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**MIGRANT CHILDREN IN RUSSIA. I.
MIGRATION, ETHNICITY AND
SEGREGATION IN ST. PETERSBURG**

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Migrant Children in Russia. I. Migration, Ethnicity and Segregation in St. Petersburg

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents first findings of large-scale study of children from migrant families (104 schools, 419 classes, 7380 students) carried out in St. Petersburg. Researchers discuss the issues of ethnic and social differentiation among schools, parents' interaction with schools, teachers' attitudes to migrant minority students, ethnic effects in communication among students. A multi-level regression modeling demonstrates the effects of migration status and ethnic status on academic performance. The study shows that migrant children from ethnic minority groups have higher levels of learning motivation than their local-born classmates, perform at school on the same level, and have educational plans similar to those of ethnic majority students. Social network analysis (p2 modeling) of multiple class networks shows the absence of discrimination on the part of the ethnic majority in relation to the ethnic minorities.

Keywords: migrant children, education, school differentiation, school segregation, social network analysis

This is the first paper in the series of SESL working papers reporting the most general results from first survey. Next papers in the series will deal with more focused studies of social networks, multi-level analysis of schools and classes, and socio-economic and ethnic differentiation of schools in urban space in St. Petersburg, as well as with the results of survey in Greater Moscow area.

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“Migrant Children in Russia” Project Framework

The Sociology of Education and Science Laboratory at the HSE has been studying children from migrant families since 2008. The research has been focused on St. Petersburg and the Greater Moscow area because these metropolitan areas are main magnets for both internal and international labor migrants. The research project started in 2008 with a preliminary qualitative study of four multiethnic schools in St. Petersburg (58 interviews with children, 31 interviews with migrant parents, 64 interviews with teachers, curriculum directors and principals). In 2009 the researchers conducted a pilot survey (1200 questionnaires) of students in 22 St.Petersburg schools with large proportions of migrant children. The schools were selected following recommendations of district education authorities. Based on the pilot survey results, the questionnaire was considerably modified.

In 2010 large-scale surveys employing the new questionnaire were carried out in St.Petersburg (104 schools) and the working suburbs of Greater Moscow area (50 schools). In 2012 the researchers will carry out the next round of the survey of additional 50 schools in the Greater Moscow Area (50 schools), covering, as a result, all municipalities adjacent to the Moscow city limits. Next phase will be focused on city schools of Moscow City proper.

Overall, presently we have amassed more than 12 thousand questionnaires filled out by school children, 80 interviews with migrant children, 65 interviews with migrant parents, 188 interviews with school teachers and administrators, 14 interviews with the staff of education authorities at municipal and district levels.

The research design combines qualitative (interviews, case studies) and quantitative (questionnaires) methods. Interviews with all participants of the educational process – students, parents, teachers, school administrators – are a valuable addition to the quantitative data as qualitative data elucidate different actors’ viewpoints on adaptation of migrant children at school and reveal both official and unofficial practices of interaction between the schools and the families of labor migrants.¹

In all schools we surveyed all students in entire classes with the same questionnaire, allowing for comparison between children of different ethnic origins and with different migration histories. The survey was limited to students from grades 8 to 10 (age 14-16).

The questionnaire included items about educational and professional plans, school grades, socio-demographic characteristics, multiple items on learning motivation, sense of belonging in school, and anti-school attitudes. We also included detailed questions about the family’s migration history (internal and transnational), language spoken at home, native languages of the child and his/her parents, ethnic self-identification. The questionnaire also includes two name generators for network relations in the child’s class. We also included into the questionnaire questions about mother’s and father’s education and occupation. Responses about parents’ occupation were coded according to the ISCO (International Standard Classification of Occupations), then converted into

¹ Alexandrov D., Baranova V., Ivaniushina V. Children from migrant families in Russian schools: preliminary results. St.Petersburg, Polytech Press, 2011 (in Russian).

Ganzeboom's ISEI (International Socio-Economic Index of Occupational Status)².

Our work was generously supported by the National Research University – Higher School of Economics.³ The support was provided in different forms, first and foremost by supporting the existence of Sociology of Education and Science Laboratory. We have fantastic colleagues and students in SESL to whom we owe a debt of gratitude for working with us in this project: Svetlana Savelieva, Ksenia Tenisheva, Vera Titkova, Evgeny Varshaver, Veronica Kostenko, Ekaterina Shishova and many others. We would like to express our gratitude to Eduard Ponarin for his advice on and teaching of statistics; to Elena Omelchenko and Gusel Sabirova, and their colleagues in the Center for Youth Studies for working with us in the pilot survey; to Isak Frumin, Maria Yudkevich, Marina Pinskaya and many other colleagues in Moscow for their interest in our work. We are especially grateful to Marijtje van Duijn, Tom Snijders, and Christian Steglich for their generous help and support of our interest in social network analysis at the stage when we were just making our first steps in this area.

The first in the series of working papers reporting the study findings, this paper focuses on most general results from St. Petersburg survey. Other papers in the series will deal with more focused studies of social networks, multi-level analysis of schools and classes, and socio-economic and ethnic differentiation of schools in urban space in St. Petersburg, as well as with the results of survey in Greater Moscow area.

Relevant theory and empirical research

In this section we briefly refer to certain literature which was important for us in framing the research program, its methods and its theoretical assumptions.

As many researchers before us, we started with the theory of 'segmented assimilation', championed by Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou⁴. While the traditional theory of assimilation posited that migrants are assimilated into the "mainstream" of hosting society, Portes and Zhou argued that there is no single assimilation pattern fit for all: the character of assimilation depends on the initial social-economic position and cultural characteristics of migrant groups, and also on the social context into which these groups can assimilate locally.

A classic example used by Alejandro Portes is that of assimilation of Caribbean migrants in Florida, where Cuban migrants were integrated into the

² Ganzeboom H., Treiman D. Internationally Comparable Measures of Occupational Status for the 1988 International Standard Classification of Occupations // *Social Science Research*. 1996. V.25. P.201–239.

³ Research on migrant children in Russian schools was funded by the Basic Research Program of the National Research University – Higher School of Economics (FRP projects in 2009 – 2010) by the grant from Russian State Foundation for the Humanities in 2011 (grant 11-03-00538a), and personally for Daniel Alexandrov by the Laboratory of Comparative Social Research of the National Research University – Higher School of Economics.

⁴ Portes A., Zhou M. The New Second Generation: Segmented Assimilation and its Variants // *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 1993. Vol. 530. P. 74–96.

Cuban community of educated Spanish-speaking Americans while migrants from Haiti and other Caribbean islands (mostly descendants of slaves) were integrated into the social life of urban Afro-American ghettos. The results of assimilation of these groups radically differ, maintains Portes.

Another important tenet of the segmented assimilation theory is that the conflicts in/with the host society may affect results of assimilation. Within the traditional conceptual framework, conflict has always been considered as a hindrance to assimilation ultimately leading the people to lock themselves up in their migrant communities. In some cases, however, confrontation with host society can produce an opposite result – accelerated assimilation.

Much attention in the discussion of segmented assimilation is given to important example provided by Margaret A. Gibson's research on immigrants from India in rural California⁵. A group of Sikhs, who attach great importance to education, found themselves in California's poor rural areas where the locals had high levels of xenophobia while also having general disregard for the value of education. In these circumstances, the only result of the migrants' conflict with a local population was acceleration of their assimilation because the migrant students' educational ambitions were steadily growing, and so did the local teachers' willingness to help these children – the teachers were more interested in working with the migrants, who were very eager learners, rather than with the local kids, who thought negatively about school.

A third important tenet of the theory of segmented assimilation is the idea that preservation of cultural values in a diaspora often encourages long-term process of assimilation in future generations, rather than hampers it. As Min Zhou's research in a Vietnamese community of New Orleans⁶ shows, traditional cultural values are very important for the process of assimilation. Children who at an early age tried to distance themselves from their ethnic community and tried to merge with the larger non-diaspora community, adopting cultural and behavioral values of their American peers as fast as possible, ultimately made poorer progress than children who grew in families upholding traditional values and norms. A 'delayed' assimilation was conducive to achievements in a long run.

This point of Portes and Zhou is the most controversial; usually critics of the theory of segmented assimilation target it as the theory's main idea⁷. Indeed, in terms of the influence exercised by a community's traditional values and internal cohesion on its children's academic achievements, ethnic groups differ from each other. In particular, Portes and Hao demonstrated that Spanish-speaking (Mexican)

⁵ Gibson M. *Accommodation without assimilation*: Sikh immigrants in an American high school. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.

⁶ Zhou M., S. S. Kim. Community forces, social capital, and educational achievement: The case of supplementary education in the Chinese and Korean immigrant communities// *Harvard Educational Review*. 2006. V.76. P.1-29.

⁷ Kroneberg C. Ethnic Communities and School Performance among the New Second Generation in the United States: Testing the Theory of Segmented Assimilation // *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 2008. Vol. 620. P. 138–160; Silberman R. et al. Segmented assimilation in France? Discrimination in the labour market against the second generation // *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 2007. Vol. 30. P. 1–27.

students studied better when they were a majority in their class and Korean children, when they were a minority⁸.

Ethnicity may have a different effect in different types of schools: for students of privileged schools ethnicity may be of far lesser importance than social background, whereas in bad, troubled schools it may matter more because migrant children in a bad school keep close to their ethnic group⁹.

The process of assimilation spans several generations and different generations of migrants may significantly differ from one another. Studying different generations of migrants, American sociologists discovered that first-generation migrants have a higher learning motivation and study better than second- and third-generation migrants¹⁰. The researchers explain this with "immigrants' optimism" characteristic for recently arrived families and positive selection among migrants¹¹.

Research into the influence of contextual factors on migrant children's academic achievements shows several important effects. First, it turned out that a popular belief notwithstanding, many migrants perform at school as well as their local peers¹²; both the country of origin and the host country are the factors at play here. Second, concentration of migrants in "migrants' schools" too does not necessarily cause negative effects. For instance, in Belgium sociologists demonstrated that in schools with largest shares of migrants migrant children looked to the future very optimistically and rarely quit school¹³.

Peers have a considerable impact on migrant children academic achievements and social mobility¹⁴. Study of these effects would require more than just data on school composition – researchers need precise information about the immediate circle of friends as children are very selective in their communication and friendship. Formally desegregated schools can be in fact internally segregated which was well documented in American schools¹⁵. The most interesting results

⁸ Portes A., Hao L. The schooling of children of immigrants: Contextual effects on the educational attainment of the second generation // *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. 2004. Vol. 101. P. 11920–11927.

⁹ Portes A. Children of immigrants: Segmented assimilation and its determinants. In *The economic sociology of immigration: Essays on networks, ethnicity, and entrepreneurship*, ed. A. Portes. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1995. Pp. 248-80; Portes A. Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology // *Annual Review of Sociology*. 1998. Vol. 24. P.1-24.

¹⁰ Kao G., Tienda M. Optimism and achievement - the educational performance of immigrant youth // *Social Science Quarterly*. 1995. Vol. 76. P. 1–19; Kao G., Tienda M. Educational Aspirations of Minority Youth // *American Journal of Education*. 1998. Vol. 106. P. 349–384.

¹¹ Feliciano C. Educational Selectivity in U.S. Immigration: How Do Immigrants Compare to Those Left Behind? // *Demography*. 2005. Vol. 42. P. 131–152.

¹² Levels M., Dronkers J. Educational performance of native and immigrant children from various countries of origin // *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 2008. V.31. P.1404 - 1425.

¹³ Van Houtte M.V., Stevens P.A.J. School Ethnic Composition and Students' Integration Outside and Inside Schools in Belgium // *Sociology of Education*. 2009. Vol. 82. P. 217–239.

¹⁴ Kao G. Social Capital and Its Relevance to Minority and Immigrant Populations // *Sociology of Education* 2004, V. 77, P. 172–183.

¹⁵ Moody, J. Race, School Integration, and Friendship Segregation in America // *American Journal of Sociology*. 2001. V.107: 679-716.

were obtained by Dutch researchers who found that in schools in the Netherlands and Belgium students from the ethnic majority ignore ethnicity when choosing friends among their classmates, while minority students in these very schools prefer to form friendships with other ethnic minorities¹⁶.

In Russia the academic discussion on international labor migration is largely based on the state statistics and few small scale field studies. There is a lack of data on the ethnic composition of migrant labor force, the levels of Russian language proficiency, desire to stay or to return to their native country and plans for their children's education. So far, but a handful of academic articles on migrant children have been published in Russia. The few available articles which provide important insights into the situation with migrant children are based on qualitative research or small-size surveys with no rigorous sampling strategy¹⁷. One exception is an article by Yu.Tyumeneva and Yu.Kuzmina with careful statistical analysis of family effects in educational achievement based on Russian samples in international large-scale educational assessment PIRLS and PISA¹⁸.

Defining 'migrants' and 'minorities'

The first generation migrants are those who moved from one country to another; the second generation is children of first-generation migrants who were either born in the host country or brought there at a very early age. One can count grandparents, or only one parent, or both parents – in the American tradition, a migrant is a person with at least one parent born outside the U.S.¹⁹, while Belgian researchers include the third generation into analysis, so that anyone whose maternal grandmother was born outside Belgium is considered a migrant²⁰.

The migrant status is always conceptualized through the fact of birth in a foreign country. In case of Russia this simple criteria does not work because people born before 1991 in 'newly independent states' (Azerbaijan, Armenia,

¹⁶ Baerveldt C. et al. Ethnic Boundaries in High School Students' Networks in Flanders and the Netherlands // *International Sociology*. 2007. Vol. 22. P. 701–720; Vermeij L. et al. Ethnic segregation in context: Social discrimination among native Dutch pupils and their ethnic minority classmates // *Social Networks*. 2009. Vol. 31. P. 230–239.

¹⁷ Tyuriukanova E. V., Ledeneva L.I. Migrants' Children's Orientations toward Acquiring a Higher Education // *Sociological Studies*, 2005, №4, p. 94-100 (in Russian); Barazgova E. S., Vandyshev M. N., Likhacheva L. S. Sociocultural Identity Formation Contradictions in the Transboundary Migrants' children // *Proceedings of the Ural State University*, 2010, № 1(72), p.229-240 (in Russian); Makarov A. Specifics of ethno-cultural adaptation among migrants' children in Moscow schools // *Sociological Studies*, 2010, №8, p.94-101 (in Russian).

¹⁸ Tyumeneva Yu. Comparison of Factors Related to Success in PIRLS: a Secondary Analysis of PIRLS4 2006 on Russian Sample // *Journal of Educational Studies*, 2008, №4, p. 56-80 (in Russian); Kuzmina Yu., Tyumeneva Yu. Reader's literacy of 15-year-olds: the importance of family, individual and school characteristics (According to the Russian sample PISA 2009) // *Journal of Educational Studies*, 2010, №3, p. 164-191 (in Russian).

¹⁹Portes A., Rumbaut R.G. Introduction: The Second Generation and the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study // *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 2005. Vol. 28. P. 983–999.

²⁰ Van Houtte M.V., Stevens P.A.J. School Ethnic Composition and Students' Integration Outside and Inside Schools in Belgium // *Sociology of Education*. 2009. Vol. 82. P. 217–239.

Georgia, Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan and all other, Russia included) were in fact born in one and the same country, namely the Soviet Union.

Prior to 1991 the USSR had substantial internal migration, with a long history going back into the days of the Russian empire, which was populated with different ethnic groups – for instance, in St.Petersburg, an Armenian diaspora lived almost since the city's foundation, and different religions were prominently present in the city: large mosque was built in 1910-13, and a Buddhist temple, in 1909-15.

What is obvious, though, is that in education the discourse about migrants has been dominated by such categories as language and culture. From the point of view of school, linguistic and cultural differences are much more important than the formal attribute such as citizenship or the country of parent's birth. Russian-speaking migrants from Belarus and Ukraine, although not citizens of Russia, are not thought of as migrants by the teachers, whereas arrivals from Chechnya or Dagestan which are parts of Russian Federation are considered migrants. Thus if discrimination of any kind occurs, it occurs on the basis of cultural and may be racial characteristics but not the legal ones.

Any particular categorization of ethnic and/ or migrant groups is usually related to particular research objectives. For instance, in most European studies not focused on individual ethnic groups of migrants, researchers have been often distinguishing between "the majority" and "the minority", including into the former group, together with natives, migrants from "Western" countries (European Union, UK, USA)²¹.

Our data allow to construct different categories based on ethnic origin or migration experience for the purpose of the analysis, as well as to investigate the impact of migration status and migrant minority status independently from each other. The sample includes both first-generation and second-generation migrant children, but the latter subsample is too small to be fit for a separate analysis.

Within the context of this study we define as migrants all people who re-settled, including into this category both foreign and internal migrants. We consider as ethnic minorities those migrants for whom Russian language and culture are not native. The category of migrant minorities thus comprises representatives of ethnic groups from Central Asia, the Transcaucasia and the North Caucasus, as well as the few Chinese and Koreans. Ukrainians, Belarusians and settlers from the Baltic nations are not included in this category. This artificial categorization is predicated on our research focus – the impact of language barrier and cultural differences on adaptation; discrimination and segregation in schools.

Material and methods

The findings reported in this paper are the result of the survey carried out in St.Petersburg schools in the Spring of 2010.

The general population in this study is regular state schools of St.Petersburg. Private schools, schools for children with special needs, separate elementary schools and boarding schools were left out. The general population comprised 599

²¹ Baerveldt C. et al, Ibid; Vermeij L. et al., Ibid; Van Houtte M.V., Stevens P.A.J., Ibid.

educational establishments.

In order to have stratified sample, we divided city schools into two categories: first category included ordinary schools, second – “schools with advanced curriculum”, that is gymnasiums, lyceums and schools with enhanced coverage of certain subjects. The latter are considered more advanced in academic matters and according our preliminary data had far fewer migrant children than the schools with ordinary curriculum. Information about individual schools’ status was obtained the Web-site of the St.Petersburg Committee for Education. From our pilot survey we also knew that small schools have more migrant children than large schools – in fact, the smaller is the school the larger is the percentage of ethnic minorities. The data on the number of students enrolled in each city school was obtained beforehand from the St.Petersburg Committee for Education.

The sample was created in two stages. At the first stage, stratified sampling was used: 30 “ordinary schools” and 10 “advanced schools” were chosen at random by number. At the second stage, a subsample of small schools was added in order to increase the number of multiethnic schools in the sample. As we know the city statistics on school enrollment independently from our survey, we can apply weights and use weighted sample in our statistical analysis.

The sample comprised 104 schools from all 18 districts of St.Petersburg. 419 classes (grades 8-10 covering all students in the grade) were surveyed, 7380 student questionnaires were collected. The sample is fully representative for schools with a standard curriculum and, indeed, less representative for lyceums, gymnasiums, specialised schools. We also collected more than 150 interviews with migrant students, migrant parents, teachers and school administrators.

In some cases, “schools with advanced curriculum” were excluded from the analysis since their small number in the sample raises doubts that they adequately represent the entire population of schools of this type. In each case of analysis, the researchers carefully identify the particular sample subject to analysis and the population to which the results can be extrapolated. Weighting factors were applied in the computing of all frequencies and distributions in the study.

Standard statistics (ANOVA, chi-square, principal component analysis) were used for processing the data with SPSS package. Considering a nested structure of the sample multilevel regression analysis was applied using HLM 7 software. In social network analysis, UCINET and StocNET were employed.

In our sample, the categories of “migrant minorities” and “ethnic minorities” are practically overlap but for a few ethnic minority children whose families have lived in St.Petersburg for more than two generations. The total sample (7380 questionnaires, 104 schools) includes about 10% ethnic migrants. Applying weighting coefficients we can calculate the proportions of different ethnic groups among St.Petersburg school students of age 14-16 – ethnic minority children form 7% of St.Petersburg school students. The largest migrant minority groups are Azerbaijani (26% of the entire population of ethnic minorities) and Armenians (18%); Central Asian ethnic groups account for 14% , North Caucasians, for 12%, and Georgians, for 8%. The ethnic composition of St.Petersburg schools is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Ethnic composition of St.Petersburg schoolchildren

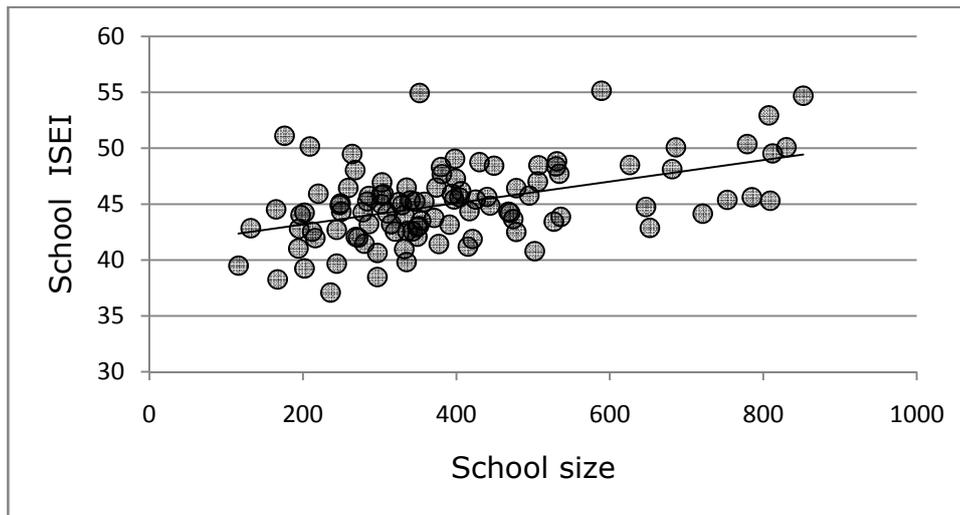
Russians	89,6%
Other Slavic nationality (Ukrainians, Belarusians)	1,9 %
Azerbaijanis	1,7 %
Armenians	1,1 %
Middle Asia nationalities (Uzbeks, Tajiks, Kirgiz, Kazakhs, Turkmen)	1,0 %
North Caucasian Nationalities (Lezgins, Ossetians, Chechens, Avars etc.)	0,8 %
Georgians	0,6 %
Tatars, Bashkirs, Chuvash, Mordva	0,5 %
Other nationalities	1,7 %
Nationality not known	1,1 %

It should be noted that many students from migrant minority families identified themselves in the questionnaires as "Russians", so for ethnicity coding we used responses to the questions about child's and parents' native language. In the group of children identified as migrant minorities on the basis of both their parents' native language and the region of origin, nearly 25% called themselves Russians (based on their citizenship status), some used hybrid hyphenated categories (e.g. Ukrainian-Moldavian or Russian-Azerbaijani) and a few self-identified themselves as "Muslims" or "Caucasians".

Ethnic and social differentiation among the schools

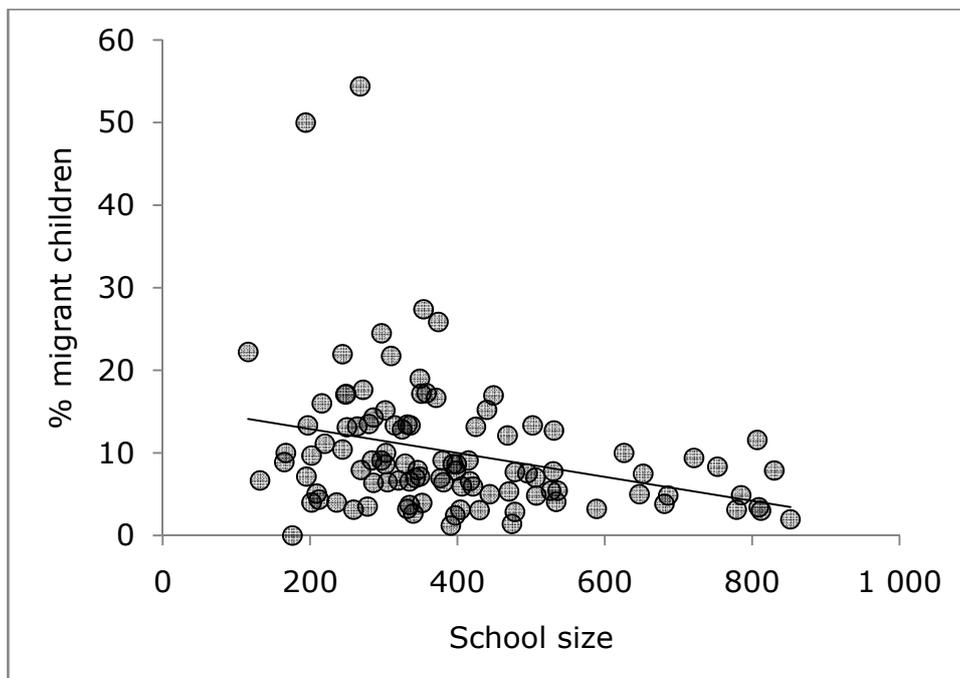
In Russia educational system there is no residential requirements for school enrollment and families have freedom of choice in selecting a school. As a result, "prestigious", "high-ranking" schools always have a competitive admission and can afford selecting students, whereas unpopular schools in disadvantaged, to the contrary, have problems with student recruitment – there is a positive correlation between school size and aggregate socio-economic status of families in school (see Fig. 1).

Figure 1. School socioeconomic status (ISEI) and school size (St.Petersburg, 104 schools)



City statistics on the number of non-citizens and non-native Russian speakers among students in St.Petersburg schools (though it is incomplete) shows a negative relationship between the size of a school and the share of 'migrants' among this school's students. Our data on 104 schools clearly shows the relations between school size and the concentration of migrant children (Fig. 2).

Figure 2. Percentage of migrant minority children in schools (St.Petersburg, 104 schools)



The distribution of migrant minority students among small schools is uneven as well: practically every district in St.Petersburg has several schools which have higher proportion of migrants than other small schools in the same district.

There is virtually no large-scale ethnic residential segregation in St. Petersburg which would result in ethnic segregation in schools – in all city districts the segregation exists on a micro-scale, and often adjacent schools are significantly differentiated with respect to ethnic composition. The point can be well illustrated with a map of two St.Petersburg districts (Fig. 3). As the map shows, schools are located very close to each other, and yet, the shares of migrant minorities in these adjacent schools differ by order of magnitude. These are very typical situations, and this pattern is repeated throughout St.Petersburg.

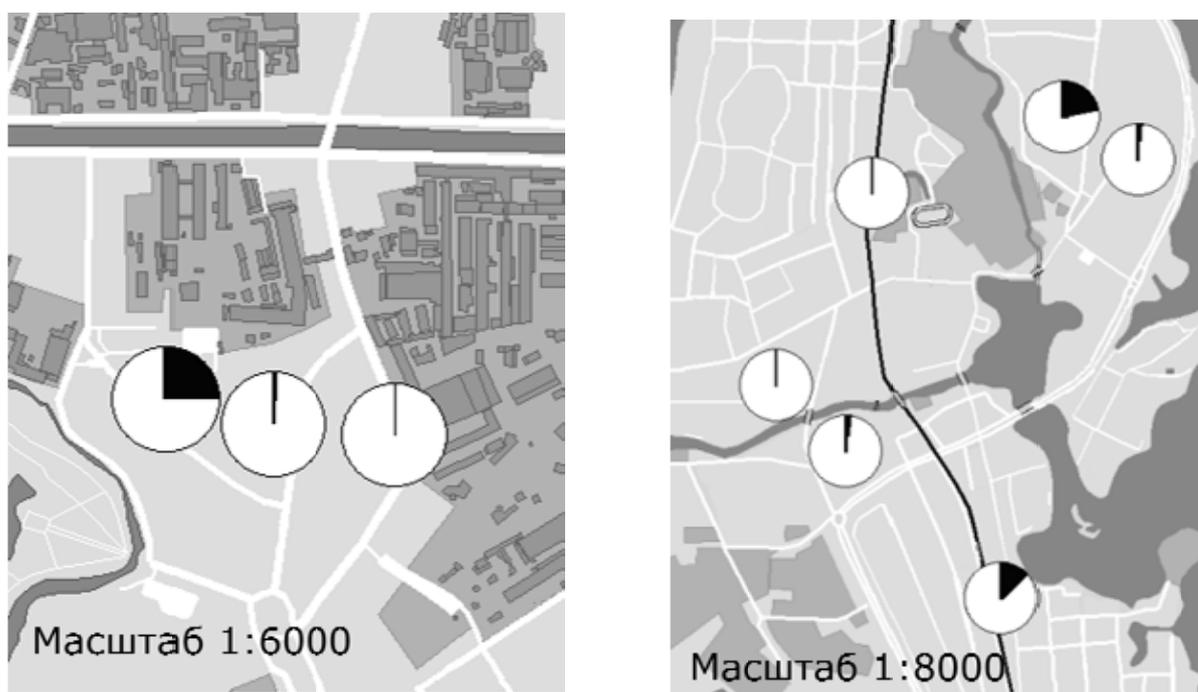


Figure 3. School ethnic differentiation in city space (St.Petersburg). Black area in the circle corresponds to percentage of migrant minority children in school.

There are several factors contributing to such micro-segregation: availability of cheap housing with apartments for rent alongside with apartment buildings with middle-class dwellers, the availability of jobs for migrants and places of ethnic entrepreneurial activity (for instance, large markets) in the neighborhood, and a particular school's history. Most telling in this respect is a remark by a school principal who has been working at one of the multiethnic schools for over 20 years – she said that her school was always attended by migrants: previously they were children of internal migrants coming from rural areas for low-skilled jobs and nowadays by children of transnational migrants, while the nearby school was a school for the “children of managers”.

Yet another important factor contributing to segregation and the formation of “migrants’ schools” is network effect in migrant communities: recently arrived migrants prefer to send their children to schools attended by children of their relatives or acquaintances, as we learned from the interviews with parents. In case of recent migrants with non-citizens status parents often go to district office of education, and then are channeled into certain schools which are multiethnic in composition and have additional classes in Russian language.

In a context of per capita funding, administrators of small schools, who are often at pains to recruit enough students to sustain the school and pay teachers reasonable salaries view labor migrants' children as a their key to survival and a resource to prevent the shutdown of their schools. Obviously, gymnasiums, lyceums and other "high-status" schools are not interested in such resource. These 'high-status' schools often offer additional fee-based courses and activities (e.g. second foreign-language) which are promoted by teachers and students are expected to take up one of these courses, and such charges create yet another obstacle for less affluent families.

The link between ethnic and socio-economic differentiation in schools has been confirmed both by the interviews and the survey data: migrant families sending their children to gymnasiums, lyceums and specialized schools have significantly higher socio-economic status. Table 1 presents the ISEI scores for the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities at different types of schools. It is also evident that in both "high-status" and ordinary schools ethnic minorities have a somewhat lower ISEI score than the ethnic majority.

Table 2. Socio-economic index (ISEI) of ethnic groups by school type

	Ethnic majority	Ethnic minority migrants	
Gymnasiums, Lyceums, Schools with advanced curriculum	50,2 ± 0,48 (N=810)	48,8 ± 1,6 (N=58)	t=0,7 P=0,46
Standard schools	45,2 ± 0,18 (N=4998)	43,4 ± 0,53 (N=501)	t=3,0 P=0,003
	t=10,1 P<0.000	t=3,3 P=0,001	

SES difference between school types is much more pronounced than between ethnic minorities and the ethnic majority within one type of schools – migrant minorities in gymnasiums have a higher socio-economic status than the ethnic majority in ordinary schools.

Indeed, socio-economic differentiation of schools is to be expected, but our data show that the ISEI scores of the ethnic majority and migrant minorities do not seriously differ within schools of one type, which runs contrary to the notion in mass-media that migrant minorities in Russia are mostly poor and uneducated.

Our data demonstrate²² that parental education and professional status are the main determinants of child's enrolment in a gymnasium. But even allowing for these factors, migration status remains important: the longer a family has lived in St.Petersburg, the better the chances are that their child will study in a gymnasium, lyceum or a school with advanced curriculum, irrespective of the family's ethnic status.

²² Logistic regression analysis; data not shown.

The interaction of migrant families with schools

Interaction between parents and school in Russia has several important aspects: satisfying requirements (completing domicile registration [*propiska*] for children, submitting to the supervising teacher all necessary information about the family, attending teacher-parent meetings and being open to communication with the supervising teacher), parental control over the child (fulfillment of home assignments, control of school attendance, accompanying small children to and from school) and willingness to invest in education both on the child's level (from buying schoolbooks and additional aids to hiring private tutors) and on the school level by helping school either financially (contributing to the fund for the class's needs on equal terms with other parents, offering sponsorship to the school) or by personal effort (e.g. participating in renovation). Large and financially successful schools often expect financial contribution while small schools which are short of funds (for menial labor) are looking for parents who would invest time and energy into cleaning and small repair so often needed in schools.

The teachers almost invariably speak very positively about migrant parents commending their commitment to the school, control over the child, openness for contacts with teachers. Here are some typical examples:

The families are very close. All parents watch over their children. The children are nicely dressed, clean, accurate and well fed. They are always keeping an eye over their children... buy schoolbooks for them, equip them readily. They spare nothing for their offspring. A migrant family neglecting their child – such things simply never happen (a teacher, school B).

They are very compliant parents... they attend teacher-parent meetings because they worry stronger about their children, precisely in terms of adaptation (a supervising teacher, school D).

The last quote contains a characteristic comparison (*worry stronger*) of migrant parents with local majority parents. Teachers at small schools attended mostly by migrants and local children from families with low socio-economic status are especially willing to praise migrant families:

I see migrant parents taking better care of their offspring than Russian-speaking parents living in our neighborhood do of their. This is quite a difficult neighborhood... single-parent families, troubled families and so on. Against such background, these children are simply angels (a principal, school M).

Communications between the migrant parents and the school administrators and teachers are hierarchically structured; teachers have a much higher status than migrant parents. This disparity in rank also transpires in daily contacts between the migrant parents and the school. The migrant parents recognize teacher's right to demand compliance with all of the school's formal requirements, to gather money for the school's needs and to interfere in the child's life outside school.

The most conspicuous example of teacher's right to interfere in a migrant family's life is the issue of language choice. The teachers often mention in the interview that they *ask*, or *demand from*, migrant parents, even those who speak Russian very poorly, to talk in Russian with their offspring and *prohibit* them from using their native tongue.

We aiming the parents [to work on language], we ask them to speak Russian at home to make life easier for the children. But, I need hardly say, it's impossible. But we do all we can. But mostly the parents are appreciative and the children apply themselves to the task. Children are quick in catching up (a school principal).

The mechanism of adaptation through school affects not only children from labor migrant families but their parents as well. School is a space where migrants come in touch with the "official" world.

They are faced with the necessity to have the paperwork in good order, to submit information about their families, to comply with certain rules at school, with the necessity to modify the family's habitual practices (to speak Russian and not their native language; to change food practices). Talking to parents about children, teachers and school administrators convey to migrant families the new behavioral norms.

In some schools, the jobs of cleaners and attendants are held by Azerbaijani mothers who take up employment at school to be closer to their children. For this small group of women, school is the most important space of secondary socialization in the new environment.

Women in some migrant families have only a few contacts with the world outside the family – in such families, employment for women is disapproved, visits to 'official' places are an activity reserved for men, and women tend to stay at home without much visiting public spaces. In such families schools are exceptional public places to which visits by women are approved and where employment is allowed as it is justified by "the need to watch after children." Thus school is practically the only place where female homemakers from many migrant families come in touch with the "outside" world, and school as an institution (as well as networks of parents formed around it) serve for them as one of the important sources of information about life outside the home.

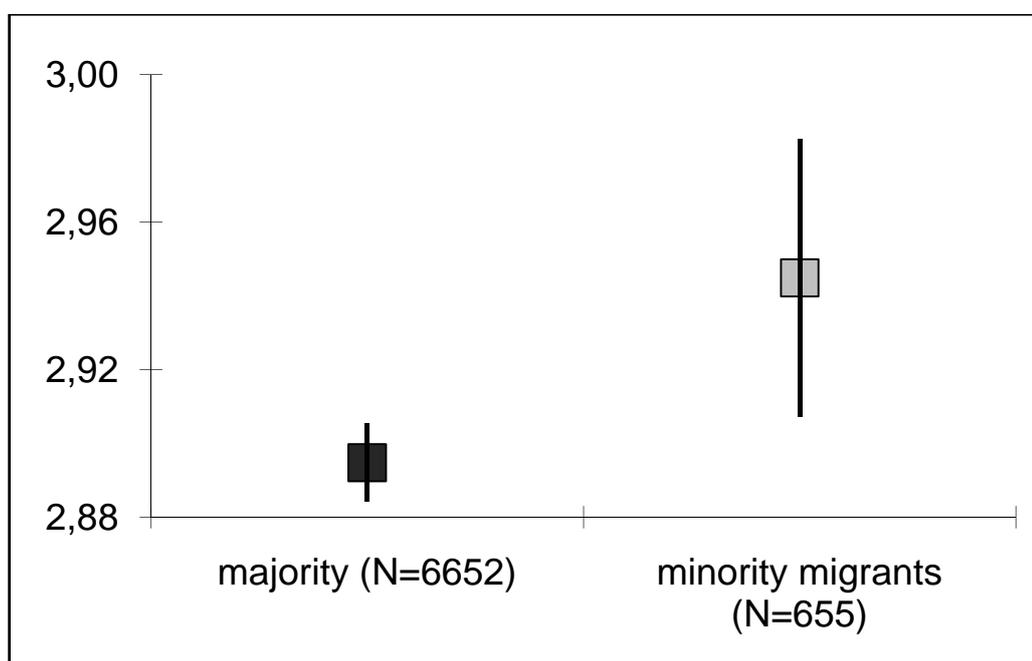
Characteristics of migrant minorities as students

Migrant children's educational achievements and plans have traditionally stood as the benchmark of success or failure of their integration into host society. Another important indication of a migrant's successful integration is his/her plans with regard to higher education.

In Russia today higher education no longer has an "exclusive" status and is viewed as almost a requisite: 80% of local students in our sample have plans for university education, and similarly 80% of the migrant children too intend to receive a tertiary degree – in respect to educational plans, migrants do not differ from their local Russian counterparts.

Learning motivation has a significant impact on achievement at school. It was demonstrated many times that with controls for gender, socio-economic indicators and school characteristics motivation is the most important factor affecting a student's grades. In our survey we measured motivation levels by presenting to students eight statements and asking them to evaluate their agreement with each on a 1-4 scale; a student's motivation level was calculated as the mean value of the eight responses. The scale reliability is quite high (Cronbach's alpha = 0.69 for our sample). The motivation level of ethnic minority children is considerably higher than motivation of local majority (see Fig. 4).

Figure 4. Learning motivation of minority migrants comparing to ethnic majority pupils



Mastery of Russian language is the key parameter teachers rely on evaluating a child's adaptation. Indeed, for a migrant minority child, his/her degree of Russian language proficiency depends on the age when (s)he started learning Russian. Adaptation happens most easily when a migrant child attends kindergarten in the hosting society (in our case in St. Petersburg) and nearly synchronously starts speaking both Russian and his/her mother tongue.

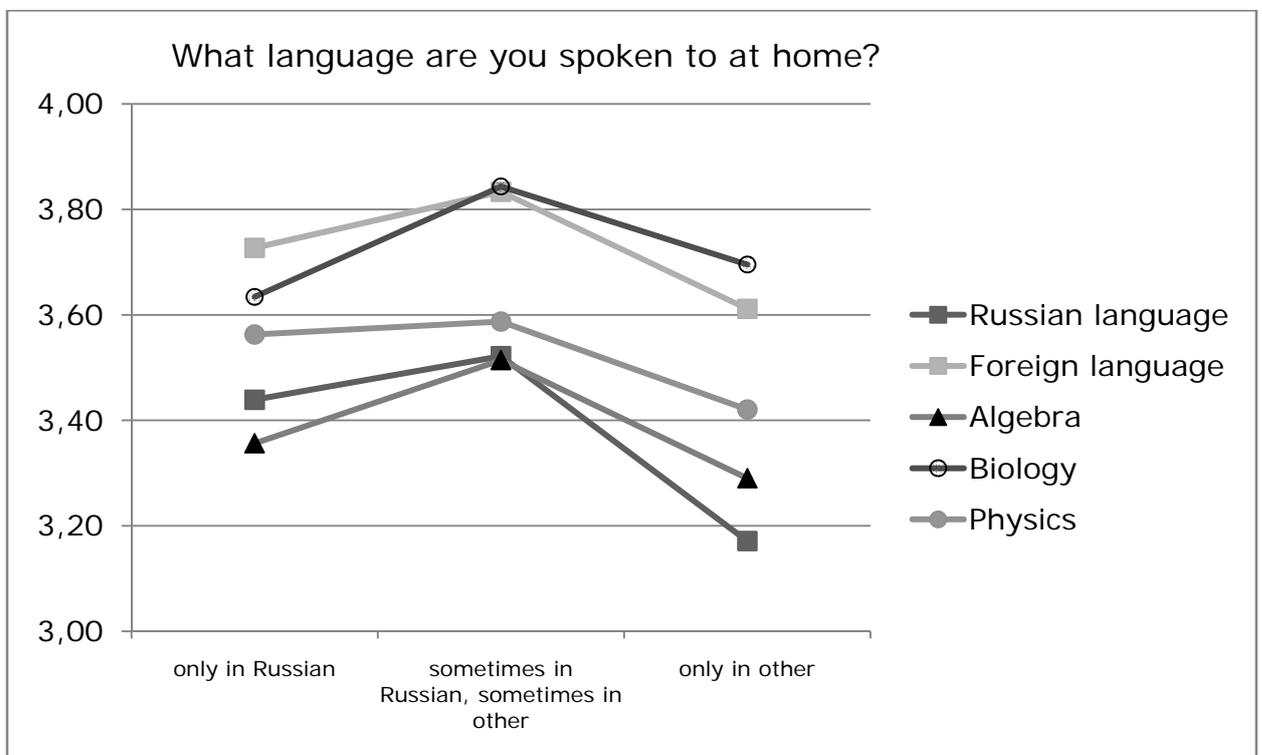
Such children in their interviews say that Russian language is easy for them and they often do not remember when and how they began speaking Russian. The teachers too point to different levels of the children's command of Russian depending on whether or not the child attended the kindergarten.

Our survey shows 55% of migrant minority families use two languages (Russian and native) at home, and 34% of the children claim that the families speak only Russian at home. The interviews show that "place of communication" is the determining factor in the choice between Russian and a native language.

Our respondents usually talk in Russian outside the home (at school or on a street) with family members with whom they communicate in native tongue at home. Most respondents communicate in Russian with their age peers at school or on a street even in an ethnically homogenous company. It appears that the use of native tongue alone is fairly marginal.

A migrant student's language of 'at home' communication affects his/her academic performance. As the comparison of academic performance of three groups of students shows (Fig. 5), students from families using only a non-Russian language at home perform the worst and students whose family employs two languages, Russian and mother tongue, perform the best. The Russian language grades differ most strongly along these lines; for other subjects, the tendency holds albeit differences between the groups are statistically insignificant.

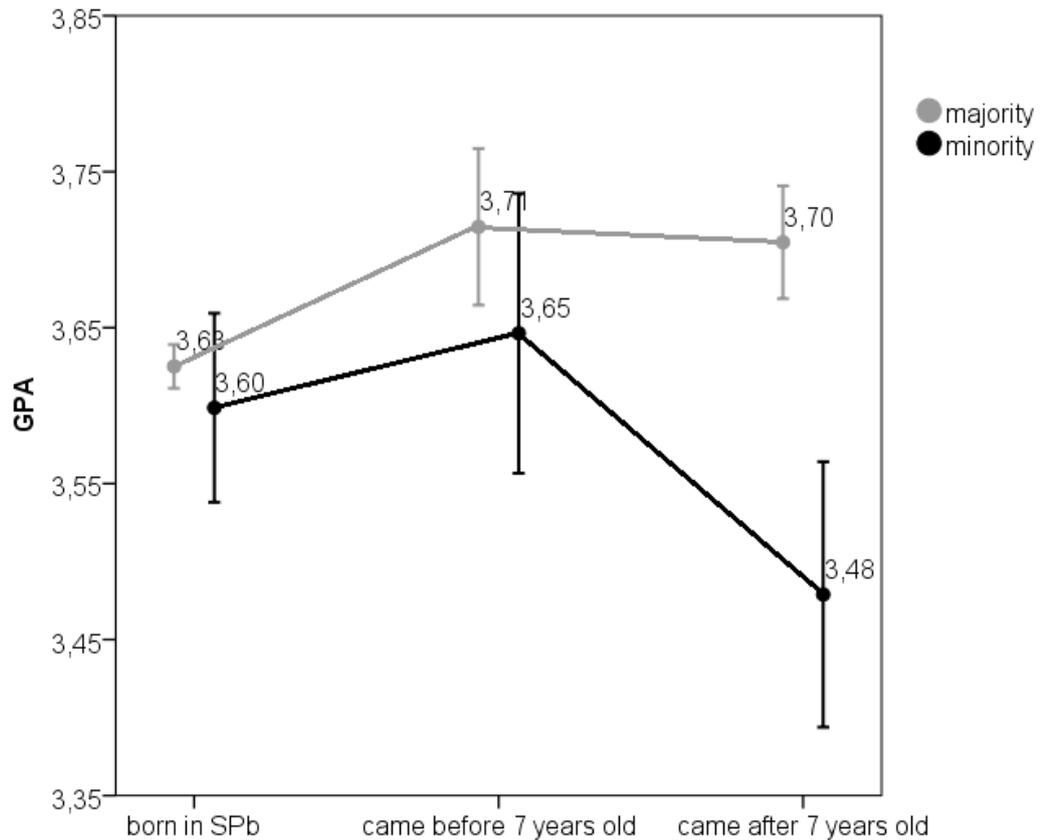
Figure 5 Pupils' grades depending on language spoken at home



It is important to distinguish the influence of migration as such from the influence of being an ethnic minority, and we aimed at separating the effects of migration status and minority status from the very beginning of our research. The relation between academic performance and the length of residence in St.Petersburg is non-linear and is different for the ethnic majority and ethnic minorities (see Fig. 6).

We ran ANOVA and regression analysis for these effects on a subsample of "ordinary" schools (95 schools, 6411 students) as our full sample contained only a small number of gymnasiums (9 schools, 969 students). Thus the findings obtained can be extrapolated only to the "ordinary" schools but probably not to the "prestigious" ones – the effects there might be different.

Figure 6 Effects of migration status and minority status on pupil's grades (ANOVA)



Children from the families with migration background perform better than their local age peers from the same schools, and this holds true both for internal majority migrants (coming from other parts of Russia), and ethnic minority migrants. There can be at least two explanations for this: first, a “positive selection” among migrants, second, “immigrants’ optimism” mentioned earlier.

As might be expected, for ethnic majority children the age when they came to St.Petersburg does not matter: it has no impact on their academic performance. The contrary is true for children who are non-native Russian speakers – the age of the arrival is very important: if they arrive when they are past kindergarten age, their performance in school will be significantly worse than that of their peers. Language problems are arguably at the heart of the matter: such children experience difficulties at school first of all on account of insufficient command of Russian language. And they can also have problems with adaptation in general as they tend to withdraw from many school activities.

Recent arrivals account for 26% of the total group of migrant minorities at the age 14-16. Many migrant minority children came early or were born in St.Petersburg, that is their parents came to the city 15-20 years ago, and these children are second generation or ‘one-and-a-half’ generation migrants.

To evaluate the impact of migration status and ethnic status controlling for variables (child’s gender, family’s socio-professional status, characteristics of the school’s student body) we created a series of multi-level regression models. A separate paper will deal with these models in detail; here we present only one

model, using as a dependent variable a student's academic performance measured as the average of final grades for academic terms in five subjects: Russian language, algebra, foreign language, biology, physics. To analyze the interaction effect (ethnic status * migration status) we constructed 5 dummy variables with the basic category "ethnic majority, born in St.Petersburg".

Results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 3. Two-level regression. Dependent variable – GPA

Level 1: 6411 students Level 2: 95 schools					
	b (SE)		Beta	Significance	
^a Gender	-0,24 (0,02)		-0,21	***	
Motivation	0,27 (0,02)		0,21	***	
ISEI family	0,007 (0,0006)		0,16	***	
^b Minority, born in St.Petersburg	-0,007 (0,19)		-0,003		
^b Minority, came before 7 years old	0,090 (0,061)		0,025		
^b Minority, came after 7 years old	-0,053 (0,041)		-0,020		
^b Majority, came before 7 years old	0,028 (0,024)		0,017		
^b Majority, came after 7 years old	0,07 (0,02)		0,032	**	
Intercept 1 (b ₀)	2,68 (0,19)			***	
% parents with higher education at school	0,0018 (0,0011)		0,002		
RandomEffects	St. Deviation	Variance Comp.	d.f.	χ ²	p-value
Intercept2, u ₀	0.10617	0,01127	92	331.95635	<0.001
level-1, r	0.51080	0,26091			

b – non-standardized coefficients

SE – standard error

Beta – standardized coefficients

Significance levels: *p ≤ 0.05; ** p ≤ 0.01, ***p ≤ 0.001

^aReference category -- girls

^bReference category – ethnic majority, born in St.Petersburg

The larger effects are produced by individual variables such as gender (boys study worse), motivation and family's socio-professional status. At school level, we included only one characteristic – the share of parents with university education, and its significance is low (about 10%). It should be reminded that the absence of great variations in the share of parents with university education might be

explained by the fact that the model was built from a sample excluding “high-status” schools.

When controlling for the said variables the differences in academic performance between the ethnic majority and minorities become insignificant. And there is only one category for which the difference matters: “ethnic majority – came after the age of 7” (but the effect is rather small).

Similar results were obtained by researchers working on family effects in educational achievement based on international assessment data²³. Analyzing the PIRLS 2006 data (tests administered in 4th grade when children at age 10-11) researchers found that controlling for family and school characteristics the test outcomes were not affected by the child’s country of birth (Russia or elsewhere) or by the frequency of use of Russian language at home. In PISA 2009 assessment (tests administered to students at age 15) the language of intra-family communication and migrant status affect a child’s performance in the functional literacy test (although the effect of migrant status was practically obliterated with the inclusion of school characteristics into the model). We suppose that the difference between PISA and PIRLS results may be due to the effect of age at migration – the PISA tests functional literacy for much older children.

In our study we have used school grade scores, which of course are qualitatively different from independent tests such as PISA and PIRLS, and which might be explained by contextual classroom/teacher factors. More rigorous approach would call for using independent test assessment, but this option, regrettably, is presently unavailable for us.

Social networks and social exclusion

The issue of interethnic relations in multiethnic schools has a practical importance, especially considering the levels of xenophobia in the society. Sociologists have used small surveys (or even opinion polls) to collect data on xenophobia in schools and ethnic-based social exclusion. An alternative to such ‘polling’ approach is provided by social network analysis, when people are asked about their social connections. In our questionnaire, students were asked to tell the first names and family names of their classmates with whom they maintain closest contacts or no contacts at all.

We selected for statistical analysis of communication/friendship networks in classes only those classes where at least 75% of students responded to the network questions as this participation rate is sufficient to avoid distortions in the presentation of a network’s general structure²⁴. Our database of St.Petersburg schools has 309 such classes (5905 students).

In order to isolate the effect of ethnicity we need to control for other factors affecting communication and friendship both on individual and group levels (for instance, the proportion of migrant minority children in the class).

Standard statistical tools cannot be applied to network data because it does not meet the prerequisite requirement about independence of observation (so-

²³ Tyumeneva Yu., 2008, Ibid.; Kuzmina Yu., Tyumeneva Yu., 2010, Ibid.

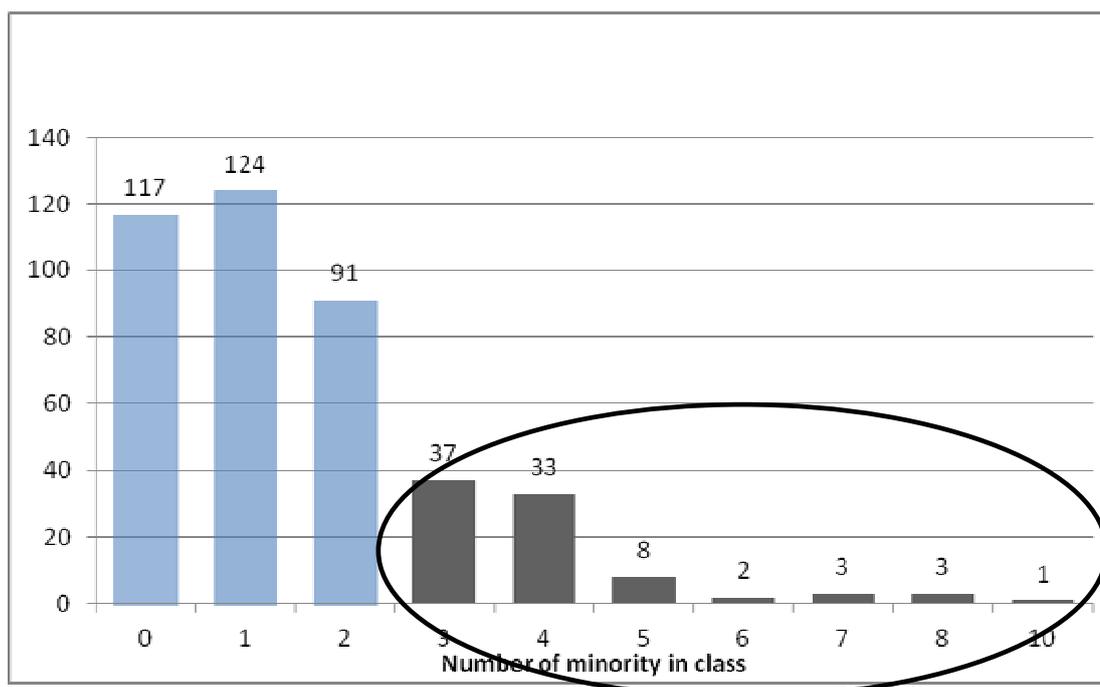
²⁴ Hamilton, Ch. e.a. Rates of Classroom Participation and the Validity of Sociometry // School Psychology Review. 2000. V.29. P.251-266.

called problem of network autocorrelation). For the analysis we use p2 method²⁵ for dyadic analysis from the StocNET software, which is approximately analogous to multilevel multinomial regression modeling on network data. The p2 model was developed by Marijtje van Duijn, Tom Snijders and Bonne Zijlstra²⁶.

Our subsample for the analysis of relationship between ethnic background and communication in class included only classes numbering at least three migrant children: 86 multiethnic classes (about 1500 students) and had 50% of girls and 21% of ethnic minority children.

This design was selected because gender homophily is the most important factor affecting friendship between teenagers. In practical terms it means that if a class has two Uzbek students, a boy and a girl, most likely they will not form a friendship – even if there is an ethnic homophily, it will not be called into play in such situation because gender homophily is stronger. Three migrants in a class, therefore, is the minimal level for testing the hypothesis about homophily with respect to ethnic minority status. Data on minority distribution in classes from our sample are presented in Fig. 7.

Figure 7. Classes with different number of minority children



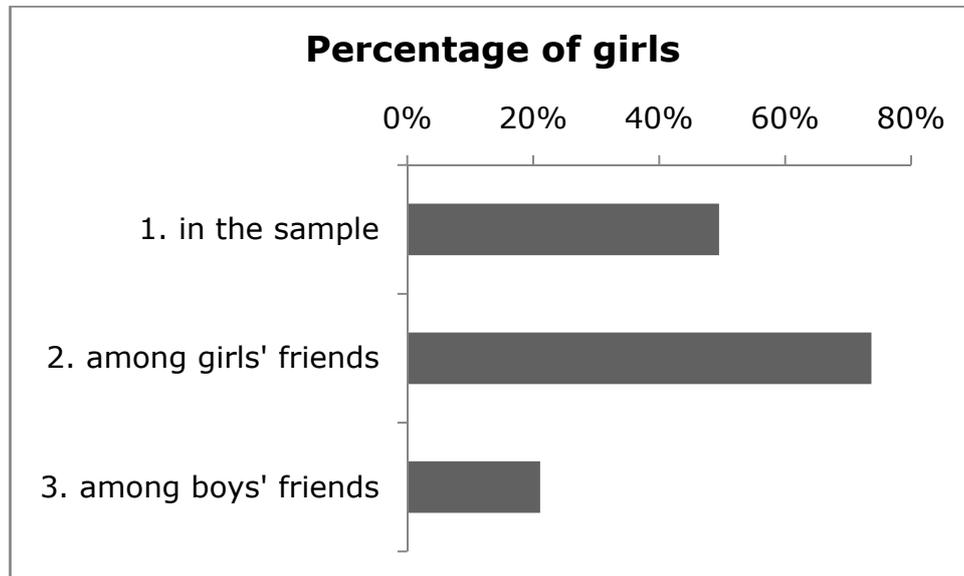
The next graphs (Fig. 8 and 9) reflect the descriptive statistics of the distribution of the respondents' friendly ties by gender and by ethnic categories.

²⁵ We would like to stress here that the successful application of p2 models were possible only due to encouragement and generous help from Marijtje van Duijn, who kindly taught p2 magic to Valeria Ivaniushina, and consulted us on all network matters in Groningen, in St. Petersburg, and over email.

²⁶ Van Duijn M.A.J. et al. P2: a random effects model with covariates for directed graphs // *Statistica Neerlandica*. 2004. Vol. 58. P. 234–254; Zijlstra B.J.H. et al. The multilevel p2 model: A random effects model for the analysis of multiple social networks // *Methodology*. 2006. Vol. 2. P. 42–47.

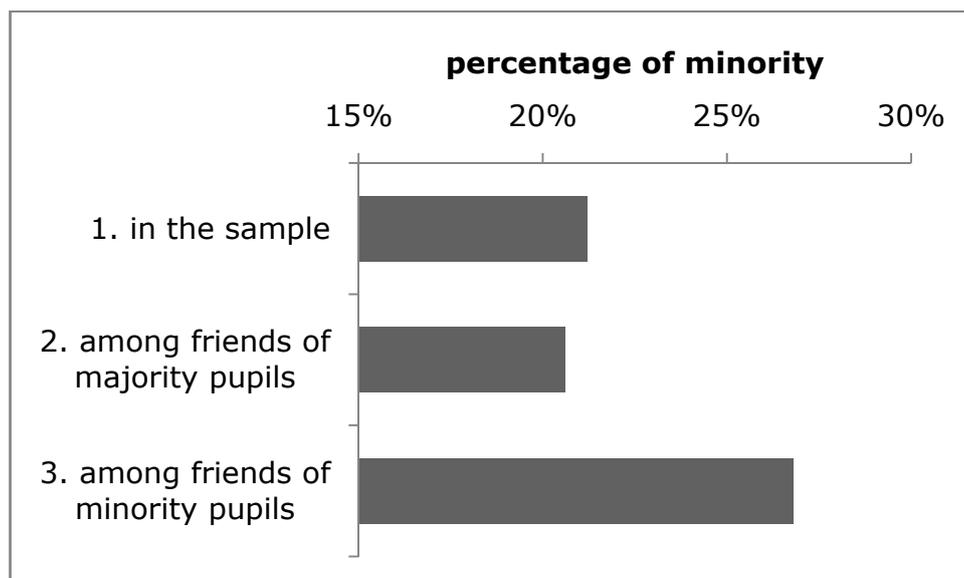
The graphs show that, indeed, girls prefer to make friends with girls and boys with boys, and this is confirmed with a chi-squared test. As for ethnicity, the data demonstrates that ethnic majority has same proportion of migrant minorities among friends as in the sample in general, while ethnic minority students differ in this respect and selectively communicate with their minority peers.

Figure 8. Number of friendship ties by gender



$\chi^2_{1-2} = 412,5$ ($p < 0,001$); $\chi^2_{1-3} = 588,2$ ($p < 0,001$)

Figure 9. Number of friendship ties by minority status



$\chi^2_{1-2} = 0,67$ ($P = 0,67$); $\chi^2_{1-3} = 12,5$ ($p < 0,001$)

Great advantage of p2 multilevel modeling is that it makes possible to assess in social network analysis the effects of both individual variables (gender, ethnicity, academic performance, person's socio-economic status, etc.) and group, or contextual, variables (for instance, school's type or size, its health status, proportion of migrant children, etc.). The p2 software models random effects with dyadic data, using as independent variables both actors' attributes and properties of dyads (dyadic co-variates).

Friendship ties between students in a class were used as a dependent variable in the model. The analysis assessed the probability of such ties depending on gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, academic performance, plans for higher education, certain attitudes (anti-school attitudes, sense of belonging, a student's self-assessment of popularity), as well as school and class characteristics (number and proportion of migrant minority children in the class; school's size and type).

The analysis was performed in steps: first, each of the independent variables was tested individually, second, the variables were introduced into the model sequentially. The final model contained all variables that had been found to produce a statistically significant effect. Below we present two models and briefly describe the findings.

Model 1 analyzes the synchronous impact of gender and ethnicity (or rather, ethnic minority status) on the probability of friendship ties. It demonstrates a strong effect of gender homophily (for both boys and girls) after controlling for minority status. After controlling for gender homophily the only effect which remained significant is minority-minority preference – minority peers prefer communicating with each other.

Table 4. Density effects Model 1

	estimate	S.E.	Sig.level
Gender			
Sender girl	0.64	0.11	***
Both girls	0.89	0.07	***
Both boys	1.48	0.07	***
Minority/Majority			
Sender Majority	-0.03	0.12	
Both Majority	-0.00	0.07	
Both Minority	0.45	0.09	***

Significance level: * $p \leq 0.05$; ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$

In the second model, in addition to the main variables we included additional variables which theoretically can affect friendship: school grades, plans for higher education, anti-school attitudes, self-assessment of popularity. We also tested and excluded from the model, on account of their complete lack of effect, the following variables: family's socio-economic status, sense of belonging, plans to leave school after the 9th grade, school's size and type, number and proportion of minority migrants in class. The final model includes only variables with a significant effect (see Table 5)

Table 5. Density effects. Final model

	estimate	S.E.	
Gender			
Sender girl	0.66	0.12	***
Both girls	0.88	0.07	***
Both boys	1.51	0.07	***
Minority/Majority			
Sender Majority	-0.04	0.12	
Both Majority	0.02	0.07	
Both Minority	0.39	0.09	***
Both plan Higher Education	0.20	0.04	***
GPA (Abs.Dif.)	-0.32	0.04	***
Anti-school attitude (Abs.Dif.)	-0.14	0.03	***
Self-perceived popularity (Abs.Dif.)	-0.27	0.03	***

The results of the p2 modeling can be summarized as follows:

1. Gender homophily has the strongest effect among all variables, and for boys its effect is stronger than for girls. It is a well-known pattern, and we computed all other coefficients controlling for this effect.
2. Ethnic homophily has an asymmetric effect: whereas ethnic majority children are "ethnically blind" (i.e. their friends' ethnicity does not matter much to them), ethnic minority students tend to form ties with ethnic minority peers.
3. There is significant homophily based on anti-school attitudes and plans for receiving a higher education. In other words, children tend to form friendships with those classmates who, like them, plan (or don't) to enroll in a university and who have similar attitudes to school in principle.
4. Socio-economic status, sense of belonging to the school, and plans to leave school after 9th grade (to attend vocational school) in our model do not affect formation of ties and coalitions by children in schools.
5. Not a single contextual characteristic of the school or the class – school's type and size, absolute number and proportion of migrant minority children in class – produces a significant effect, i.e. the formation of friendship ties are unrelated to the characteristics of the school/class.

Ethnic majority students with all things equal (say, controlling for gendered friendships) disregard ethnicity in forging friendships. Migrant minority teenagers, to the contrary, given a choice prefer to make friends with other migrant minority children. And as our interviews with the students and teachers show, migrant minority children in schools do not always find friends among children from the same ethnic groups: for instance, Azerbaijanis can form friendships with Armenians or Kyrgyz – depending on the ethnic groups present in the class.

This preference may be explained by minority children's wish to find friends with a similar experience of migration and of living in different culture/language. Besides, external categorization – the appraisals by teachers and local children –

may contribute to the forging of new, supra-ethnic identities ("from Caucasus", "migrants", etc.) among migrant children. Still, there is no evidence for social exclusion of ethnic minority children in school networks.

Research in Belgian and Dutch schools (Baerveldt e.a., 2007; Vermeij e.a., 2009) revealed a similar asymmetry in communication choices made by ethnic majority and ethnic minorities. Russian schools as well as Russian students and their migrant peers do not differ in that respect from schools and students in Western Europe.

Conclusion

Our research demonstrates that distribution of children by school depends more on social class than on ethnic background. Migrants (both internal and international), who lack material resources, local social capital and time, opt for schools attended by children from local families with a low socio-economic status, while children of well and more educated migrants enroll in "schools with advanced curriculum". This seems to be in accord with the theory of segmented assimilation, although with a qualification: migrants are integrated into different segments of society according with their socio-economic status without forming ethnic enclaves.

We find important effects of migration process as such. In schools with standard curriculum, children of both internal and international migrants are studying better than local children, especially when they arrived in St.Petersburg before school age. This effect holds for both ethnic majority and ethnic minorities. This seems to be in line with the hypotheses of positive selection among migrants and 'migrant optimism' as an optimistic outlook among first-generation migrants. In Russia one cannot rule out the possibility that in the next generation the "migrants' optimism" may dry up.

Ethnic conflicts, xenophobia and lack of tolerance do not seem to be a problem in St.Petersburg schools. Discussing problems related to migrant children, the teachers and principals mention only linguistic problems. Children who came to the city before or around the age of 7 do not have any difficulties with linguistic adaptation, but ethnic minority teenagers who came at the age of 10 or older and have a poor command of Russian can be identified as a risk group and their adaptation requires special efforts from schools.

Our analysis of the students' communication networks produced an important conclusion – ethnic majority children choosing friends ignore ethnicity, whereas ethnic minority children prefer to make friends with other ethnic minorities. Such patterns of friends selection have been identified in European schools, and Russian students do not differ in this respect from their European counterparts. Unlike in the U.S., in Russian schools there is no evident race- or ethnic-based segregation within school. The xenophobic tendencies often reported in the media, are not reflected in the students' interethnic friendships.

By way of conclusion we will touch upon consequences of the existing social and ethnic segregation in schools. It seems from our data that the concentration of migrant children in small schools attended mostly by children from local low-income

families does not negatively affect the migrant children's adaptation and integration.

Such differentiation, in the short run, has a positive impact on the migrant students' motivation and interaction with teachers. In schools with local children from poor families, migrant children are viewed by teachers as good learners and receive attention and support.

It seems unlikely that in schools with a different social composition (children of educated and well-to-do parents) these migrant children from relatively poor families would receive the same support and attention as their academic performance would be poorer relative to other students in the class.

In a long term the effect of such differentiation among schools is hard to measure, but it evidently may lead to a long term negative outcome. Faced with discrimination on the labor market and obstacles to social mobility after the positive experiences at school, today's students may experience in a decade deep social deprivation. Any long-term social forecasts would require a longitudinal study tracing the lives of migrant children after graduation from school.

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