

Turkish immigrant adolescents' adaptation in the Netherlands: The impact of the language context

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Abstract

The language assimilation model represents the notion that immigrant youth's proficiency in the national language (L2) predicts adaptation irrespective of their ethnic language proficiency (L1). We studied the context dependency of this model using Lerner's notion of "goodness of fit". Lerner contends that if personal resources or competencies do match the demands posed by particular activity settings, e.g., the school, then the person experiences reward and this positively affects adaptation. Two hypotheses guided the study: 1) when a context demands the use of Dutch language a more fluent proficiency is rewarding and thus is positively related to adaptation outcomes, irrespective of the level of ethnic language proficiency; 2) the more proximal the context is in terms of the need to use the national language, the stronger the moderating effect of the language context is on the relationship between national language proficiency and adaptation outcomes. The study was conducted in the Netherlands. Participants were 160 Turkish second generation immigrant adolescents (13-18 years). We found support for the first hypothesis, but not for the second.

Key words: immigrants's' adaptation, acculturation, language context, goodness of fit.

Resumo

No modelo de asimilación lingüística represéntase a noción de que a competencia da mocidade inmigrante na lingua nacional (L2) predice a adaptación independentemente da competencia na súa lingua orixinaria (L1). Nós estudamos a dependencia contextual deste modelo usando a noción de "bondade adaptativa" de Lerner. Lerner afirma que se as competencias ou recursos persoais cumpren as demandas

formuladas polo conxunto de actividades particulares (por exemplo, a escola); xa que logo, a persoa obtén un beneficio e isto afecta positivamente á súa adaptación. Dúas hipóteses guiaron este estudo: 1) cando un contexto demanda o uso do neerlandés, precisase unha competencia máis fluída e isto está relacionado positivamente cos resultados adaptativos, independentemente do nivel de competencia na lingua orixinaria; 2) canto máis próximo sexa o contexto en termos de necesidade de uso da lingua nacional, maior será o efecto modulador da lingua de contexto na relación entre a competencia na lingua nacional e os beneficios adaptativos. O estudo levouse a cabo en Holanda e os participantes foron 160 adolescentes (de 13 a 18 anos) da segunda xeración inmigrante turca. Atopamos apoios para a primeira hipótese, pero non para a segunda.

Palabras clave: adaptación dos inmigrantes, aculturación, contexto lingüístico, bondade adaptativa.

1. Introduction

In the Netherlands, like in other Western countries, immigrant adolescents' social functioning and well-being is a matter of special concern to politicians and educators. When compared to their Dutch peers dropout rates, juvenile delinquency and unemployment percentages are higher amongst immigrant youth (cf. Tesser, Merens & van Praag, 1999). The problems are persistent and hard to resolve, but finding explanations is a step towards resolving them.

A variety of explanations have been suggested in the national and international literature: parents' low SES, an insufficient proficiency of the majority language, stressful experiences due to acculturation requirements and discrimination, lowered self-esteem and a confused ethnic identity, cultural differences linked with immigrant children's educational experiences and differences in acculturation strategies (Ogbu, 1992; Fishman, 1996; Glenn & de Jong, 1996; Driessen, 2000). Acculturation refers to the cultural and psychological changes that result from the contact between cultural groups, including the attitudes and behaviors that are generated.

In an earlier study (Vedder, in press) we explored the relationship between acculturation strategies and immigrant adolescent reported adaptation outcomes. With respect to the acculturation strategies we were mainly interested in the ethnic identity of these young people and their proficiency in both their ethnic and the national language. We used the data of Turkish and Surinamese second generation immigrant youth living in the Netherlands to test the validity of the notion that integration (a strong

orientation towards the ethnic culture combined with a strong orientation towards the national culture) rather than assimilation (a relatively stronger orientation towards the national culture), separation (a relatively stronger orientation towards the ethnic culture) or marginalization (a weak orientation towards either culture), is the most adaptive mode of acculturation and the most conducive to the immigrants' well being. This notion has been proposed by a variety of researchers and has found support in various studies (cf. Coleman & Gerton, 1993; Berry, 1997; LaFromboise; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Howard, 1998). However, there are also empirical studies and theoretical analyses that suggested that context matters in terms of what the most adaptive acculturation strategy is (cf. Nguyen, Messe & Stollack, 1999; Mollenkopf, 2000; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001; Birman, Trickett & Vinokurov, 2002). For instance, Birman et al. (2002) suggest that the roles of ethnic and national identities in the adaptation of immigrants are linked to the acculturative demands of both the overall community context and the demands of agents at various life spheres within this context. Immigrants perceive stronger assimilative expectations in their school settings and have stronger assimilative wishes with regard to school adjustment than with respect to other domains of adaptation. The notion of what the preferred acculturation strategy is and what the criterion for positive adaptation may vary within and between ethnic groups and within and between societies.

1.1. Context matters

In our own research thus far we have primarily focused on between group and between country comparisons. We found that for Turkish youth Dutch language proficiency played a more important role for adaptation outcomes than either ethnic identity or ethnic language proficiency (Vedder, in press). The data fitted the language assimilation model and not the language integration model, i.e., maintaining one's ethnic language and being proficient in the national language at the same time. We suggested that maintaining and improving one's ethnic language proficiency, even if this is combined with good Dutch language proficiency, is perhaps not widely accepted in the Dutch multicultural society. Earlier research (van Oudenhoven, Prins & Buunk, 1998) showed that the Dutch prefer immigrants to adopt an assimilation or integration strategy, but that they think that most immigrants prefer a separation strategy. It seems likely that signs that immigrants want to maintain their links with their culture and language are

interpreted as a deviation from the desired situation, which leads those who signal or assume this deviation to push with increasing vigor towards assimilation (cf. Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2003).

We decided to find more evidence for this context-specific explanation by comparing these Dutch findings with findings in a largely similar group of second generation Turkish adolescents living in Sweden. We explored explanations at the level of national differences in immigrant policy, particularly with respect to ethnic language policies (cf. Vedder & Virta, submitted). Maintaining ones home language and optimizing ones ethnic identity appeared to be the strongest acculturation strategy for Turkish youth in Sweden, leading to the best adaptation outcomes. This may be caused by characteristics of the Swedish acculturation context. Traditionally there has been a strong appreciation for home language maintenance not only from language minority groups themselves, but also from educators and policymakers. Active multilingualism was the goal. Since the 1990s, however, educators and particularly policymakers have drastically changed their evaluation of the home language facilitation practices. What was valued by the immigrant communities as well as by the broader society then came under pressure. The Swedish findings can easily be interpreted in terms of resistance or as an indication that Turkish youth living in Sweden is not willing to give up their appreciation of their home language, which they see as a source of ethnic identity and as a resource for their well-being.

Both of the above-mentioned studies support a notion that in terms of adaptation outcomes there is no such thing as a preferred acculturation strategy that is valid for all times and places. Possibilities for optimizing adaptation outcomes as well as choices of acculturation strategies may vary according to context with respect to immigrant language policy and corresponding experiences. Both studies, however, had serious limitations in that for our interpretation of the results we relied on a particular choice of contextual information that was not gathered as part of the research design; hence we worked with a-posteriori interpretations.

This study focuses on within-group variance allowing us to use context information that was collected as part of the study's design. We focus specifically on neighborhood and language context variables. Earlier studies (Schnittker, 2002) showed that the ethnic composition of particular activity settings or of the neighborhood, in which immigrants live, moderated the relationship between acculturation and adaptation outcomes, such as well-being and self esteem. The verb moderate here refers to a moderator effect,

i.e. the effect of a third variable (C), in this case the ethnic composition of the neighborhood, that affects the relationship between two other variables, acculturation (A) and adaptation (B). A moderator functions like a switch changing the strength of a relationship between A and B from weak to strong depending on the value of the moderator (for instance, from a ethnically homogeneous to a ethnically heterogeneous neighborhood) or changing the direction of the relationship between A and B from positive to negative. We want to replicate this moderating effect and contribute to the explanation of this effect in accordance with the goodness-of-fit model proposed by Juang, Lerner, McKinney and von Eye (1999). This model suggests that if personal resources or competencies do match the demands posed by particular activity settings, e.g., the school, the person experiences rewards, this positively affects adaptation. In terms of personal resources we focus on national language proficiency and in terms of demands we focus on contexts differing in the likelihood that the immigrant adolescents involved experience a demand to use the national language. When there is no such demand, a good national language proficiency is not rewarding and does not lead to positive adaptation outcomes, whereas, when the setting demands the use of Dutch language a more fluent proficiency is rewarding and thus is positively related to adaptation outcomes. This is the first hypothesis that we will put to the test.

We will use three different contexts. The first context is defined in terms of the ethnic composition of the neighborhood in which adolescents and their families live. We assume that a more ethnically diversified neighborhood requires more frequent use of the national language as the language of broader communication. The second context is defined by the frequency of contacts with peers belonging to the national group and the third is defined by the relative frequency of parents' use of either the ethnic or the national language in the adolescents' home context. We regard these contexts as ranging from more distal to more proximal in terms of the likelihood that the adolescents experience a demand for the use of the national language. Our second hypothesis is that the moderating effect on the relationship between national language proficiency and adaptation outcomes is stronger the more proximal the context is in terms of the need to use the national language.

1.2. The language assimilation model

As indicated earlier we will explore the context dependency of the relationship between acculturation and adaptation using the language

assimilation model. This model represents the notion that language proficiency may have a direct impact on adolescents' learning and development in that it is an instrument for the transmission of information and for regulating cognitive processes (cf. Baker, 2001). The language assimilation model is characterized by the assumption that an immigrant's ethnic language proficiency does not contribute to the immigrant's adaptation, but that national language proficiency does.

Tesser (Tesser & Iedema, 2001), in accordance with the goodness-of-fit model, suggested that in the Netherlands support for this model is growing due to recent changes in school curricula. These changes aim at stimulating students' self-regulated learning with an increased attention for cooperation, discussions, verbalizing problem-solving strategies and writing assignments. These activities require a good command of the Dutch language. This development has made it relatively more difficult for immigrant students to do well in schools.

As stated before, we already know that with Turkish immigrant youth living in the Netherlands the language assimilation model provides an explanation for their adaptation outcomes. In the present study we want to further explore the validity of this model by analyzing its context dependency.

2. Method

Data for this study were collected in the Dutch contribution to the International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth (ICSEY).¹

2.1. Participants

This study focuses on second-generation Turkish immigrant youth aged 13 to 18 living in the Netherlands. Second generation was defined as referring to youth who were born in the Netherlands or had immigrated before the age of seven. Participants were 160 adolescents and at least one of their parents, living mainly in the densely populated western part of the

¹ Members of the project group are: J.W. Berry & K. Kwak (Canada), C. Fan & D. Sang (Australia), G. Horenczyk (Israel), K. Liebkind (Finland), F. Neto (Portugal), J. Phinney (U.S.A.), C. Sabatier (France), D. Sam (Norway), P. Schmitz (Germany), P. Vedder & F. van de Vijver (Netherlands), and E. Virta & C. Westin (Sweden); see: <<<http://www.ceifo.su.se/icsey/icsey.html>>>.

Netherlands, in or near the four cities Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht. Of the adolescents slightly less than 50% were female. The mean age was 14.66 ($SD = 1.528$).

The parents' socio-economic status (SES) was estimated using four categories: (1) unskilled workers, (2) skilled workers, (3) white collar, and (4) professional. The SES for the parent with the highest score was used. This, of course, excluded those parents neither of whom was employed: 19%. In order to avoid dropping these parents from all analyses in which occupational status was included as a covariate, we decided to give the unemployed parents a score '0' for occupational status.

2.2. Instruments

Data were collected with a questionnaire compiled by members of the ICSEY team. In this paper, we focus on demographic information, the intensity of contacts with peers from the national group, parents' language usage at home, adolescents' language proficiency in both the ethnic and the Dutch language and a number of adaptation variables: self-esteem, life satisfaction, and psychological problems. All measures were self-report measures. The questionnaire included several other self-report measures, which are not included in the current analyses.

Demographic variables included adolescents' age, gender, country of birth, and, if foreign born, age of arrival, and their parents' occupational status. The last variable was used to estimate parents' socio-economic status (SES). It was derived from information about the parents' occupation. When the two parents of a given adolescent differed as to their occupational status, the higher one was used for the categorization.

The three settings: adolescents were asked to give information about *the ethnic composition of their neighborhood*. They could choose from five alternatives: (1) almost all the people are from my ethnic group; (2) the majority of the people are from my ethnic group; (3) there is about an equal mix of people from my ethnic group and other groups; (4) the majority of the people are from ethnic groups different from mine; (5) almost everyone comes from an ethnic group different from mine.

Peer relationships. The scale had four items assessing the frequency of interaction with peers from the national group. An example: "How often do you spend free time with peers from your own ethnocultural group?". Participants responded on a scale ranging from never (1) to very often (5). No

information about the psychometric qualities of this scale was available previous to this study.

Language usage at home. The parents reacted to four statements with respect to their language use at home: father speaks ethnic language at home; father speaks national language at home; mother speaks ethnic language at home; mother speaks national language at home. Answers were given on a five-point scale running from (1) “not at all” to (5) “all the time”. Since this was not an a-priori scale we decided to conduct a Principal Component Analysis (with varimax rotation) to find out whether it would be feasible to combine the scores on the four items in a single factor score. All four items loaded on a single factor (eigenvalue 1.982; 49.55% variance explained; loadings .809, -.527, .810, and -.628, respectively). Higher scores indicated a more frequent use of the ethnic language. We used the factor score for distinguishing home settings characterized by a dominant use of the ethnic language from homes with a dominant use of the national language.

Ethnic language proficiency. Proficiency in the ethnic language of an immigrant group is a self-report based on a scale constructed by Kwak (1991). The questionnaire inquires about a person’s abilities to understand, speak, read and write the ethnic language. Answers are given on a five-point scale running from “not at all” (1) to “very well” (5).

National language proficiency. Proficiency in the national language refers to the same self-report questions but now with respect to the national language. Earlier research (Kirchmeyer, 1993) suggested that self-reports on language proficiency have a satisfactorily high correlation with evaluations of a person’s language proficiency by others.

Psychological adaptation was measured using scales for self-esteem, life satisfaction, and psychological problems. All items had response agreement scales with options ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Global *self-esteem* was measured using Rosenberg’s (1965) 10-item self-esteem inventory. A sample item is “On the whole I am satisfied with myself”. The original scale was designed as a unidimensional factor structure, which indeed has been demonstrated in a number of studies (Simpson & Boyal, 1975; Hensley, 1977).

Life satisfaction. For measuring the overall degree of youngsters’ satisfaction with their lives we used a five item scale developed by Diener, Emmos, Larsen and Griffin (1985). A sample item: “I am satisfied with my life”. The scale has been tested among diverse groups of samples including college students and has shown good psychometric properties including good

test-retest reliability, high internal consistency, and strong positive correlations with other subjective well-being scales (see Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985).

Psychological problems is a scale containing 15 items designed to measure depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms. Items came from a variety of sources (Kovacs, 1980/1981; Kinzie, Manson, Vinh, Tolan, Anh & Pho, 1982; Reynolds & Richmond, 1985; Beiser & Flemming, 1986; Mollica, Wyshak, de Marneffe, Khuon & Lavelle, 1987; Robinson, Shaver & Wrightsman, 1991). Sample items are: "I feel tired"; "My thoughts are confused".

The reliability of the scales (Cronbach's alpha), together with means and standard deviations are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. The reliability (Cronbach's alpha), means and standard deviations of the measures used in the study.

	# items	Cronbach α	Mean	SD
Ethnic composition neighborhood	1	-	3.00	.958
Relationships with national peers	4	.82	12.19	4.051
Ethnic language proficiency	4	.82	16.68	2.763
Dutch language proficiency	4	.82	18.02	2.021
Self-esteem	10	.83	38.68	7.720
Life satisfaction	5	.79	18.46	4.523
Psychological problems	15	.88	33.11	9.752

2.3. Procedure

Turkish research assistants encountered the Turkish youth in schools. All participants were invited to individually complete the questionnaire. All participants were informed that participation was voluntary, and that responses were confidential. All questionnaires were in Dutch. The research assistants were allowed to give support in the group languages. The Turkish research assistants were all supplied with a Turkish version of the questionnaire, but none of the adolescents requested interpreter support.

Parents were approached through their participating child. They brought home an envelope with a questionnaire for their parents and returned the completed questionnaire within a week.

3. Results

In order to find out whether any of the dependent variables (adaptation) or predictors (ethnic and national language proficiency) was related to either adolescents' gender or their SES background (measured as their parents' occupational status) we conducted a series of ANOVAs with each of the dependent variables and predictors. None of these analyses yielded a significant main or interaction effects. We concluded that there was no need to include either gender or SES or both in further analyses.

We tested the validity of the language assimilation model in multiple regression analyses in which we used self-esteem, life satisfaction, and psychological problems as dependent variables and adolescents' ethnic language proficiency and their national language proficiency (in this order) as the predictors. In order to check for the moderating effect of the three context variables we divided the sample using the medians of each of the context variables as the cut off point. The median of the neighborhood's ethnic composition was 3.00, of the peer relationships 12.30, and of the language use at home .35.

First we present the mean scores and standard deviations for the language and the adaptation variables by context specified group (see Table 2). The groups defined by the median split do not differ in any of the three contexts with respect to ethnic language proficiency and life satisfaction. We found a difference only in the groups defined in terms of parents' dominant language use at home; the Dutch language proficiency of the group in which the adolescents' parents predominantly use the Dutch language is higher than in the group in which parents predominantly use Turkish (Cohen's d is medium size: .56; Cohen's $d = M_1 - M_2 / \text{pooled}$). In two contexts, neighborhood and peer relationships, we found that adolescents who were confronted with a presumed stronger demand to use the Dutch language had a higher score for self-esteem (effect sizes were small: .44 and .43, respectively). The fact that, for this same variable, we failed to find a significant difference in the third context shows that a higher self-esteem is not systematically related to the group of adolescents confronted with a stronger demand to use the Dutch language. The fourth and final statistically significant difference was found in the context of peer relationships with respect to psychological problems (a small effect size: -.39).

Table 2. Means and standard deviations for the language proficiency and adaptation variables by context specified groups.

Context/ Variable	Context < median			Context median			<i>T</i> (<i>p</i>)
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
Neighborhood							
Ethnic language prof.	38	16.55	2.575	118	16.70	2.874	.29 (ns)
Nat. language prof.	39	17.85	1.926	119	18.06	2.084	.56 (ns)
Self-esteem	37	36.20	7.382	117	39.51	7.752	2.29 (.023)
Life satisfaction	38	18.45	4.619	119	18.49	4.413	.05 (ns)
Psych. Problems	37	33.85	11.058	117	32.84	9.323	-.55 (ns)
Friends national group							
Ethnic language prof.	78	16.78	2.334	79	16.53	3.170	-.56 (ns)
Nat. language prof.	79	17.71	2.095	81	18.26	1.935	1.73 (ns)
Self-esteem	76	37.27	7.365	80	40.45	7.403	2.69 (.008)
Life satisfaction	78	17.84	4.409	81	19.12	4.473	1.82 (ns)
Psych. Problems	76	34.85	9.762	80	31.10	9.286	-2.46 (.015)
Parents' language usage							
Ethnic language prof.	66	17.06	2.423	71	16.54	2.568	-1.23 (ns)
Nat. language prof.	67	17.55	2.098	72	18.60	1.659	3.27 (.001)
Self-esteem	65	38.55	7.706	71	38.61	7.889	.04 (ns)
Life satisfaction	67	18.47	4.469	71	18.30	4.331	-.24 (ns)
Psych. Problems	67	34.00	10.307	69	32.39	9.420	-.95 (ns)

Table 3. The prediction of adaptation outcomes using ethnic and national language proficiency as predictors and four contexts varying in the likelihood of requiring the use of the national language as moderators.

Context/ Dependent variable	L1/ L2	<i>N</i>	Context < median			Context median			
			β	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i> ² -change	<i>n</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>R</i> ² -change
Neighborhood									
Self esteem	L1	37	-.24	-1.40	.056	117	.10	1.05	.025
	L2		.02	.13	.000		.09	3.30 ^b	.085
Life satisfaction	L1	38	-.33	-2.02	.130	118	-.00	-.05	.003
	L2		-.09	-.56	.008		.29	3.13 ^b	.078
Psychol. problems	L1	37	.30	1.78	.049	117	-.13	-1.40	.026
	L2		-.26	-1.54	.062		-.14	-1.45	.018

Friends national group									
Self esteem	L1	76	.03	.22	.004	79	.03	.27	.011
	L2		.13	1.06	.015		.36	3.32 ^c	.125
Life satisfaction	L1	78	-.04	-.34	.000	79	-.15	-1.31	.009
	L2		.18	1.49	.029		.26	2.26 ^a	.062
Psychol. problems	L1	76	-.15	-1.25	.033	79	.04	.33	.000
	L2		-.10	-.87	.010		-.19	-1.68	.036
Parents' language usage									
Self esteem	L1	64	.11	.86	.014	71	.02	.14	.013
	L2		.02	.13	.000		.35	2.99 ^b	.114
Life satisfaction	L1	66	.01	.09	.000	71	-.15	-1.23	.002
	L2		-.01	-.08	.000		.37	3.08 ^b	.122
Psychol. problems	L1	66	-.16	-1.27	.033	69	-.05	-.42	.013
	L2		-.06	-.46	.003		-.22	-1.77	.045

^a $p < .05$; ^b $p < .01$; ^c $p < .001$

Two important conclusions can be drawn. The first is that we did not find systematic differences between the groups in any of the contexts. The second conclusion is that the groups of adolescents confronted with settings with a relatively lower demand to use the Dutch language did not have lower levels of ethnic and national language proficiency or more negative adaptation outcomes than youth confronted with settings requiring the use of the Dutch language. In order to test the two hypotheses we conducted regression analyses. The outcomes are presented in Table 3.

The first hypothesis was that whether or not a context demands the use of the national language moderates the relationship between national language proficiency and self-reports on adaptation, irrespective of the level of ethnic language proficiency. We used three contexts. First we choose the neighborhood, focusing on the ethnic composition, whilst assuming that a greater ethnic diversity would call for the use of the national language as the language of communication. The second context was defined by the intensity of contacts with peers with a Dutch cultural and language background, and thirdly we asked parents to what extent they used the national and ethnic language at home.

The hypothesis was confirmed in all three contexts with respect to two of the three elements of adaptation, viz. global self-esteem and life satisfaction. In the context requiring a better Dutch language proficiency youth's actual

level of Dutch language proficiency had a stronger predictive power with respect to self-esteem and life satisfaction than in the context less demanding of adolescents' Dutch language proficiency. Being more or less fluent in Dutch in settings requiring Dutch did not have an impact on adolescents' self-reported psychological problems. These findings warrant the conclusion that it is not national language proficiency as such predicts adaptation in Turkish immigrant youth living in the Netherlands, but rather national language proficiency in settings that demand the use of the national language.

Both the neighborhood and the home context median-split distinguish contexts demanding the use of Dutch from contexts in which the ethnic language is very probably used more frequently. Parallel to the finding that, in a setting requiring the use of the national language, the national language proficiency is positively related to the adolescents' adaptation, one might expect that in a setting requiring the use of the ethnic language, the ethnic language proficiency is positively related to adaptation. The outcomes for the below-median group in Table 3 show that we found no support for this latter expectation. In neighborhoods in which most people are from the same ethnic background, we found rather high, albeit not statistically significant β values for the relationship between ethnic language proficiency and either self-reported global self-esteem or life satisfaction, but these values were negative, indicating that better ethnic language proficiency did correspond to lower adaptation scores.

Our second hypothesis was that the contexts' moderating effect would be stronger in settings representing a more proximal demand for good national language proficiency. We suggested that the proximity of this demand would increase from neighborhood to the home setting. No clear support was found for this hypothesis. The contrast in findings between below and above median settings was largely stable between the contexts.

4. Discussion

In earlier articles (Vedder, in press; Vedder & Virta, submitted) we suggested that the relationship between acculturation and adaptation outcomes in Turkish second generation immigrant youth living in the Netherlands can best be described in terms of the language assimilation model. This model states that the immigrants' national language proficiency predicts adaptation outcomes irrespective of the level of immigrants' ethnic

language proficiency. Other models, such as the ethnic identity model, in which both ethnic identity and ethnic language proficiency are seen as important predictors of adaptation independent of the level of national language proficiency, and the language integration model in which it is suggested that both ethnic language proficiency and the ethnic language proficiency are important resources and predictors of immigrants' adaptation, were not supported by the data from the Turkish adolescents. In those publications we focused on between-group differences and suggested that the findings could be explained by group-specific socialization traditions, immigration histories, and to different language policies as part of national immigrant policies. In this article we left the cross-cultural perspective behind and focused on within-group differences in an attempt to get a better picture of the processes involved in the acculturation of the Turkish immigrant youth living in the Netherlands. Particularly we wanted to find out more about the context dependency of the language assimilation model.

We found support for the notion of context dependency. More particularly we found that national language proficiency predicts adaptation outcomes in contexts demanding the use of the national language, but not in contexts that did not demand the use of the national language. We tested this for three contexts and found comparable outcomes irrespective of the context. This means that the finding is robust, but it also means that we did not find support for the second hypothesis, viz. that the contexts' moderating effect would be stronger in settings representing a more proximal demand for good national language proficiency.

Earlier we stated that the goodness-of-fit model can be used to explain the findings. This model describes mechanisms that explain the relationship between aspects of acculturation –in this study language proficiency in both the ethnic and the national language– and adaptation outcomes. This model describes at least two possible causative mechanisms (cf. Juang, Lerner, McKinney & von Eye, 1999). First, experiencing a fit between contextual demands and personal capacities is a *reward* that may positively impact on adaptation outcomes. Second, the experience of a lack of fit may result in *stress* that negatively impacts on adaptation outcomes. Although we did not set up this study to explore the validity of the goodness-of-fit model in the first place, the findings shed some light on the validity of this model, at least in relation to the present data and with respect to these causative mechanisms.

With regard to the first hypothesis it was remarkable that the relationship between language proficiency and adaptation only concerned self-esteem and

life satisfaction, but not psychological problems. Psychological problems or manifestations of stress symptoms seem less susceptible or sensitive to the experience of (a lack of) fit between demands for the use of the national language and the personal national language proficiency than either self-esteem or life satisfaction. Stated more generally, the experience of a lack of fit does not correspond to a manifestation of stress symptoms. If such stress symptoms are not related to different levels of fit, then it is not very likely that stress induction is a causative mechanism in the goodness-of-fit model.

If a sense of reward links language proficiency and adaptation outcomes, why is this not the case irrespective of whether we are dealing with the national or the ethnic language? Why did we not find that ethnic language proficiency predicts adaptation outcomes when adolescents are confronted with demands to use the ethnic language? In terms of the goodness-of-fit model the answer would be that in the settings that we referred to (the neighborhood and the home situation) the experience of fit is not rewarding or stated differently, there is no reality of an experience of fit between personal language resources and setting specific demands for the use of these resources. This perhaps results from a lack of a sense of demand in situations in which the ethnic language is used. The quality of language used in these situations may not be seen as a challenge for the persons involved, and therefore cannot be rewarding. Either the persons involved in these settings are very tolerant of the quality of adolescents' language use or in these settings there is no coordinated norm for the quality of language use, or both. Our research design did not provide data to find out whether this actually was the case for the persons and settings involved in the study. However, we have evidence from other sources.

In the socialization of Turkish immigrant children in the Netherlands, even for second generation children in the pre-school years the acquisition and use of the Turkish language is seen as common or normal (Aarssen & Backus, 2001). By the time these children start going to school their parents want them to acquire Dutch language proficiency as soon as possible, but regard this as primarily the school's responsibility (Vedder & Bouwer, 1996; Nijsten, 1998). Parents embody a demand for the use of the Dutch language in particular settings, such as the school. Of course the school community also represents its own interests in this respect, for instance by grading the demonstrated language proficiency. Through this and by the simple fact that Dutch is the language of instruction in schools, the school symbolizes and maintains standards for the quality of the use of the Dutch language for

children and adolescents. Given Turkish parents' high aspirations for their children's educational careers and the importance of the national language proficiency for these careers the immigration setting makes the national language more demanding than the ethnic language (Nijsten, 1998).

Aarsen and Backus (2001) indicated that the status of Turkish is high amongst Turkish immigrants living in the Netherlands. The consequence of this is that as compared to other immigrant groups, the loss of the ethnic language between the first and second generation is relatively minimal. These authors also pointed out that Turkish in the immigration setting is a language in development. Due to reduced conservation or promotion of standard Turkish, both regional varieties of Turkish or Turkish dialects and Dutch affect the Turkish language learned and transmitted between generations in the Netherlands. Apart from these influences the immigration setting redefines what is considered to be a typical Turkish language context and related concept domain is, whereas originally all contexts were Turkish language contexts. Özgüzel (1994) showed that Turkish children themselves report sometimes having problems in formal settings, mainly school related, when they are supposed to learn and use standard Turkish. In most Turkish language situations the use of standard Turkish is not required and in these situations the children report encountering no problems.

In sum, generally there is evidence that Turkish youth living in the Netherlands has a stronger sense of quality standards with regard to the Dutch language than with regard to the Turkish language. This means that there is evidence that the goodness-of-fit model can be used for describing and explaining acculturation processes and outcomes in settings demanding the use of the Dutch language, but not in settings with a predominant use of the ethnic language.

In terms of acculturation the goodness-of-fit model is largely independent of the type of acculturation strategy adopted by immigrants. The causative mechanism can function under conditions of assimilation, but also under conditions of integration or separation. The model expresses the notion that persons try to optimize the fit between competencies or personal resources and the situation-specific request for resource use. Their personal reward is the maintenance or improvement of a particular level of well-being. The type of demands made of immigrants in particular culture-contact situations seems to be decisive. If assimilation is required, then the immigrant will accommodate towards assimilation. If it is integration, integration is what shows up. This suggests that whenever the goodness-of-fit model can be used to explain the

relationship between acculturation and adaptation the immigrants are characterized by a compliant attitude. Other studies however (e.g. Ogbu, 1992; Kromhout & Vedder, 1996) have suggested that immigrants or more generally ethnic minorities may develop an oppositional attitude as soon as solidarity or loyalty within the group is experienced as more important and incompatible with a positive attitude towards and contacts with other groups. This means that the goodness-of-fit model does not always encapsulate the explanation for the relationship between acculturation and adaptation.

Nevertheless, the Turkish adolescents in this study appeared to be compliant to the setting-specific demands in terms of language. They were not characterized by an oppositional attitude towards the national culture and language. These conclusions have an important implication for educational interventions with Turkish youth. They suggest that in order to promote the adaptation of Turkish youth living in the Netherlands demands with respect to the use of the Dutch language may need to be intensified. The risk of aversive effects is small, whereas the benefits for the youth's integration and social participation are potentially large and rewarding.

We did not find support for the second hypothesis that the moderating effect would be stronger depending on the proximity of the demand to use the Dutch language. We reckoned that the three contexts that we distinguished would vary in this respect. Apart from this assumption, we also assumed that a more proximal or stronger sense of demand would co-vary with the strength of the contexts' moderating effect. Our findings suggest that at least one or possibly both assumptions are inaccurate. The design did not permit testing of these two assumptions independently. New research will be needed in which adolescents can be asked to indicate to what extent they think different settings vary in the demand for the use of the national language.

In explaining and discussing the findings of the present study we intensively used the goodness-of-fit model. At the end of this section we would like to point at a final weakness of the design. Juang, Lerner, McKinney & von Eye (1999) measured an estimate of the goodness of fit by asking each of the participants to evaluate the goodness of fit. Although this procedure in itself is not problems-free –after all it is difficult to find out how accurate the personal estimates of the goodness of fit actually are– our alternative of not measuring it is certainly less preferable. New research might attempt to measure the goodness of fit and compare the outcomes to the outcomes of the approach that we followed when focusing on the context dependency of the relationship between acculturation and adaptation using a median split procedure.

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