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Language, Ethnic Identity, and the Adaptation of Immigrant Youth in the Netherlands

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We explored the relationships between immigrant adolescents' first- and second-language proficiency and their psychological and sociocultural adaptation using three models: the ethnic identity model, the language assimilation model, and the language integration model. The study was conducted in the Netherlands. Participants were 161 Turkish and 95 Surinamese adolescents (ages 13 to 18 years). In the Turkish group we found support for the language assimilation model as well as for the language integration model. In the Surinamese group a stronger orientation toward the original ethnic culture corresponded to more negative adaptation outcomes. This effect mirrors the assimilation model. The ethnic identity model did not contribute to explaining adaptation differences between immigrant adolescents in the Netherlands.

Keywords: *immigrant youth; identity; adaptation*

This article addresses the question of what role ethnic identity and ethnic and national language proficiency play in the psychological and socio-cultural adaptation of immigrant youth in the Netherlands. The focus on these variables is inspired by recent discussions in the Netherlands about a desirable educational approach toward students who are immigrants. School adjustment is generally regarded as the primary sociocultural and developmental task for children and adolescents. Within many immigrant communities, the importance attributed to school adjustment is particularly high (Vedder, Eldering, & Bradley, 1995). However, particular groups of students who are immigrants, such as the Turkish and Indian-Surinamese students who participated in the current study, present more of an educational challenge to their parents, schools, and the wider community than other groups. In the Netherlands, dropout rates, juvenile delinquency, and unemployment percentages are higher in these groups than among their Dutch peers (cf. Tesser, Merens, & Van Praag, 1999; Van Tilborg & Spit, 1998). In the discussion on how to cater to the needs of these adolescents, policy makers and

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educators advocate either the notion that ethnic identity and ethnic language proficiency should play an important role in the school curriculum or the notion that it is primarily the student's proficiency in the majority language that counts in terms of the immigrant student's school career. We dwell on these different notions when presenting three models specifying possible relationships between intercultural relationship variables and adaptation variables.

Psychological and Sociocultural Adaptation

We differentiate between two types of adaptation, psychological and sociocultural. Research indicates that attention for immigrants' orientation toward their own ethnic group, for instance by focusing on ethnic identity and their ethnic language proficiency, is conducive to their psychological adaptation. Research has also shown that attention to relationships with the national culture, for example, by stressing the need for proficiency in the national language, supports immigrants' sociocultural adaptation. *Psychological adaptation* refers to feelings of well-being or satisfaction, whereas *sociocultural adaptation* refers to the ability to fit in or adjust to new social settings. Psychological adaptation is primarily based on affective responses, whereas sociocultural adaptation is based on behaviors and the effectiveness of interactions in a new cultural milieu and the skills that facilitate these interactions (Ward, 2001).

Acculturation Context

In the Netherlands about 17% of the population are first- or second-generation immigrants. One tenth of these immigrants are Surinamese and one tenth are Turks. The Surinamese are descendants of former indentured laborers who arrived in Surinam from British East India around 1900 and emigrated to the Netherlands at the time that Surinam became independent in the 1970s. They already had Dutch citizenship. Most of them were Hindu. The Turks came to the Netherlands in the 1960s to do low-paid, unskilled work. They came from mainly rural areas in Turkey and were Muslim. Since then, many Turks have followed them for reasons of family reunification and family formation. The two groups differ considerably in terms of acculturation and community organization. The cultural distance between the Turks and the host nationals was and is significantly bigger than between the host nationals and the Surinamese. The Turks came from a country whose language, legal system, religion (Islam), and educational system differed from the Dutch system. The Surinamese, because of their colonial heritage, were

already acquainted with the Dutch language, legal and educational system, and Dutch religious customs. The Turks originally were supposed to return to their country, which explains why the Dutch government supported their wish for culture and language maintenance. Thus, Turkish immigrants tended to be concentrated in neighborhoods close to where they worked and have been encouraged to maintain their own traditional culture rather than become Dutch. Rath (1991) suggested that this explains, at least partly, why the Turks followed a largely separated acculturation trajectory. In contrast, the Surinamese did not receive a similar amount of support and were not supposed to remigrate. After all, they were and are Dutch citizens. They already spoke Dutch, and they did not live together in neighborhoods.

Immigrant Policy

The Dutch government officially tries to maintain an immigrant policy, which is aimed at integration into Dutch society as well as the preservation of cultural identity. Two values lie behind this policy: equality of opportunity and equivalence of cultures. The equality-of-opportunity part of this policy traditionally has been pursued by giving extra funds to schools attended by children and youth who are immigrants, by ensuring financial income, guaranteed medical support, and financial support for housing. Financing home-language lessons for children who are immigrants and multicultural courses for all students are two measures used to ensure cultural equivalence. Financial support to immigrant organizations also contributes to this aim.

Intercultural Relationships

Several surveys have shown that the attitudes of the Dutch toward immigrants have become more negative in recent years. A study by Van Oudenhoven, Prins, and Buunk (1998) showed that Dutch host nationals prefer immigrants to adopt an assimilation or integration strategy, while they assume that most immigrants prefer a separation strategy. It seems likely that indications that immigrants want to maintain their links with their culture and language are interpreted as a deviation from the desired situation. Public opinion in the Netherlands is tending toward growing impatience with immigrants and the progress of their adaptation to Dutch society (cf. Arends-Tóth, 2003). This is accompanied by an explicit expression of fear by members of parliament and other politicians who are afraid of a lack of control in respect of the growing influence of Islamic educational, political, and religious practices and a growing Islamic population (by now 5% of the population). Policy makers and educators have started stressing the need for immigrants in the

Netherlands to learn Dutch and act Dutch even if this is at the expense of a loss of contact with their cultural heritage (Crul, 2000; Driessen & Withagen, 1999). In this climate, the interactions between ethno-cultural groups, mutual perceptions, and actual possibilities for social participation may lead to group- and context-bound qualifications of the concept of integration, in which the host national group stresses the need for assimilation and the immigrant groups the need for cultural and linguistic maintenance or separation (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003).

Three Models

We explored the aforementioned relationships between identity, language proficiency, and adaptation using three models: the ethnic identity model, the language assimilation model, and the language integration model.

The ethnic identity model. This model (Alkan, 1998) is inspired by social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), which suggests that the need for self-esteem is satisfied, in part, by positive evaluation of one's own group. In cases where one's ethnic group is not valued in the larger context, a positive ethnic identity may be hard to achieve, and self-esteem is under pressure. The ethnic identity model assumes that youth who are immigrants are growing up between cultures, which leads to identity confusion and adaptation problems if the children experience a lack of appreciation for the skills, knowledge, and feelings that are typical of their cultural background. The model suggests that a strong ethnic identity is important to enabling immigrants' healthy adaptation and well-being in the new society.

The model, albeit not necessarily under this name, has had a clear impact on the school curriculum for students of the ethnocultural minority in countries such as Sweden and the Netherlands (Alkan, 1998; Viberg, 1994). Lessons in the student's first language and lessons on the student's cultural heritage are seen as important for a healthy adaptation in the new society because such lessons are deemed to allow immigrant youth to experience appreciation for their parents' language and culture. A similar model is influential in the United States, although here the curricular part is more frequently filled with ethnic studies than with heritage language programs (Glenn & De Jong, 1996; Ogbu, 1992). Research provides support for the view that maintenance of a strong ethnic identity is generally related to psychological well-being among members of immigrant groups (Liebkind, 1996; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997).

The relationship between ethnic language and ethnic identity is a much-debated topic. A clear but extreme position in this discussion is linked to the

notion that ethnicity is largely defined by culture, which includes language, and even more specifically the language in which culture is transmitted between generations. This position corresponds to strong pleas for language maintenance or language revitalization (Fishman, 1989). Fishman (1989) put language and language maintenance at the heart of ethnic identity. It is the tool for the acquisition of culture-specific knowledge, skills, and feelings. Other scholars are more hesitant about giving the ethnic language a prominent role in ethnic identity. They have suggested that culture-specific knowledge, skills, and feelings can be transmitted through a newly acquired language as well and that ethnic language loss may occur without ethnic identity being reduced (Genesee, 1987; Glenn & De Jong, 1996). Phinney, Romero, Nava, and Huang (2001) presented a review of studies and concluded that research yielded conflicting findings about the relationship between language maintenance and ethnic identity.

As for ethnic identity, we focus on what was called by Phinney (1992) the group membership component of ethnic identity, which refers to a person's sense of belonging to a group and the attitudes and emotions that accompany this sense of belonging. This sense of belonging is basic to feelings of security and competence; however, in many situations it will also be indicative of the availability of social, material, or emotional support in processes of psychological and sociocultural adaptation. The feelings of security and competence and the availability of support are conducive to a healthy psychological adaptation (Liebkind, 1996; Phinney, 1989; Phinney & Kohatsu, 1997).

The language assimilation model. Language proficiency in either the ethnic or national language 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 focuses on the importance of national language proficiency for adaptation of students who are immigrant.

In the Netherlands, there has been growing support for the notion that immigrant youth's proficiency in the national language is a better predictor of academic performance and social participation than either proficiency in their ethnic language or measures of ethnic identity (cf. Driessen, 2000). Tesser (Tesser & Iedema, 2001) suggested that the growing support for this model is also because of 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 all require a good command of the national language, which has made it relatively more difficult for students who are immigrants to do well in schools.

As stated earlier, in the Netherlands pressure in the direction of assimilation has been increasing. Some studies warn against such pressures because these pressures tend to jeopardize a healthy adaptation (Igoa, 1995; Olneck, 1994).

The language integration model. The stimulation of students' national language proficiency and the promotion of students' loyalty toward and knowledge of their ethnic culture and language are, in fact, not necessarily conflicting ideas. With respect to ethnic and national language proficiency, this notion is represented in the language integration model. It is inspired by research on bilingualism showing that children who acquired high levels of proficiency in more than one language developed extra cognitive resources as compared to children who grew up with one language only (for an overview of research, see Baker, 2001). In line with this notion, we would expect that immigrant adolescents who are proficient in their ethnic and the national language have higher scores for psychological and sociocultural adaptation than adolescents who are less balanced in their bilingualism or who lack proficiency in either language.

Another source of inspiration for this model stems from Berry's work on immigrants' acculturation attitudes. Berry (1990, 1997) introduced a two-dimensional model of acculturation recognizing that the two dominant aspects of acculturation, namely, preservation of one's heritage culture and adaptation to the host society, are conceptually distinct and can vary independently (Liebkind, 2001). Based on this distinction, Berry (1990) suggested the following two questions as a means of identifying strategies used by immigrants in dealing with acculturation: Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's cultural heritage? Is it considered to be of value to develop relationships with the larger society? Four acculturation strategies—integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization—can be derived from yes or no answers to these two questions. Integration is defined by positive answers to both questions, and marginalization by negative answers to both. A positive response to the first and negative to the second defines separation, and the reverse defines assimilation. The model highlights the fact that acculturation proceeds in diverse ways and that it is not necessary for immigrants to give up their culture of origin to adapt to the new society. Some studies show that integration is the most adaptive mode of acculturation and the most conducive to the immigrants' well-being, whereas marginalization is the worst (Berry, 1997).

Inspired by and in analogy to a two-dimensional model of acculturation, ethnic language proficiency and national language proficiency (in this case Dutch) can be seen as two dimensions or aspects of immigrant adolescents'

acculturation that may vary independently. Each may or may not contribute to the acculturation outcome, and together they may reinforce, weaken, or compensate each other. Based on adolescents' scores for ethnic and national language proficiency, we distinguish four types of bilingualism: marginalization (weak proficiency in either language), assimilation (weak proficiency in ethnic language, strong proficiency in Dutch), separation (strong in ethnic language and weak in Dutch language), and integration (strong in both languages). We expect that integration corresponds to higher levels of adaptation than either separation, assimilation, or marginalization do.

In sum, the question is whether a good command and frequent use of the ethnic language do indeed correspond to higher ethnic identity scores and whether ethnic identity is positively related to psychological and socio-cultural adaptation as suggested in the ethnic identity model. Perhaps ethnic identity is not particularly important or perhaps proficiency in the majority language is a better predictor of adaptation, as suggested in the language assimilation model. The third model suggests that ethnic and majority language proficiency are important for immigrant youth's adaptation.

METHOD

This study is part of the International Comparative Study of Ethnocultural Youth (ICSEY).¹

Participants

The current study focuses on second-generation Turkish and Surinamese youth ages 13 to 18 years. *Second generation* was defined as referring to adolescents born in the Netherlands or who had immigrated before the age of 7 years. Random sampling was not an option because of the relatively low percentages of members of particular ethnocultural groups in the population. Participants were 95 Surinamese with an Indian background, and 161 Turks, living mainly in the densely populated western part of the Netherlands, in or near the four cities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam, and Utrecht. In the Turkish and Surinamese group the proportion of female adolescents was slightly below 50%. The average age of the adolescents did not significantly differ between groups. The mean ages were 14.7 ($SD = 1.54$) and 15.0 ($SD = 1.61$) in the Turkish and Surinamese group, respectively. Adolescents' average length of residence in the Netherlands was 14.3 years and did not differ between groups (SD Turks = 2.08, SD Surinamese = 2.40).

The parents' socioeconomic status (SES) was estimated using four categories of occupational status: (a) unskilled, (b) skilled, (c) white collar, and (d) professional. In terms of education, these categories correspond more or less to (a) 0 to 10 years of formal schooling, (b) finished secondary school, (c) more than 12 years of education, but no university degree, and (d) university degree. The SES for the parent with the highest score was used. When both parents were unemployed they received score 0. This characterized 19% of the Turkish and 6% of the Surinamese participants. Irrespective of these 0 scores, parents' SES was lowest in the Turkish group with 26% of the parents holding unskilled and 53% skilled jobs. A higher SES was found in the Surinamese group with 34% white-collar jobs and 27% professional jobs ($\chi^2 = 42.28$, $df = 4$, $p = .000$, $n = 235$). It was not possible to compare these sample characteristics to population statistics because no population statistics are available for parents of 13- to 18-year-old Turkish and Surinamese second-generation immigrant youth in the Netherlands. Those statistics that are available referred to the employment status and qualification level of all first-generation Turkish and Surinamese adults living in the Netherlands. These statistics show that in the year that data were collected 19% of the Turkish adults and 12% of Surinamese adults were unemployed. Almost 60% of all first-generation Turkish adults were employed at the unskilled level and 19% were skilled. One fourth of all Surinamese first-generation immigrants had a white-collar job, and 14% had a job requiring a university degree (Tesser et al., 1999). In terms of SES, the samples are not representative of all Turkish and Surinamese immigrants living in the Netherlands but belong to a better qualified segment.

Instruments

Data were collected with a questionnaire compiled by members of the ICSEY team. In this article, we focus on demographic information, proficiency in the ethnic language as well as in the national language, ethnic identity, and three adaptation variables: self-esteem, psychological problems, and behavioral problems. All measures are self-report measures. The questionnaire included several other self-report measures, which are not included in the current analyses.

Ethnic Language Proficiency

Competence in the first language of an immigrant group is a self-report scale based on a scale constructed by Kwak (1991). The scale inquires about

a person's abilities to understand, speak, read, and write the ethnic language. Answers are given on a 5-point scale running from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very well*). Cronbach's alphas, based on data collected in the current study, were .82 for the Turkish and .87 for Surinamese adolescents. Earlier research (Kirchmeyer, 1993) suggested that self-reports have a satisfactory high correlation with evaluations of a person's language proficiency by others.

National language proficiency. Proficiency in the Dutch language refers to the same self-report questions but now with respect to the national language. Cronbach's alphas amounted to .82 for the Turkish and .94 for the Surinamese youth.

Ethnic identity was measured with eight items assessing ethnic affirmation (e.g., sense of belonging, positive feelings about being group member). This scale is adapted from the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM; Phinney, 1992; Roberts et al., 1999). A sample item is "I feel that I am part of Turkish culture." Cronbach's alphas were .78 and .81 for the Turks and Surinamese respectively.

Psychological adaptation was measured using scales for self-esteem, and psychological problems. Self-esteem was measured using Rosenberg's (1965) 10-item self-esteem inventory. The items had response agreement scales with options ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). A sample item is "On the whole I am satisfied with myself." Cronbach's alphas were .83 in the Turkish and .79 in the Surinamese sample.

Psychological problems is a scale containing 15 items designed to measure depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms. Items came from a variety of sources (Beiser & Flemming, 1986; Kinzie et al., 1982; Kovacs, 1980/1981; Mollica, Wyshak, deMarneffe, Khuon, & Lavelle, 1987; Reynolds, & Richmond, 1985; Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991). A sample item is "My thoughts are confused." A 5-point response scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very often*) was used. Cronbach's alphas were .88 for the Turkish youth and .86 for the Surinamese.

Sociocultural adaptation was measured using a scale for behavioral problems. The 10-item scale is an adaptation of Olweus's (1989, 1994) and Bendixen and Olweus's (1999) antisocial behavior scale. A 5-point response scale ranging from *never* to *several times in the course of a 12-month period* was used. A sample item is "Purposely destroyed seats in a bus or a movie theatre." Five of the 10 items dealt with school situations (e.g., sent out of classroom). Cronbach's alpha for the Turkish group was .81 and for the Surinamese group .72.

Procedure

Specially instructed Surinamese volunteers who either used their personal networks or worked through church communities contacted the Surinamese participants at their homes. The Turks tend to be concentrated in particular neighborhoods, which means that certain schools in their neighborhood are visited by considerable numbers of Turkish youth. Turkish research assistants encountered the Turkish youth in schools. All participants were invited to individually complete the questionnaire. All questionnaires were in Dutch. The research assistants were allowed to give support in the ethnic languages, however, none of the adolescents requested interpreter support. The research assistants made sure that they received authorization from parents and consent from the adolescents before the adolescents filled out the questionnaires.

RESULTS

We first explored our data by calculating scale item mean scores and Pearson correlations between scores by ethnic group (see Table 1).

The mean scores, except the scores for behavioral problems, differed significantly between groups. Turks have higher ethnic language proficiency, lower national language proficiency, a stronger ethnic identity, lower self-esteem, and more psychological problems than the Surinamese adolescents. With respect to language proficiency, these findings confirm our expectations and are seen as a confirmation of the validity of the measure for language proficiency. Overall the adaptation of Surinamese youth is more positive than that of the Turkish.

The correlation matrices show that in general the correlations between the intercultural relationship variables (language proficiency variables and ethnic identity) and the adaptation variables are low. In the Turkish sample, we found a statistically significant positive correlation between ethnic identity and psychological problems, indicating that a stronger ethnic identity tends to coincide with more psychological problems. In this group we also found two low but statistically significant correlations between national language proficiency and measures of adaptation, whereas in the Surinamese sample the statistically significant correlations were found with adolescents' ethnic language proficiency. The latter can be explained by the fact that Surinamese adolescents hardly vary with respect to their proficiency in the national language. They all have high scores, whereas they vary considerably with respect to their ethnic language proficiency. In both groups we found modest correlations between the adaptation measures. The correlations do not lend

TABLE 1: Scale Means, Standard Deviations, and Pearson Correlations Between Scales, by Group

	n	M	SD	F Turks-Surinamese	Pearson Product-Moment Correlations					
					Ethnic Language Proficiency	National Language Proficiency	Ethnic Identity	Self-Esteem	Psychological Problems	
Turks										
Ethnic language proficiency	160	4.16	0.69							
National language proficiency	163	4.51	0.50		.24**					
Ethnic identity	161	4.66	0.53		.12	.11				
Self-esteem	159	3.88	0.77		.09	.24**	-.07			
Psychological problems	159	2.20	0.65		-.08	-.16*	.16*	-.47**		.32**
Behavioral problems	160	1.55	0.65		.02	.07	.07	-.23**		
Surinamese										
Ethnic language proficiency	88	2.49	1.15	215.57**						
National language proficiency	95	4.81	0.36	23.62**	.09					
Ethnic identity	95	4.42	0.65	9.21**	.01	-.05				
Self-esteem	94	4.20	0.66	13.23**	-.39**	.09	.16			
Psychological problems	94	1.89	0.50	17.48**	.20	.02	-.11	-.63**		
Behavioral problems	94	1.55	0.53	ns	.22*	.12	-.06	-.32**		.38**

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .001$

support to the proposition that the orientation toward their own culture is more indicative of the immigrants' psychological adaptation than of their sociocultural adaptation.

A series of two-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine the effects of gender and SES on each of the intercultural and adaptation variables in each of the ethnocultural groups. No statistically significant main or interaction effects were found in the Turkish group. In the Surinamese group, the analyses yielded a statistically significant main effect of occupational status for self-esteem scores, $F(4, 74) = 3.58, p = .01$, only. The following mean scores were found: unemployed: 4.40 ($SD = .70, n = 5$), unskilled: 4.31 ($SD = .73, n = 13$), skilled: 3.70 ($SD = .59, n = 18$), white collar: 4.25 ($SD = .66, n = 27$), professional: 4.44 ($SD = .48, n = 21$). Mean difference tests with correction for multiple comparisons (Scheffé) revealed a difficult-to-interpret significant difference between skilled and professional parents. Because this is a clearly non-trend-bound finding we decided to neglect it in further analyses. In the Surinamese group, no significant gender or interaction effects were found. Based on these preliminary analyses we decided that in further analyses gender and occupational status would not be included as control variables.

The Ethnic Identity Model

The ethnic identity model assumes that a good command of the ethnic language corresponds to higher ethnic identity scores and that ethnic identity predicts adaptation outcomes. Is this confirmed by the data in the two samples? In our section on the exploration of the data we already reported that we found no statistically significant correlation between ethnic identity and ethnic language proficiency; however, we did find statistically significant correlations between ethnic language proficiency and adaptation. We conducted hierarchical multiple regression analyses to explore the added value of ethnic identity beyond the value of ethnic language proficiency in explaining each of the adaptation scores. We entered ethnic language proficiency on the first and ethnic identity on the second step. All R^2 values reported are R^2 change values, whereas the β values reported refer to the final model tested, including all entered variables.

Self-Esteem

In the Turkish group, none of the variables added statistical significance to the prediction of the adolescents' self-esteem. In the Surinamese group, eth-

nic language proficiency contributed to the prediction ($R^2 = .16$; $\beta = -.40$, $p = .000$); however, ethnic identity did not add to the prediction.

Psychological problems: In the Turkish group, ethnic language proficiency did not contribute to the prediction of psychological problems, whereas ethnic identity contributed a little ($R^2 = .03$, $\beta = .17$, $p = .033$), albeit not in the expected direction. The finding indicated that a stronger ethnic identity corresponds to more psychological problems. In the Surinamese group, neither ethnic language proficiency nor ethnic identity contributed to the prediction.

Behavioral problems: In the Turkish group, the analyses yielded no statistically significant outcomes, whereas in the Surinamese group we found a statistically significant contribution for ethnic language proficiency ($R^2 = .07$, $\beta = .22$, $p = .042$) but not for ethnic identity.

Ethnic language and ethnic identity together did not contribute to the prediction of adolescents' adaptation in either of the groups. In the analysis in which we found support for the role played by the adolescents' ethnic identity in their adaptation, the contribution of ethnic identity was negative. No support for the ethnic identity model was provided by the two analyses that showed that ethnic language proficiency predicts adaptation. In the Surinamese group, better ethnic language proficiency corresponded to lower self-esteem and more behavioral problems. These findings justify the conclusion that the ethnic identity model is not supported by the data.

The Language Assimilation Model

With regard to the assimilation model, we were particularly interested in the relationship between national language proficiency and adaptation, taking into consideration a particular level of ethnic language proficiency. For each ethnocultural group we again conducted hierarchical multiple regression analyses to predict adaptation scores. To predict adaptation we entered ethnic language proficiency first, followed by majority language proficiency.

The analyses yielded statistically significant findings with adolescents' self-esteem only. In the Turkish group, ethnic language proficiency did not contribute to the prediction of self-esteem but, as expected, majority language proficiency did ($R^2 = .05$, $\beta = .22$, $p = .006$). In the Surinamese sample, ethnic language proficiency appeared to be the important variable ($R^2 = .16$, $\beta = -.41$, $p = .000$). National language proficiency had no added value. This latter finding could be expected given the generally strong national language proficiency of the Surinamese adolescents. The high scores reduce the vari-

able's predictive power because of a restriction of range. The finding in the Turkish group supports the language assimilation model. The finding in the Surinamese group mirrors the language assimilation model: Ethnic language proficiency negatively contributes to adolescents' self-esteem.

The Language Integration Model

Two different analytical approaches were available to test this model. With the first one, the variables, ethnic language proficiency and national language proficiency, could be used for categorizing all adolescents in terms of the four bilingualism categories marginalization, separation, assimilation, and integration. This was done based on a distinction between low and high levels of language proficiency for the ethnic and the national language and combining these for defining the four categories. The discrete variable, bilingualism, could then be included as a factor in an ANOVA showing us which category corresponded to more positive or more negative adaptation scores. This approach stays close to the theoretical notions presented above. However, it also has an important disadvantage. The variables used for the categorization were measured as continuous variables and treating them as discrete variables meant a loss of information. Using the product of the scores for the two measures of language proficiency, instead, was a way to resolve this problem. This product can be seen as a score on a dimension running from marginalization (low scores on both measures of language proficiency) to integration (high scores on both scales) and thus permitted analysis of the relation between language integration and adaptation. We decided to use both approaches.

For the first approach we had to decide how to distinguish levels of language proficiency. We decided to use the scale midpoint (3) for ethnic language proficiency. In the Turkish group, this left us with only 8% of the participants with low ethnic language proficiency, whereas in the Surinamese group this proportion was considerably higher (75%). Using this same cut-off point with national language proficiency would have left us in the Turkish group with just a few adolescents in the low proficient group. Maintaining this cut-off point would mean that we would not be able to include the separation and marginalization category in our analyses. In the Surinamese group, not a single adolescent had a score lower than 4. We decided to set the cutoff point for national language proficiency at 4, which resulted in about 24% of Turkish youth in the low proficient category and 13% of the Surinamese. The use of these cutoff points for a classification in terms of high and low language proficiency resulted in the following categories:

- lower or equal to 3 for ethnic language proficiency and lower or equal to 4 for national language proficiency (marginalization)
- lower or equal to 3 for ethnic language proficiency and higher than 4 for national language proficiency (assimilation)
- higher than 3 for ethnic language proficiency and lower or equal to 4 for national language proficiency (separation)
- higher than 3 for ethnic language proficiency and higher than 4 for national language proficiency (integration)

Because of the low number of Turkish adolescents in the marginalization and assimilation category (6 in each) and the low number of Surinamese youth in the marginalization (11) and separation (1) category we decided to exclude these participants from the analyses. This left us with only two bilingualism categories for each group: separation and integration for the Turkish group and assimilation and integration for the Surinamese group. This reduced number of categories nevertheless allowed us to find out whether language integration is the more conducive strategy in terms of adaptation outcomes.

For each ethnocultural group we conducted a MANOVA, including self-esteem, psychological problems, and behavioral problems as dependent variables and the bilingualism categories as the independent variable. Table 2 presents the respective mean scores.

In the Turkish group, the analyses yielded no statistically significant outcomes. In the Surinamese group, we found a significant multivariate effect, Wilks's $F(3, 72) = 4.46, p = .006, \eta^2 = .16$. Subsequent univariate analyses showed that this effect was due to adolescents' self-esteem scores. As can be seen in Table 2, adolescents in the assimilation category had higher self-esteem scores than adolescents in the integration group, $F(1, 74) = 11.33, p = .001, \eta^2 = .13$. No statistically significant differences were found with respect to psychological and behavioral problems.

For the second analytical approach, we first computed the product of the scores for ethnic and national language proficiency and then we calculated Pearson product-moment correlations between the product scores and the three adaptation measures. In the Turkish group, we found a statistically significant correlation with self-esteem (.16, $n = 160, p = .022$), revealing, as expected, a weak but positive relationship between language integration and psychological adaptation. In the Surinamese group, we found statistically significant correlations with all adaptation variables (self-esteem: $-.38, p = .000$; psychological problems: $.20, p = .027$; behavioral problems: $.25, p = .009; n = 91$). In this group stronger language integration corresponds to lower self-esteem and more psychological and behavioral problems.

TABLE 2: Mean Adaptation Scores by Language Acculturation Strategy and by Ethno-Cultural Group

	n	<i>Self-Esteem</i>		<i>Psychological Problems</i>		<i>Behavioral Problems</i>	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Turkish adolescents							
Separation	32	3.72	.68	2.27	.68	1.50	.59
Integration	112	3.99	.72	2.18	.62	1.58	.67
Surinamese adolescents							
Assimilation	55	4.36	.59	1.87	.47	1.52	.47
Integration	21	3.81	.76	2.05	.56	1.78	.72

The two approaches yielded largely similar findings. In the Surinamese group, the second approach revealed even less support for the language integration model than the first approach. In the Turkish group using the second approach, we found some support for the language integration model, which was not found in the first approach.

DISCUSSION

In the current study we explored the relationship between immigrant adolescents' ethnic language proficiency, their majority language proficiency, their ethnic identity, and their psychological and sociocultural adaptation. More specifically, we tested the validity of three models that are used to explain immigrants' adaptation processes and outcomes in the new society: the ethnic identity model, the language assimilation model, and the language integration model.

The assumption represented in the ethnic identity model is that strong ethnic language proficiency contributes to a person's ethnic identity and that ethnic identity is conducive to adaptation. This assumption was not confirmed by the data. Actually, ethnic language proficiency and ethnic identity appeared to correspond to negative adaptation outcomes.

The second model that we tested was the language assimilation model. This model suggests that immigrants' adaptation is more positive to the extent that the immigrants are more proficient in the national language. We found confirmation for this model in the Turkish group. In this group, national language proficiency predicted students' self-esteem. In the Surinamese

group, ethnic language proficiency negatively contributed to adolescents' self-esteem. This effect mirrors the language assimilation model.

The third model, the language integration model, assumes that immigrants proficient in the ethnic and the majority language have a better psychological and sociocultural adaptation than immigrants who are weak in one or both languages. We found support for this model in the Turkish group. Surinamese adolescents, however, who had strong national language proficiency and a relatively weak proficiency in their ethnic language, fared better in terms of self-esteem than other adolescents. This finding actually can be interpreted as support for the language assimilation model. Overall, these findings did not lend support to the conceptual distinction between psychological and sociocultural adaptation.

Proponents of the ethnic identity model might wish to argue that the fact that we did not find confirmation for this model may be because of theoretical and methodological limitations of the study. Phinney, Romero, et al. (2001) presented a review of studies and concluded that research yielded conflicting findings about the relationship between ethnic language proficiency and ethnic identity. The authors mentioned methodological problems and limited knowledge about group and country-limited validity of studies as important explanations for the divergent findings.

Another explanation for these inconsistencies might be provided by a contextual approach as discussed by Birman, Trickett, and Vinokurov (2002) and Phinney, Horenzcyk, Liebkind, and Vedder (2001). They suggested that the role of ethnic identity in the adaptation of immigrants is linked to the acculturative demands of the overall community context and the demands of agents within various life spheres in this context, for example, teachers or fellow students in schools who are nonimmigrant. Ethnic identity is likely to be strong when immigrants have a strong desire to retain their identities and when pluralism is encouraged or accepted. In the face of real or perceived hostility toward immigrants or toward particular groups, some immigrants may downplay or reject their own ethnic identity; others may assert their pride in their cultural group and emphasize solidarity as a way of dealing with hostility (Liebkind, 2001). This may arouse stress and other psychological problems. This could explain the finding in the Turkish group that a stronger ethnic identity corresponds to more psychological problems.

With respect to the finding in the Surinamese group that stronger ethnic language proficiency corresponds to weaker self-esteem and more behavioral problems, a simpler explanation seems possible. Avoird (2001) showed that Hindu families in the Netherlands stimulate their children to use Dutch at home and in other settings. Parents assume that this is an important condition for their and their children's social position and well-being. In general, the

families are characterized by a strong push toward assimilation. Perhaps children who cannot live up to their parents' aspirations try to cope with the stress of their parents' push and the experience of not meeting their parents' high standards by adopting an avoidance strategy. This avoidance strategy takes shape in a more frequent use of their ethnic language and in exploring their own cultural roots. To these adolescents it is not so much ethnic language proficiency or ethnic identity that predicts adaptation, that is, the ethnic identity model, but the problematic adaptation and the accompanying acculturative stress which trigger an interest in their ethnic language and ethnic identity.

Why did not we find stronger support for the integration model? Given the small variance in national language proficiency, one answer might be that the distinction between lower and higher levels of proficiency in the majority language had no significance in terms of adaptation processes. A possible theoretical explanation with methodological implications is presented in Cummins's threshold model (for a review of the development of this model see Baker, 2001). This model suggests that only if a person develops a high level of language competence in more than one language, this multilingualism is accompanied by positive cognitive benefits, that is to say, positive consequences in terms of psychological adaptation. Apart from basic interpersonal communication skills, this language competence should entail also language skills that are required in school for understanding tasks and discussing problem-solving strategies. In the current study, we did not explicitly measure these latter language skills. The self-report measures used in the current study may not be indicative of the level of this type of language proficiency. Hence, our categorization is not suitable for exploring the validity of the integration model. New research would be needed to redress this problem.

Another design characteristic that deserves more attention in future studies concerns the sampling. We had to use convenience sampling. Comparison with population statistics suggested that the two samples had a slightly higher SES. Analyses of the relationship between SES and the intercultural and adaptation variables suggested that there was no need to include SES as a control variable in further analyses. Given the scarcity of comparative acculturation studies focusing on model testing we are of the opinion that the current study, notwithstanding a possible sampling bias, is a valuable contribution to understanding the acculturation process among immigrant youth.

What do the findings mean for policy makers and educators? They may take the findings as a justification for the language assimilation model. This study suggests that further support for improving proficiency in the majority language is important to immigrant students' adaptation.

NOTE

1. Members of the project group are J. W. Berry & K. Kwak (Canada), C. Fan, R. Rooney, & D. Sang (Australia), G. Horenczyk (Israel), K. Liebkind (Finland), F. Neto (Portugal), J. Phinney (United States), C. Sabatier (France), D. Sam (Norway), P. Schmitz (Germany), P. Vedder & F. van de Vijver (Netherlands), and E. Virta & C. Westin (Sweden), C. Ward (New Zealand), and Lena Robinson (UK).

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