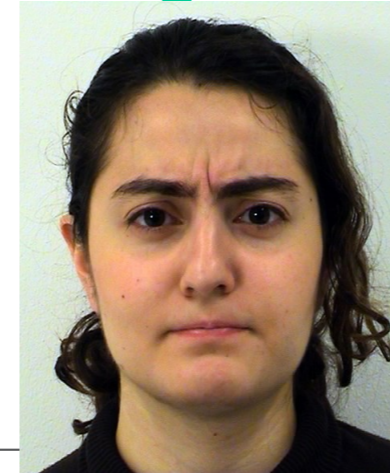
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Belgian man



Ayse









# Studies: Overview




## STUDY 1

### Kagitcibasi scale

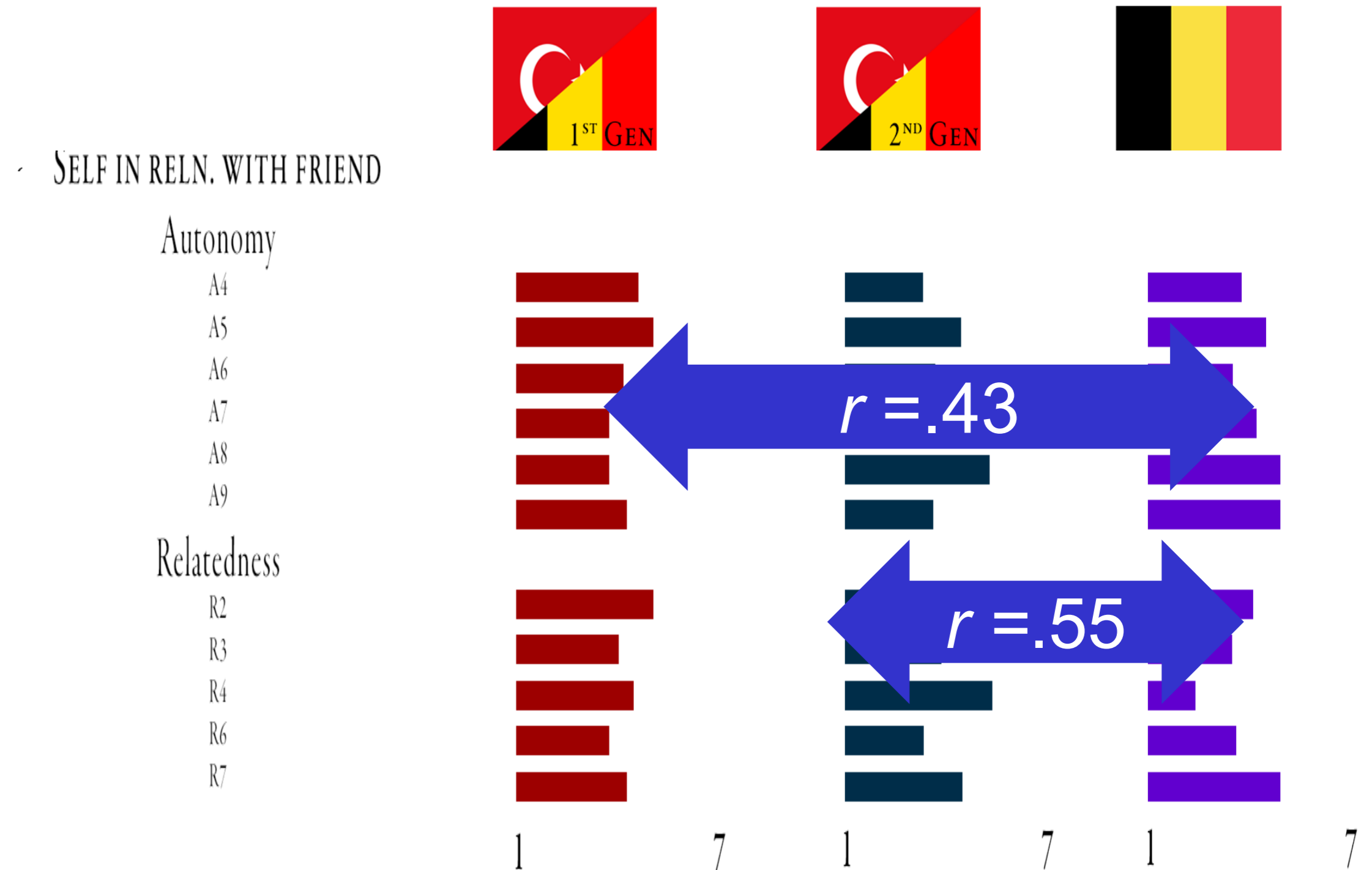
-  Majority Belgians (n = 46, M<sub>age</sub>=32)
-  1<sup>st</sup> Gen. Turkish Belgians (n = 36, M<sub>age</sub>=37)
-  2<sup>nd</sup> Gen. Turkish Belgians (n = 49, M<sub>age</sub>=26)
-  Majority Turks (n = 147, M<sub>age</sub>=21)

## STUDY 2

### Vignoles scale

-  Majority British (n = 133, M<sub>age</sub>=36)
-  Majority Chinese (n = 110, M<sub>age</sub>=29)
-  Chinese British (n = 194, M<sub>age</sub>=29)

## Cultural fit of self-construals



See also: Güngör, D., Bornstein, M. H., De Leersnyder, J., Cote, L., Ceulemans, E., & Mesquita, B. (2013). **Acculturation of Personality: A Three-Culture Study of Japanese, Japanese Americans, and European Americans.** *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 44(5), 701–718. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022112470749>

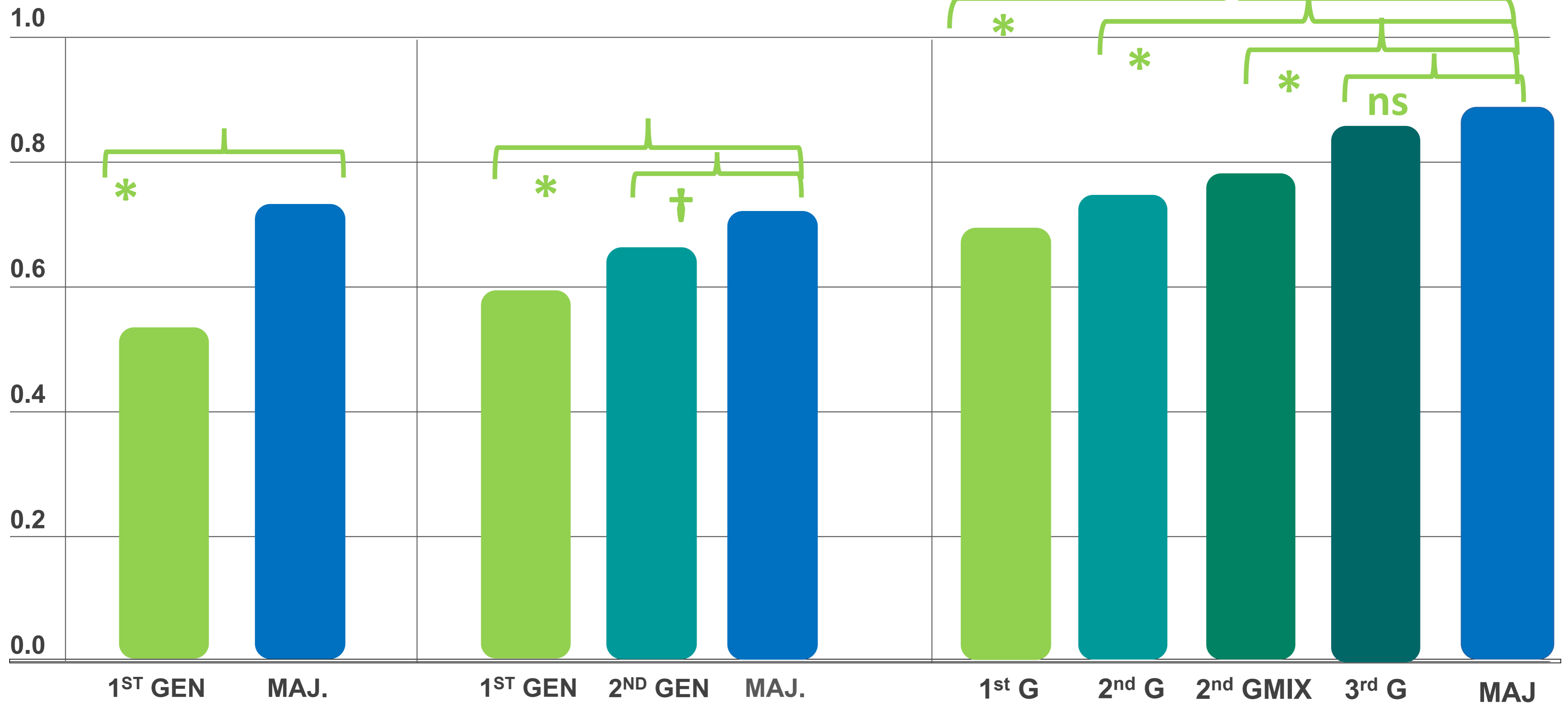
**RQ1: Do other psychological processes also acculturate?**

**Study 1:  
Koreans in US**

**Study 2:  
Turks in Belgium**

**Study 3:  
Minority Youth in Belgium**

Emotional fit with majority pattern



# Cultural exposure matters

## Study 1: Koreans in US

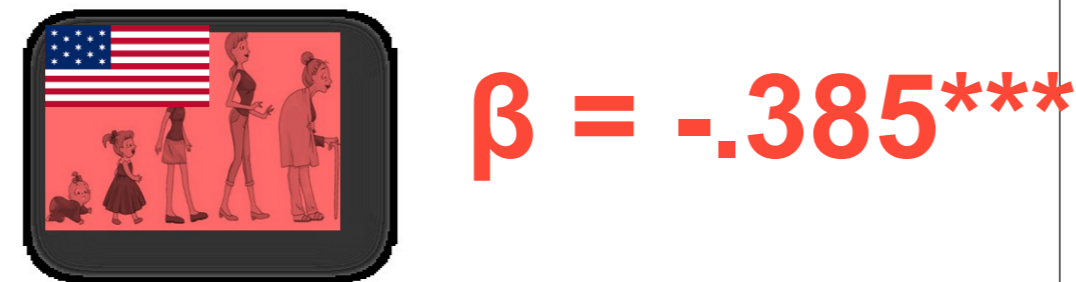
## Study 2: Turks in Belgium

## Study 3: Minority Youth in Belgium

Proportion of life spent in new culture



Age at immigration to new culture



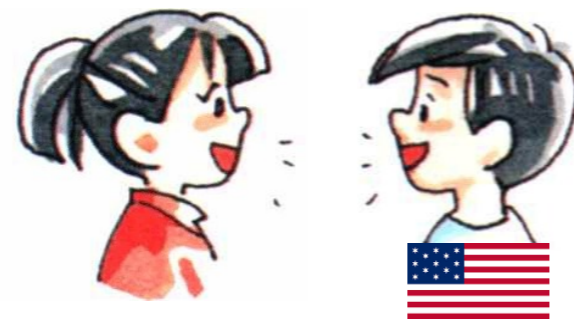
Proportion majority members in class



# Social contact is key.

Korean adults in US

$$\beta = .258^*$$



Social contact

Turkish adults in Belgium

$$\beta = .12^+$$

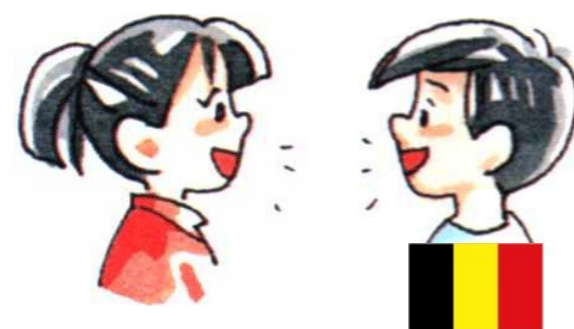
for neg sit only



Social contact

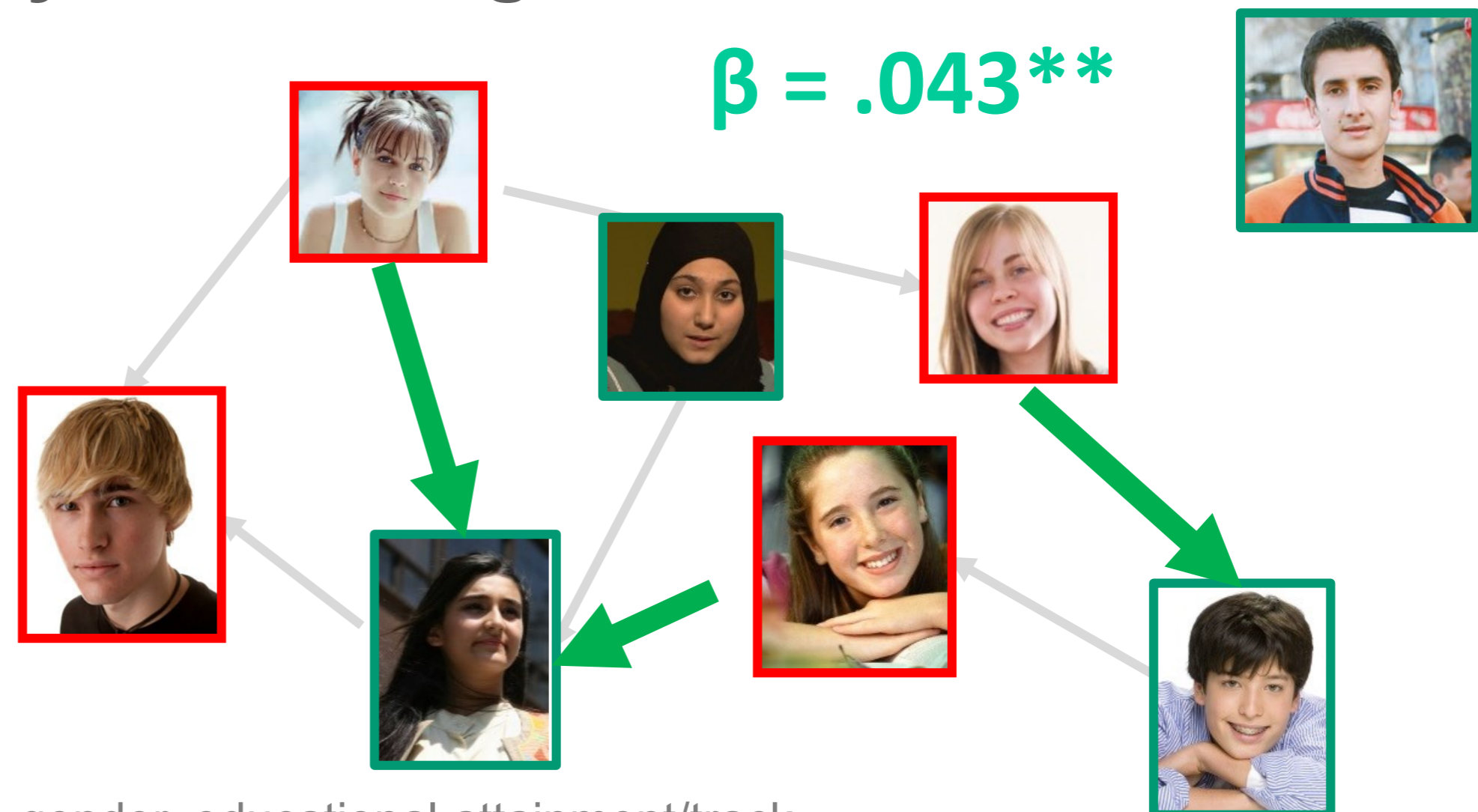
Minority youth in Belgium

$$\beta = .044^*$$



Social contact

$$\beta = .043^{**}$$



Controlled for age, gender, educational attainment/track

**Cultural exposure  
and social contact are  
key for change**

# Maintaining emotional fit with heritage culture

Korean adults  
in US



$\beta = .208^\dagger$   
For neg sit. only

Turkish adults  
in Belgium

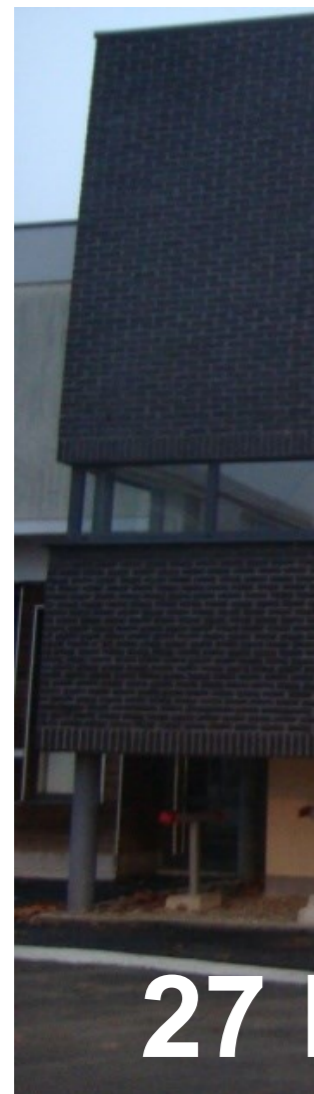
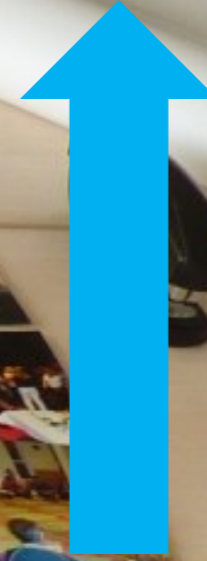


$\beta = .176^{**}$

About equal levels of fit with mainstream and  
heritage cultural patterns

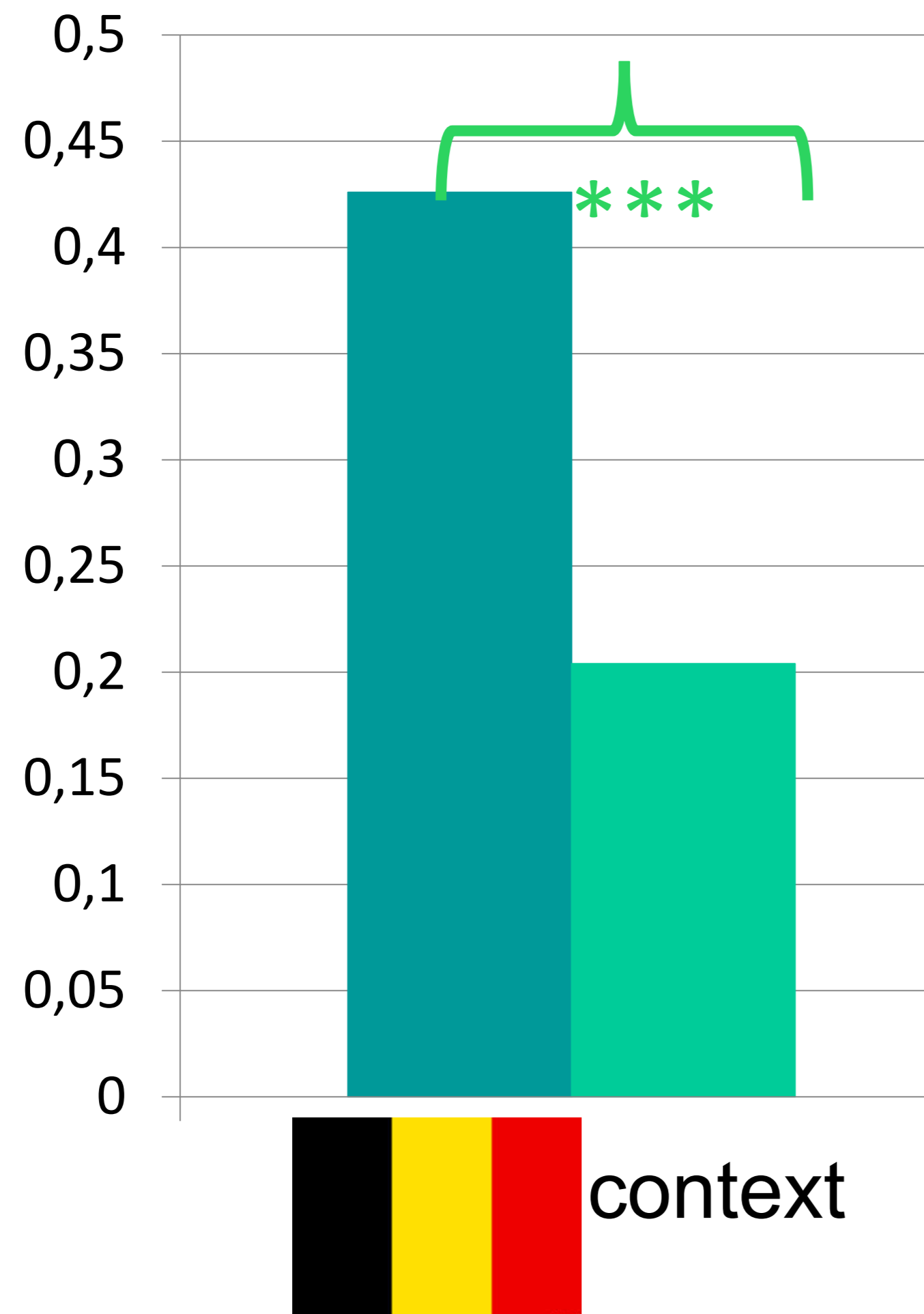
n = 56

About half First Generation; 50% female





# Same situation, different emotions



**Ambiguous situations**

- ANGER\_nv
- CONTEMPT\_nv



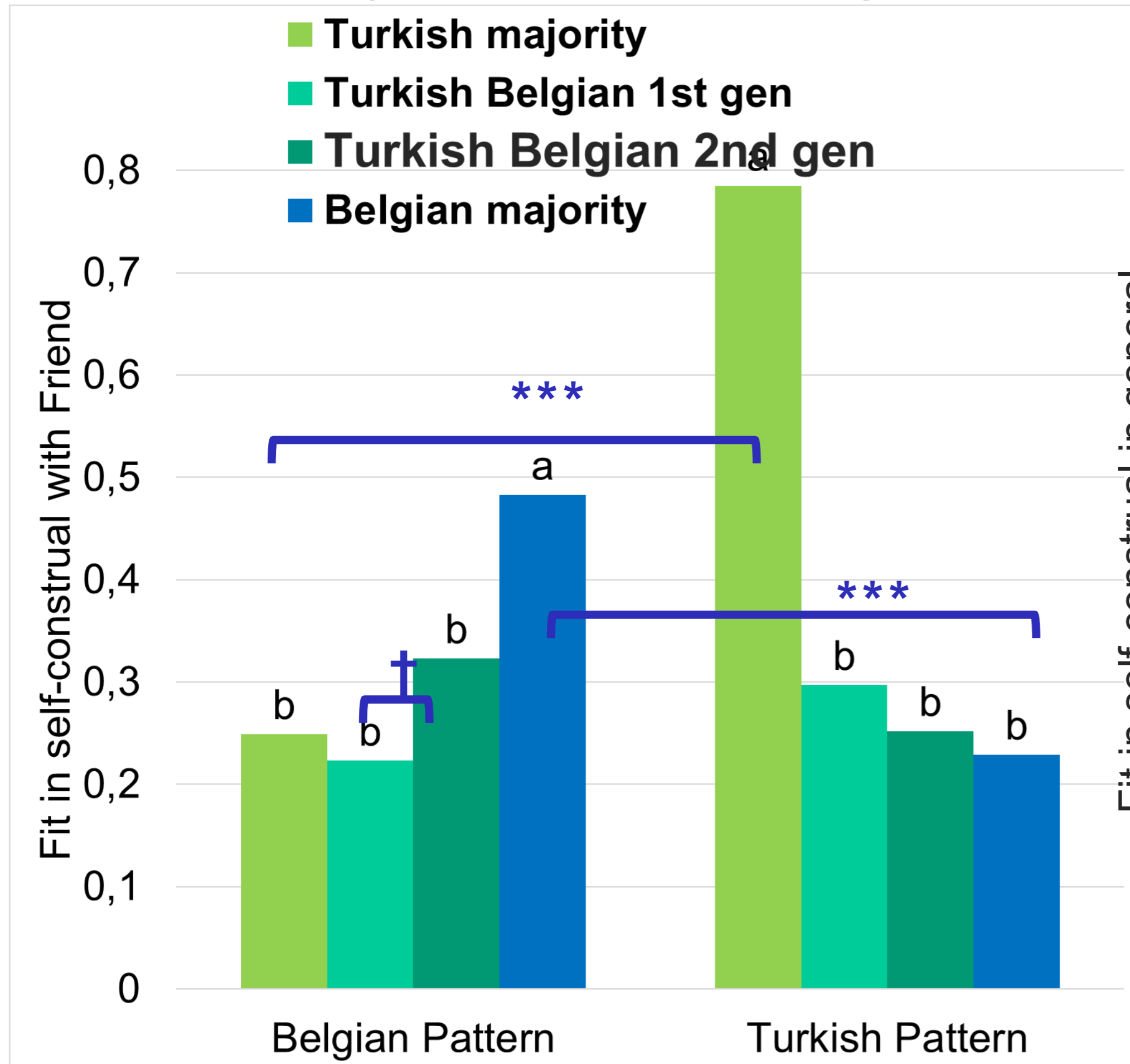
Repeated measures ANOVA:  
Emotion\*context  $F_{(1, 54)} = 6.844; p = .012$

**Minorities may  
maintain heritage  
patterns and switch  
cultural frames in the  
domain of emotion**

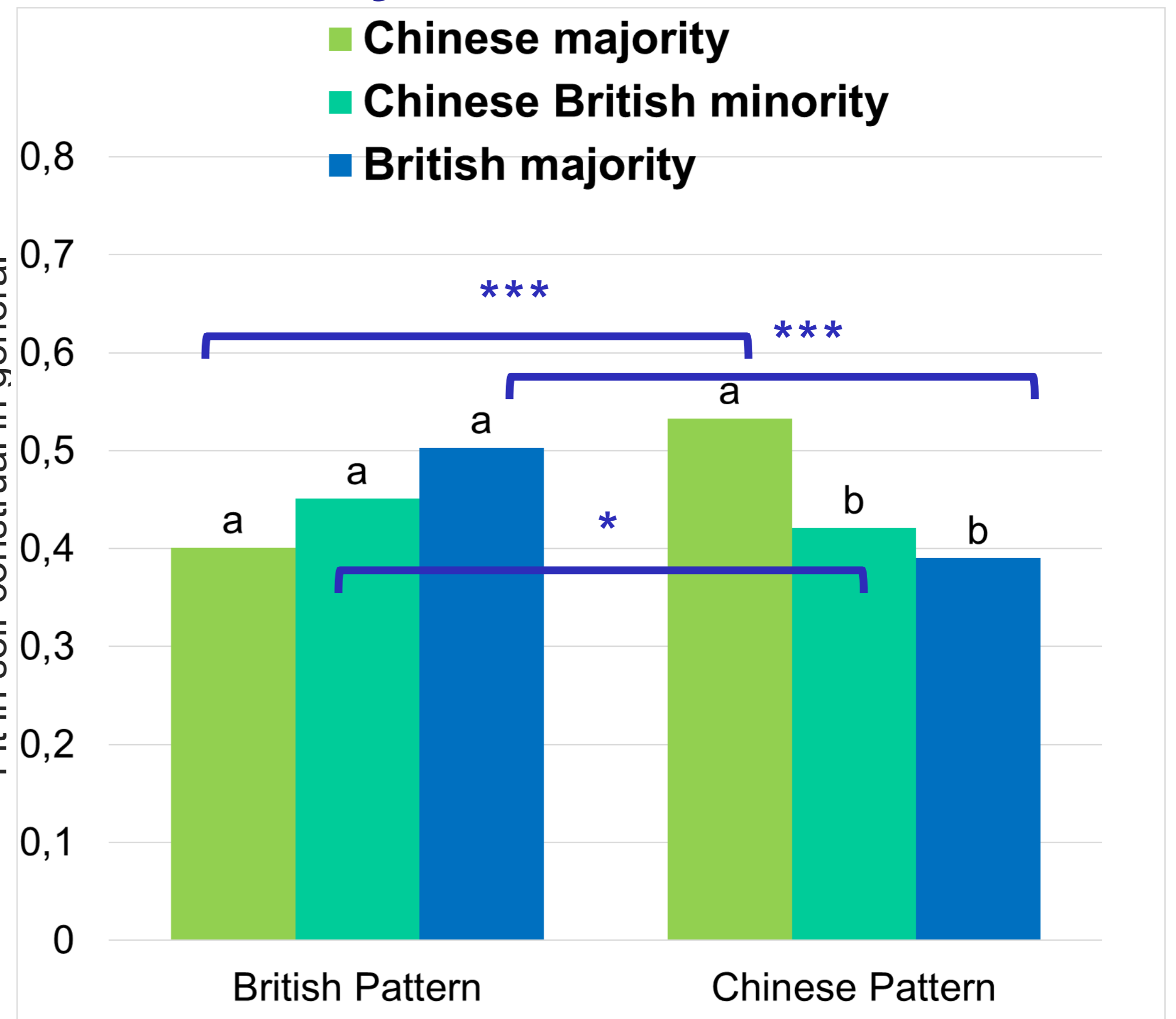
See also: \*Zhou, C., Dewaele, JM., \*Ochs, C.M. & De Leersnyder, J. (2021). The Role of Language and Cultural Engagement in Emotional Fit with Culture: an Experiment Comparing Chinese-English Bilinguals to British and Chinese Monolinguals. *Affective Science* 2, 128–141. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42761-021-00037-x>

# RQ1: Is there acculturation in self-construals?

## Study 1: Turkish Belgians



## Study 2: Chinese British



**Yes, there is emotional acculturation and selves may be susceptible too**

**RQ1: Do other psychological processes also acculturate?**

**RQ2: What is the (complex) interplay between acculturation in different domains?**

## Fit in emotions

**Korean adults in US**

**Adopt North  
American values  
and traditions**

$$\beta = -.152$$

**Turkish adults in Belgium**

**Adopt Belgian  
values and  
traditions**

$$\beta = -.039$$

**Minority youth in Belgium**

**Adopt Belgian  
values and  
traditions**

$$\beta = .012$$

# Fit in self-construal

## Turkish adults in Belgium

Adopt Belgian  
values and  
traditions

*ns*

Adopt social  
contact with  
Belgian majority

*ns*

---

## Chinese adults in the UK

Adopt British  
values and  
traditions

$\beta = -.186$

**Inconsistent!**

Adopt social  
contact with  
Westerners

$\beta = .244$

Controlled for age and gender

**Acculturation of self  
and emotion are  
perhaps not a willful  
process**



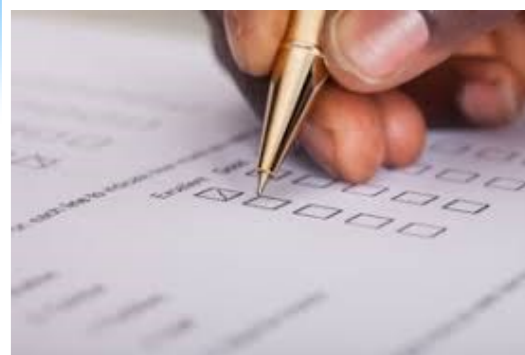
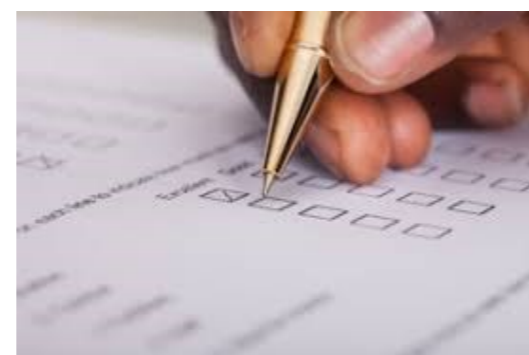
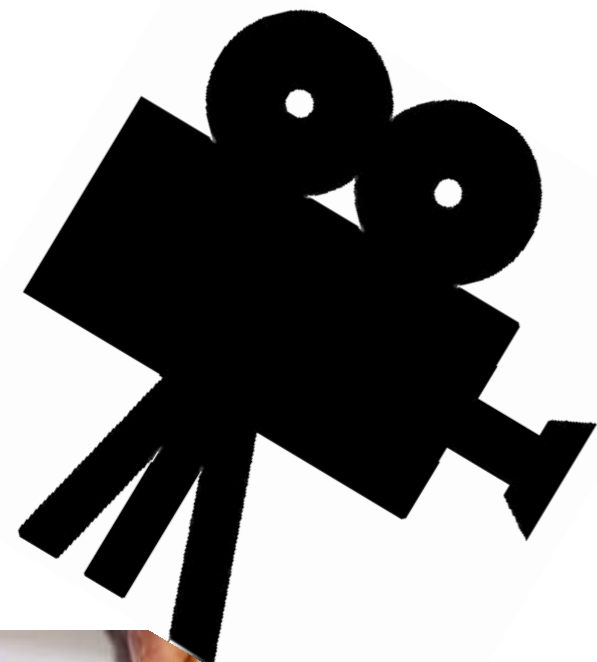
**Acculturation is non-  
monolithic**

**RQ1: Do other psychological processes also acculturate?**

**RQ2: What is the (complex) interplay between acculturation in different domains?**

**RQ3: What exact micro-processes of socialization account for psychological change?**

# Grounding experiment: 6 vignettes



Individual

Opportunity  
for grounding

= Joint

Story 1, 3, 5: Positive  
relatedness concerns

Individual

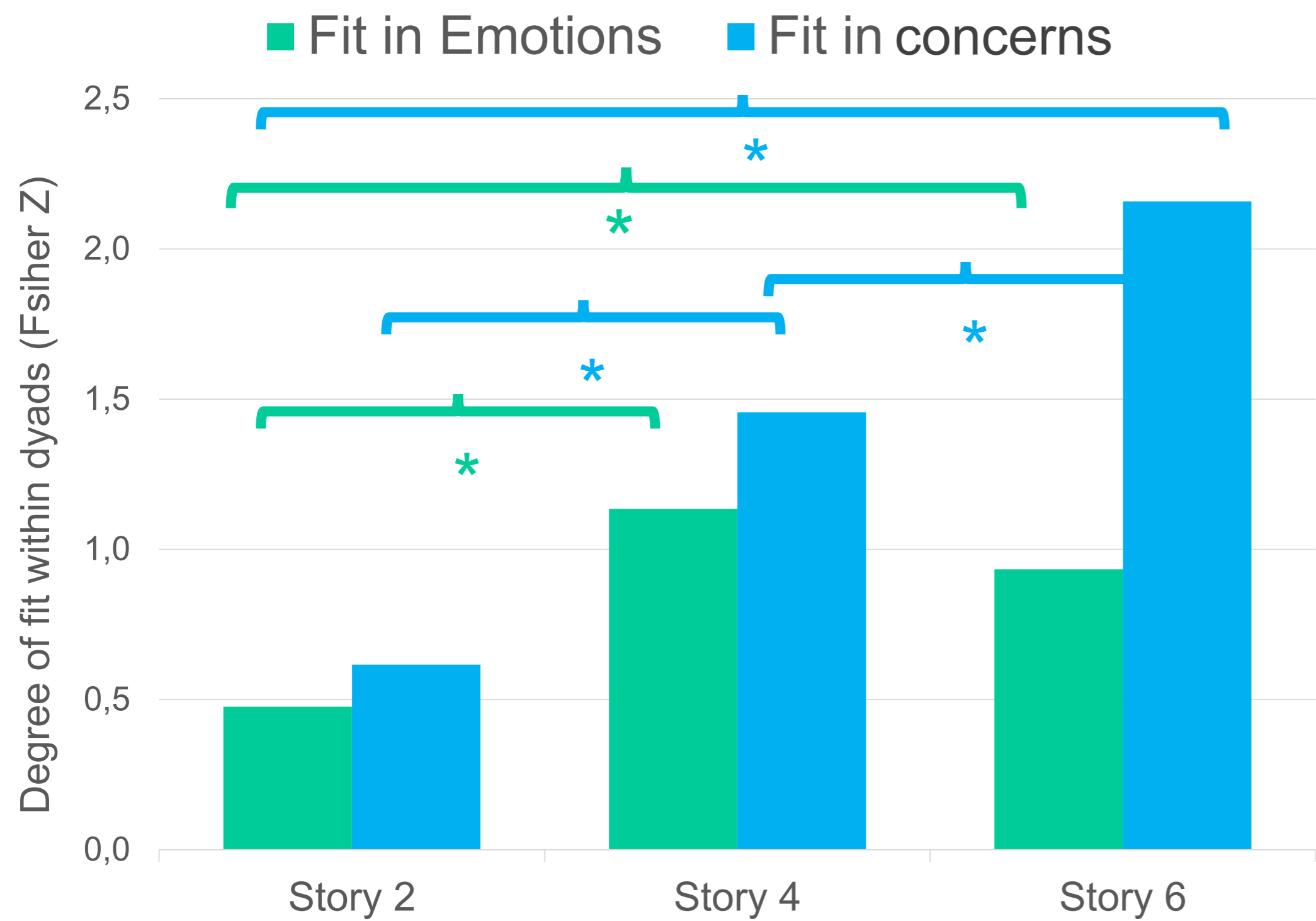
Opportunity  
for grounding

= Joint

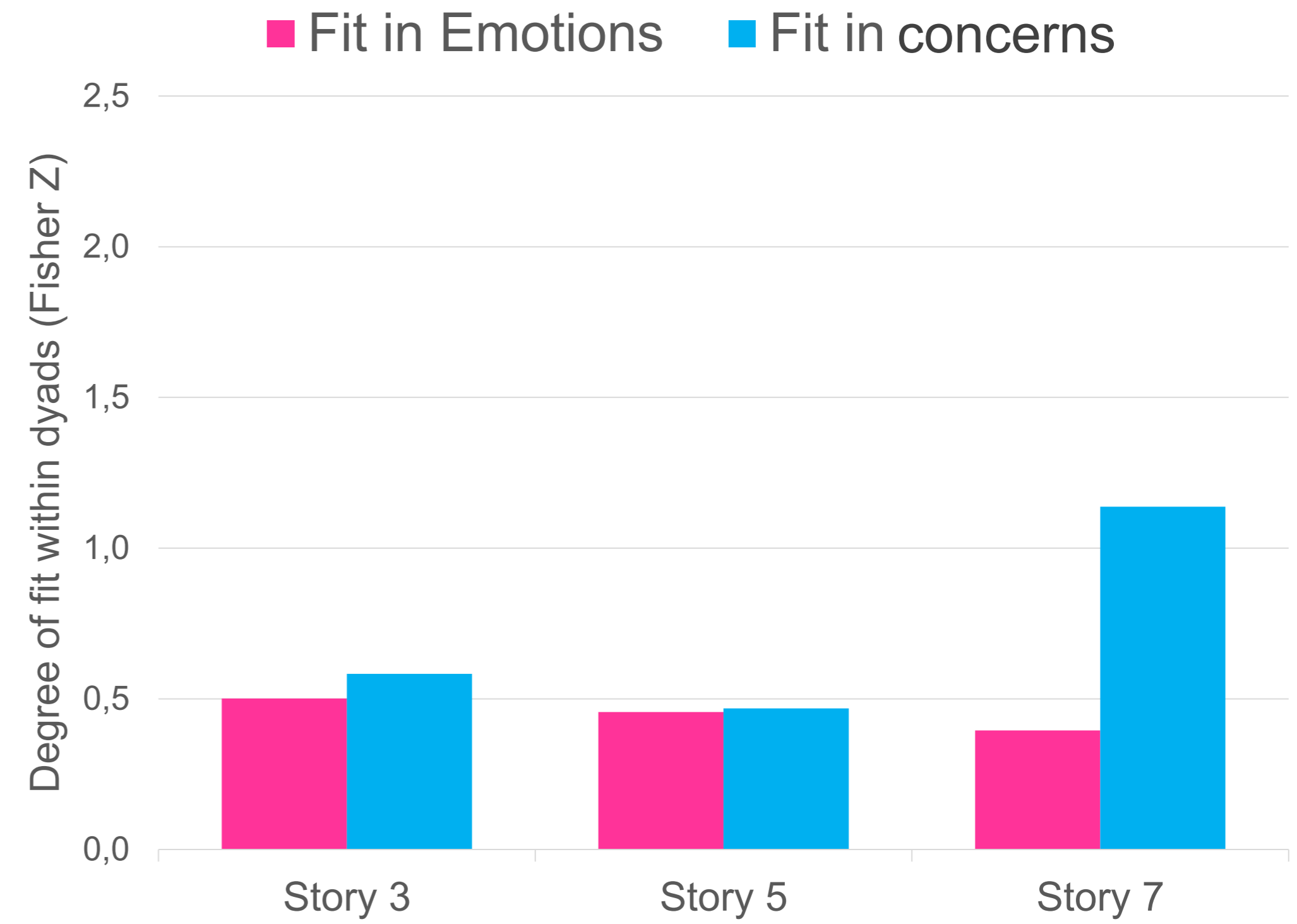
Story 2, 4, 6: Negative  
autonomy concerns

32 same-gender dyads of MBO students  
 each time: Majority Dutch + Turkish Dutch *or* Moroccan Dutch

Data-collection on hold due to covid!



Positive relatedness-promoting vignettes



Negative autonomy-promoting vignettes

**Opportunities for  
*grounding* in  
intercultural dyads  
increase fit in positive  
situations**

**RQ1: Do other psychological processes also acculturate?**

**RQ2: What is the (complex) interplay between acculturation in different domains?**

**RQ3: What exact micro-processes of socialization account for psychological change?**

**RQ4: How do different acculturative processes affect thriving?**

### 3 Studies: Emotional Fit and Well-Being

#### Participants

##### Study 1:

31 European Americans  
Community sample



##### Study 2:

267 Belgians  
Student sample



##### Study 3:

75 Koreans  
Community sample



Fit with own culture's average emotional patterns



# Study: CILS-Leuven

 **Majority Belgians** (n = 2644,  $M_{Age} = 14.6$ )

 **Turkish Belgians** (n = 702;  $M_{Age} = 15.0$ )

 **Moroccan Belgians** (n = 904;  $M_{Age} = 15.1$ )

**Fit with Belgian majority average self-construal pattern in relation to their teacher**



**Dutch grade**  
 $\beta = .120^{**}$

**Math grade**  
 $\beta = .101^*$



**Overall well-being**  
 $\beta = .197^{***}$

Controlled for age and gender



**Yes, cultural fit seems  
beneficial**

**BUT: likely that fit with multiple  
contexts is important for  
biculturals**



# Future directions and potential impact – exciting times ahead

Acculturation of motivation and cognition?

Day-to-day experience across a  
range of acculturative domains?

Cultural changes in  
majority members?

Different ways of  
defining 'culture'



De Leersnyder, 2014, *PhD-thesis*  
Mesquita, De Leersnyder, & Jasini, 2019, *Handbook of Cultural Psychology*

**Expands  
phenomena**

**Re-thinks  
concept itself**

# Cultural psychology approach to acculturation

**Acknowledges  
complex nature**

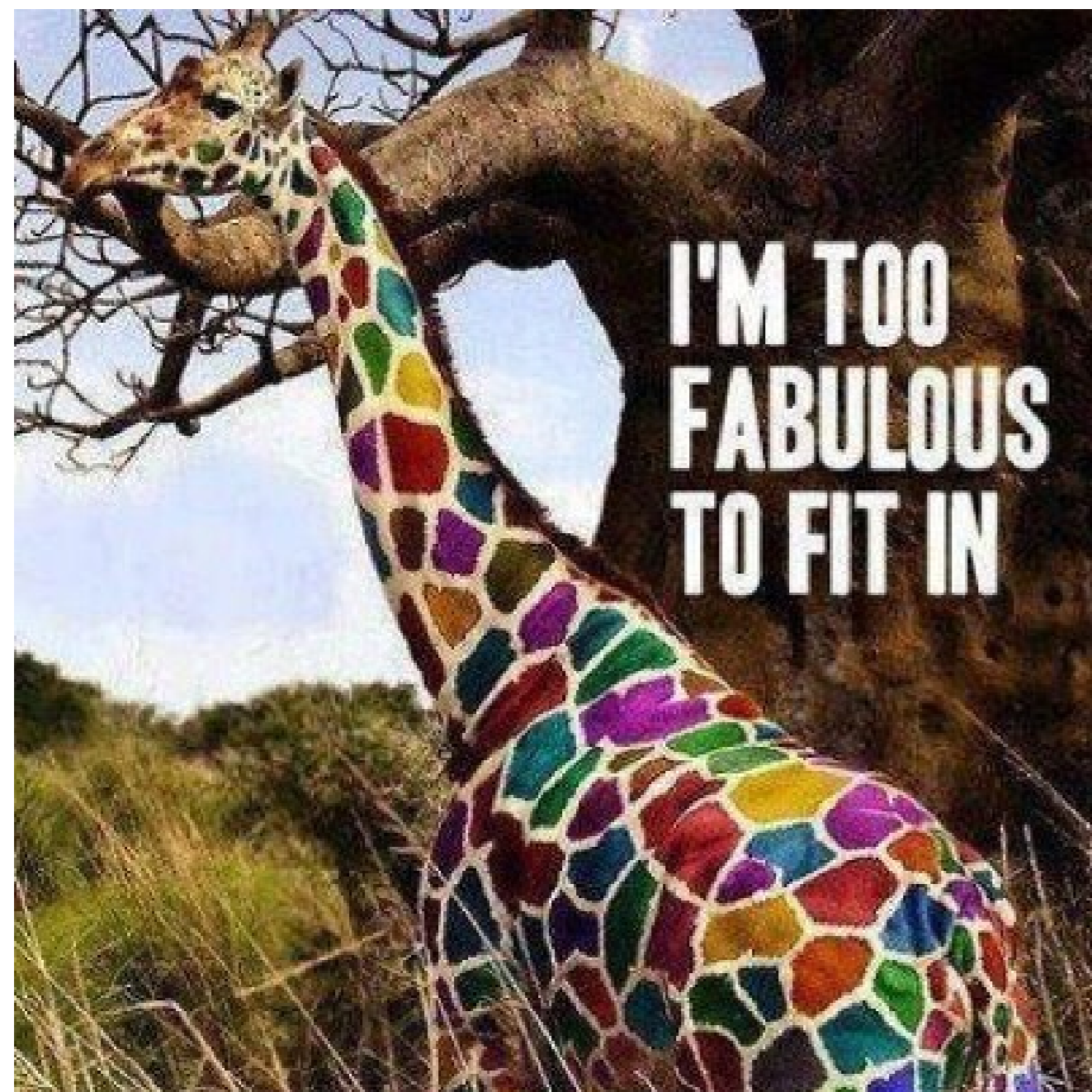
**Involves  
*all* of us**



# Model within culture variation

## Beyond comparing group-level means

Chentsova-Dutton, De Leersnyder, & Senzaki, 2018  
Research topic in *Frontiers in Psychology*



# Socio-cultural Nature of Emotion

Emotional experience is not hard-wired

De Leersnyder, 2022,  
*The Socio-cultural Shaping of Emotion.*  
Cambridge University Press

De Leersnyder, Boiger, & Mesquita, 2020, *Advances in Cultural Psychology*

De Leersnyder, 2019, *Affective Social Learning*

De Leersnyder & Pauw, 2022, *Handbook of Language and Emotion*

De Leersnyder, 2017, *Current Opinion*

De Leersnyder, Boiger, & Mesquita, 2013, *Frontiers in Psychology*

De Leersnyder, Boiger, & Mesquita, 2015, *Emerging Trends*

Mesquita, De Leersnyder, & Boiger, 2016, *Handbook of Emotion*

Mesquita, De Leersnyder, & Albert, 2014, *Handbook of Emotion Regulation*

Mesquita, Boiger, & De Leersnyder, in prep. *European Review of Social Psychology*

Mesquita, Boiger, & De Leersnyder, 2016, *Current Opinion in Psychology*

Mesquita, Vissers, & De Leersnyder, 2015, *Int. Encyclopedia of Social & Behavioral Sc.*





## For the real world

Raise **awareness** on how acculturation and ‘integration’ may also occur ‘**under the skin**’

Help make **visible** (often invisible) barriers to societal **thriving** due to cultural misfit

Help create environments that **remove these barriers and foster mutual understanding** and the exchange making





Batja Mesquita



Karen Phalet



Jeanne Tsai



Alba  
Jasini



Roy  
Konings



Evelyn  
Morreel



Fedoua  
Lamrani



Graziela  
Dekeyser



**CSCCP**



Michael  
Boiger



Seval  
Gündemir



Loes  
Meeussen



Orhan  
Agirdag



Heejung  
Kim



Fattana  
Mirzada



Erdem  
Yilmaz



Derya  
Güngör



Gülseli  
Baysu



Kaat  
Van Acker

# THANK YOU

[jozefien.deleersnyder@kuleuven.be](mailto:jozefien.deleersnyder@kuleuven.be)

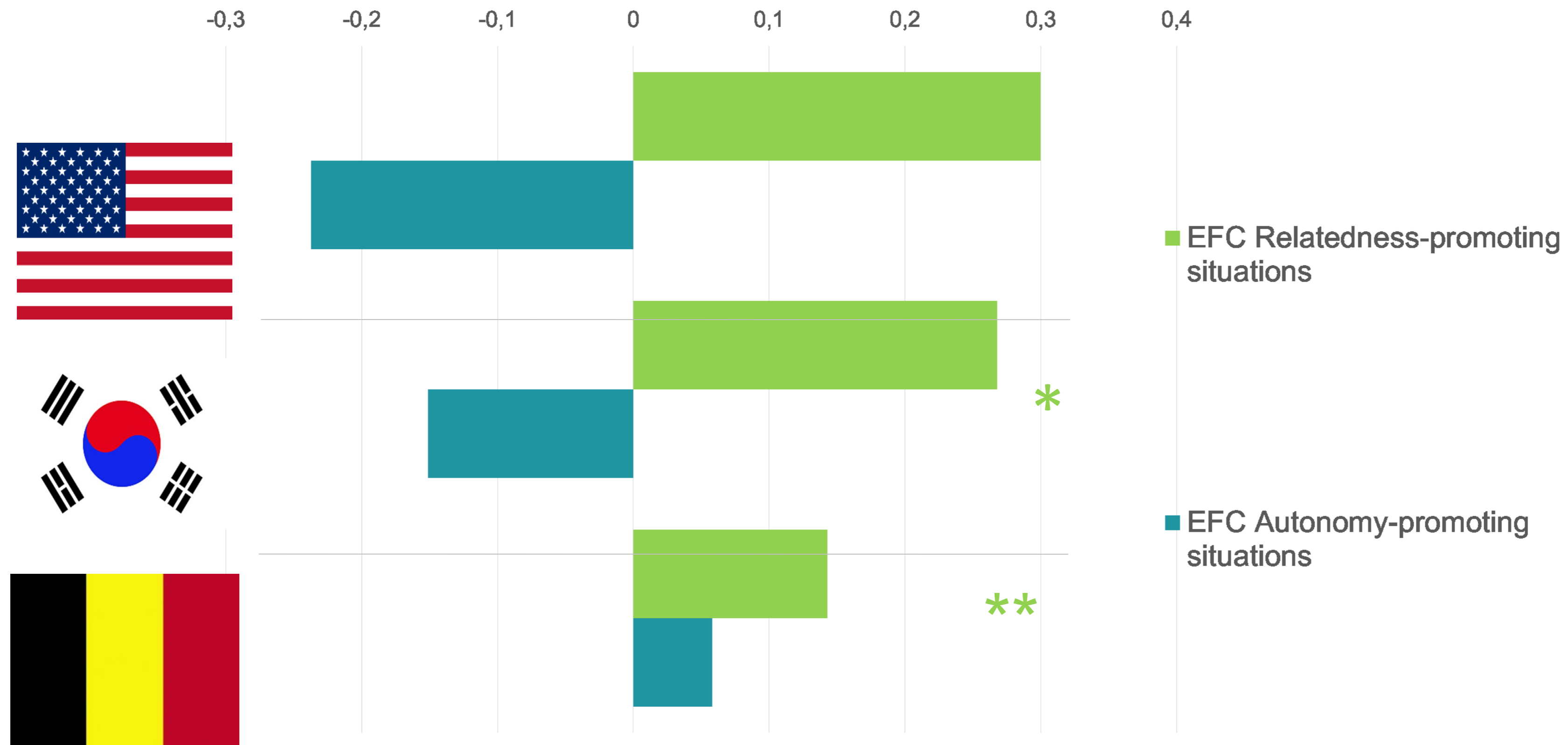


# Does cultural fit feel good?

De Leersnyder, Mesquita, Kim, Eom, & Choi, 2014

## Emotional Fit and Relational Well-Being

$\beta$  = strength of association



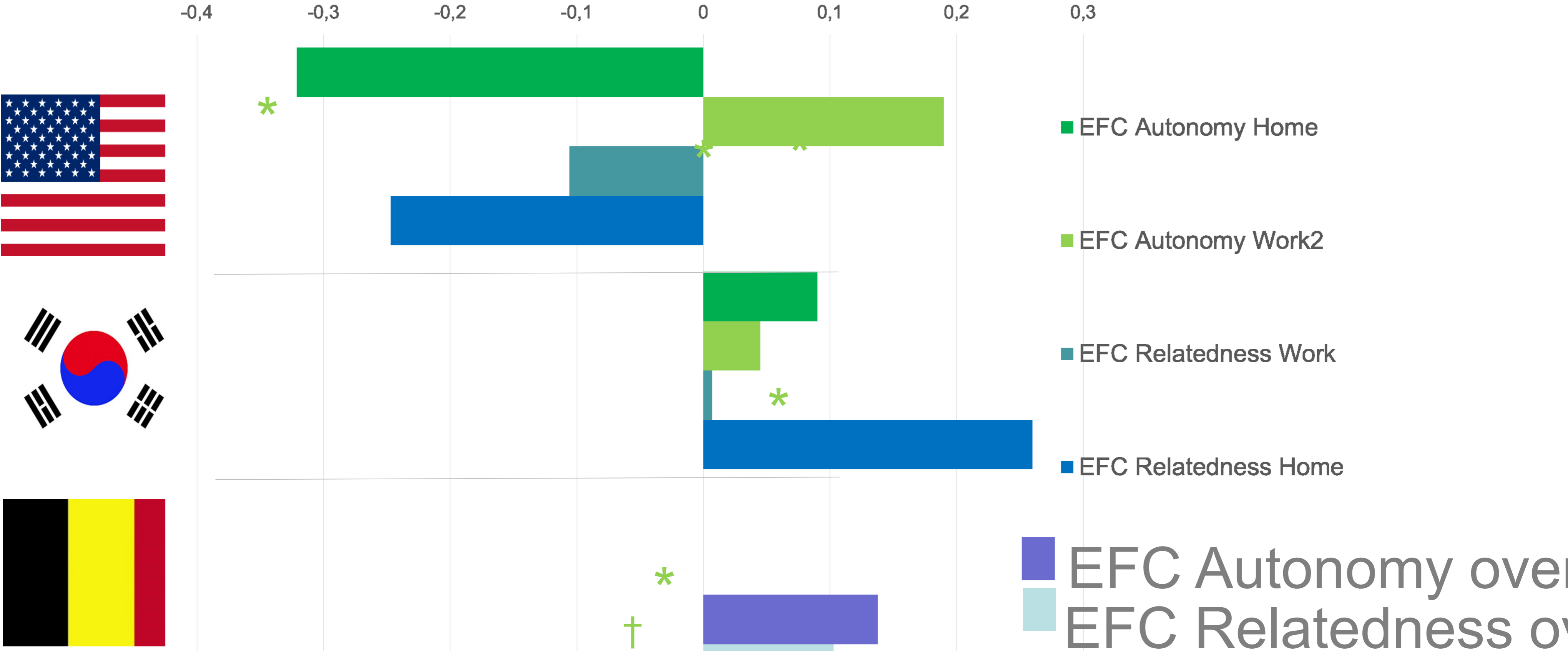
After controlling for Context, Gender, Social Class, & General Well-Being

# Does cultural fit feel good?

De Leersnyder, Kim, & Mesquita, 2015

## Emotional Fit and Psychological Well-Being

$\beta$  = strength of association



After controlling for Context, Gender, Social Class, & General Well-Being measures



Coding of emotional expressions: **PCA**Pattern Matrix<sup>a</sup>

	Component	
	Anger	Contempt
ANG_AU1-2	,762	,005
ANG_Frustration	,684	-,206
ANG_AU 4	,609	,073
ANG_AU23-24	,433	,241
CONT_peruse	-,130	,754
CONT_AU 14	-,011	,655
SURPRISE_eyes	,173	,525

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.  
 Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

# Coding of emotional expressions: **reliability**



**Native Belgian coder**  
**Native Turkish coder**  
**Turkish-Belgian coder**

**x**

**x**

**x**

**x**

## RELIABILITY

  
Within a 2-minute  
situation

$$\frac{(\text{Codes agreed upon} * 2)}{(\#codes 1 + \#codes 2)}$$

### Study 1: adults



$\beta = .183^{**}$

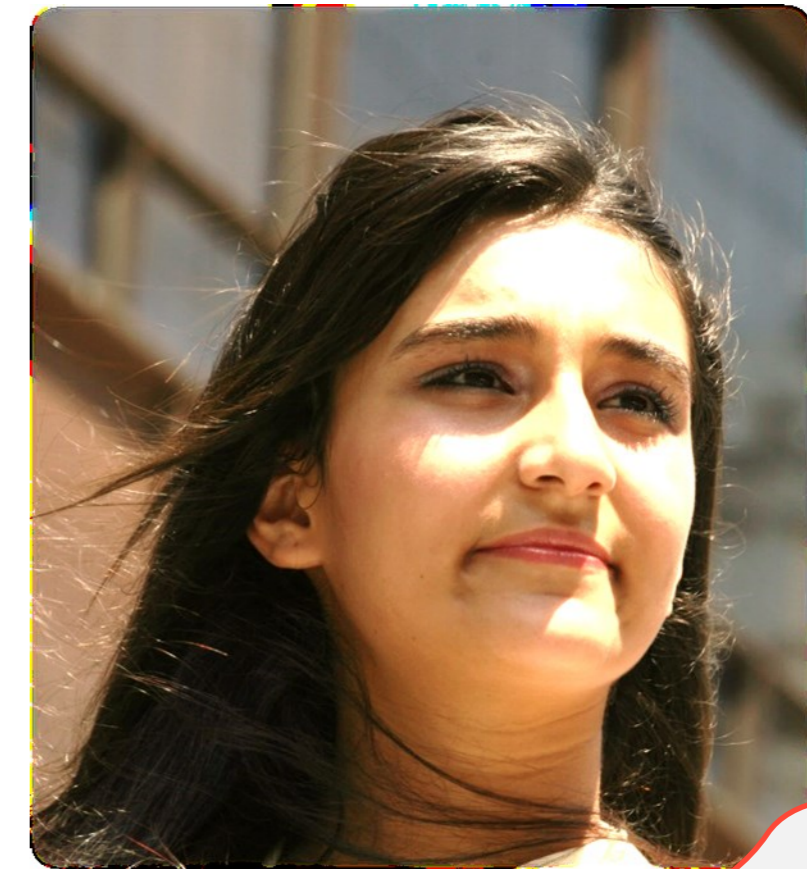
Goedemiddag!

- HELEMAAL MEE EENS
- MEE EENS
- GEEN MENING
- NIET MEE EENS
- HELEMAAL NIET MEE EENS

$\beta = \text{non sign}$

Control variable = no difference

### Study 2: youth



$r = .197^{***}$

Goedemiddag!

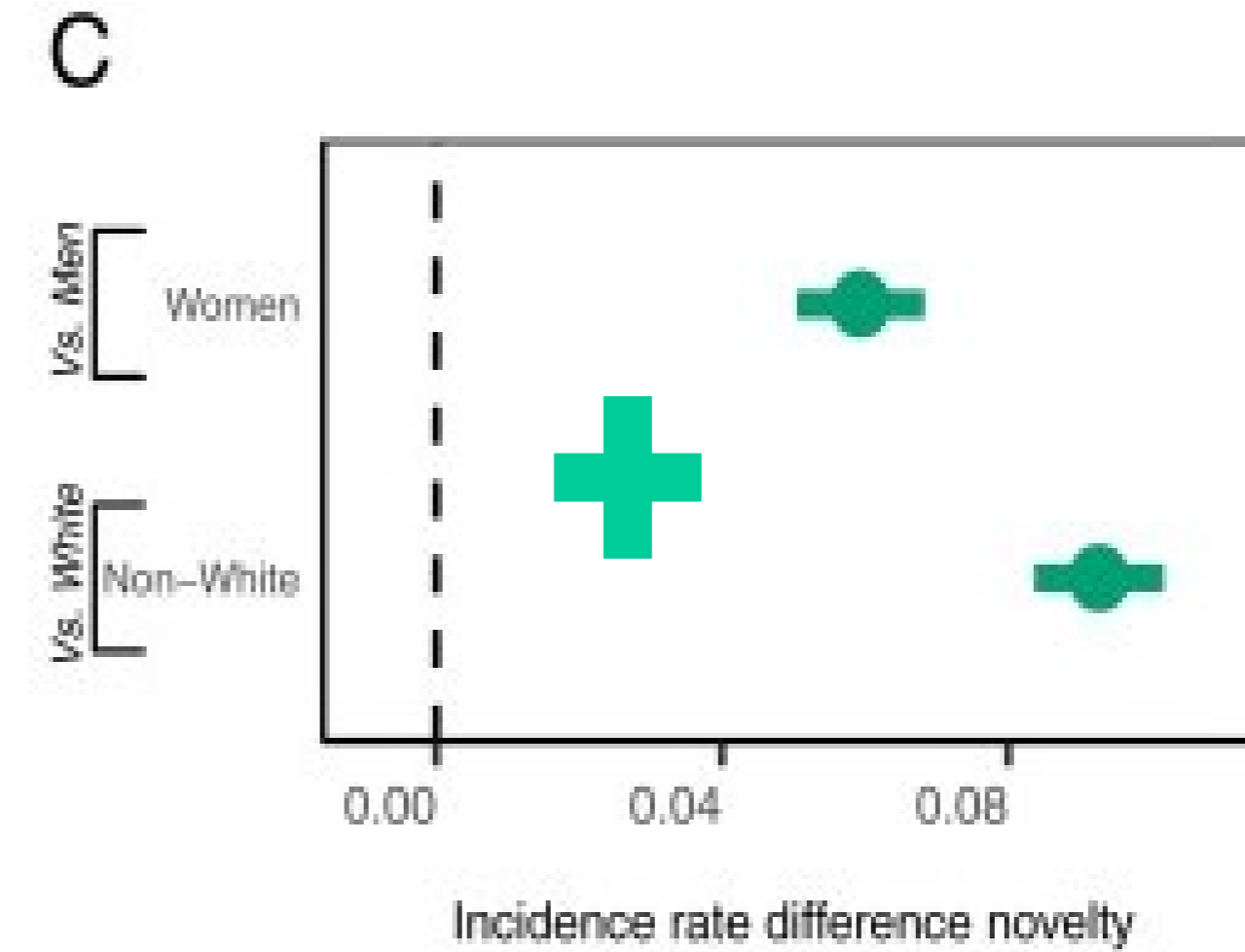
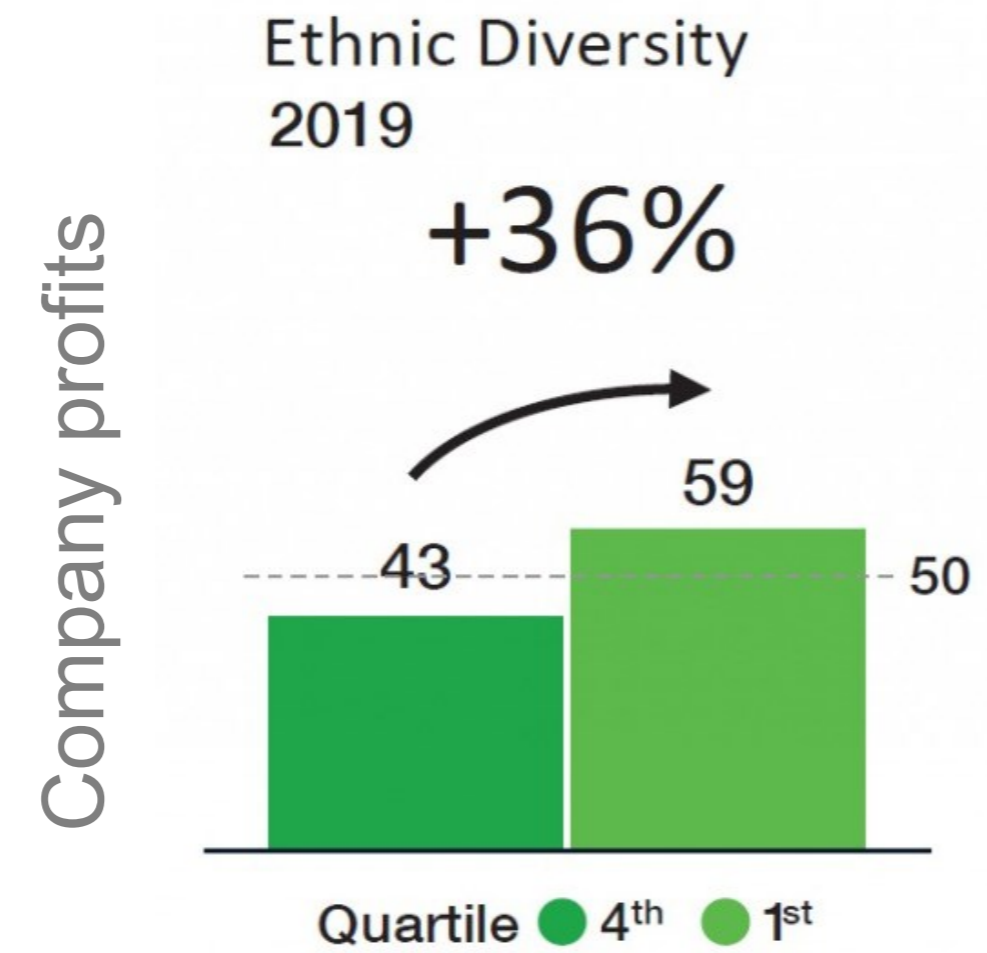
$1^{st} \text{ gen } r = .297^{***}$

$2^{nd} \text{ gen } r = .169^{*}$

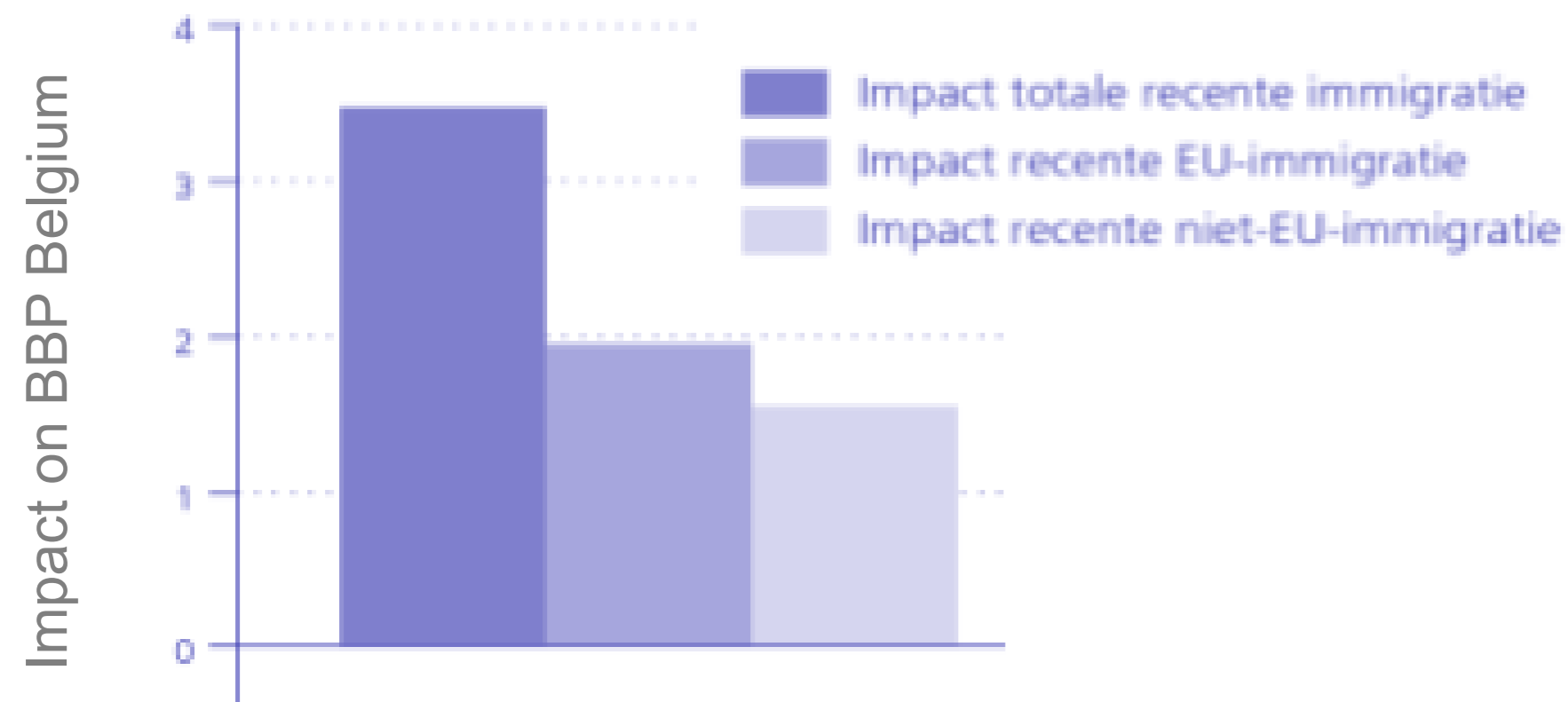
$2^{1/2} \text{ gen } r = .071$

$3^{rd} \text{ gen } r = .179^{\dagger}$

# Many benefits



## Geaggregeerde impacten van de recente immigratie (in % en procentpunten)



## DIVERSITY'S IMPACT

Ethnic diversity correlates more strongly ( $r$ ) with citation counts than do diversity in age, gender or affiliation, according to an analysis of more than 1 million papers in 24 academic subfields (circles).

