

NATIONAL IDENTIFICATIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS A 'TRADITIONAL ENEMY' NATION
AMONG ENGLISH CHILDREN

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Abstract

This study investigated national identifications and national attitudes amongst white English children aged 6-7 and 10-11 years old. Eighty children were interviewed using a scale to measure their strength of national identification, and using a trait attribution task and affect questions to measure their attitudes towards four target groups: English people (the ingroup), German people (a salient 'traditional enemy' outgroup), French people (a salient and positively liked outgroup) and Dutch people (a non-salient outgroup). It was found that the children's attitudes to German people developed differently from the way in which their attitudes to French and Dutch people developed. There was also consistent evidence of ingroup favouritism, at both ages. However, there were no significant relationships between the strength of national identification and attitudes towards any of the four target groups, and there were also no gender differences on any of the measures. It is argued that these findings cannot be explained by cognitive-developmental theory. In addition, while social identity theory is able to explain the different developmental patterns displayed by the children's outgroup attitudes, this theory has difficulty in explaining the lack of any relationship between the children's national identifications and attitudes. It is suggested that English children's national attitudes may be driven more by exogenous sources of information about salient national groups than by social identity processes *per se*.

Introduction

This study investigated the national identifications of English children, and examined the relationship between these identifications and the children's national attitudes. In particular, the study explored whether these children's strength of national identification was related to their attitudes towards a salient and positively evaluated national outgroup (French people), a non-salient national outgroup (Dutch people) and a salient national outgroup which has been perceived to be the 'traditional enemy' of the national ingroup for many years (German people).

England presents a complex context in which to examine the relationship between national identifications and attitudes. England is one of the three constituent nations of Great Britain (the other two being Scotland and Wales). Great Britain and Northern Ireland together make up the United Kingdom (UK). England has dominated Great Britain politically, culturally and economically for several centuries, and as a result, the concept of Britishness has acquired strong Anglocentric connotations (Kumar, 2003). Condor (1996) and Kiely, McCrone and Bechhofer (2005) found that English people are sometimes confused about the difference between the terms 'English' and 'British' and may even use them interchangeably. That said, Abell, Condor, Lowe, Gibson and Stevenson (2007) also found that some English people (e.g., those with extreme right-wing political affiliations) do draw a very clear and explicit distinction between 'English' and 'British', and construe 'English' as a distinctive category which is directly contrasted with 'British', 'Scottish' and 'Welsh'. In addition, for at least some English adults, the identities of 'English' and 'British' are associated with different conceptual contents: 'English' tends to be associated with sport (especially football and cricket), landscapes (green fields and rolling hills), architectural styles (English Gothic and Tudor), and cultural heritage (English stately country homes) (Abell et al., 2007; Condor, 2006; Lunn, 1996), whereas 'British' is usually associated with the British Empire, the monarchy, foreign policy and ethnic diversity (Condor, 2006; ETHNOS, 2005; Lunn, 1996; Vadher & Barrett, 2010).

A further difference is that the category of 'English' is implicitly interpreted by many English people as a racial and/or ethnic category such that members of non-white ethnic minority groups can never be viewed as English no matter how assimilated they may be in terms of their cultural practices, attitudes and identifications (Abell et al., 2007; Kumar, 2003; Parekh, 2000; Phoenix, 1995). In their turn, ethnic minority individuals living in England are far less likely to identify with England and Englishness than majority white individuals, and are instead more likely to identify with Britain and Britishness which, unlike England and Englishness, are construed as superordinate and racially and ethnically inclusive (Stone & Muir, 2007; Tilley, Exley & Heath, 2004; Vadher & Barrett, 2010).

However, the category of 'English' is not only defined in contradistinction to 'British', 'Scottish', 'Welsh' and ethnic and racial minority groups; it is also defined in contradistinction to 'German' and 'French', two salient nations that are in close geographical proximity to England. German people are especially salient to English people, being perceived by many as the 'traditional enemy' of England. This perception of Germany is a historical legacy of the two World Wars, a legacy that is regularly resuscitated, perpetuated and promulgated by the English mass media (especially tabloid newspapers) in their reporting of relationships between England and Germany, particularly in the context of football matches between the two countries (Beck, 2006; Downing, 2000; Fedeler, 2008).

Evaluative attitudes towards German people are acquired by English children at a relatively early age, and Germans are the national outgroup towards which young English children typically express the least positive attitudes (Barrett, 2007; Barrett & Short, 1992; Barrett, Wilson

& Lyons, 2003; Byram, Esarte-Sarries and Taylor, 1991; Johnson, 1966, 1973). That said, while English children's attitudes towards Germans are usually significantly less positive than their attitudes towards any other national outgroup, German peoples are *not* always described with predominantly negative characteristics, suggesting that English children tend to hold representations of Germans which are neutral rather than negative overall (see Barrett & Short, 1992; Barrett et al., 2003). Indeed, in a recent study which included English 6-, 9-, 12- and 15-year-olds, Barrett (2007) found that, at all four ages, there were no significant differences in the number of negative and positive attributes ascribed to German people by these children, suggesting a neutral rather than a negative evaluation of German people overall. That said, these same children did ascribe significantly more positive than negative traits to all of the other outgroups which were tested (Spanish, Italian, French and Scottish people) and Germans were a unique exception in not showing this general pattern. A second finding of interest was that there were no changes in the children's overall positivity towards, or affect for, German people with age.

Historically, the French nation has also been a salient European outgroup in the evolution of English and British identity, especially during the 18th and 19th centuries (Kumar, 2003). Today, attitudes to France and to French people are generally very positive within England, and France was the second most popular holiday destination (after Spain) for British people between 2003 and 2007 (Office for National Statistics, 2009). Previous studies which have examined English children's attitudes to French people (Barrett, 2007; Barrett & Short, 1992; Johnson, Middleton, & Tajfel, 1970; Middleton, Tajfel & Johnson, 1970) have revealed that French people are positively liked, and that overall levels of positivity towards, and liking of, French people typically do not change between 6 and 12 years of age.

In the present study, English children's attitudes towards German, French and Dutch people were examined. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to examine English children's attitudes to Dutch people. Like France and Germany, The Netherlands is situated relatively close to England. However, the Dutch are not a salient nation in the construction of English national identity, unlike the Germans and French. Hence, one purpose of the present study was to examine the extent to which the development of attitudes towards salient outgroups (German and French people) is similar to, or different from, the development of attitudes towards a non-salient outgroup (Dutch people).

Social identity theory postulates that attitudes towards different outgroups will differ depending upon the salience and relevance of those outgroups for the definition of the ingroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1999). By contrast, the cognitive-developmental approach to the development of prejudice does not draw any conceptual distinction between attitudes to salient vs. non-salient outgroups, but instead postulates that attitudes towards all outgroups become more positive through middle childhood as a consequence of changes to the child's cognitive and socio-cognitive understanding (Aboud, 1988; Aboud & Amato, 2001; Doyle & Aboud, 1995). Social identity theory further argues that attitudes to outgroups can also vary according to a number of other factors, including the perceived status of the outgroup and the perceived legitimacy and stability of the status differential between the outgroup and the ingroup (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, 1999; see also Barrett & Davis, 2008). There is existing evidence that English children's attitudes to German and French people do not change during middle childhood (Barrett, 2007; Barrett & Short, 1992), contrary to the predictions of cognitive-developmental theory. Hence, the present study was designed, in part, to test between these two theories: it was anticipated that support would be found for the predictions of social identity theory rather than cognitive-

developmental theory, and that attitudes towards the three outgroups would develop in different ways from each other.

A second issue which was explored in this study was whether the strength of English children's national identifications change through the course of middle childhood. Much previous research into children's national attitudes has omitted to measure the strength of national identification (e.g. Piaget & Weil, 1951; Jahoda, 1962; Lambert & Klineberg, 1967; Middleton et al., 1970). From the perspective of evaluating the findings of these earlier studies, this may be an unfortunate omission because social-psychological research with adults has revealed that the strength of identification with an ingroup can be an important influence on attitudes towards both the ingroup and salient comparison outgroups, with there being systematic differences in the attitudes of low and high identifiers (e.g., Jetten, Spears & Manstead, 2001; Mummendey, Klink & Brown, 2001; Perreault & Bourhis, 1998; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2001). Hence, in the present study, the strength of English children's national identification was assessed in order to ascertain whether there are any changes in the strength of national identification through the course of middle childhood, at the time when their attitudes to other nations are developing.

Thirdly, this study investigated the relationship between the strength of national identification on the one hand and children's national attitudes on the other. It was anticipated that, if outgroups need to be salient and relevant comparators for the definition of the ingroup in order for social identity processes to occur in relationship to those outgroups (as Tajfel & Turner, 1986, proposed in their original formulation of social identity theory; see also Turner, 1999, and Barrett & Oppenheimer, this volume), then there may not be any relationship between the strength of English national identification and attitudes to Dutch people. However, such a relationship should be present in the cases of attitudes to German and French people, as these are both salient and relevant outgroups for the construction of English national identity. Hence, the present study tested this prediction made by social identity theory, namely that a relationship between national identifications and attitudes would only be present in the cases of attitudes to German and French people. Furthermore, because, on a strict reading, social identity theory may be construed as only predicting relationships between the strength of identification and *the magnitude of the discrepancy* between attitudes towards the ingroup and attitudes towards salient outgroups, this study crucially examined whether there is a relationship between national identification and the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup over the outgroups, with relationships only being anticipated in the cases of the German and French outgroups.

A fourth issue which was investigated was whether there are gender differences in English children's national identifications and attitudes. Previous studies have suggested that, among some populations, boys have higher levels of national pride than girls (Amadeo, Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Husfeldt & Nikolova, 2002; Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald & Schulz, 2001), and that boys sometimes hold less positive attitudes to other national groups than girls (Byram et al., 1991). However, these findings are by no means universal (see Barrett, 2007, for a review). One possible explanation of these gender differences (where they occur) is that sporting events are a potent arena in which national identifications and attitudes are forged, an explanation which is consistent with findings that sporting figures, events and locations are often elicited when adults (ETHNOS, 2005) and children (Forrest & Barrett, 2001) are asked to produce emblems of their own nation. The fact that boys typically have higher levels of interest in sport than girls (Beal, 1994) may therefore explain these gender differences in national identifications and attitudes, where they occur. An alternative possibility is that boys watch war films and play war games more frequently than girls (Clifford, Gunter & McAleer, 1995; Goldstein, 1992, 1994;

Valkenburg, 2004), both of which also comprise two potent sites for the constructions of national attitudes. Insofar as English-German rivalry today is primarily flagged by the British mass media in the context of sporting events where metaphorical connections are frequently made to the two World Wars, it was expected that, if gender differences were to be found in the present study, then they would be most likely to occur in the children's attitudes to German people, with boys exhibiting less positive attitudes than girls, and with boys exhibiting higher levels of national identification than girls.

To summarise, this study investigated: (i) whether English children's attitudes towards different national outgroups develop in a similar or varied manner through the course of middle childhood; (ii) whether English children's strength of national identification changes during middle childhood; (iii) whether, amongst these children, there is a relationship between the strength of English national identification and the positive distinctiveness of English people over German and French people, but not between the strength of English national identification and the positive distinctiveness of English people over Dutch people; and (iv) whether English children display gender differences in their national identifications and attitudes.

Method

Participants

A sample of 80 English school children (40 girls and 40 boys) participated in the study. The sample was recruited from two primary schools located in the counties of Surrey and Hampshire in the south-east of England. Because the category of English is racialised, all children were of white English ethnicity. Children were recruited from two age ranges. The younger group consisted of children aged 6-7 years old (mean age = 6.64, *sd* = 0.29), while the older group consisted of children aged 10-11 years old (mean age = 10.64, *sd* = 0.32). Equal numbers of girls and boys were recruited to each age group. Table 1 shows the mean ages of the children broken down by age group and gender.

Table 1. Mean ages of participants, broken down by age and gender (with standard deviations in parentheses).

	Girls	Boys
Younger	6.65	6.63
(0.33)	(0.26)	
<i>n</i> = 20	<i>n</i> = 20	
Older	10.62	10.67
(0.37)	(0.28)	
<i>n</i> = 20	<i>n</i> = 20	

Procedure

Each child was interviewed separately in a quiet room within their school. After establishing rapport with the child, it was explained that the interviewer was interested in what they thought about certain things and that the child would be asked to complete some tasks and

answer some questions. Each child was reassured that they were not being tested, that there were no good or bad answers, and that no one other than the interviewer would know what they had said.

Three tasks were then administered to the child. The first task consisted of the six questions comprising the national identification scale, in which the term *English* was used to denote the national identity being tested; the second task consisted of the trait attribution task in which the child was asked to select, from a set of six positive and six negative traits, those traits which applied to English people, German people, French people and Dutch people (with each target group being tested independently from the other groups); the third task consisted of a pair of questions designed to assess the child's general liking of/affect towards each of the four target groups on a five point rating scale running from *like a lot* to *dislike a lot*. For full details of all three tasks and the randomisation procedures which were employed in their administration, see Barrett and Oppenheimer (this volume).

Results

Data screening and preparation

The scores obtained from the six questions used to measure the children's national identifications were subjected to an exploratory principal components analysis using varimax rotation. This revealed that all six items loaded onto a single factor (eigenvalue = 2.78, % of variance explained = 46.37%), with the loadings of the items on this factor ranging between .52 and .76. The six items also scaled reliably (Cronbach's alpha = .81). Because responses to the questions were scored using a mixture of 4- and 5-point scales, the responses scored on the 4-point scales were rescored onto 5-point scales, and the scores on all six questions were then averaged in order to derive a mean strength of national identification score (NI, scores ranging between 1 and 5).

On the trait attribution task, the total number of positive traits (PT, scores ranging from 0-6), the total number of negative traits (NT, scores ranging from 0-6), and an overall positivity score obtained by subtracting the number of negative traits from the number of positive traits (POS, scores ranging from -6 to +6) were calculated for each of the four target groups individually. In addition, the positive distinctiveness attributed to English people over each of the three outgroups individually was calculated by subtracting each of the three outgroup POS scores from the English ingroup POS score in turn (PD, scores ranging between -12 and +12).

The scores from the general affect (liking) questions were analysed as they stood (AFF, scores ranging from 1-5). In addition, the affective distinctiveness of English people over each of the three outgroups individually was calculated by subtracting each of the three outgroup AFF scores from the English ingroup AFF score in turn (AD, scores ranging between -4 and +4).

In the analyses reported below, only the statistically significant results are reported. All other results were non-significant.

National identification scores

The NI scores were analysed using a 2 (age group) x 2 (gender) between-groups ANOVA, which only showed a significant main effect of age group ($F(1,76) = 5.94, p < .05$). National identification was stronger amongst the younger children ($M = 4.42, sd = 0.64$) than the older children ($M = 4.11, sd = 0.49$).

Scores derived from the trait attribution task

The PT and NT scores were analysed using a 2 (age group) x 2 (gender) x 2 (PT vs. NT) x 4 (target group: English, German, French, Dutch) mixed ANOVA, with independent groups on the first two factors and repeated measures on the last two factors. This revealed a significant main effect of target group ($F(3, 59) = 8.13, p < .001$), a significant main effect of PT vs. NT ($F(1,61) = 105.52, p < .001$), a significant main effect of age group ($F(1,61) = 9.59, p < .005$), a significant interaction between target group and PT vs. NT ($F(3,59) = 15.06, p < .001$), and a significant three-way interaction between target group, PT vs. NT and age group ($F(3,59) = 3.02, p < .05$).

Post hoc ANOVAs and *t*-tests were conducted to locate where these effects were occurring. These revealed that significantly more positive traits were assigned to English people ($M = 4.19, sd = 1.47$) than to French ($M = 3.53, sd = 1.67$), Dutch ($M = 3.01, sd = 1.67$) and German ($M = 2.64, sd = 1.90$) people, and that significantly more positive traits were assigned to French people than to Dutch and German people. In addition, significantly more negative traits were assigned to German people ($M = 1.84, sd = 1.54$) than to English people ($M = 1.04, sd = 1.40$), French people ($M = 1.07, sd = 1.42$) and Dutch people ($M = 1.35, sd = 1.67$). The main effect of PT vs. NT was due to more positive traits than negative traits being assigned to all four groups (see preceding means). The main effect of age group was due to the younger children assigning more positive traits and more negative traits overall than the older children (see Table 2 for means).

Table 2. Mean number of positive traits (PT) and negative traits (NT) assigned to each of the four target groups, broken down by age (with standard deviations in parentheses). The location of significant differences within columns are shown using superscript numbers, with mean scores which do not differ significantly from one another sharing the same superscript number. Within the PT and NT columns, pairs of cells which are significantly different from each other are shown in bold.

Target group	PT		NT	
	Younger	Older	Younger	Older
English	4.301 (1.38)	3.931 (1.53)	1.201 (1.65)	0.931 (1.21)
German	3.312,3 (1.90)	2.002 (1.70)	2.032 (1.78)	1.652 (1.25)
French	3.782 (1.84)	3.303 (1.49)	1.361,3 (1.69)	0.681 (0.97)
Dutch	3.163 (1.90)	2.894 (1.47)	1.902,3 (1.83)	0.831 (1.34)

The two-way interaction between target group and PT vs. NT was qualified by the three-way interaction between target group, PT vs. NT and age group. The relevant means are shown in Table 2. Post hoc analyses revealed that the English PT and NT scores did not differ as a function of age, the French and Dutch NT scores (but not the French and Dutch PT scores) were significantly lower in the older children than in the younger children, while the German PT scores (but not the German NT scores) were significantly lower in the older children than in the younger children. In other words, the pattern of age differences in relationship to the three outgroups was different depending upon whether the target group was the ‘traditional enemy’ outgroup or

another kind of outgroup.

Next, the overall positivity (POS) scores for each of the four target groups were analysed using a 2 (age group) x 2 (gender) x 4 (target group: English, German, French, Dutch) mixed ANOVA, with independent groups on the first two factors and repeated measures on the last factor. This revealed only a significant main effect of target group ($F(3,183) = 18.46, p < .001$). Post hoc *t*-tests revealed that all four means were significantly different from each other (English $M = 3.05, sd = 1.94$; French $M = 2.52, sd = 2.30$; Dutch $M = 1.69, sd = 2.26$; German $M = 0.81, sd = 2.51$). One-sample *t*-tests further showed that all four means were significantly higher than 0, indicating that attitudes to all four national groups were positive overall, including attitudes to Germans (German $t(72) = 2.75, p < .01$).

Table 3. Mean positive distinctiveness (PD) scores, broken down by age (with standard deviations in parentheses). The location of significant differences within columns are shown using superscript numbers, with mean scores which do not differ significantly from one another sharing the same superscript number.

PD score	Younger	Older	Overall
English-German	1.931 ¹ (2.64)	2.661 ² (2.91)	2.321 ³ (2.79)
English-French	0.702 ¹ (2.74)	0.462 ¹ (2.34)	0.572 ¹ (2.52)
English-Dutch	2.031 ² (2.53)	1.062 ¹ (2.61)	1.513 ¹ (2.60)

The three positive distinctiveness (PD) scores were also analysed using a 2 (age group) x 2 (gender) x 3 (PD score: English-German, English-French, English-Dutch) mixed ANOVA, with independent groups on the first two factors and repeated measures on the last factor. This revealed a significant main effect of PD score ($F(2,122) = 13.24, p < .001$) and a significant interaction between PD score and age group ($F(2,122) = 3.17, p < .05$). The relevant means are shown in Table 3. Post hoc *t*-tests revealed that the three overall PD scores were all significantly different from each other. However, amongst the younger children, the English-German and the English-Dutch PD scores did not differ significantly from each other but both were significantly different from the English-French PD scores. By contrast, amongst the older children, the English-French and the English-Dutch PD scores did not differ significantly from each other but both were significantly different from the English-German PD scores. As the figures in Table 3 show, with increasing age, the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup over the ‘traditional enemy’ outgroup increased, while the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup over the other two outgroups decreased.

Scores derived from the affect questions

The affect (AFF) scores were analysed using a 2 (age group) x 2 (gender) x 4 (target group: English, German, French, Dutch) mixed ANOVA, with independent groups on the first two factors and repeated measures on the last factor. This only revealed a significant main effect of target ($F(3,66) = 38.50, p < .001$).

Post hoc *t*-tests indicated that affect was significantly higher towards English people ($M = 4.68, sd = 0.62$) than to French ($M = 3.85, sd = 0.97$), German ($M = 3.25, sd = 1.32$) and Dutch ($M = 3.19, sd = 1.15$) people, and that affect was also significantly higher towards French people

than to German and Dutch people. However, affect towards German and Dutch people did not differ significantly. One-sample *t*-tests further revealed that while affect towards both English people ($t(75) = 23.85, p < .001$) and French people ($t(77) = 7.72, p < .001$) was significantly higher than the neutral mid-point of the affect scale (3), affect towards German people and Dutch people was not significantly higher than the neutral midpoint.

The affective distinctiveness (AD) scores were then analysed using a 2 (age group) x 2 (gender) x 3 (AD score: English-German, English-French, English-Dutch) mixed ANOVA, with independent groups on the first two factors and repeated measures on the last factor. This also only revealed a significant main effect of AD score ($F(2,136) = 9.48, p < .001$). Post hoc *t*-tests showed that English-German AD ($M = 1.39, sd = 1.51$) and English-Dutch AD ($M = 1.49, sd = 1.26$) did not differ, but both were significantly larger than English-French AD ($M = 0.81, sd = 1.07$).

Table 4. Partial correlations between all of the measures, controlling for age.

	PTEng	NTEng	PTGer	NTGer	PTFre	NTFre	PTDut	NTDut	POSEng	POSGer	POSFre	POSDut	PDGer	PDFre	PDDut	AFFEng	AFFGer	AFFFre	AFFDut	ADGer	ADFre																		
PTEng	.18	.18	.15	.23	.16	.21	.08	-.07	-.09	.01	.28*	.32*	.24	.51***	.14	.21	-.69***	.00	-.11	-.04	-.45***	-.42***	-.48***	.00	-.07	.00	-.01	.07	.00	.01	PTGer								
NTEng		.23	.41**	.05	.57***	-.08	.03	.82***	.26	.47***	-.73***	-.23	-.43***	.06	.49***	-.10	.21	-.43***	.12	.18	NTGer																		
PTGer			.18	.48***	-.10	.55***	-.34**	-.75***	-.39**	-.44***	.47***	.11	.16	.03	-.50***	-.03	-.13	.46***	.05	.13	PTFre																		
NTGer				.30*	.44***	.04	.21	.38**	.85***	.29*	-.21	-.66***	.12	.14	.18	.40**	-.13	-.12	.31*	.17	NTDut																		
PTFre					.05	.06	-.37**	-.25	-.75***	-.08	-.01	.44***	-.21	-.03	-.23	-.36**	.08	.19	.33*	-.09	PTDut																		
NTFre									-.02	.23	.44***	.33*	.75***	-.26	-.14	-.54***	.13	.41**	-.04	.26	-.33*	.09	-.19	NTDut															
PTDut										-.23	-.39**	.00	-.68***	.21	-.17	.47***	-.14	-.31*	.09	-.19	.23	-.15	.12	POSEng															
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* p < .05, ** p < .005, *** p < .001

The correlations between the variables

Finally, all of the measures were correlated with each other, controlling for age. The results are shown in Table 4. Some of the significant correlations were expected (due to the non-independence of the measures involved), particularly those between the PT and NT scores on the one hand and the corresponding POS and PD scores on the other hand. Similarly, the significant correlations between the AFF scores and the corresponding AD scores were also expected.

More interestingly, the following patterns are apparent from Table 4. First, there were *no* significant correlations between the NI scores and *any* of the attitudinal measures. Second, affect towards English people (AFFEng) did not correlate significantly with any other measures (except with the three AD scores, which can be disregarded as the AFFEng and AD scores were non-independent). Third, all of the PT scores for the four target groups were significantly correlated with each other (and four out of the six pairs of NT scores were significantly correlated with each other as well). This suggests that children's attitudes to national groups are structured in such a way that if they are positive towards one group, they are positive to all groups. Fourth, the PT and NT scores for the two salient outgroups (German, French) were systematically related to the AFF scores for those outgroups; however, this relationship was not present in the case of the ingroup (English) nor in the case of the non-salient outgroup (Dutch).

Discussion

This study was designed to investigate four main research questions. The first question was whether English children's attitudes towards different national outgroups develop in a similar or varied manner through the course of middle childhood. The study found differences in the development of attitudes to the three outgroups. For example, the children's attitudes to French people were more positive than their attitudes to both Dutch and German people (e.g., as indexed by both positive trait attributions and affect). However, while on some measures the children's attitudes to Dutch and German people were not significantly different (e.g. on the positive trait attributions and on affect), the children's attitudes to Dutch people developed in a similar way to their attitudes to French people (with the number of negative traits ascribed to these two groups decreasing with age), while their attitudes to German people displayed a different developmental pattern (in which the number of *positive* traits ascribed to Germans decreased with age: see Table 2). It was also found that the positive distinctiveness of English people over German people became more pronounced with age, while the positive distinctiveness of English people over the other two outgroups showed the opposite pattern (see Table 3). However, while affect towards French people was significantly higher than the neutral mid-point of the affect scale, affect towards both German and Dutch people was not significantly higher than the neutral mid-point of the scale.

This differentiated pattern in the development of attitudes towards outgroups suggests that the cognitive-developmental explanation of the development of prejudice (Aboud, 1988; Aboud & Amato, 2001), according to which attitudes towards all outgroups become more positive through middle childhood as a consequence of developmental shifts in the child's socio-cognitive understanding of large-scale social groups, is inadequate, as it fails to explain why attitudes to different outgroups develop in these different ways. Cognitive-developmental theory also fails to explain why, in the present study, the number of positive traits ascribed to Germans actually decreased, rather than increased, with age: this trend is in direct contradiction to the predictions of cognitive-developmental theory (Doyle, Beaudet & Aboud, 1988; Doyle & Aboud, 1995).

By contrast, social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner 1999), which postulates

that intergroup attitudes are influenced by a number of factors (including the salience of the outgroup concerned and its relevance for the definition of the ingroup, and the status of the outgroup in relationship to the ingroup) is able to account for the differentiated patterns of attitudes to the different outgroups. Indeed, social identity theory can readily explain the differences displayed in the development of attitudes to German people vs. French and Dutch people: older children are more likely than younger children to have knowledge of the historical intergroup relationships which have existed between England and Germany; hence, differences in attitudes towards German people vs. the other two outgroups are more likely to be displayed by the older children than the younger children (the pattern which was indeed found in this study).

The second research question which was addressed by this study was whether English children's strength of national identification changes during middle childhood. It was found that the strength of national identification decreased significantly between 6-7 and 10-11 years of age. That said, it should be noted that national identification was still very strong, even at the age of 10-11: on a 5-point scale, the mean strength of identification at 10-11 years was 4.11. It is also important to note that this study yielded evidence of ingroup favouritism, with the children at both ages showing significantly greater positivity towards the ingroup on several measures (e.g. on the number of positive traits attributed to English people, on overall positivity, and on affect for members of the ingroup). Hence, care needs to be taken in not overplaying this reduction in the strength of national identification between these two ages. However, one possible explanation of this reduction is that, by the age of 10-11, other identities are increasing in salience for the child as he or she begins to embark on a more extensive exploration of self (Marcia, 1980; Kroger, 2004), and it may be the competition from these other identities which is responsible for the reduction in the strength of national identification at the threshold of adolescence.

The third research question which this study sought to address was whether there is a relationship between the strength of national identification and the positive distinctiveness of the ingroup over salient comparison outgroups. The outcome of the correlational analysis was consistent and clear on this issue: there was no relationship between the strength of national identification and any of the attitudinal measures. From the perspective of social identity theory and research with adults which has shown that there are widespread differences in the attitudes of high and low identifiers (e.g., Jetten, Spears & Manstead, 2001; Mummendey, Klink & Brown, 2001; Perreault & Bourhis, 1998; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2001), this outcome is surprising. It suggests that identification with the national ingroup is not a dominant factor in driving the development of children's national attitudes, at least not amongst English children. It is pertinent to note that this finding is consistent with previous findings reported by Barrett (2007), who similarly failed to find any consistent relationship between national identifications and national attitudes in 6-, 9-, 12- and 15-year old English children. The issue of the age at which, and how and why, national identifications become a significant predictor of national attitudes amongst English people remains an open question for future research involving older children and young adults to address. However, one distinct possibility is that children's attitudes towards other national groups are driven neither by their endogenous cognitive-development, nor by social identity processes, but by external sources of information, including holidays in other countries, school teaching and school textbooks, representations in the mass media and peer group discourse. One of the available theories of how children's national and ethnic identifications and attitudes develop, namely societal-social-cognitive-motivational theory (Barrett, 2007, 2009; Barrett & Davis, 2008), proposes that all of these factors, as well as cognitive development and social identity processes, can play a role in the development of intergroup attitudes. The evidence from

the present study suggests that this kind of conceptual framework may indeed be required if we are to explain all of the different patterns of development and their associated casual factors which have now been documented within different national and socio-historical contexts.

Fourthly and finally, this research also sought to examine whether English children display gender differences in their national identifications and attitudes. Once again, the study yielded clear and unambiguous findings: no gender differences emerged in any of the analyses which were conducted. Hence, this study adds support for the note of caution expressed by Barrett (2007) concerning the lack of consistency concerning gender differences in children's national identifications and attitudes: gender differences are indeed far from universal in this domain.

In addition to these four principal outcomes, a number of incidental findings were also obtained in this study. For example, it was found that the attributions of positive and negative traits to different national groups were inter-correlated. This suggests that children who feel positively toward their own national group also feel positively toward other national outgroups, while children who feel more negatively about their national ingroup feel more negatively about other national groups. It was also found that trait attributions to salient national outgroups correlate with affect towards those outgroups, but the same relationship does not apply in the case of non-salient outgroups or the ingroup. This latter finding provides further evidence that children's attitudes towards outgroups are differentiated rather than uniform.

It should be acknowledged that there are limitations to the present study. First, the sample size is relatively small, with only 80 children being tested in total. Second, it would have been useful to test additional children at other ages, particularly through the years of adolescence, in order to ascertain when the relationship between national identifications and national attitudes is established. Third, the measures which were used in this study were global and quantitative in nature. They precluded obtaining more fine-grained information about the children's understanding of national groups and their own national identifications. Future studies would benefit from including qualitative open-ended questions to explore in greater detail children's own subjective perspectives on these issues.

In conclusion, this study has shown that children's attitudes to national outgroups are differentiated. Depending upon the particular outgroup concerned, children's attitudes display different developmental patterns. In particular, in the case of English children, attitudes to German people (the 'traditional enemy' nation) were found to develop differently from their attitudes to a positively liked outgroup (French people) and their attitudes to a non-salient national outgroup (Dutch people). These findings cannot be readily explained by cognitive-developmental theory, but can be explained by social identity theory. That said, social identity theory has difficulty in explaining the further finding obtained in this study that national identifications and national attitudes are not related in English children. It is possible that a more comprehensive model such as societal-social-cognitive-motivational theory is instead required in order to explain the present findings.

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