

## Experiment 1: Self-Symbolizing on Facebook

### Sample characteristics

Two hundred and forty-five individuals with a German-Turkish bicultural background participated in the study. They were recruited via German-Turkish bicultural groups on social media. Of these participants, 32 indicated to have no commitment to either the German or the Turkish culture, or both. In line with prior research on symbolic self-completion (e.g., Longoni et al., 2014), using commitment as an inclusion criterion, the remaining sample size of committed participants was 213 (131 female, age  $M = 27$ ,  $SD = 7.6$ , range: 18 – 45). The selected language, the participants' migration status,  $z_s < 0.60$ ,  $p_s > .37$ , and commitment to the German or Turkish cultural identity goal,  $t_s < 0.54$ ,  $p_s > .59$ , did not differ significantly between experimental conditions.

### Language Versions

All materials were back-translated and checked for consistency by two independent interpreters. Language selection was offered because – although all participants were bicultural – it was expected that many participants were more fluent in one than the other language. Being able to speak the corresponding language is one marker of possessing a cultural identity; however, it is not the only one. We therefore decided not to limit the experiment to completely bilingual participants only.

### Contrast Analysis

A follow-up contrast analysis confirmed that the probability to self-symbolize did not significantly differ between the *German complete/Turkish incomplete* and the *German incomplete/Turkish complete* conditions,  $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $z = 0.62$ ,  $p = .536$ ,  $OR = 1.18$ ,  $CI_{OR} [0.70, 2.01]$ , nor between these two conditions and the *German incomplete/Turkish incomplete* condition,  $\beta = 0.24$ ,  $z = 1.51$ ,  $p = .133$ ,  $OR = 1.27$ ,  $CI_{OR} [0.93, 1.74]$ . However, the probability to self-symbolize in the three conditions in which single or double incompleteness had been

induced was significantly higher than in the *complete/complete* condition,  $\beta = 0.42$ ,  $z = 3.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $OR = 1.52$ ,  $CI_{OR} [1.21, 1.93]$ .

## **Experiment 2: Self-Symbolizing by Prosocial Helping**

### **Sample characteristics**

The experiment was advertised in student organizations for Turkish students at two German Universities, at several bicultural events in Southern Germany organized by local communities, at a Turkish sports club in Germany, in schools, and in a mosque. For practicality reasons, most experimental sessions were conducted outside of the lab at locations easily reachable by the participants (e.g., in the classroom of a local school). All experimental sessions were conducted in a separate room where participants could work undisturbed on the study with an experimenter present. The experimenter was a German-Turkish bicultural student blind to the experimental conditions.

For all analyses, the experimental conditions were dummy coded. Completeness was coded as 0 and incompleteness was coded as 1 both for German and Turkish completeness vs. incompleteness. We checked whether relevant sample characteristics (i.e., the selected language, the migration status of the participant, the migration background of the participant's family, and the sense of belonging to the two cultures before the incompleteness manipulation) differed systematically across the experimental conditions. Logistic regression analyses showed no significant differences in the selected language or the participants' and migration status between the four experimental conditions,  $z_s < 1.26$ ,  $ps > .20$ .

Feelings of belongingness to the Turkish culture before the incompleteness and completeness induction also did not differ significantly between the experimental conditions ( $F_s < 0.298$ ,  $ps > .586$ ). Looking at the baseline belongingness to the German culture, it turned out that participants in the Turkish complete condition reported higher baseline belongingness than participants in the Turkish incomplete condition,  $F(1,104) = 4.77$ ,  $p = .031$ . Baseline

feelings of belongingness to the German culture did not differ significantly between the German identity complete vs. incomplete conditions,  $F(1,104) = 2.09$ ,  $p = .151$ . However, differences in baseline belongingness did not significantly affect the dependent variables and the same pattern and magnitude of results as reported below were observed in models including baseline belongingness to the German culture as a covariate.

### **Contrast Analysis**

Follow-up contrasts confirmed that the probability to self-symbolize did not differ significantly between the conditions where incompleteness was only induced for one identity goal,  $\beta = -0.14$ ,  $z = -0.69$ ,  $p = .488$ ,  $OR = 0.87$ ,  $CI_{OR} [0.57, 1.30]$ , and between these conditions and the condition where incompleteness was induced for both identity goals,  $\beta = -0.16$ ,  $z = -1.21$ ,  $p = .224$ ,  $OR = 0.87$ ,  $CI_{OR} [0.66, 1.09]$ . In contrast, the probability to symbolize was significantly higher in the three conditions in which incompleteness had been induced compared to the condition in which completeness had been induced for both identity goals,  $\beta = 0.29$ ,  $z = 2.55$ ,  $p = .011$ ,  $OR = 1.35$ ,  $CI_{OR} [1.09, 1.73]$ .

### **Privately stated preferences**

**Pretest.** Existing and well-researched cultural dimensions from different works and authors (Hofstede, 1983, 2011, Smith, Dugan & Trompenaars, 1996, Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2011) were summarized in a questionnaire (*Table 1*) to maximize the number of cultural dimensions and define culture-specific symbols. Only the individual items within the dimensions were reformulated and adapted.

The preliminary study was conducted as an online study. The participants could choose between the Turkish and German languages. Subjects should use a 5-point Likert scale to indicate which symbols (statements, actions, beliefs) they consider to be typical of German culture and which are typical of Turkish culture. The scale ranges from "1 = *clearly typical Turkish*" to "5 = *clearly typical German*". If an action or a statement applied to both,

or both were not true, then the middle category was on the scale "3 = *equal to both*". 58 subjects (24 female, 34 male) participated in the survey. The average age of the participants was  $M = 30.59$  years ( $range = 16 - 61$ ,  $SD = 12,424$ ).

*Table 1: Overview of cultural dimensions*

Cultural dimensions	M	SD	variance	typical	comment
balance of power	2,12	0,53	0,28	Turkish	hierarchy
individualism	4,00	0,53	0,28	German	individualistic
masculinity	2,64	0,57	0,32	Turkish	competition
uncertainty avoidance	2,01	0,68	0,46	Turkish	traditional
progress, orientation	3,93	0,58	0,33	German	progressive
restraint	1,69	0,60	0,37	Turkish	strict rules
materialism	3,35	0,40	0,16	German	materialism
emotionality	3,45	0,48	0,23	German	structurally
understanding of time	3,67	0,66	0,44	German	time-oriented
performance	2,54	0,48	0,23	Turkish	status-oriented
religion	1,78	0,61	0,37	Turkish	religious

Cut-off values were determined to be typically Turkish  $M \leq 2.5$  and for typical German  $M \geq 3.5$ . Thus, the cultural dimensions of understanding time, orientation, domination, individualism, uncertainty avoidance and religion have been found suitable for differentiating between typical Turkish and German cultural symbols (*Table 1*). This was taken into account in the main study.

**Measurement in Experiment 2.** A list of activities was shown, consisting of six domains based on culture dimensions detected in classic cultural comparison research

(Hofstede, 1983, 2011; Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2011). The domains were: language, orientation toward tradition and future, self-restraint, individualism vs. collectivism, uncertainty, and religion. These dimensions were selected based on a pretest with an independent sample of 58 German-Turkish bicultural individuals. For each domain three items were generated, one representing the German culture, one representing the Turkish culture, and one neutral item. For example, in the domain “language” the items were: “I would like to listen to German music or watch a German movie.”, “I would like to listen to Turkish music or watch a Turkish movie.”, and “I would like to listen to the radio, or go to the movie theatre.” The participants were asked to select four activities out of the six domains that they would like to perform.

**Results in Experiment 2.** We performed a 2x2 ANOVA with the experimental factors (German and Turkish identity) as predictors. The experimental factors had no significant effect on this variable,  $F_s < 2.44$ ,  $p_s > .121$ , indicating that the groups did not differ in the number of typically Turkish and typically German actions they checked on the list.

**Interpretation.** Incompleteness, did not affect items checked on a list of preferences. It is likely that the participants did not see the list as suitable means of symbolizing. Effective self-symbolizing requires social reality (Brunstein & Gollwitzer, 1996; Gollwitzer, 1986; Gollwitzer et al., 2013; Gollwitzer & Wicklund, 1985b). Because the study was anonymous, the participants’ choices of preferences were not registered by others. In contrast, effort in the questionnaire task at the end of the experiment was readily observable – the more tasks the participants worked on, the longer they took and this was observed by other participants and the experimenter who was a German/Turkish bicultural student. This suggests that engaging in relevant voluntary tasks in front of others is a more effective form of self-symbolizing than privately stating relevant preferences.