

Tilburg University

Multilingualism and education

Kroon, S.; Vallen, T.

Published in:
Current Issues in Language and Society

Publication date:
1994

[Link to publication in Tilburg University Research Portal](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Kroon, S., & Vallen, T. (1994). Multilingualism and education: An overview of the Dutch language and education policy towards ethnic minorities. *Current Issues in Language and Society*, 1(2), 103-131.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

MULTILINGUALISM AND EDUCATION: AN OVERVIEW OF LANGUAGE AND EDUCATION POLICIES FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Sjaak Kroon and Ton Vallen

*Research Group on Language and Minorities, Tilburg University, PO Box 90153,
5000 LE Tilburg, The Netherlands*

Abstract In common with other Western European States, the Netherlands has become a country of permanent settlement for immigrants. The proportion of the Dutch population which might be considered to be of immigrant origin depends on the criteria adopted for assessing status, but remains high whichever system is used. This has caused the multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual nature of modern Dutch society to become an issue of central importance in the Netherlands. In particular, educational provision has led to debate. Government policy has promoted intercultural education for all pupils and, within well-defined limits, objectives have been largely accepted and sometimes achieved. The question of language education has, however, proved more problematic and all the classic problems common in multilingual societies have been encountered. As the Dutch now discuss and implement elements of the *Ceders in de Tuin* report, the 1992 policy document, there is a questioning of the belief that it is mostly socio-economic factors which are the decisive factors in the underachievement noted amongst school children from ethnic minority groups. Underpinning the report is the Dutch commitment to belief in integration with respect for difference, a position which makes necessary a rigorous analysis of the assimilation/pluralism debate and the Netherlands' stance.

1 Introduction

Despite a considerable wealth of literature in the Netherlands, both on language and education policies concerning ethnic minorities and on possible future developments in this area, this field is perhaps not really one which will stimulate large numbers to read intensively. In part, this is undoubtedly due to the fact that such policies are regarded as the territory of government, civil servants and a handful of academics who treat the subject in dry, abstract dissertations which do not always have a direct relationship with everyday language usage and (language) education practice. Such a viewpoint, however, can be criticised on several counts. After all, everybody has their own judgements and makes their own statements about language, about the quality and value of their own language use and that of others, and about the aims, norms and values of (language) education. And although this does not mean that everybody is, therefore, involved in language and education policy, it does mean they are involved — as a rule, perhaps, unconsciously so — in language and education

politics. Statements like 'those foreigners should first of all learn Dutch properly...' and 'when I was at school it wasn't such a mess in the classrooms and at least we learned how to spell' are political judgements about language and education that are often heard — not only from the mouths of politicians and administrators. What is more, the positions that national and local authorities, advisory bodies, school boards, teachers, etc. adopt (or, perhaps consciously, do not adopt, for that too is politics — but not policy!) towards language/education policies and politics determine public opinion and public judgement to a large extent. Similarly, their positions have great influence on the key questions — What is possible in the life of a language community and in (language) education? What will be accepted or tolerated? And, last but not least — What is to be funded? Moreover, since governors and policy makers in turn are evidently influenced by public opinion, the circle is complete. In short, language and education policy/politics are not at all abstract; they form part of people's everyday reflection on the practice of language and education.

This becomes clear when official statements or decisions concerning language issues are made. One may cite the many pens that are regularly taken up — for example, the number of letters to the editor in Dutch newspapers, commenting on language-political issues such as the pros and cons of dialect, the use of English as a language of instruction in university education, ethnic minority language teaching, sexism in language, the 'failure' of language teaching, correct pronunciation, etc. (cf. Kroon & Vallen 1989a: 17–19). The type of statement that is generally made in this context, shows that although every person — as a language user and education 'consumer' — is a language and education expert from a political point of view, s/he is at the same time a language and education 'layperson' from a policy point of view.

Against this background we will first provide a brief sketch of the immigrant situation in the Netherlands before discussing some general aspects of Dutch education policy with respect to ethnic minorities. Then we will discuss the policies concerning intercultural education, ethnic minority language teaching and teaching Dutch as a second language and the facilities for implementing these policies. Included in this discussion will be statements made in a recent policy report about these subjects, entitled *Ceders in de tuin* (Cedars in the Garden) (CALO, 1992). And finally, in the last section we will raise some general points of criticism about *Ceders in de tuin* before giving a brief summative assessment and evaluation together with a forecast of what may now happen.

2 The Netherlands as a Country of Immigration

When estimates are made of the number of immigrants in the Netherlands, the main criterion is very often that at least one of the parents should have been born in another country. This means that there are at the moment some 2.2 million inhabitants of immigrant origin, which corresponds roughly to 15% of the total Dutch population. This percentage is about the same as that during the Dutch Golden Age, i.e. the 17th century (Lucassen & Penninx, 1985). Within this large and diverse group of immigrants in the Netherlands (as in most other Western European countries), two socio-cultural subgroups can be distinguished:

- (1) Immigrants and their children who come from Western or comparable industrialised countries and whose socio-cultural backgrounds differ hardly, if at all, from those of the majority of the native Dutch population. This group (which would include people from Germany, France, Belgium and Britain amongst others) has, generally speaking, little or no difficulties in terms of their social participation in Dutch society.
- (2) Immigrants and their children whose socio-cultural backgrounds differ considerably from those of the native Dutch population (e.g. people from Turkey, Morocco, Surinam, the Antilles and the Moluccas). Most people in this subgroup — which constitutes the majority of the Dutch immigrant population — experience considerable problems in terms of their participation in a number of diverse social areas.

In this contribution we are mainly concerned with the latter group. Although there have been quite a number of discussions about content and terminology, this group is, in our opinion, best described as 'ethnic minorities'. The concept of 'ethnicity' refers, in this context to the fact that these groups consider themselves to be different from other groups (self definition), and are considered to be different by other groups (other definition), on the basis of specific characteristics (e.g. common racial, cultural, religious, language or historical characteristics). The concept of 'minority' is a relational one that refers to the fact that these groups find themselves in a disadvantaged position in many social domains when compared to the sociological majority (e.g. in education, employment, housing and political decision-making). In many cases this disadvantaged position is partly the result of disfavouring by the majority group (Kroon & Vallen, 1989b). Incidentally, it should be noted that both these concepts are dynamic quantities; the question to what extent and on the basis of which criteria a certain group considers itself an ethnic group, and also the extent of discrimination against a minority compared to a majority, are determined by the dynamics of social development (for a more elaborate discussion of these two concepts and their implications, see Tennekes, 1986; Vanhoren, 1992).

If we include the illegal immigrants who currently live in the Netherlands (roughly estimated at between 50,000 and 150,000 people) and use the definition of ethnic minorities mentioned above, about 1 million inhabitants of the Netherlands — roughly 6.5%–7% of the population — can be considered as belonging to ethnic minority groups (first and second generation). Almost half of these come from the former Dutch colonies of Surinam, the Dutch Antilles and the republic of Indonesia, including approximately 40,000 Moluccans. The other half comes, for the most part, from the Mediterranean, mainly from Turkey and Morocco. Spaniards, Italians and immigrants from the former Yugoslavia are present in much smaller numbers, although of course this last group and groups of immigrants from other Eastern European countries have recently increased substantially. Finally, there has traditionally been a relatively large number of Chinese in the Netherlands (currently estimated at some 60,000). The highest concentrations of ethnic minorities are found in the industrial areas and big cities (for further details see Eurostat, 1991; Extra & Verhoeven, 1992).

As can be concluded from Table 1, the numbers of immigrants and of members

Table 1 Population figures based on nationality and birth country of person, father and mother and combination of birth-country person/father/mother on January 1, 1990 (*Source: Roelandt, Roijen & Veenman, 1991: 25*).

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Birth- country: person</i>	<i>Birth- country: father</i>	<i>Birth- country: mother</i>	<i>Birth- country: p/f/m</i>
Dutch	14250656	13725771	13361591	13228155	12667804
Greeks	4456	5236	7535	5455	9200
Italians	16745	14134	27185	16114	31403
Former Yugoslavs	12824	14475	19275	20594	24232
Portuguese	8040	7885	10181	9582	11542
Spaniards	17429	17560	23380	21729	28724
Turks	191455	141250	202897	199396	205898
Antilleans/Arubans	0	56063	49613	52510	81079
Surinamese	14609	157054	205010	205799	236995
CapeVerdians	2341	7957	11956	11848	12254
Moroccans	147975	115488	164058	159657	167810
Tunisians	2441	2647	4040	2944	4606
Chinese	6163	21319	33551	30988	35899
Vietnamese	5194	7170	7901	8110	8735
Other	212246	598565	764401	919693	1366393
Total	14892574	14892574	14892574	14892574	14892574
Total excl. Dutch	641918	1166803	1530983	1664419	2224770

of ethnic minorities are not the same in all statistics and surveys, because the criteria used for identifying these groups often vary a great deal and are constantly under debate. It makes a considerable difference whether one uses nationality (passport), birth-country, birth-country of father, birth-country of mother or a combination of the last three as the criterion. Compared to the nationality criterion, the combined birth-country criterion leads to a remarkable fall or rise in the number of indigenous and non-indigenous inhabitants of the Netherlands respectively (Extra, 1992).

Despite the fact that the Dutch government has recently adopted a more stringent immigration policy, new immigration, family reunifications and higher numbers of refugees and asylum seekers have all resulted in an increase in the population of more than 50,000 people per year (CALO, 1992). Recent prognoses have shown that this number will continue to grow over the next few years as a result of a further increase in the number of asylum requests granted, the opening of the internal European borders and developments in Central and Eastern Europe and in other regions of the world. It is estimated that around the year 2000 roughly one third of the population under the age of 35 who live in the

medium-sized and large cities of Western Europe will be of immigrant origin (Widgeren, 1975). And already we can see that about 50% of the first year intake into primary education in Amsterdam, Rotterdam and the Hague (as in other European cities) consists of ethnic minority children (for more information about Berlin, see e.g. Kroon, Pagel & Vallen, 1993).

Like the other EU countries, the Netherlands does not have the type of immigration policy pursued in Canada and Australia for example. But it should be observed that for the past thirty years the Netherlands has had a considerable surplus of immigrants over emigrants (61,000 people in 1991 and 71,000 in 1992) and that the majority of immigrants have settled or will settle permanently in the Netherlands. This has, *de facto*, caused the Netherlands to evolve (along with most other Western European States) from a country of immigration, (possibly temporary) into a country of permanent settlement — a fact which has been recognised by the government and by most (democratic) political parties. But it is often noted that there have so far been very few adequate, well-considered and coherent policy measures in this area. Moreover, even after thirty years there are still politicians who claim that Europe has been ‘taken by surprise’ by this new social development; such statements are evidence of ostrich policy and cynicism — to say the least — rather than of realism.

Since the 1983 *Minderhedennota* (Minorities Policy Plan) the following target groups are distinguished in Dutch policy on minorities:

- (1) caravan dwellers;
- (2) members of ethnic minorities who are legal inhabitants of the Netherlands and who are of Moluccan, Surinam or Antillean origin, as well as foreign employees and their family members from the Mediterranean;
- (3) gypsies and refugees (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken, 1983).

It is striking that the Government merely lists the target groups of its minority policy, rather than defining them or explaining why certain groups are and others are not considered main target groups. One could imagine why the very large group of immigrants from the former Dutch East Indies — with the exception of Moluccans — was left out of consideration (but see films like *My Blue Heaven* and the literary works of Marion Bloem). However, the fact that the Chinese and second-generation Moluccans, Surinamese and Antilleans did not constitute main target groups was remarkable then and remains so, especially in the light of the situation in 1993; an official amendment to this list should have been made long ago. A possible reason for limiting the target groups to the aforementioned populations — apart from budgetary considerations — may be that governments tend to place the emphasis entirely or as much as possible on socio-economic disadvantages, which obstructs their view of the ethno-cultural differences which are so important to many minorities. For those minority groups whose differences cannot be (directly) interpreted in terms of disadvantages (e.g. the Chinese) this has meant that they are left out of consideration in the minority policy’s allocation of special facilities and services. As we shall see below, however, there are perhaps signs of a change in this respect in the teaching of ethnic minority languages.

3 Government Policy on Education for Ethnic Minorities

It would be inappropriate and impossible to describe here in full detail the Dutch government's policy on education for ethnic minorities. The reader who wants a comprehensive overview of policy since the 1960s can refer not only to the relevant policy papers but also to the volumes of such journals as *Migrantenstudies*, *Samenwijs*, *Stimulans* (Migrant Studies, Coeducation, Stimulus) and the former journal *Gastonderwijs* (Guest Education) and from there trace the core publications. Similarly, he or she may find Entzinger (1990), CALO (1992) and Lucassen & Köbben (1992) very useful. In the section below, however, we will limit ourselves to an overview of the main developments since the 1980s, in the areas of intercultural education, the teaching of ethnic minority languages, and Dutch as a second language. In doing so we will restrict ourselves mainly to primary and secondary education. An overview of the organisation of the Dutch education system is given in Figure 1.

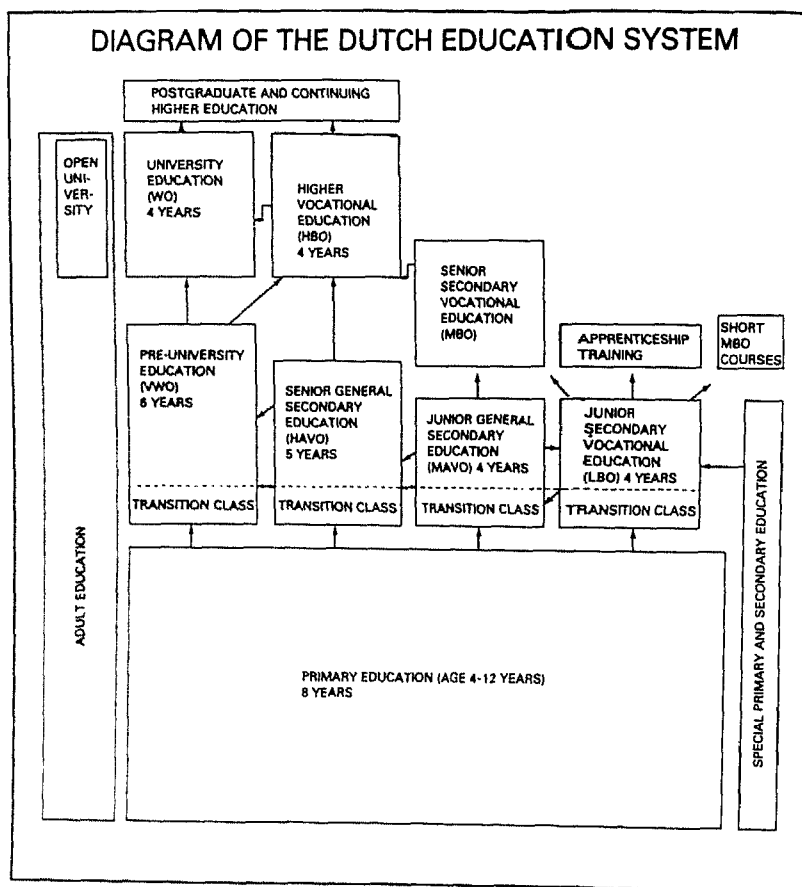


Figure 1 The Dutch education system (Source: Ministry of Education and Science Docinform nr. 332 E).

Without wanting to trivialise everything that has happened in previous decades, it should be observed that the multi-ethnic, multicultural and multilingual nature of Dutch society has only gained political recognition over the past fifteen years. This recognition has been translated into concrete policy measures (including education). Although in the 1970s the various academic disciplines, social organisations and educational practitioners repeatedly and emphatically pointed out that most immigrants would settle permanently in the Netherlands and that therefore more numerous and structural facilities were required, it took a report by the *Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid* — WRR — (Advisory Council on Government Policy) to persuade the Government to change its position. This advisory report, which appeared in 1979 under the title *Etnische Minderheden* (Ethnic Minorities), explicitly discarded the notion of ‘temporariness’:

The Government’s policy will have to assume the possibility of permanent residence in the Netherlands. This entails the acceptance of the fact that there has been a continued growth in the ethnic and racial diversity of Dutch society. Society as a whole (and therefore the majority as well) will have to adapt itself to this changed situation (WRR, 1979: XXXIX).

On the basis of this position, the WRR distinguished three fields requiring a government response in policy terms: problems of disadvantage among the ethnic minorities, problems of culture and identity, and problems for the native majority population.

In the early 1980s the Ministry of Education and Science and the Home Office published policy plans on ethnic minorities (cf. Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen, 1981 and Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken, 1983). The first document, published by the Ministry of Education and Science, is particularly important for our purpose, in that it formulates two of the main aims of education policy:

- (1) education should prepare and enable members of minority groups to fully function and participate in Dutch society — socio-economically, socially and democratically — while offering them the possibility of doing so from their own cultural background.
- (2) education should — e.g. by means of intercultural education — stimulate the acculturation of minorities and the other members of Dutch society. Acculturation here means a bipartite or multipartite process of getting to know each other, accepting and respecting each other and having an open mind towards each other’s cultures or elements thereof (Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen, 1981: 6).

In the implementation of these main aims, education policy focuses on four points, one of which is connected with the establishment of a direct stimulation policy on immigrants as part of the general education priority policy. Of the remaining three, two are directly and one is indirectly connected with (elements of) language education.

In brief, it is stated that education should contribute to eliminating the ethnic

minorities' disadvantages in society in general and in education (e.g. through special attention and facilities for Dutch as a second language); that education should take into account the identity of ethnic minorities (e.g. through the teaching of a minority's own language and culture); and that education should contribute to the formation of a harmonious, multi-ethnic society (e.g. through intercultural education).

Between 1980 and 1990 various reports and plans were written by the Ministry of Education and Science. At the same time the general minority policy was expanded and elements of it were implemented. By the end of the 1980s, however, it became increasingly clear that — despite much effort — the social position of the ethnic minorities had hardly improved; there were high unemployment rates, disappointing school results, limited social participation, etc. These findings induced the Government to commission the *Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid* to draw up another report on its minority policy. This 1989 report entitled *Allochtonenbeleid* (Allochthon Policy) strongly emphasises the fight against social disadvantage (WRR, 1989). It includes, for example, the proposal that it should be made compulsory for unemployed adult immigrants to learn Dutch, and that if this obligation is not fulfilled, their unemployment or social security benefits should be withdrawn. The preservation of language and culture was deemed less important and should not, according to the WRR, be given priority. It was even suggested that lessons in a minority's own language and culture were a waste of time and would be better replaced by lessons in Dutch as a second language.

Contrary to what had happened in 1979 the government this time reacted rather reservedly to the new report, as is clearly shown in a 1991 policy paper by the Ministry of Education and Science on ethnic minority language teaching (Wallage, 1991). The same reserve is apparent in the October 1992 report *Ceders in de tuin* which deals with the future policy on educating immigrant pupils (CALO, 1992). This report was drawn up by a commission which had been appointed by the State Secretary for Education and Science and which was chaired by former *PvdA* (Labour) Minister of Education and Science, Van Kemenade. We shall return to this report and to the Wallage 1991 policy paper below. For now we will restrict ourselves to the general position assumed by the Van Kemenade Commission.¹

The commission has pointed out that it is of paramount importance for the education of ethnic minorities that three separate strands be distinguished: a policy to counter disadvantage, a policy towards newcomers and a policy on first language teaching. On the basis of results from research, the Commission states that the observed disadvantages of ethnic minorities in education are primarily caused by factors related to their socio-economic status (especially the parents' low education levels) and by their limited command of Dutch. Furthermore, the Commission is of the opinion that the underachievement of immigrant pupils in education is not influenced by the supposedly lower average intelligence levels of immigrant pupils (as alleged by certain tests) in comparison with native pupils in comparable socio-economic circumstances. Nor are they influenced by ethnic, cultural or religious differences between immigrant and native pupils, or by the

attention which education pays to the immigrant pupils' first languages. Different groups of immigrant children (i.e. with different origins and backgrounds) show a differentiated and divergent picture of underachievement in education and the different degrees of underachievement are already discernible in the pre-school period. Thus, since the immigrant pupils' underachievement cannot be ascribed to ethnic-cultural differences, the commission has pleaded for a strict separation of disadvantage policy and cultural policy and for substantial and financial support in these two areas, especially in those regions and cities where it is most needed (i.e. the Educational Priority Policy areas).

In the following sections we will discuss in more detail the developments that have taken place in the late 1980s and early 1990s with respect to intercultural education, the teaching of ethnic minority languages and the teaching of Dutch as a second language.

4 Intercultural Education

A new Primary Education Act has been in effect in the Netherlands since 1985. With regard to intercultural (or multicultural) education it contains the important statement that education starts from the principle that pupils grow up in a multicultural society (Section 9, Subsection 3). Similarly, in the legislation on secondary education which was introduced in 1989, it is stated in Section 27 that a school curriculum must contain a justification for the way in which attention is paid to the fact that pupils grow up in a multicultural society. Thus, these sections of the law have made intercultural education one of the overall principles of all education for all pupils, of ethnic Dutch origin as well as immigrant or immigrant origin. This principle was worked out in greater detail in policy papers in 1984 and 1986 and in an implementation paper of 1988. The 1986 policy paper (Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen, 1986) states that the aim of intercultural education is to teach pupils to deal with similarities and differences that are related to aspects of ethnic and cultural background with an eye to functioning equally and jointly in Dutch society. From this general aim the policy paper derives three sub-aims:

- (1) The acquisition of a knowledge of each other's backgrounds, circumstances and culture (both by the native population(s) and the ethnic groups in our country), and the mutual acquisition of an insight into the way in which values, norms and circumstances determine people's behaviour.
- (2) The peaceful coexistence in our country of groups of different ethnic and cultural origins.
- (3) The prevention of and combat against prejudice, discrimination and racism based on ethnic and/or cultural differences among all population groups (Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen, 1986: 4).

This list of worthy aims cannot conceal the fact the Government does not make it clear exactly how intercultural education might be realised in schools. This difficult task is left to teachers in their everyday practice. Although intercultural education is still veiled in obscurity and subject to a great deal of change, it now

looks as if four basic principles have been commonly accepted in the Netherlands:

- (1) Intercultural education should not be a separate, isolated school subject but a principle that applies to all teaching and all subjects.
- (2) Intercultural education is not only meant for pupils from ethnic minority groups; all pupils grow up in a multicultural society.
- (3) Intercultural education should be aimed at the 'here and now': Dutch children, Turkish children and children from other ethnic minority groups are growing up in the 1990s for the multicultural society of the 21st century. In that sense, the history of the Ottoman Empire, the Arabisation of Morocco or the history of the slaves in Surinam are only marginally relevant.
- (4) Intercultural education is not an umbrella term or synonym for everything that is related to the education of ethnic minorities (e.g. second language teaching, minority language teaching) and even less so for such matters as international student and pupil exchange programmes, training programmes abroad or course programmes in intercultural communication at universities and polytechnics. However, it is of course advisable to organise such activities within the framework of, or in connection with, intercultural education.

But other than this, opinions and ideas are very divided and there is a great lack of clarity and certainty. The most fundamental discussion a few years ago involved the supporters of the 'intercultural interpretation' and those of the 'anti-racist interpretation'. The former advocate so-called 'encounter education', which aims at the harmonious coexistence of pupils from the various ethnic groups at school and consequently in society later on. The 'anti-racists' by contrast use the ethnic minorities' structurally weak social position as a starting point and consider the fight against prejudice, stereotyping and racism as the central theme in intercultural education. For some time there was a polarisation of these two streams which has led to numerous theoretical-ideological polemics, which were not constructive, especially for education. However, over the past few years the discussions have become slightly milder in tone and the two sides seem to have found some common ground; after all there are now anti-racist educational tools and suggested curricula, and the intercultural education tools now contain anti-racist elements (for an overview, see van de Guchte, 1989).

With respect to intercultural education as a whole (and this certainly does not only apply to the Netherlands) it must be said that *grosso modo* theory has been developed further than practice. What is more, theory development in this area (as in many other areas) is only marginally relevant to everyday practice. And, finally, the discussions about the theory and practice of intercultural education today seem not only 'milder' but also less frequent than in the recent past. We have the impression that this lull in discussion goes hand in hand with a certain stagnation in educational practice; an impression which seems to be confirmed by the Van Kemenade Commission.

The amount of attention that is paid to intercultural education in the report by the Van Kemenade Commission is highly disappointing. It devotes barely half

a page to a discussion of legislation, concluding that the aims have been very vaguely defined, and that this has led to a wide variety of interpretations of the form and content of intercultural education. Furthermore, it has been observed that although some materials have been developed, and some schools in both the primary and secondary sectors have started working on implementing them, the vast majority do nothing about intercultural education, despite the fact that it is intended for all pupils at all schools. It is said that similar problems are encountered abroad, but suggestions for improving the situation or for starting new initiatives are not included in the report. It is striking, for instance, that no attention is paid to initiatives to give an intercultural interpretation to specific school subjects such as Dutch and the factual subjects (see e.g. van Hoeij, van der Vegt & Wilmlink, 1990). Kloprogge's (1992) contribution in Part 2 of the Van Kemenade report contains a more detailed discussion of the analysis presented in Part 1; again the emphasis is on the lack of initiatives in the field of intercultural education and on the vagueness and ambiguity of the aims of projects that do exist. And, finally, it is rightly observed that because the attention paid to growing up in a multicultural society is anchored in educational legislation, a noncommittal approach is no longer possible. In the light of the vagueness of its aims, however, education is set what is in fact an impossible task:

It should become active in an area which the government itself is unable to clarify adequately and in which projects and development activities offer little or no support (Kloprogge, 1992: 11).²

5 Ethnic Minority Languages in Education

One of the results of an intercultural view of (language) education is that children from ethnic minority groups — if they or their parents so wish — are offered the possibility of using their mother tongue at school, e.g. as a means of communication or as an auxiliary language of instruction. At the same time they have the possibility of receiving instruction in an immigrant (standard) language (or target language) of their own or their parents' choice.

The government and academia have used very mixed arguments for the teaching of ethnic minority languages as a school subject. In the early days, the return to the country of origin was considered the main motive for so-called 'Education in the Own Language and Culture'. Later on, the following arguments were advanced: the promotion and preservation of the pupils' contact with their parents and other relatives; the development and support of their own identity or of a positive self-image in the immigration country; the opportunity for them to identify with the school and increased motivation towards academic achievement. Over the past few years, however, the cultural component has gradually receded into the background (as a result of which the new term which has been increasingly used since Wallage (1991) is 'Own Language Teaching') and it is particularly emphasised that first language teaching — provided it is part of a well-considered curriculum and properly attuned to the other school subjects — can make a positive contribution to the development of a well-balanced bilingualism, to the development of the second language (i.e. Dutch) and to the

cognitive development of the children in question. Not only these arguments but also the widespread failure of the 'second language only approach' has led to the fact that educationalists and linguists have become increasingly in favour of some form of bilingual education. It should be noted, however, that most advocates of a bilingual approach do not take bilingual education to mean a few hours of own language and culture teaching a week. Against the background of the reality of a multilingual society they are of the opinion that the monolingual tradition in education and the 'monolingual habitus' of teachers are becoming increasingly dysfunctional and will therefore require fundamental change (see e.g. Gogolin, 1990). So a few 'own' language (and culture) lessons a week will not suffice; more radical changes will be required which affect the core curriculum and the role and function of (native and immigrant) teachers within that curriculum.

For some time now there have been statutory regulations for the use of Frisian and of indigenous Dutch dialects in the Dutch education system. In primary education in the province of Friesland, Frisian is taught as a compulsory subject and there are about eight Frisian language schools which in fact teach the subject, Dutch as a second language. In addition in those areas where most of the pupils have acquired Frisian and Dutch dialects as their first languages, these language varieties are allowed as an educational medium. And, following on from this, the same legal status applies to non-indigenous ethnic minority languages. The fundamental problem in this case, however, is that the linguistic composition of classes with these children is seldom homogeneous.

The legal framework for the teaching of ethnic minority languages as part of the regular curriculum has existed in the Netherlands since the mid 1970s. The population groups who have mainly availed themselves of this possibility are the Turks and Moroccans, while other Mediterranean and Latin-American groups have continued to use the option of providing this education outside school hours. As we noted above, own language and culture teaching in those days was aimed at the pupil functioning in the country of origin after remigration. But when it became increasingly clear in the 1980s that the majority of immigrants would stay in the Netherlands permanently, this led to a gradual change in the aims and organisation of the teaching of ethnic minority languages and, some time later, to a change in legislation. The official situation that came into existence via the aforementioned new Primary Education Act is described below. It should, however, be noted that there are likely to be some further changes in the near future.

Section 11 of the Primary Education Act states that for children of non-Dutch origin the authorities (i.e. the school board) may on certain conditions include as a separate subject in the curriculum the teaching of the (official) language and culture of the home country. Besides the already available possibility of using ethnic minority languages as auxiliary languages of instruction in education, it is also permitted to supply 2.5 hours of 'own' language and culture teaching to immigrant pupils. A further 2.5 hours may be supplied outside the regular curriculum, although this option is hardly used at all (CALO, 1992). As far as own language and culture teaching is concerned, pupils have a right to education in the official standard language of the country of origin, with the exception of

Moluccans and Turkish Armenians who may use their own preferred variety (Moluccan Malay and Aramaic respectively). However, the right to own language (and culture) teaching only applies to those ethnic minority groups which are explicitly recognised as target groups in the official minority policy discussed above (see section 2) and the official language of whose country is not Dutch. This means that e.g. Chinese children (because of the fact that the government apparently considers their parents to hold a relatively high socio-economic position) and Surinamese and Antillean children (because of the fact that the government still considers Dutch to be the official language of these two former colonies) are excluded, in spite of the fact that the majority of them do not acquire Dutch during their primary socialisation (70% of the Antilleans in the Netherlands, for instance, speak Papiamentu at home; see Narain & Verhoeven, 1992). Another condition is that the parents of the children in question should apply for own language and culture teaching, which is different from the Frisian situation in that all schools in Friesland are obliged to teach Frisian irrespective of the demand. This difference may seem discriminatory and unjust, not only because there are many more immigrants than Frisians in the Netherlands but also because there is hardly any empirical evidence for educational problems on the part of children with a Frisian language background, whereas such evidence abounds in the case of children with immigrant language backgrounds (Wijnstra, 1980). Apparently, political and cultural arguments are used in the case of Frisian, but much less so in the case of ethnic minority languages (Extra, 1989).

In Table 2 an overview is given of numbers and proportions of participants with respect to Education in Own Language and Culture in primary education.

The legal regulations for secondary education are similar to those for primary education, except that the availability has so far been limited to Turkish and Arabic as optional subjects. In addition, these two languages can only be taken by Turkish and Moroccan children respectively. Since the 1992 school year there have been official final examinations in these subjects, while in primary education in 1993 there are for the first time national tests (i.e. tests developed by the National Institute for Educational Measurement) in Turkish and Arabic (Aarts & de Ruiter, 1992).

As we said in Section 3, the State Secretary for Education and Science proposed important changes in the field of ethnic minority language teaching in a 1991 policy paper. In our opinion these changes will bring about improvements; they could strengthen the position of ethnic minority language teaching and could open up possibilities of truly bilingual education. The paper, which has been adopted by Parliament, contains the following important elements:

- (1) An extension of the possibilities for the bilingual support of immigrant children in forms 1, 2 and 3 of primary education, whereby — in a change to the current practice — not only the national language of the country of origin but also the children's actual mother tongue may be used as the language of instruction.
- (2) Education in the national standard language of the country of origin as a subject in forms 4–8 of primary education, whereby — in a change to the

Table 2 Numbers and proportions of participants in Education in Own Language and Culture (EOLC) in primary education (*Source: Minderhedenbeleid, 1993: 18*).

	1990			<i>N pupils</i>	1991	
	<i>N pupils</i>	<i>N participants EOLC</i>	<i>% participants EOLC</i>		<i>N participants EOLC</i>	<i>% participants EOLC</i>
Turkish	38294	31328	82	40187	32297	80
Moroccan	38867	27506	71	40728	28266	69
Spanish	2721	914	34	2614	965	37
Greek	815	318	39	887	241	27
Italian	2529	262	10	2469	274	11
Yugoslav	2989	807	27	3046	554	18
Portuguese	1506	508	34	1355	615	45
Tunisian	671	69	10	854	209	24
Moluccan	4755	1726	36	4613	1656	36
CapeVerdian	2462	1031	42	2817	1128	40
Other	23865	0	0	26263	0	0
Total	119474	64469	54	125833	66205	53

current practice — the emphasis is mainly on language rather than **culture**, and whereby the current restriction of such education to certain **politically** defined groups will in future be abolished.

- (3) Education in an ethnic minority language in secondary education as an optional subject with a final examination, as one among many other subjects. For the time being this option is limited to Turkish and Arabic, but it may in future be extended to include other languages and may be made available to native Dutch pupils (Wallage, 1991).

The recent report by the Van Kemenade Commission contains some important considerations and recommendations on first language education for immigrant pupils:

- The literature so far contains no conclusive evidence to suggest that first language teaching not only produces better learning results in that particular language but also in the pupil's command of the second language. Conversely, there is no empirical evidence either to suggest that the teaching of and in the first language forms a barrier to achieving learning results in the second language or in other areas.
- From the point of view of combating underachievement first language education is not urgently required; more important in this respect are the improvement of immigrants' socio-economic positions and the learning of Dutch as a second language.
- From the cultural-political and economic points of view, it is very important that the living immigrant languages spoken in the Netherlands should be

retained and kept alive. This will ensure that the traditional cultural diversity of Dutch society is maintained and promoted. At the same time immigrant groups will see their own cultural position reinforced within pluralistic Dutch society and their self-confidence will grow. In addition, Dutch society can benefit economically from an extension of its language repertory with citizens who are fluent not only in English, French and German but also in such important world languages as Chinese, Arabic, Spanish, Turkish, Italian and Hindi.

- Education should carry a cultural policy in which equal treatment is given to the various languages and in which no distinction is made between the various foreign languages in use among immigrant groups in the Netherlands. In other words, this vision does not distinguish between the German of Germans who live in the Netherlands (permanently) and the Turkish of Turks who live in the Netherlands (permanently).
- The Teaching of Immigrant Living Languages (TILL) should be an independent and recognised school subject at any school where there is a demand for it (on the part of pupils and/or parents). It should be considered a recognised part of the curriculum with 2.5 hours per week. School boards are obliged to provide this education under the following conditions:
 - (a) the lessons are taught by qualified teachers responsible to the school and in accordance with the legal quality requirements;
 - (b) the lessons may not be at the expense of the regular curriculum;
 - (c) the teaching of the languages of immigrant groups may not be marginalised; it is to be treated the same as other school subjects and to include a performance assessment;
 - (d) the teaching of the languages of immigrant groups — if provided — should also be accessible to native pupils. (CALO, 1992: 50).

These requirements can be met e.g. by creating room for this teaching in the curriculum. This may be achieved by using the legal possibility of lengthening the school day.

- The provision of classes in the living immigrant language in any school will have to be determined on the basis of organisational, pedagogical and financial considerations. The minimum number of pupils required for such a class to be formed should be flexible (at the moment this number is eight).

The recommendations put forward by the Van Kemenade Commission (and especially those concerning the Teaching of Immigrant Living Languages — TILL) have in recent months been the subject of widespread discussions. Nearly every day there are positive as well as negative reactions and it may of course be concluded that the Commission's proposals have quite a few snags and catches (see the final section). The report and Wallage's 1991 proposals clearly show that a different course is being taken for Education in Own Language Culture than was planned in the 1989 report of the Advisory Council on Government Policy (see section 3). How much of all the proposals and plans will be realised can only be assessed once they have been through parliament later in 1993.⁴

6 Dutch as a Second Language

Contrary to what one would expect and in contrast with the amount of government attention directed to intercultural education and ethnic minority language teaching, Dutch as a Second Language (DSL) has so far been treated in a niggardly way in the national government's policy (see Fase, 1989; Kroon & Vallen, 1989a,b). There is no legislation in the Netherlands in this area, nor are there any special structures or regulations to facilitate the teaching of DSL. The first policy paper aimed explicitly at the teaching of DSL only appeared at the end of 1988 and counted no more than eight pages (Notitie, 1988). It contains some general measures for improving the quality of the teaching of DSL. The fact that DSL teaching is treated so marginally in Dutch policy is all the more surprising if one considers that as early as 1981 the Ministry of Education and Science mentioned this precise component as being a central focus of attention in their education policy for ethnic minorities (see section 3). And that makes sense; after all a knowledge of the dominant majority language is one of the main prerequisites for the immigrant's social success in the host society.

At the moment schools have roughly three ways of obtaining additional teaching periods and/or funding for DSL. First of all there is the so-called facilities regulation, which forms part of a general set of regulations to combat educational underachievement among children from disadvantaged groups (native and immigrant). These regulations are called *Onderwijsvoorrangsbeleid* (Educational Priority Policy). Its starting point is that the same curricula and exams should apply to immigrant children as to native Dutch children. If — in view of this fact — immigrant children require additional support, the school board can ask the teachers to supply it. To make this possible the government each year provides a considerable number of primary schools with funds for additional teaching hours. To determine the number of such additional hours complex pupil counts take place in which pupils are 'weighed' individually on the basis of socio-economic and ethnic-cultural criteria and get an additional 'weight' on top of the 'normal' pupil-weight of 1. An overview of this weighing system is given in Table 3.

Table 3 Weighing system for additional teaching hours in primary education (1993)

<i>Weight</i>	<i>Category of pupils</i>
1.9	Children from ethnic minority groups (the target groups in the minority policy), in combination with a low socio-economic position (the parents' profession or level of education)
1.7	Children of caravan dwellers and gypsies
1.4	Children of bargees
1.25	Children of native parents with low educational or professional levels
1.0	Other children

The total 'weight' of a primary school determines the number of additional teaching hours and, as a result, it also determines indirectly the number of teachers employed in any one year. The broad definition of the 1.25 pupil weight has meant that more than 40% of all native primary school pupils fall in this category. Together with the pupils who fall in the 1.4–1.9 categories, this means that some 80% of all Dutch primary schools currently receive Educational Priority Policy aid. The Ministry of Education and Science is working on a change in the identification procedure of 1.25 category pupils and the Van Kemenade Commission too has recommended drastic changes in this area.

Secondary education too has a facilities regulation. However, this regulation (of so-called CuMi-facilities) is aimed exclusively at immigrant pupils who belong to well-defined minority groups, who are of school age, and who have not spent their entire primary school time in the Netherlands. This scheme does not work with additional teaching hours but with task units. The allocation of such task units is based on a yearly deployment plan drawn up by the school. The number of task units allocated to different categories of pupils is given in Table 4.

Table 4 Facilities regulation for additional task units in secondary education (1993)

<i>Task unit</i>	<i>Category of pupils</i>
0.9	Immigrant children who have been in the Netherlands for less than 4 years;
0.4	Immigrant children who have been in the Netherlands for 4–8 years;
0.2	Immigrant children who have been in the Netherlands for more than 8 years;
0.4	Surinamese, Antillean and Aruban pupils who have been in the Netherlands for less than 4 years, as well as for Moluccan pupils and 'caravan dwelling pupils'.

For those pupils who enter Dutch education directly from their countries of origin after the official counting date, 2.35 task units are allocated as soon as a school has at least 10 such pupils (CALO, 1992: 16–17).

It is the responsibility of the school authorities (i.e. school boards) to check if the available additional facilities for primary and secondary education are actually applied for and, if they are, how they are used for those pupils who have earned/deserved them. Many schools are known to fail to use the additional teaching hours or task units specifically for combating the educational under-achievements of the target groups. Instead they 'misuse' them for introducing general measures that apply to all children (e.g. reducing the size of classes or employing (additional) remedial teachers). At many schools some individual staff members do not even know that additional teaching facilities are available for specific target groups. At the moment there is no thorough *a posteriori* justification or check on the deployment of these facilities, let alone an *a priori*

earmarked allocation of such facilities by the Government. But if the recommendations by the Van Kemenade Commission are implemented, this situation is going to change soon (see below). In fact the current situation is very unclear; what exactly is being done during the additional hours, by which teachers, with

Table 5 Proportions of Turkish, Moroccan and Other immigrant children in the different types of secondary education in 1990/1991 (*Source: Minderhedenbeleid, 1993*).

	<i>Turkish</i>		<i>Moroccan</i>		<i>Other</i>	
	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>
IBO	19.63	21.79	24.00	27.66	13.81	16.83
LBO	37.34	37.44	38.98	37.91	27.99	31.00
Subtot.	56.97	59.23	63.07	65.57	41.80	47.82
AVO	9.03	9.58	8.31	8.34	12.43	11.95
MAVO	23.49	19.39	22.18	19.19	24.09	19.76
HAVO	5.56	5.99	3.74	4.10	10.55	9.69
VWO	4.82	5.70	2.69	2.78	11.11	10.76
Unknown	0.13	0.11	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.03
Subtot.	43.03	40.77	40.77	34.43	58.20	52.18
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Legend: IBO: individualised junior secondary vocational education; LBO: junior secondary vocational education; AVO: general secondary education (transition year); MAVO: junior general secondary education; HAVO: senior general secondary education; VWO: pre-university education (see Figure 1).

what qualifications, with what teaching materials and for the benefit of which pupils? As can be seen from Table 5, it has now become clear that the efforts so far have led to little substantial improvement in the educational position of immigrant children. Table 6 gives some additional information about the results of some groups for Dutch Language and Arithmetic in primary education in relation to period of residence in the country.

The fact that the government is well aware of these disappointing results for immigrant children was already clear in the policy paper mentioned above (Notitie, 1988) and especially in the problem areas it identifies and the recommendations it makes for improvement. The four main problem areas identified in the paper are:

- the insufficient knowledge and insight on the part of teachers into second language teaching and second language acquisition;
- the insufficient availability and/or quality of teaching materials for second language teaching at all levels of education;
- the specific and varying problems that immigrant children entering the system encounter in the field of Dutch as a second language;
- the lack of national coordination and direction with regard to the developments in second language teaching.

Table 6 Scores for Dutch Language and Arithmetic in Form 8 of primary education for different (ethnic) groups related to period of residence in the Netherlands (*Source: Minderhedenbeleid, 1993*).

Group	Subject	Period of residence in the Netherlands		
		1–4 years	5–15 years	Always
Moroccans	Language	39.0	45.0	48.4
	Arithmetic	16.0	19.8	22.0
Turks	Language	38.8	45.0	46.2
	Arithmetic	15.2	21.1	21.6
Surinamese	Language	46.8	49.4	51.1
	Arithmetic	19.3	20.9	23.1
1.25 pupils	Language			54.4
	Arithmetic			26.0

These observations have led to a series of measures which aim at the organisation of special support classes in primary and secondary education, at the development of new teaching materials and the implementation of good existing materials, at the development of new techniques, at (refresher) courses for teachers, at support programmes, at improvements in teaching methodology, etc. At the same time a new project group has been commissioned to stimulate, monitor and coordinate national and local DSL initiatives and to supply expert and financial support to new initiatives and experiments. This DSL project group receives an annual budget from the Ministry of Education and Sciences of between 5 and 10 million guilders. Schools can send in DSL project applications to this group either individually or in consortia. In many such cases applications have been accepted and financially supported. The Project Group Dutch as a Second Language has now operated fairly successfully for over three years and has instituted important experiments and improvements. Thus, the second option that schools have to acquire additional facilities for DSL teaching (in the form of additional personnel or means) consists of temporary, additional support from the DSL project group.

The third option to receive additional support — some permanent, some temporary — results from the Dutch Government's social innovation policy. Within the framework of this policy a large part of the national budget is allocated to municipalities and especially to the major cities (as is the case in Sweden). These cities can use this money where they think it is most needed. The amount of money allocated to individual cities is determined partly by the size of their ethnic minority communities. Schools with a certain percentage of immigrant pupils can apply to their local authorities for additional facilities, including for example specific facilities for DSL teaching. Additional short term grants for social innovations are sometimes made to stimulate specific aspects of innovation. In the cities with fast-growing immigrant populations such an allocation

was made in 1992, aimed at refresher courses for teachers of Dutch as a second language.

Because of the disappointing results of the policy to counter disadvantage, and the DSL policy so far, the Van Kemenade Commission now proposes to abandon the weighting regulations at primary schools and the task unit regulations of the CuMi-facilities in secondary education. In the Commission's opinion the financial resources which this would free up should be used together with other budgets in this area to:

- allocate facilities more specifically and, as a result, fight educational underachievement more effectively in primary and secondary education, in agreed priority areas (in whose definition only socio-economic indications should be used);
- enhance specific facilities for DSL teaching;
- make finance available for the independent teaching of the languages of immigrant groups in primary and secondary education and in adult education (see Section 5).

The concrete proposals of the Commission on DSL teaching are rather disappointing, since they pay no attention at all to the largest group of educationally underachieving immigrants, i.e. those who enter the educational system at the start. With respect to pupils who enter the system directly from their countries of origin it is proposed that individual learning routes (of 12–16 months) should be mapped out to produce a sufficient command of Dutch to make their integration into regular schools or the job market possible. The support facilities will then ensure that these pupils' progress in regular education is monitored for another year.

The complete set of proposals put forward by the Van Kemenade Commission shows that it is aiming at a strategy similar to that applied in Sweden and, therefore, that it expects a great deal from a decentralisation policy. Although there is a national education policy, local authorities in priority areas receive additional finance and accept greater responsibilities. Schools in these areas will every year have to clarify through the curriculum their plans to reduce educational underachievement and other problems, and every school must provide information in its annual report about the results achieved. Schools that perform well can then qualify for additional finance, whereas schools that have for several years and without reasonable explanation (of whatever kind) achieved poor results will receive less — a policy which will ultimately harm the innocent pupils. It is, as we write in 1993, still unclear whether the decentralisation policy propagated by the Van Kemenade Commission will be well received by government and parliament. And if it is, it remains unclear whether the policy proposals on the fight against educational underachievement in general and on the teaching of the languages of immigrant groups and of DSL can be implemented and whether they will in the long run prove more effective than the current policy. At any rate, in the eyes of many, this is by no means a foregone conclusion.

7 Critical Comments, Evaluation and Perspective

It looks as if the report *Ceders in de tuin* will play an important part in future policy decisions about reducing the educational underachievement of certain subgroups of pupils, about intercultural education and about the teaching of ethnic minority languages and of Dutch as a second language. What this report says on these subjects has already been summarised and evaluated in the relevant sections above. Here we would like to add a few remarks about three general aspects of the report.

- (1) The Van Kemenade Commission draws the conclusion that the poor socio-economic position of parents is a decisive factor in the disadvantaged educational position of immigrant children and that there is no difference in this respect between native and immigrant children. This conclusion will undoubtedly be true in part, but the question remains whether an immigrant parent's socio-economic position and level of education works the same way and can therefore be measured with the same yardstick as that of a native parent. The Commission is probably aware of this, witness its proposal to replace the current criteria for assessing the socio-economic status of the parents of all pupils with a more differentiated scale which relates to the education levels of both a pupil's parents. And although this justifiably creates more differentiation at the 'lower end' of the education scale, the question still remains whether the results of such differentiation will explain — wholly or in part — the dramatic differences in scores on Dutch language and arithmetic between native and immigrant pupils who under the current criteria fall within the same socio-economic category (see Table 7). Before the Commission's proposal is implemented further research would have to clarify this situation.

Table 7 Scores for Dutch Language and Arithmetic in primary education. Means per pupil category and Form. Population mean: 50 (*Source*: Tesser, Mulder & van der Werf, 1991).

<i>Form</i>	<i>Indigenous high/middle SES</i>		<i>Indigenous low SES</i>		<i>Non-indigenous low SES</i>	
	<i>Language</i>	<i>Arithmetic</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Arithmetic</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Arithmetic</i>
4	52.9	51.4	50.9	48.9	43.8	43.4
6	52.4	52.3	48.4	48.3	40.7	42.6
8	52.5	52.3	48.5	39.3	39.3	42.1

- (2) The proposals on the teaching of the languages of immigrant groups, which are a logical result of the justifiable distinction between disadvantage policy and cultural policy, are likely to be a key factor in the development of policy and in that sense will help to improve the position of these languages and to reduce prejudice both within and outside education. However, the Commission remains vague about the concrete implementation of its plans at school and classroom level. And that is precisely the problem. Because of the

connection with the longer school day this language policy does not manage to free schools from the isolation in which 'own' language (and culture) teaching currently finds itself. Education's traditional monolingual core curriculum is after all not affected. This fundamental problem is not solved by also allowing native pupils to take part in 'own' language classes. And schools with many immigrant children usually also have many native pupils from less privileged milieux who in turn do not have the easiest of times at school and who will, therefore, be little inclined to take an additional subject. It is regrettable that the Commission has not tried to formulate any proposals concerning truly bilingual education (including 'own' language teaching) at schools with many immigrant children from e.g. one or two ethnic minority groups, and that it has not made any suggestions to start experiments in this area.

- (3) To improve the educational prospects of immigrant children it is important that there should be coordinated activities not only as regards the children but also their parents. As the education levels of immigrant parents and children rise, the aspiration level and intellectual climate within families will change, which could in future bear fruit for many generations to come. As far as the area of adult education is concerned, *Ceders in de tuin* does not make any really substantial proposals. It would have been sensible if for example an attempt had been made to link current, fairly successful (pre-school and extracurricular) family intervention activities (such as the HIPPY inspired⁶ *Op-Stap* programme, (cf. Bekkers, van Embricqs & van Loggem, 1992) with education programmes for parents. Many mothers who now take part in family intervention programmes for children often appear to be stimulated to take part in a training programme themselves. This intrinsic motivation should be used and it is therefore disappointing that the Commission has not realised this, but has instead opted to support the development of centre-based programmes (CALO, 1992: 22). It is not at all clear whether the latter approach will prove more effective. What is more, these programmes come suspiciously close to the traditional approach of the old compensation programmes, which have mostly failed. Finally, it is much more difficult in a centre-based programme to activate children and their parents together, since this type of less individual approach often discourages uneducated adults from participating (cf. Rispen & van der Meulen, 1992).

In politics and policies on language education there is always the dilemma of desirability versus feasibility; to what extent are certain desirable innovatory proposals feasible within society and within a set time frame? More concretely this means in our case that the following question should be asked: what is the theoretical starting point when we assess the extent to which multi-ethnicity, multiculturalism and multilingualism are accepted in education? On the theoretical continuum of starting points the one extreme is that of unconditional assimilation while the other is that of unconditional pluralism (Entzinger, 1990).

Assimilation means that immigrants are expected to adapt in every way to the host society and to give up their own identity, language and culture: 'To be Dutch with the Dutch'. Completely assimilated are only those — in theory — whom

one can no longer hear, see or notice to have once been 'different'. Assimilation as a result of a (more or less explicit) minority policy is still a sort of ideal image for many states. The American idea of the melting pot, which assumed that the melting of various cultures, ethnic groups and languages would produce a society of 'new people' (but see Glazer & Moynihan, 1970), as well as the Dutch idea of mutual acculturation, which assumed that not only minorities but also the majority would adapt (as it were 'of its own accord') are ultimately based on an assimilatory starting point. Of course neither of these two involve assimilation in its most stringent form, since both envisage that the minorities would blend in with the majority out of their own will without the need for intervention. And even though neither has worked — as the ethnic riots in such American cities as Los Angeles and the abandonment of the Dutch acculturation policy have shown — there are still calls from time to time for assimilation as the solution to all problems.

Pluralism entails that the people in a society function alongside each other without having to give up their ethnic, cultural and linguistic identity. In a pluralistic society all people have the inalienable right to retain their own culture, language and traditions to such an extent as they themselves desire. The most important reason for the fact that there can be hardly any actual, i.e. state-sanctioned, pluralistic societies is probably that consistently implemented and practised pluralism is more than a society can take in the eyes of those in power (the majority). For a society — in the real sense of the word — to exist and survive it is deemed necessary that there be a certain degree of social cohesion, which is in part brought about by a certain degree of assimilation.

The official Dutch political reaction to the multicultural society is somewhere halfway between assimilation and pluralism. It can be characterised as 'integration while retaining one's own identity'. In concrete terms this position sometimes bears the marks of assimilation and sometimes those of pluralism. This can be best illustrated by looking at two examples.

The Dutch Slaughter of Animals Act for a long time contained some sections which prevented the ritual slaughter of animals. Fully in line with an assimilation policy, the police were therefore given strict orders to take action against ritual slaughter. But with the increase in the number of Islamic Dutch people this law could no longer be maintained and was changed. In future it was permitted under certain conditions to have sheep ritually slaughtered. And Dutch society has been able to cope with such a change towards pluralism without any problem. Similarly the Education Act contains the important stipulation that children are of school age until they are sixteen years old; they are obliged to attend school until they have reached that age. Now it is has been noted that this school age is not entirely respected in some families, for example orthodox Islamic families, especially with regard to their daughters. For a variety of reasons (e.g. religious, materialistic, etc.) parents sometimes keep their elder daughters at home, sometimes for shorter or longer periods, sometimes even permanently. But whereas the Slaughter of Animals Act was changed, nothing of the sort happened with the school age as part of the Education Act.⁸ The responsible authorities and, if necessary, the police ensure that the Education Act is

implemented. The latter example shows where the state draws the borders of acceptability. Absolute pluralism might possibly lead to social disintegration in that it might create an ethnically determined lower class.

Neither decision — to adapt the Slaughter of Animals Act and not to adapt the Education Act — threatens the general aim of the Dutch government's minority policy, i.e. the creation of a society in which the members of ethnic minorities living in the Netherlands hold a position of equality and have the full scope to develop themselves.

What does this position of 'integration while retaining the own identity' mean for language education in a multilingual society? Or in other words, how much pluralism does a multilingual pupil need and how much assimilation can he/she take?

From what we have said, it will be clear that, as far as ethnic minorities' native languages are concerned, we believe that these languages deserve a clear, recognised and established position in education, first of all as a subject among other subjects (e.g. for example teaching Turkish or Arabic as 'own' languages to Turkish or Moroccan pupils). For the time being there is, however, the restriction that these are subjects which — because of the mother tongue teaching methods used — cannot be taken by all pupils. At a later stage, and after an assessment of the possibilities and needs, it should be possible to teach these languages as optional subjects to other pupils (but as second languages not as mother tongues).

The second option is that ethnic minority languages are used as languages of instruction in a bilingual model. And even though the Dutch practice so far has only been a transitional approach (L1 to increase the language competence in L2), we argue nonetheless in favour of more experiments with a maintenance approach. This entails the use of the mother tongue as the language of instruction (alongside the teaching of and in the majority language) during the whole of primary education and, if possible, in secondary education.

Our position towards minority languages at school is therefore a pluralistic one; a school should be able to cope with a certain degree of multilingualism and should use it positively. Its most important aims in doing so would be of a cultural-political and pedagogical nature: the preservation of ethnic minority languages, and native language competence as a basis for second language learning.

As far as second language education is concerned, we would like to remark here that as long as the majority language is not the immigrant child's mother tongue but a second language, it should be taught as such. Not using bilingual strategies in the teaching of Dutch as a second language can only lead to underachievement by immigrant children at school. This has been made painfully clear by the long-standing practice internationally of monolingual education aimed at assimilation. Of course immigrant children should learn the majority language of the immigration country with a view to their social participation and integration. But it should not be done unthinkingly or at any cost. Equal social participation requires more than a command of the second language alone; such command is a necessary but not a sufficient prerequisite, as the recent outbursts of xenophobia, discrimination and brutal racism

throughout Europe clearly indicate. A command of the majority language alone does not offer sufficient protection against this type of attack by members of the majority.

Besides the teaching of ethnic minority languages and second language education, intercultural education is the third strand in the formation of language education in a multilingual society. Intercultural education should contribute to the fight against lingocentrism (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988). Lingocentrism means the belief that one's own language and language use are superior to those of others, and is usually associated with feelings of superiority and contempt, whether conscious or not, towards the speakers of those other languages. This intercultural principle should, incidentally, not only be applied in specific, planned lessons in intercultural language study or language awareness, but also in the teaching of ethnic minority languages and in second language education. In this way intercultural education can contribute to a situation in which ethnic minorities may be integrated while retaining their own identity, as well as to the creation of a better understanding on the part of the majority. And the latter is probably the most urgently needed at the moment.

Notes

1. Remarkably, the Home Office has appointed a Temporary Scientific Commission for Minority Policies shortly after the Van Kemenade Commission had finished its report and even before the Minister and State Secretary for Education and Science have given their official reaction to the report. The chairwoman of this new Commission is the former State Secretary for Education and Science, Ginjaar-Maas, who is currently an MP for the VVD (Liberal Party).
2. In the preliminary reaction on *Ceders in de tuin* by the State Secretary for Education and Science, which became available on March 22, 1993, it is suggested, in order to overcome the implementation problems of intercultural education, to establish a national Project Group for Intercultural Education (cf. Wallage 1993).
3. It should be noted here that the teaching of the languages of immigrant groups is not intended as a replacement for foreign language education. If it does take place in the traditional modern foreign languages department, it will be alongside rather than instead of foreign language education.
4. In the preliminary reaction of the Secretary of State of Education on *Ceders in de tuin* most of the recommendations with respect to ethnic minority language teaching are adopted. The 1991 policy paper on Own Language Teaching remains in force and it is for example proposed to include pupils of Chinese, Antillean and Surinamese origin in the provisions for Own Language Teaching in primary education (cf. Wallage 1993).
5. In the preliminary reaction of the State Secretary for Education and Science on *Ceders in de tuin* some of the recommendations with respect to DSL are accepted whereas others are clearly rejected. The latter for example applies to the recommended decentralisation policy; the former to the recommended distinction between culture policy and disadvantage policy and the restructuring of the facilities regulations in primary and secondary education as part of a disadvantage policy (cf. Wallage 1993).
6. HIPPY is an acronym for Home Intervention Programme for Preschool Youngsters. This programme has been carried out in Israel since the end of the sixties.
7. It should be noted that the natural opposite of full assimilation is of course not full pluralism but full segregation, or in other words, apartheid. But since we want to limit

ourselves here to a discussion of real possibilities within civilised societies, we shall not discuss this variant.

8. However, since a few months it is possible for Islamic parents to request that their daughter(s) be moved to an all-girls class, and if there are sufficient requests, schools can form such classes. Despite this, however, the Education Act remains unchanged.

References

- Aarts, R. and de Ruiter, J.J. (1992) *Handleiding Toets Turkse Taal en Handleiding Toets Arabische Taal*. Arnhem: CITO.
- Bekkers, B., van Embricqs, R. and van Loggem, D. (1992) (red) De gezinsinterventieprogramma's: OpStap, Opstapje, Klimrek. In J. Rispens and B.F. van der Meulen (red) *Gezinsgerichte Stimulering Van Kinderen in Achterstandssituaties* (pp. 175–86). Amsterdam/Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.
- CALO (Commissie Allochtone Leerlingen in het Onderwijs) (1992) *Ceders in de tuin. Naar een nieuwe opzet van het onderwijsbeleid voor allochtone leerlingen*. Deel 1. Zoetermeer: Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen.
- Entzinger, H. (1990) Overheidsbeleid. In H.B. Entzinger & P.J.J. Stijnen (red) *Etnische Minderheden in Nederland 244–64*. Meppel/Amsterdam/Heerlen: Boom/Open Universiteit.
- Eurostat (1991) *Demographic Statistics on the European Community*. Luxemburg: Statistical Office of the EC.
- Extra, G. (1989) Ethnic minority languages versus Frisian in Dutch primary schools. A comparative perspective. In *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* 10 (1), 59–72.
- (1992) The context of ethnic communities and ethnic community languages in the Netherlands. Paper presented at the Erasmus Conference 'Home Language and School in a European Perspective'. Leeuwarden, October 29, 1992 (mimeo).
- Extra, G. and Verhoeven, L. (1992) Immigrant groups and immigrant languages in Europe. In G. Extra and L. Verhoeven (eds) *Immigrant Languages in Europe* (pp. 3–18). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Fase, W. (1989) Overheidsbeleid Nederlands als tweede taal in Nederland. In S. Kroon and T. Vallen (red) *Etnische minderheden en Nederlands als tweede taal in Nederland en Vlaanderen*. Nederlandse Taalunie Voorzeten 23. Den Haag: Stichting Bibliographia Neerlandica, 25–38.
- Glazer, N. and Moynihan, D.P. (1970) *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City*. 2nd Edition. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Gogolin, I. (1991) *Der monolinguale Habitus der multilingualen Schule*. Hamburg: Fachbereich Erziehungswissenschaft der Universität Hamburg.
- Guchte, C. van de (1989) *Intercultureel betekent veel. Een leeswijzer over intercultureel onderwijs*. Enschede: SLO.
- Hoeij, J. van, Van der Vegt, N. and Wilminkm, H. (1990) (red) *Intercultureel onderwijs per vak bekeken. Suggesties voor docenten in het voortgezet onderwijs*. Den Bosch/Enschede: LPC/SLO.
- Kloprogge, J. (1992) Onderwijsbeleid voor minderheden; een queeste naar doelen, middelen en effecten. In CALO (1992) *Ceders in de tuin. Naar een nieuwe opzet van het onderwijsbeleid voor allochtone leerlingen*. Deel 2: Voorstudies. Zoetermeer: Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen, Hoofdstuk 4, 1–30.
- Kroon, S., Pagel, D. and Vallen, T. (1993) (Hrsg.) *Multiethnische Gesellschaft und Schule in Berlin*. Münster/New York: Waxmann.
- Kroon, S. and Vallen, T. (1989a) Nederlands als tweede taal: politiek, beleid en perspec-

- tieven. In M. Kienstra (red) *Onderwijs aan anderstaligen*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 17–42.
- (1989b) Etnische minderheden en Nederlands als tweede taal: begripsbepaling en demografische gegevens. In S. Kroon and T. Vallen (red) *Etnische minderheden en Nederlands als tweede taal in Nederland en Vlaanderen*. Nederlandse Taalunie Voorzeten 23. Den Haag: Stichting Bibliographia Neerlandica, 13–24.
- Lucassen, L. and Köbben, A. (1992) *Het partiële gelijk. Controverses over het onderwijs in de eigen taal en cultuur en de rol daarbij van beleid en wetenschap*. Amsterdam/Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.
- Lucassen, L. and Penninx, R. (1985) *Nieuwkomers. Immigranten en hun nakomelingen in Nederland 1550–1985*. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff.
- Minderhedenbeleid (1993) *Jaaroverzicht Minderhedenbeleid 1993*. Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, vergaderjaar 1992–1993, 22 809, nrs. 1–2.
- Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken (1983) *Minderhedennota*. Den Haag: Staatsuitgeverij.
- Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen (1981) *Beleidsplan culturele minderheden in het onderwijs*. Den Haag: Staatsuitgeverij.
- (1986) *Notitie intercultureel onderwijs 1985*. Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, Vergaderjaar 1985–1986, 18701, nr. 4.
- Narain, G. and Verhoeven, L. (1992) *Ontwikkeling van tweetaligheid bij allochtone kleuters*. Tilburg: Faculteit Letteren KUB.
- Notitie (1988) *Litvoeringsnotitie Nederlands als tweede taal. Voorstel t.b.v. de besteding van 5 miljoen*. Zoetermeer: Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen.
- Skutnabb-Kangas, T. (1988) Multilingualism and the education of minority children. In T. Skutnabb-Kangas and J. Cummins (eds) *Minority Education: From Shame to Struggle* (pp 9–44). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Rispens, J. and van der Meulen, B.F. (1992) (red) *Gezinsgerichte stimulering van kinderen in achterstandssituaties*. Amsterdam/Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.
- Roelandt, Th., Roijen, J. and Veenman, J. (1991) *Minderheden in Nederland. Statistisch Vademecum 1991*. Den Haag: Staatsuitgeverij.
- Tennekes, J. (1986) Nederland een multiculturele samenleving? In *Migrantenstudies* 2 (3), 2–22.
- Tesser, P., Mulder, L. and van der Werf, G. (1991) *De eerste fase van de longitudinale OVB-onderzoeken. Het leerlingenonderzoek*. Nijmegen/Groningen: ITS/RION.
- Vanhoren, I. (1992) *Over wie praten we nu eigenlijk? Verkenning van de criteria voor doelgroepafbakening in beleid voor en onderzoek over etnische minderheden*. Steunpunt Migranten-Cahiers 1. Leuven: KU-Leuven/Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid (HIVA).
- Wallage, J. (1991) *Eigen taal als onderdeel van een geïntegreerd talenonderwijs*. Zoetermeer: Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen.
- (1993) *Beleidsreactie bij het advies 'Ceders in de tuin'; naar meer schoolsucces voor allochtone en autochtone leerlingen*. Zoetermeer: Ministerie van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen.
- Widgeren, J. (1975) *Migration to Western Europe. The social situation of migrant workers and their families*. UN/SOA/SEM/60/WP2.
- Wijnstra, J. (1980) Education of children with Frisian home language. In *Applied Psychology* 29, 43–60.
- WRR (1979) *Etnische minderheden*. Rapporten aan de regering 17. Den Haag: Staatsuitgeverij.
- WRR (1989) *Alloctonenbeleid*. Rapporten aan de regering 36. Den Haag: Staatsuitgeverij.