

Immigrant parents' acculturation strategies and involvement in children's education

Experiences of Turkish and Maghreb immigrant families in Europe

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**Immigrant parents' acculturation strategies and
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Experiences of Turkish and Maghreb immigrant families in
Europe

Acculturatiestrategieën van immigrantenouders en hun betrokkenheid bij het
onderwijs van hun kinderen: Ervaringen van Turkse en Maghrebijnse ouders in
Europa

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

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Veur pap en mam

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1

General introduction

European societies are becoming increasingly diverse as a consequence of immigration from outside Europe and increasing migration within Europe (European Commission, 2020). This comes with certain challenges. How can the integration and participation of newcomers to society be supported? How can society's institutions, foremost the systems of early education and care and primary education, be adapted to deal with the increasing diversity and to ensure equal opportunities for all? There is an urgent need for tackling the rising inequalities in education and the wider society, and for preventing immigrant ethnic-cultural minority groups from discrimination and social exclusion.

The heterogeneity that is present in current European societies is the result of the complex interplay of ethnicity, religion, language, traditions, and cultural values and practices of immigrant and ethnic minority groups, and it does not only concern differences between these groups and the mainstream society, but equally differences within these groups (Crul, 2015), for which Meissner and Vertovec (2015) coined the term *superdiversity*.

Current superdiversity in Europe has sparked intense public and political debate on immigration and integration lately around the central issue on how the participation of immigrants and minorities in the economic, social, cultural, and political spheres of society can be increased. Several European countries, upon the first major waves of labor immigration in the nineteen sixties, adopted policies based on acceptance. Newcomers were welcomed and supported in adapting to the new country of residence, while respecting the heritage cultures and languages, and even supporting their maintenance. In recent years, however, national policies have Europe-wide shifted towards a stronger emphasis on assimilation (Malik, 2015; Meer & Modood, 2015). Among other leading politicians in Europe, the German chancellor Angela Merkel in 2010 publicly stated that “Multikulti ist absolut gescheitert”, multiculturalism has utterly failed (Kymlicka, 2012). As a consequence, current policy trends in most European countries require immigrant and minority communities to adopt the culture and language of the country of residence as much and as quickly as possible, and to assimilate into the majority society.

It is a firm and widely held belief that assimilation into the country of residence is the best option for equal opportunities, inclusion and upward social mobility for immigrants and minorities, in particular for the next generation, the children of immigrants, who participate in education or are about to enter the education system. However, current assimilation policies also imply that immigrant families should renounce their own heritage culture and language, and implicitly these policies put the full responsibility for successful integration on the shoulders of the immigrants themselves, while not promoting adaptation of the majority society to the increased diversity (Randeria & Karagiannis, 2020). This may put pressure on immigrant communities, in particular on immigrant families, when parents wish to maintain their own linguistic and cultural practices and values to at least some extent and to pass this cultural heritage on to their children (Song, 2019). Indeed, studies indicate that assimilationist pressure can negatively impact on immigrants wellbeing, feelings of belonging to the country of

residence, and national identification (Green et al., 2020; Igarashi, 2019; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013) and may actually increase the distance between immigrant and majority communities (Brown & Zagefka, 2011; Guimond et al., 2014). This negative impact may in particular hold for the relationships between parents and professionals in the early education and care and primary education systems. These professionals are among the most important representatives of the majority society for families with children in the (pre)school age and, as such, fulfill a key role in connecting immigrants and ethnic-cultural minorities to society. Several reports indicate that assimilationist attitudes of professionals in education often go together with explicit devaluing of the heritage culture and languages, with a potentially negative impact on the wellbeing of immigrant children and on the relationships with immigrant parents (Pulinx et al., 2017; Ünver & Nicaise, 2019). This raises the question whether the current assimilationist pressure has the intended effect or, on the contrary, unintentionally reproduces or even worsens the disadvantaged position of immigrant families at risk of social exclusion.

The public debates on integration are dominated by opinion leaders, policymakers and politicians of the majority society. Likewise, much research on integration has been conducted from the point of view of the majority society (e.g., Kim, 2009; Smith, 2020), or compared immigrant groups to non-immigrant groups with the latter implicitly being taken as the standard (e.g., Cooper et al., 2010). This often results in generalizations with little eye for the variation within groups and in conclusions that fail to do justice to the emotional and educational investments of immigrant parents in children's development, learning and education, not seldom against the odds of severe material deprivation and other disadvantaging factors (Antony-Newman, 2019; Scheele et al., 2010; Van de Werfhorst & Heath, 2019). In this dissertation, we focus on the perspective of immigrant families with pre- and primary school aged children across Europe as they navigate their way through the country of residence and try to strike a balance between their own deeply held cultural values on the one hand and societies' expectations on the other hand. We focus on the diverse ways in which immigrant parents support their children's development, learning, education in school, and integration into the wider society. We examine the interplay of family-related characteristics, including foremost parents' acculturation preferences, characteristics of the local preschool and primary school context, and trends in the national contexts of official integration policies, to explain variation in parents' support for their children's development and learning, at home and in collaboration with children's (pre)schools.

The studies reported in this dissertation focus on immigrant families with a Turkish or Maghreb (i.e., North-West African, including a Moroccan, Algerian or Tunisian) background, as they comprise the largest non-Western immigrant groups in Europe (Eurostat, 2020). These immigrant groups have settled in different European countries with different (early) education systems and national integration policies, and therefore comparisons within groups across countries can be informative to central issue of how to promote integration and inclusion. Such comparisons should be carefully conducted and findings should be cautiously interpreted. Evidence will be tentative at best and

there are many methodological limitations. Yet, the need for evidence on the impact of local and national integration policies is urgent.

In this chapter, we will first introduce the general theoretical frameworks of the present dissertation, then describe the structure of the dissertation and the three research projects of which data have been used, and finally give a brief introduction to the chapters included in this dissertation.

Parents supporting children's wellbeing, development and learning

Optimal development of children requires coherence and continuity between the different microsystems of which young children are part, primarily the family, the early childhood education and care (ECEC) center, the preschool and the primary school (Epstein, 2010; Rosa & Tudge, 2013). This idea can be traced back to the well-known bio-socio-ecological model of human development of Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

Development, according to the bio-socio-ecological model, results from the recurrent interactions (proximal processes) of a child with his or her immediate environment across the entire lifespan. In every stage of development, and across subsequent stages, the child participates in several *micro-systems* (e.g., the family, peer group, school). These micro-systems together constitute the *meso-system* of the child (e.g., the family-school meso-system). The social agents involved in a child's micro-system (e.g., the parents, peers, teachers), are connected to other social agents' micro-systems through their own micro- and meso-systems. These indirect relations of the child with other social agents (e.g., the team of teachers at school, the community of professionals at the local level), are referred to as *exo-systems*. Finally, the wider system encompassing, and directly or indirectly regulating, the micro-, meso- and exo-systems of the child and all other social agents, is the *macro-system*. The macro-system operates at the level of the society and is constituted by the institutions of the society, including its policies regarding education, equity and inclusion. The macro-system also encompasses broad historical trends and changes in society over time (also referred to as the *chrono-system*), including the increasing cultural and linguistic diversification, and how society responds to these trends and changes. Optimal development of children in terms of wellbeing, well-becoming and realizing their potentials (Ben-Arieh, 2010), requires coordination of all systems at all system levels to optimize the coherence and continuity of children's proximal processes across systems and time.

In the present dissertation, we focus specifically on the relationships between the micro-systems of the family, the preschool ECEC center and the primary school within the wider context of national equity and integration policies. Coherence of the micro-systems of the family and the (pre)school and related to this, the coordination between parents and teachers, is often referred to as *educational partnerships*. Educational partnership is a multidimensional concept (Minke et al., 2014), including dimensions such as a trustful relationship between parents and (pre)school teachers, and involvement of both parties in children's learning in the school environment and home environment

(see for example the typology of Epstein [1992, 2001]). The first dimension, a *trustful parent-teacher relationship*, is characterized by shared beliefs about the importance of the relationship and commitment to establishing and maintaining a positive relationship with respect to the child's development and learning (Clarke et al., 2009). Trust, respect and personal regard, accountability, consideration, sensitivity and understanding, and equality and reciprocity, are key elements of a high quality parent-teacher relationship (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Clarke et al., 2009). Research has shown that high quality parent-teacher relationships can support children's academic and behavioral outcomes (Garbacz et al., 2015; Hughes & Kwok, 2007; Minke et al., 2014).

The second dimension, *parental (educational) involvement*, can be defined as "parental participation in the educational processes and experiences of their children" (Jeynes, 2005, p. 245). This participation includes both home-based and school-based parental involvement, and also entails parents' expectations or aspirations for their child. Numerous studies and meta-analyses have found positive effects on children's development and learning of a nurturing, stimulating home environment provided by the parents (e.g., Boonk et al., 2018; Foster et al., 2005; Jeynes, 2012; Leseman et al., 2019; Niklas et al., 2016; Scheele et al., 2010), often surpassing the effects of (pre) school (e.g., Melhuish et al., 2008). It should be noted that some meta-analyses do not consistently support these positive effects, which might be, at least partly, related to the multifaceted nature of parental involvement (Fan & Cheng, 2001), or methodological flaws in evaluation studies (Mattingly et al., 2002), or implementation flaws of family support programs at home (de la Rie et al., 2021).

Parents' home-based involvement is often operationally defined as the informal *home learning environment* (HLE) they provide to their children on a day-to-day basis. This broad concept encompasses the availability of materials and resources at home that promote early development and learning (such as picture books, construction play materials, jigsaws, puzzles, tablets) and, most importantly, the interactions parents and children engage in using these materials and resources to promote children's early language and cognitive development, self-regulation, and social-emotional competences (Leseman & de Jong, 1998; Melhuish et al., 2008; Scheele et al., 2010). School-based involvement of parents, often referred to, or for that matter narrowed-down to, as *parental participation* in school activities includes parental behaviors such as attending parent-teacher conferences, volunteering in classroom activities, or helping with field trips (Minke et al., 2014). In addition to being physically present at (pre)school, parental participation can also include contacting the school about the child's wellbeing and academic progress (Barnard, 2004; Glick & White, 2004).

Research on immigrant parents has often concluded that parents with an immigrant background compared to non-immigrant parents have less trusting relationships with teachers (Bendixsen & Danielsen, 2020; Bossong & Keller, 2018; Janssen et al., 2012), provide lower quality home learning environments (Hayes et al., 2018), and also tend to participate less in activities at the ECEC center or primary school (Antony-Newman, 2019). However, it is important to address some biases in this research. Although most

of these studies are careful not to blame the immigrant parents, or at least not only the immigrant parents but also the (pre)schools, the findings tend to be one-sided, because the practices of the comparison group (often non-immigrant middleclass families) or the established practices of parental participation at (pre)schools are implicitly taken as the norm.

In addition, studies tend to insufficiently take into account the often limited material resources of immigrant families and parents' lower education level and language and literacy skills (Cooper et al., 2010; Niklas & Schneider, 2013), while at the same time not fully recognizing the alternative ways in which immigrant parents against all odds can and do invest in their children's development and learning (Capotosto, 2017; López, 2001; Reese, 2012). Due to these biases, teachers at ECEC centers or primary schools are reported to frequently believe that immigrant parents do not care much about their children's schooling, resulting in negative attitudes towards immigrant parents that, in turn, can negatively affect the relationships with these parents and their involvement in school (Curdt-Christiansen, 2020; Janssen et al., 2012). Biases like these, rooted in deficit thinking and reinforced by a negative public discourse on the integration of immigrant families as in current Europe, might perpetuate the myth of uninvolved immigrant and minority parents (Altschul, 2012; Auerbach, 2007).

Moreover, there is large variability between and within immigrant groups, which depends on individuals' immigration history, socioeconomic status, language skills (both in the heritage language and in the language of the country of residence), acculturation preferences, religious commitment, psychological wellbeing and other personal or family related characteristics (e.g., Berry et al., 2006; Güngör et al., 2012; Mattei & Aguilar, 2016; Phalet & Baysu, 2020; Van Steensel, 2006). Differences in local and national integration policies, and related to this, the beliefs, attitudes and practices of local professionals in care and education, institutional arrangements in (early) education (e.g., accessible and affordable ECEC), urban planning and housing policies (e.g., degree of residential segregation), and other social policies may also matter for the participation, feelings of belonging, and social mobility of immigrant families (Crul & Schneider, 2010; Romijn et al., 2021), and this, in turn, may affect parents' home-based and school-based involvement in their children's development and learning. It should prevent researchers, professionals, policymakers and politicians alike from drawing firm conclusions that generalize to a whole immigrant community or, even worse, to immigrants and minorities in general, as in the claim of the 'failure of integration'.

The current dissertation examines the ways in which immigrant parents try to provide a nurturing home environment for their children, how they perceive their relationships with the teachers of the ECEC centers and schools attended by their children, and whether they participate in activities of the centers and schools of their children. The studies reported in this dissertation try to identify the facilitators and barriers to immigrant parents' home-based and school-based involvement in children's development and learning, looking specifically into the role of parents' acculturation strategies and other personal characteristics, on the one hand, and to factors in the

wider social context, in particular the equity and integration policies at the local and national level, on the other hand.

Interactive acculturation

Research on the acculturation of immigrant and ethnic-cultural minority groups has been strongly influenced by Berry's two-dimensional *Integration-Acculturation Model* (Berry, 1997). In this framework, acculturation is defined as the interplay of two theoretically independent dimensions: immigrants' preference for maintenance of the heritage culture and language (which can vary from low to high) and their preference for intercultural contact with members of the majority group and more broadly for participation in the majority society (which can also vary from low to high; see Berry et al., 2006). Combined, these orientations result in four types of acculturation strategies: *integration* (comparatively strong preference for cultural maintenance *and* comparatively strong preference for intercultural contact and participation in the majority society), *assimilation* (low preference for cultural maintenance *and* high preference for majority group contact and participation), *separation* (high preference for maintenance of the heritage culture together with a strong orientation on the cultural in-group *and* low majority group contact and societal participation), and *marginalization* (low preference for cultural maintenance together with limited connection to the in-group *and* low preference for intercultural contact with the majority group and participation in the majority society).

Zagefka et al. (2011), among other scholars, have pointed out that majority group members and the majority society as a whole also have acculturation preferences for immigrants and ethnic-cultural minority groups, which in turn can shape the acculturation strategies of these groups. This view is referred to as the *Interactive Acculturation Model* (Bourhis et al., 1997; Zagefka et al., 2011). Acculturation of immigrants is seen as an interactive process that is actively co-constructed by both the immigrants and the majority society (Passiatore et al., 2019; Phalet & Baysu, 2020). In this regard, local and national integration policies are of particular interest. Different local and national policies on integration have been identified across Europe and three main models are currently distinguished (Aggestam & Hill, 2008). The *assimilation* model, also referred to as the 'republican model' (referring to France as a country that exemplifies this model), opts for cultural homogenization, requiring ethnic-cultural minority groups to adopt the predominant national norms and language. The *multicultural* model, also referred to as the pluralism model, grants rights to ethnic-cultural groups and supports diversity in public institutions, such as education. Finally, the *exclusionary* model, also known as the separation model, regards immigrants as temporary guest workers with the prospect of returning, while excluding them from full citizenship (Doomernik & Bruquetas-Callejo, 2016; Rodríguez-García, 2010).

As stated above, several European countries nowadays opt for an assimilation model in their local and national policies (Malik, 2015). Although assimilation into the society is regarded as the most promising option by majority group members and

policymakers (Van Acker & Vanbeselaere, 2011), studies on immigrants' acculturation seem to question this logic. A predominant emphasis on assimilation has been linked to higher perceived group discrimination (Borrell et al., 2015) and lower parental self-efficacy among immigrant parents (Kogan et al., 2018). A policy approach that strives for respectful bi-cultural integration, in contrast, has been associated with favorable psychological outcomes and cognitive advantages for immigrants (Berry et al., 2006; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013; Phalet & Baysu, 2020).

A key question of the current dissertation is if, and in what way, local and national integration policies are related to parents' acculturation strategies and if and how, through these acculturation strategies, local and national policies affect parents' home- and school-based involvement in children's development and learning. The studies reported in this dissertation involve two major immigrant groups in Europe, the Maghreb and Turkish, who have settled in different countries, allowing to compare the acculturation strategies of Maghreb and Turkish immigrant parents across different national integration models. This will provide at least a suggestive and tentative evidence to answer the key question, whether an assimilation model indeed is a good, perhaps the best option for supporting the integration of immigrants and minorities, or, alternatively, whether a multicultural approach should be preferred.

Language use and informal education at home

The choice of the language(s) used at home is, according to scholars, the *nexus* between parents' acculturation strategies and the educational support they provide to children (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). Language is considered at the core of a person's cultural identity, but also a bridge to relate to others. For immigrant parents who themselves grew up with a different language than the national language of the country of residence, this often presents a dilemma. On the one hand, being able to express oneself proficiently in the majority language (conveniently referred to as the L2, the language that immigrant children usually learn second) is important for participation in the wider society and supporting the child's development and learning *in the national language* (Hammer et al., 2009; Hoff et al., 2014; Paradis, 2011). On the other hand, the heritage language (conveniently referred to as the L1, the first language immigrant children are usually exposed to), also has an important sociocultural function, next to being part of a person's cultural identity, as it enables communication with other members of the community and relatives (Agirdag, 2014; Worthy & Rodríguez-Galindo, 2006).

However, the choice of the language(s) to be used at home, in interaction with the children or in the public domain is often not a matter of free choice. From sociolinguistic studies on language maintenance, it has become clear that a complex interplay of multiple factors underlies the language choices of parents (for an overview of families' language policies, see Bezcioglu-Göktolga, 2019). In addition to parents' personal beliefs regarding the benefits of maintaining the heritage language or using the national language (Yağmur & Van de Vijver, 2012), these factors include the multilingual and multicultural beliefs and practices of teachers and other professionals in local education,

care and social services, as well as the overarching national integration policy of a country (Pulinx et al., 2017; Romijn et al., 2021). Recent studies among teachers and other professionals in several countries reveal rather negative beliefs regarding multilingualism (Slot et al., 2018), which are related to the national integration policy (Romijn et al., 2021), and indicate an implicit view that “not speaking the country’s national language at home” is a cause of failing academic achievement of immigrant children (Curdt-Christiansen, 2020, p. 177).

Language choice in the home learning environment is not a free choice also for other reasons. One major reason concerns parents’ proficiency in the languages at stake and the support for maintenance of the heritage language they receive in the wider context. This points to the role of sociolinguistic factors. Turkish is a unified written language with a rich literary and academic tradition, widely available to Turkish immigrants via diverse media channels, thereby supporting Turkish language maintenance (Backus, 2013; Leseman et al., 2019). In contrast, for immigrants with a Maghreb background, the language situation is less uniform as they speak differing varieties of Arabic or Berber-Tarifit, whereas yet another variety is used in literary and scholarly reading and writing (Shendy, 2019). Due to this, Maghreb immigrants face communication difficulties within the in-group community (Laghzaoui, 2011), enhancing the likelihood that the society’s majority language will be used as a *lingua franca*.

Another major reason for lack of freedom of language use, is related to children’s introduction to the (pre)school, which in most countries immerses them in the national language and accelerates their acquisition of this language. Reports indicate that even Turkish immigrant children in the context of relatively strong language maintenance in Turkish immigrant communities become gradually years dominant in the national language in just a few years (Blom, 2019). For language use in the home environment this may have important consequences, as children can be expected to increasingly initiate parents’ to switch to L2, the national language (Prevoe et al., 2011; Leseman et al., 2019).

In the current dissertation, we examine how immigrant families differ in their language choices when engaging in educational activities with their children at home. Based on the multiplicity of personal, sociolinguistic and policy-related contextual factors determining the choice of languages used at home, in educational interactions with children, in in-group interaction, and in the public domain, we expect to find rather heterogenous profiles.

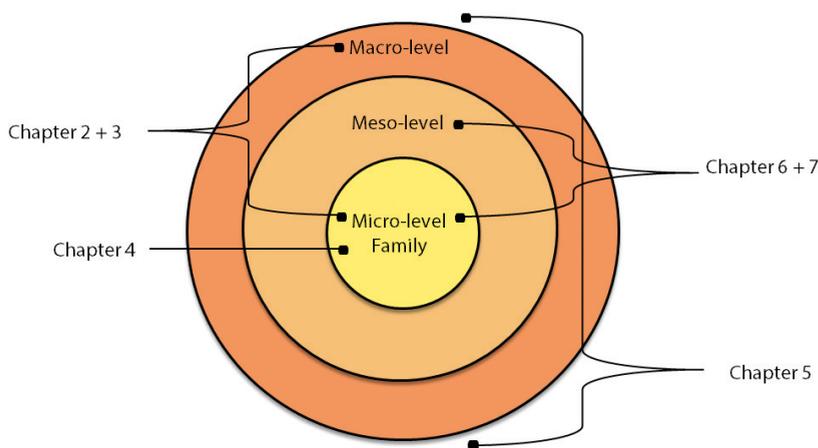
Structure, data and overview of this dissertation

This dissertation is structured along the system levels of the bio-socio-ecological model of Bronfenbrenner and presents two main thematic lines. The first thematic line comprises three studies (Chapters 2, 3 and 4) that address the informal educational support immigrant parents’ provide to their children at home, while navigating between the demands at the *macrosystem level*, in particular demands arising from assimilationist national policies, and their own cultural and linguistic values, preferences and competences. The second thematic line focuses on the partnerships between parents

and professionals in early childhood education and care and primary education on the *mesosystem* level, and the challenges on the *micro-level* (e.g., family characteristics) and the *meso- and macro-level* (e.g., neighborhood and national policies) immigrant parents encounter when establishing trustful partnerships. This was examined in a study reported in Chapter 5. Two additional studies (Chapter 6 and 7) elaborate on the findings regarding immigrant parents' partnerships with the (pre)school of their children, focusing on the experiences of Maghreb immigrant parents in a specific country (Italy, Chapter 6) and the experiences of immigrant parents of varying backgrounds in a small-scale local intervention aiming at establishing a trustful parent-professional partnership using ICT (the Netherlands, Chapter 7). Figure 1.1 presents an overview of the studies reported in this dissertation.

Figure 1.1

Overview of the Six Studies in this Dissertation.



Three data sets were used for the studies in this dissertation. The studies in Chapters 2, 3, 5 and 6 used data from the European cross-national research project ISOTIS¹, which stands for *Inclusive Education and Social Support to Tackle Inequalities in Society*. ISOTIS was a collaborative research project, in which eleven countries participated (running from January 2017 to December 2019). This project examined the nature, causes and impact of early emerging social and educational inequalities at the local and national level in the context of socioeconomic, cultural and institutional processes. One of the work packages examined the resources, experiences, aspirations, needs and well-being

1 For more information, see www.isotis.org. The ISOTIS-project was coordinated by Utrecht University (Scientific coordinator Prof. Paul Leseman, co-coordinators Prof. Edward Melhuish and Prof. Thomas Moser). ISOTIS was funded by the European Union (Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, Grant Agreement No. 727069)

of children and parents in immigrant, ethnic-minority and low-income native groups via structured and open in-depth interviews with parents and children (Moser et al., 2017). For this dissertation, data from the structured and open interview studies with parents were used, while we also refer to the studies conducted in another work package among professionals in care, education and social services in different countries (Slot et al., 2018). The study reported in Chapter 4 used data from two parallel projects: the DASH (*Development of Academic language in School and at Home*) project, a longitudinal study in the Netherlands on the language development of monolingual Dutch and bilingual Moroccan-Berber-Dutch and Turkish-Dutch preschool children (Leseman et al., 2019; Scheele, 2010), and the Language at Home project, on the development of working memory, vocabulary and syntactic skills in monolingual Dutch and bilingual Turkish-Dutch preschoolers (Messer, 2010). Finally, the study reported in Chapter 7 used mixed-method data from a local project, called the *Utrecht Virtual Learning Environment* project (U-VLO project), which was a satellite project of the ISOTIS project.

Overview of the chapters

In the study reported in Chapter 2, the focus is on the acculturation strategies of Turkish immigrant parents in England, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway against the background of the different national integration policies in these countries. Person-centered Latent Profile Analysis was conducted to identify the acculturation profiles of these parents. Additionally, the profiles were related to two indicators of parents' support to their children's education: the informal home learning environment they provide to their children and the educational aspirations they hold for them, while controlling for parents' education level and proficiency in the national language of the country of residence.

In Chapter 3, a study is reported that examined the language use in educational practices in the home environment of immigrant families with a Turkish or Maghreb background in England, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway. Using structural equation modeling, informal educational support in the heritage language or the country's main language and support for children's intercultural attitudes were investigated and related to parents' own acculturation and religious preferences, and their language proficiency in both languages. Differences between immigrant groups, across the six countries and across different age-groups of children were examined, while controlling for parents' education level and immigration background.

Chapter 4 reports a longitudinal study into the complexity of bilingualism in a heterogeneous sample of young Turkish-Dutch immigrant children in the Netherlands. Similar to Chapter 2, a person-centered approach was applied. Latent Profile Analyses were conducted at two timepoints: when children were four and six years of age. This captures an important transition period in which the exposure to and use of the Dutch language increases, as the children start all Dutch kindergarten around age 4. Different bilingual profiles were identified, based on children's language proficiency in Turkish and Dutch language and the use of these languages at home. Changes of the profiles

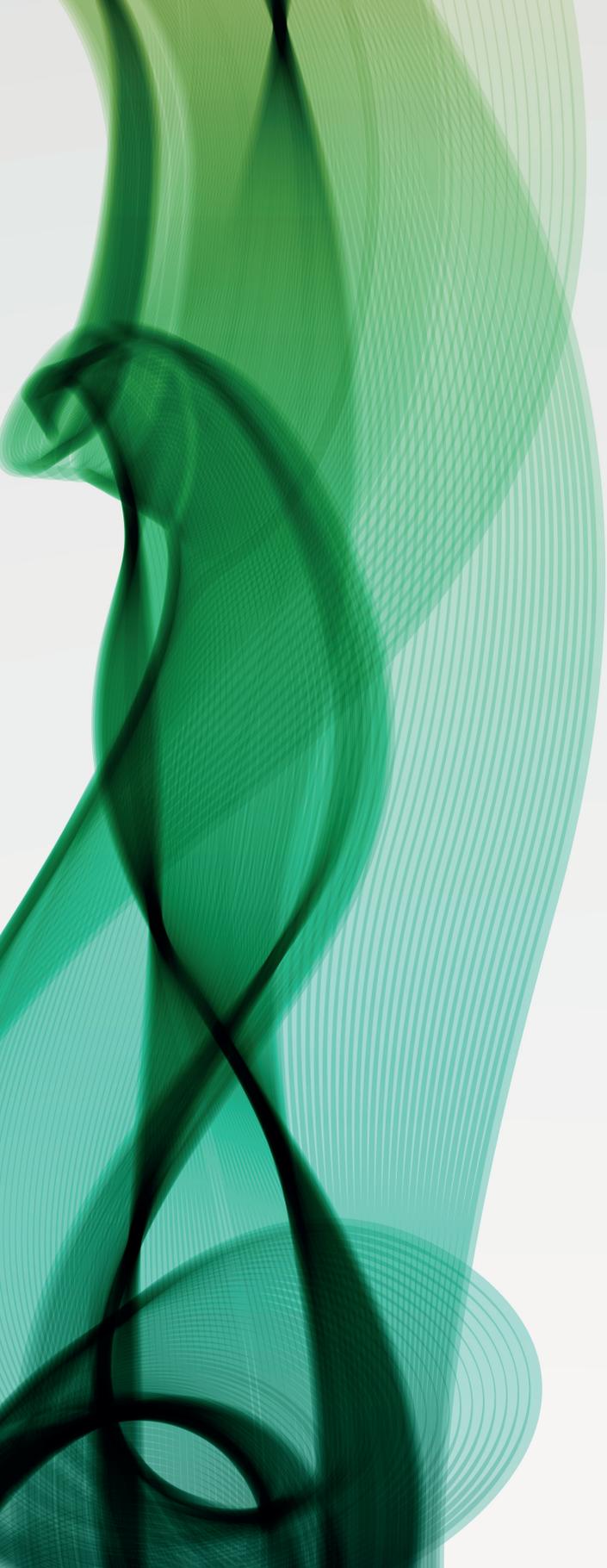
over time were examined. In addition, the relations between the bilingual profiles and family's socioeconomic status and children's cognitive abilities were investigated.

The study reported in Chapter 5 examined the challenges immigrant parents with a Maghreb or Turkish background face in establishing trusting parent-school partnerships and in participating at the ECEC center of their child in six countries. The study addressed the role of family characteristics, both demographic (i.e., material deprivation, generation etc.) and cultural (i.e., language proficiency, acculturation etc.), contextual characteristics (i.e., residential- and school-segregation) and national integration policies. Maghreb immigrants were compared in France and the Netherlands, Turkish immigrants were compared in Germany and the Netherlands, and finally both Maghreb and Turkish immigrants were compared in the Netherlands.

In Chapter 6, a mixed-method case-study is reported that focused on the experiences of Maghreb mothers in Northern-Italy with the preschools of their children. Drawing on quantitative data (based on structured interviews) and qualitative data (based on narrative-biographical interviews), the study analyzed how immigrant mothers describe their experiences with the preschool system, their relationships with the teachers and with other parents, identifying factors that either facilitate or hinder immigrant parents' full inclusion and participation in the local community.

Chapter 7 reports on a small-scale intervention project that explored the conditions and challenges of implementing an existing digital educational tool in an ECEC center in a very diverse multicultural environment in the Netherlands. The tool aimed at improving the engagement of immigrant parents of various backgrounds by working with parents as important resources for enriching preschool practices with an inclusive focus. The principles of Design-Based Research were followed, to design and improve the implementation of the tool together with the ECEC professionals and parents.

Finally, in Chapter 8, a summary and discussion of the main findings of the six studies is provided. We return to the main questions raised concerning the dilemmas immigrant families face in supporting their children, regarding their acculturation strategies and choices for language use at home, the diversity we found within immigrant groups and how local support systems (i.e., schools and ECEC) and national policies shape the experiences of immigrant families in Europe. Furthermore, theoretical and practical implications are discussed, along with directions for future research.



2

Assimilation or striking a bicultural balance?

Acculturation profiles as related to informal educational support for children among Turkish immigrant families in four countries

Francot, R., Alayli, A., Broekhuizen, M. L., & Leseman, P. P. M. (2021). Assimilation or striking a bicultural balance? Acculturation profiles as related to informal educational support for children among Turkish immigrant families in four countries. [Manuscript in preparation]

Author contributions: RF, AA, MB and PL designed the study. RF and AA analyzed the data. RF wrote the manuscript. MB and PL critically reviewed the manuscript.

Abstract

The current study examined how the acculturation strategies of Turkish immigrant families are related to key processes at home regarded as supporting children's development, learning and educational achievement, referred to as the home learning environment (HLE), and parents' educational aspirations. The study involved 943 immigrant parents with a Turkish background living in four European countries with different national integration policies: England, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway. Using Latent Profile Analysis, we first identified four acculturation profiles in the total sample as well as in the samples per country: assimilation, integration, separation and marginalization. Second, using Structural Equation Modeling we found that for parents with a younger child acculturation profiles were only minorly related to the home environment. For parents with an older child, more relations between the acculturation profiles and the home environment were found. We found no indications that the assimilation profile enables immigrant parents more in supporting their children than the integration or separation profiles. Parents' education level and proficiency in the national language were positive predictors of an education-supportive home environment, regardless parents' acculturation choices.

Keywords: immigrant parents, acculturation, home learning environment, educational aspirations

Introduction

Immigrant parents often face challenges in raising their children, as they have to navigate between the demands of the majority society in the country of residence and their wish to preserve their often deeply valued heritage culture and practices in providing a nurturing home environment. Raising children in an immigration context has become even more challenging against the backdrop of growing assimilationist pressures in Europe (Gharaei et al., 2018; Phalet et al., 2015). National integration policies often seek to promote the integration and upward social mobility of immigrants by stimulating them to adopt the culture and language of the country as much as possible. Underlying this, is the firm belief that immigrant families who assimilate into the new society, will better support their children's education and, in general, enhance children's opportunities in society (Crul et al., 2013; Rumbaut, 2015). However, there is still little evidence to corroborate this belief.

Although *assimilation* is often regarded by majority group members and policymakers as the most promising option for successful integration (Malik, 2015; Van Acker & Vanbeselaere, 2011), several studies on immigrants' acculturation question this logic. These studies have found that *bicultural integration*, with an orientation on both cultures, is likely to have the most favorable psychological outcomes and cognitive advantages for immigrants (Berry et al., 2006; Borrell et al., 2015; Phalet & Baysu, 2020). This can be explained by the competence of integrated immigrants in navigating both the dominant and heritage cultures (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013) and maintaining social support networks from both cultures (Mok et al., 2007), while the process of negotiating between two cultures may translate into greater integrative complexity, intellectual flexibility, and creativity (Benet-Martínez et al., 2006; Tadmor et al., 2009). However, the adaptive advantage of integration may critically depend on the acceptance of integration in the wider intergroup and societal context. When integrated immigrants find their dual preferences disputed or even denied, this may undercut the social and cognitive gains of integration (Gharaei et al., 2018; Schotte et al., 2018).

This raises the question whether a strong emphasis on assimilation helps immigrant parents to create a nurturing home environment for their children. Perhaps other acculturation strategies are also, or even more, enabling immigrant parents to support their children's development, learning and educational achievement.

To improve the educational opportunities and upward social mobility of immigrant children, providing a nurturing home environment is key. Parents' informal support for their children's education has been linked to the cognitive, language, and social-emotional development of children in numerous studies (e.g., Foster et al., 2005; Leseman et al., 2019; Niklas et al., 2016; Scheele et al., 2010; Melhuish et al., 2008). Several studies indicate that immigrant parents engage less in home learning activities with their children compared to non-immigrant parents (Aminipour et al., 2020; Cooper et al., 2010; Klein et al., 2014; Sammons et al., 2015; Scheele et al., 2010; Van Steensel, 2006) and this gap tends to increase when children grow older (Hayes et al., 2018). However,

this negative effect of immigrant status may be confounded with the effects of family income, material deprivation, parents' education level and literacy skills, and other characteristics. Furthermore, immigrant families may have alternative ways of supporting children's development and learning at home which are not adequately recognized in research nor valued in education. For example, they may use oral narratives related to their culture of origin and religion rather than traditional storybook reading which is more common among non-immigrant middleclass families (Reese, 2012). Finally, studies also show that parents with an immigration background are committed to their children and have high educational aspirations for them (Bucx & De Roos, 2015; Salikutluk, 2016).

While the effects of socioeconomic status, parental education and parents' literacy skills on the home learning environment have been widely documented, also in immigrant communities, it is unclear how the acculturation strategies adopted by immigrant families, either promoted or disputed in the wider society, are related to parents' educational support to their children. In the present study we address this issue. We examine the acculturation profiles of Turkish immigrant parents with children in the pre- and primary school age in England, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway, four countries with different national integration policies. We relate the acculturation profiles of Turkish parents in these countries to the educational support they provide to their children in early childhood and during primary school, focusing on the patterns of informal education at home and the educational aspirations parents hold for their children. The Turkish are one of the largest immigrant communities in Europe who have settled in different European countries, while sharing across countries a largely similar immigration history, culture, language and religious orientation.

Acculturation Strategies and Integration Policies

Research on acculturation has been strongly influenced by Berry's two-dimensional *Integration-Acculturation* framework (Berry, 1997). In this framework, acculturation is defined as the interplay of two theoretically independent dimensions: immigrants' preference for maintenance of the heritage culture and language (which can vary from low to high) and their preference for intercultural contact with members of the majority group and more broadly for participation in the host society (which can also vary from low to high; see Berry et al., 2006). Combined, these orientations result in four types of acculturation strategies: *integration* (comparatively strong preference for cultural maintenance *and* comparatively strong preference for intercultural contact and participation in the majority society), *assimilation* (orientation on the country's culture and language together with low preference for cultural maintenance *and* high preference for majority group contact and participation), *separation* (high preference for maintenance of the heritage culture together with a strong orientation on the cultural in-group *and* low majority group contact and societal participation), and *marginalization* (low preference for cultural maintenance together with limited connection to the in-group *and* low preference for majority group contact and participation in the majority society).

Berry's original model has been amended and also criticized. For example, Bourhis et al. (1997) have proposed to focus on the degree of adoption of the host country's culture rather than intercultural contact as second dimension to create a more univocal acculturation construct representing preferences or attitudes of immigrants (Arends-Toth & Van de Vijver, 2006; Matera et al., 2012). Others have argued that acculturation strategies may reflect the preferences of immigrants but also how members of the majority prefer newcomers to adapt to the country and what countries' official integration policies aim at, which in turn shape the acculturation strategies of the immigrants. In this view, the acculturation of immigrant families should be regarded as an interactive process involving both the migrant groups and the wider societal intergroup context, hence the *Interactive Acculturation Model* (Bourhis et al., 1997; Passiatore et al., 2019; Phalet & Baysu, 2020; Zagefka & Brown, 2011).

Evidence in support of this model comes from a recent study that related the national integration policies of 20 European countries to the acculturation strategies of immigrants with similar immigration histories. In countries with comparatively tolerant multicultural policies, immigrants felt more belonging to the country and did not differ much from the majority in how strongly they identified with the country. In countries with a comparatively heavy emphasis on assimilation, immigrants felt less belonging and differed clearly from the majority in national identification (Igarashi, 2019).

Finally, the original Berry model has been criticized for classifying entire groups in a number of categories while missing the diversity of identity construction within groups and the fluent boundaries between the distinguished categories (Howarth et al., 2014), calling for a research approach that focuses on multiple dimensions of acculturation, is person-centered and, while distinguishing profiles of acculturation, allows for fluent boundaries between profiles. The present study will use Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) for this purpose.

The current study includes four countries with a large Turkish immigrant community. These countries are characterized by different integration policies. England and the Netherlands have for long been known for their support to multicultural integration. In the Netherlands, however, since the beginning of the new millennium, the political discourse has shifted towards a stronger emphasis on assimilation (Entzinger, 2009; Maan et al., 2014; Malik, 2015). In contrast, although a similar shift in the national political discourse occurred in the UK, the multicultural policy framework has remained rather stable over the past decades (Malik, 2015; Mathieu, 2018). Germany, despite massive labor immigration from countries around the Mediterranean, in particular Turkey, was late to officially recognize that it had become a country of immigration. As a consequence, German integration policy has for long been characterized by exclusion of immigrants from citizenship rights (Klusmeyer & Papademetriou, 2009). Cultural maintenance among immigrants was promoted in view of the expected remigration, while participation in society was discouraged, resulting in segregated parallel communities. Recently, state and national level policies changed into an assimilationist approach and especially learning the German language is nowadays strongly promoted in early education

programs and primary education (Heinemann, 2017). Of the four countries, Norway became a country of immigration most recently. The official integration policy emphasizes equality and multicultural integration, but in education Norway is also known for its linguistic assimilation norms (Martiny et al., 2020).

Further information on the four countries' integration policies comes from a recent survey by Slot and colleagues (2018; Romijn et al., 2021) among professionals in early education and care, primary education and social youth work in ten European countries, including the four countries involved in the present study. The professionals reported on their multicultural practices and multicultural beliefs. The study found large differences between the four countries of the present study. Professionals in England were most positive about multiculturalism and multilingualism, and reported to implement more multicultural practices than the professionals in other countries. Professionals in Norway also reported above average positive multicultural beliefs and implementation of multicultural practices, but were less positive about the value of multilingualism. Professionals in Germany and the Netherlands reported less positive multicultural beliefs and were especially less in favor of multilingualism, and they reported to implement multicultural practices the least. These findings suggest that national integration policies indeed impact the beliefs and practices of professionals who at the local level are among the most important representatives of the majority society for immigrant families with young children (Romijn et al., 2021). A question of the present study is if, and to what extent, Turkish immigrant families' acculturation strategies differ between the countries.

Parents' Informal Educational Support

Children from immigrant homes are frequently seen as being 'literacy impoverished' (Auerbach, 2001, p. 385). The assumption is that their parents do not value literacy, possess few reading materials, engage in few reading and writing activities, and do not support their children's literacy development. This assumption also pertains to Turkish immigrant families with young preschool and primary-school aged children in Europe. For instance, Turkish immigrant parents in Germany were reported to engage less in shared reading in the country's national language with their preschool children than non-immigrant parents (Klein et al., 2014). In other studies with different samples of Turkish immigrant parents in the Netherlands, this finding regarding home literacy in the country's national language was confirmed (Leseman & de Jong, 1998; Leseman et al., 2019; Scheele et al., 2010). However, these studies also found that the gap with non-immigrant families was much smaller with regard to home literacy activities in Turkish, the heritage language, when the focus was on oral conversations about personal experiences and topics of general interest (nature, history), or when storytelling in the heritage language were also taken into account. Other studies in other countries with other immigrant groups confirm that especially immigrant families who prefer to maintain their heritage culture, engage perhaps less in literacy activities compared to non-immigrant families, but more so in informal educational conversations (Capotosto et al., 2017) and oral storytelling (Reese, 2012).

Another important dimension of parental support concerns the educational aspirations parents hold for their children. Several studies among a variety of immigrant groups report high educational aspirations and high expectations regarding the upward social mobility (Hadjar & Scharf, 2019; Langenkamp, 2019). This also pertains to Turkish immigrants in Europe. Education is highly valued in Turkey by parents of all social strata and this is also reflected in the high educational aspirations Turkish immigrant parents hold for their children (Leyendecker et al., 2009). This strong orientation on education as a channel for upward social mobility found in many immigrant communities, has been called 'immigrant optimism' (Kao & Tienda, 1995) or the 'immigrant drive' (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Portes & Rivas, 2011). Immigrant children are expected to be successful in the country of residence and to realize their parents' pursuit of socio-economic improvement (Cebolla-Boado et al., 2021; Salikutluk, 2016). In this context, immigrant families may decide to adopt the culture and especially the language of the country of residence as they believe that assimilating into the majority society facilitates educational success and upward social mobility for their children (Worthy & Rodríguez-Galindo, 2006). Consequentially, parents who are more assimilated into the majority society could be expected to hold higher aspirations for their children than parents who are stronger oriented on heritage culture maintenance. However, Friberg (2019) found in a study among immigrant adolescents in Norway that also a strong collectivistic in-group orientation, preference for cultural maintenance and speaking the heritage language at home were related to higher educational aspirations. Thus, previous research is inconclusive about how parents' acculturation strategies are related to the educational aspirations parents hold for their children.

The present study

The present study has two aims. The first aim is to examine the acculturation strategies of Turkish immigrant parents in England, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway against the background of the different national integration policies of these countries. The Turkish immigrant community in Europe is rather heterogeneous regarding acculturation preferences. On the one hand, Turkish immigrants are known to maintain their cultural values and customs in the country of residence to a larger extent than other immigrant groups (Backus, 2013), and to highly value maintenance of the Turkish language (Eversteijn 2011; Extra & Yağmur, 2010; Leseman et al., 2019). On the other hand, Turkish immigrants are reported to also adopt the culture and language of the country of residence, especially in the public domain (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2004). Given this heterogeneity, the current study uses Latent Profile Analyses (LPA) to identify acculturation profiles. Previous research on acculturation often classified entire immigrant groups into four categories (integration, marginalization, separation and assimilation), based on arbitrary cut-off points on the underlying acculturation dimensions, ignoring the variation within categories and the continuity of the acculturation dimensions (Howarth et al., 2014). LPA provides a more flexible approach

by determining the probabilities that parents are assigned to the profiles found based on continuous dimensions of acculturation.

The second aim of the present study is to examine the associations between the acculturation profiles of Turkish immigrant parents in the four countries and two indicators of parents' support to their children's education: the informal home learning environment (HLE) they provide to their children and the educational aspirations they hold for them. The HLE can be differentiated in different types of activities (e.g., literacy, mathematics) and the latent factor structure of the HLE will be examined. We expect differences in the HLE structure and parents' aspirations as related to the phase of education of the children. Therefore, we will examine the relations in two subsamples; parents with a focus child in the three to six years age-range who have not yet started in formal education, and parents with a focus child in the nine to twelve years age-range who attend primary school just before their transition to middle school or secondary education. Furthermore, given possible confounding effects, the current study will control for parents' education level and proficiency in the national language of the country of residence.

Based on previous studies in this field, we expect to find four multidimensional acculturation profiles: an *integration* profile, in which Turkish immigrant parents prefer to maintain their heritage culture, adopt the culture of the country of residence and desire to have contacts with the majority; an *assimilation* profile, indicating that parents do not prefer to maintain their heritage culture and only want to adopt to the culture of the country of residence, while favoring majority group contact; a *separation* profile, when parents desire to maintain their heritage culture without adopting the majority culture and without a wish for intercultural contact; and a *marginalization* profile, indicating there is both low preference for culture maintenance, adoption of the culture of the country and majority group contact. Regarding the relationships between parents' acculturation profiles and the educational support provided to their children, the present study is exploratory. Given the inconclusive findings in previous research, strong hypotheses about these relationships are not possible.

Method

Participants

All participants took part in a large-scale structured interview study among parents with a disadvantaged background in ten European countries (Broekhuizen et al., 2018). The study was part of the EU funded Inclusive Education and Social Support to Tackle Inequalities in Society (ISOTIS) project (see Chapter 1). For the current study, 943 parents with a Turkish immigration background ($M_{\text{age}} = 37.99$ years, $SD = 5.81$ years) from England ($n = 293$), Germany ($n = 338$), the Netherlands ($n = 247$) and Norway ($n = 65$) were included. Interviewed parents had either a child in the three to six years age-range who attended ECEC but did not start formal education yet ($n = 400$) or a child in the nine to twelve years age-range who were in primary education (i.e., before entering

middle school or secondary school, $n = 543$). See Table 2.1 for the descriptive statistics. The interviews were conducted with the primary caregiver of the child, in most cases the mother. In England and Norway, the proportion of first generation immigrant parents (i.e., parents born in the country of origin) was higher than in Germany and the Netherlands. Turkish-Norwegian parents were higher educated than the participants in other countries, and also reported lower material deprivation.

Table 2.1
Descriptive Statistics per Country

Country	EN	DE	NL	NO	Total
<i>n</i>	293	338	247	65	943
Gender, % woman	85.3%	93.2%	99.6%	93.8%	92.5%
Age (<i>M, SD</i>)	38.90 (5.84)	37.90 (6.03)	37.26 (5.34)	37.07 (5.77)	37.99 (5.81)
Generation %					
1 st generation	93.8%	58.2%	54.7%	71.9%	69.2%
≥ 2 nd generation	6.0%	41.8%	45.4%	28.1%	30.2%
Education level %					
Low	30.4%	36.1%	38.1%	10.9%	33%
Medium	35.5%	40.9%	40.1%	53.1%	40%
High	34.1%	23.0%	21.9%	35.9%	27%
Material deprivation (<i>M, SD</i>)	1.59 (2.22)	1.45 (1.78)	1.59 (2.10)	0.73 (1.49)	1.48 (2.00)

Procedure

Parents were recruited in two to four urban or suburban areas per country with a moderate to high representation of the Turkish community. Parents were eligible if they were either first-generation immigrants (born in Turkey), second-generation immigrants (with their parents born in Turkey), or third-generation migrants who identified themselves as members of the Turkish community. As an additional criterion for inclusion regarding their children, for the younger age-group (3-6 years old), the child had to be born in the host country and for the older age-group (9-12 years old), the child had to be living in the host country for at least five years. Recruitment strategies included approaching ECEC centers, primary schools, community centers, parent organizations and mediating key persons who worked with the target group to establish contact with the parents. Exact response rates were difficult to determine due to the stepwise recruitment procedure and strict privacy protection rules in some countries, but overall response rates on the organization level ranged between 36% and 69% across the four countries (for more information, see Broekhuizen et al., 2018). The structured interviews were conducted in person by trained interviewers with a Turkish immigrant background with good command of Turkish, Kurdish, and the national

languages, using an online questionnaire presented on a laptop. The questionnaire was available in all four countries' national languages and in Turkish, and parents could switch between languages during the interview. For most questions, the interviewers read the question to the parent, the parent answered, and the interviewer entered the response. For more sensitive questions (e.g., regarding experienced discrimination, not reported in this study), parents could enter the answers themselves. The data were upon entry directly transferred to the central data server at Utrecht University via a safe https or 4G connection, where the data were stored on a dedicated protected data server in accordance with current data protection rules. The survey took 45 to 60 minutes to complete. Parents received a gift voucher of 5 to 10 € after participating in the interview. Data-collection for the interviews ran from December 2017 to December 2018. The study was approved by the ethical committees of the research institutes involved in the study in each country. For more information about the interview study and training of the interviewers, see Broekhuizen and colleagues (2018).

Measures

Acculturation Attitudes

Cultural maintenance captured parents' preference for maintaining the heritage culture. Parents were presented with two statements based on Zagefka et al. (2014) and asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with these statements on a scale ranging from disagree (1), slightly disagree (2), undecided (3), slightly agree (4), to agree (5). The two statements were: "I think it would be good if members of my group speak our original language often" and "I think it would be good if members of my group kept as much as possible our culture of origin and way of living". The intercorrelation of the two items in the whole sample was $r = .42$ (ranging from $r = .40$ to $r = .59$ across the four countries). The final score was calculated as the mean of the answers to the two items. Higher scores indicated a stronger preference for cultural maintenance.

Cultural adoption indicated parents' preference to adopt the culture of the host country. Parents were presented with two statements based on Zagefka et al. (2014) and asked to indicate their agreement with these statements on a similar answering scale as described above. The two items were: "I think it would be good if members of my group took on as much as possible of the [nationality] culture and way of living" and "I think it would be good if members of my group speak [national language] often". As the intercorrelation of the two items was weak ($r = .11$ in the whole sample, ranging from $r = .13$ to $r = .27$ across the four countries), we decided to use only the item on cultural adoption. Parents' preference for language adoption was considered to be an ambiguous indicator of cultural adoption as language adoption can be motivated by the desire for better education and employment opportunities (Bezioglu-Göktolga & Yağmur, 2018a; Extra & Yağmur, 2010).

Preference for contact with the majority group represented parents' wish to have intercultural contact with the majority group of the country. Parents were asked

to indicate their agreement with two statements (based on Zagefka et al., 2011): “It is important to me that members of my group have friends with a [national] native background” and “It is important to me that members of my group spend some of their spare time with [nationality] native people”. A similar five-points answering scale was used as described above. The intercorrelation of the two items was $r = .48$ (ranging from $r = .40$ to $r = .61$ across the four countries). The final score was calculated as the mean of the answers to the two items. A higher score indicated that the parent found it more important for their community to have contact with the majority group.

Educational aspirations

The educational aspirations of the parents were measured by a single questionnaire item, asking parents to state the level of qualification they would like their child to complete (Buchmann & Dalton, 2002). Answering options were based on the specific national qualification levels in each country and then equated to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels, ranging from lower secondary education or second stage of basic education (ISCED 2, scored 1), upper secondary education (ISCED 3, scored 2), post-secondary non-tertiary education/short-cycle tertiary education (ISCED 4 or 5, scored 3), bachelor degree or equivalent (ISCED 6, scored 4) to master’s degree or doctoral degree or an equivalent (ISCED 7 or 8, scored 5). Thus, higher scores indicated that parents had higher educational aspirations for their children. An additional answering option was: “I don’t mind what level of qualification my child completes, because education level in itself is not important to me”. This answer was coded as missing for the present purpose (6% missing data).

Education level

Parents’ education level represented the highest completed education level of the primary caregiver based on the ISCED levels (ISCED 2011), recoded into three levels with the following cut-off points: low = ISCED 0, 1, 2 (primary education, lower secondary education or lower vocational training at most), medium = ISCED 3, 4, 5 (upper secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary and short cycle tertiary education), and high = ISCED 6, 7, 8 (full tertiary education at the bachelor level or higher).

Perceived proficiency in the national language of the country of residence

Perceived proficiency in the national language was determined based on three items, asking parents to what extent they experienced difficulties in using this language when speaking to others, reading newspapers or listening to the radio or television. An example item is: “When reading newspapers, do you have difficulty to understand the specific language that is used?”. Answers were given on five-point scales and could range from ‘never’ (1) to ‘always’ (5). Items were reverse-coded and a mean score was calculated, with a high score indicating high self-reported proficiency in the country’s main language (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .93$ in the whole sample, ranging from $\alpha = .90$ to $\alpha = .96$ across countries).

Home Learning Environment

Based on existing questionnaires (e.g., Leseman et al., 2019; Millennium Cohort Study, 2017; Sylva et al., 2004), a 12-item scale was developed to measure the informal home learning environment (HLE) provided by the parents. The items addressed several activities that adults can engage in with their children at home and were adapted to match the age of the children in focus (3 to 6-year-olds vs. 9 to 12-year-olds). The items covered five commonly distinguished facets of the HLE: educational conversations about topics of interest, shared book reading, storytelling, and informal mathematics (e.g., counting games). Example items for the younger children are: “How often do you talk with your child about his/her everyday experiences”, “How often do you read or narrate a picture book to your child”, and “How often do you measure and compare length, weight, and the size of objects with your child?”. For parents with older children, items were included that addressed school homework support and telling stories about moral and cultural issues. Example items are: “How often do you discuss religious or moral topics with your child”, “How often do you ask questions about something he/she is reading”, and “How often do you help your child with solving math problems?”. Parents were asked to indicate how frequently they would engage in the presented activities on six-points response scales ranging from every day (1), several times a week (2), once or twice a week (3), once or twice a month (4) less often (5), to (almost) never (6). Confirmative Factor Analysis was applied to examine the hypothesized factor structure of the HLE, separately for parents with younger children and parents with older children. The results are reported below.

Analysis Plan

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

First, in order to test whether the HLE items reflected the theoretical model and to reduce data, we conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Mplus 8.1 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2010), separately for parents with a younger child and parents with an older child to identify the hypothesized latent factor structure. Absolute model fit was evaluated based on the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), acceptable if $> .90$, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), acceptable if $< .08$, and Standardized Root Mean Square residual (SRMR), acceptable if $< .05$ (Bentler, 2006; Marsh et al., 2004). In addition, the configural, metric and scalar measurement invariance of the HLE factor structure across the four countries was tested using multigroup comparison.

Latent Profile Analysis (LPA)

Latent profile analysis (LPA) in Mplus 8.1 was conducted to identify parents' acculturation profiles, using the dimensions cultural maintenance, cultural adoption and preference for contact. LPA is a person-centered method suitable for continuous data (Muthen & Muthen, 1998). LPA models the heterogeneity inherent in response patterns

and detects latent profiles, applying a Maximum Likelihood Approach. The statistical criteria applied were the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and the sample size adjusted Bayesian Information Criterion (SS Adj. BIC) (Nylund et al., 2007). The best solution was chosen based on the smallest values of both indices. An additional index of entropy was calculated to evaluate the homogeneity of the profiles, with values close to 1 indicating sufficient homogeneity of the profiles (Celeux & Soromenho, 1996). In addition, the parametric Bootstrapped Likelihood Ratio (BLRT) was consulted to determine if models that differed by one profile differed significantly from each other in model fit (Nylund et al., 2007). If the BLRT would be $p < .05$, the model with more profiles had a significantly better fit than the model with fewer profiles. Next to these statistical guidelines, also the interpretability of the profiles and the distribution of parents over the profiles were checked. After conducting the LPA on the whole sample, the measurement invariance of the profiles across the four countries was examined using the multi-sample option of Mplus 8.1. First the configural equivalence was established, next the metric and scalar invariance across countries was checked.

Structural Equation Modeling

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was applied separately for the subsamples of parents with younger children and parents with older children to examine the relationships between parents' acculturation profiles, educational aspirations and the age specific HLE factors. In the first model we did not include covariates, in the second model we added parents' education level and proficiency in the host country language as covariates. Probability values of the specific acculturation profiles were used as the acculturation score for each participant. We treated the assimilation profile as the reference profile in the SEM models and included the CFA models of the HLE per age group. Again, absolute model fit was evaluated based on the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), acceptable if $> .90$, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), acceptable if $< .08$, and Standardized Root Mean Square residual (SRMR), acceptable if $< .05$ (Bentler, 2006; Marsh et al., 2004).

Results

Preliminary analysis of the latent structure of the HLE

Parents with a younger focus child

For the parents with younger children, a measurement model of the HLE with four latent factors was examined, covering the four theoretically distinguished facets of the HLE. Fit indices indicated that the data fit the HLE model well (CFI = .96, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .04). The factor loadings were all $> .40$. Next, we checked the measurement invariance by comparing configural, metric, and scalar invariance across the four countries (Muthén & Asparouhov, 2013). For the younger age group, we found metric invariance of the HLE measure, which indicates invariant factor loadings across

countries allowing for comparison of factor variances and covariances between countries ($\chi^2(24) = 28.30, p = .24$), but no scalar invariance, indicating that the item intercepts were not equivalent and that comparison of factor means between countries is not possible ($\chi^2(48) = 113.09, p < .01$). Given that we did not plan to test differences in means between countries but only structural relations, the established invariance was sufficient. As the factor loadings of the items per factor did not differ much, the four factors were computed as the unweighted means of the three items per factor for descriptive purposes: conversations with child, shared reading activities, storytelling activities, and mathematical activities, with high scores meaning that the represented activities occurred frequently, according to the parents. See Table 2.2 for the descriptive statistics of the whole subsample of parents with a younger child.

Parents with an older child

For the parents with older children, also a theory-based measurement model of the HLE with four latent factors was examined in the same way as for the parents with younger children. Note that the items differed slightly to match the older age of the children. Fit indices indicated an unsatisfactory model fit (CFI = .84, TLI = .77, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .06). Therefore, the factor structure was examined by applying exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to test several models with two to five latent factors. EFA yielded a four factor model as the best fitting model. However, one item 'play card or board games, or make jigsaw puzzles with the child' showed low factor loadings overall ($< .30$) and did not load on any factor specifically. After excluding this item, EFA resulted in a fitting four factor model (CFI = .97, TLI = .91, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .02). We ran a CFA to test the adapted four factor model. Model fit, however, was still not acceptable (CFI = .84, TLI = .77, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .06). Based on the modification indices and estimated residual covariances between items provided by Mplus, the measurement model was further adapted. We included four co-variances between the residuals of a number of items, improving the model fit considerably (CFI = .94, TLI = .90, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05). All factor loadings were $> .40$. Next, the measurement invariance of the factor structure across the four countries was checked. Again, metric variance could be established ($\chi^2(21) = 29.66, p = .08$), but no scalar invariance ($\chi^2(42) = 145.54, p < .01$). Given the aims of the present study, metric measurement invariance was sufficient.

As the factor loadings of the items per factor did not differ much, the four factors were computed as the unweighted means of the three items per factor for descriptive purposes: informal educational conversations, literacy activities, moral and cultural education, and homework support. See Table 2.2 for the descriptive statistics for the whole subsample of parents with an older child.

Table 2.2*Descriptive Statistics for the HLE Factors for Parents with a Younger or Older Child*

Parents with younger child (<i>n</i> = 400)	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Educational conversations	5.21	0.82	1	6
Shared reading	4.72	1.15	1	6
Storytelling	3.16	1.19	1	6
Emerging mathematics	4.54	0.99	1.67	6
Parents with older child (<i>n</i> = 543)				
Educational conversations	4.92	0.94	1	6
Literacy	2.81	1.22	1	6
Moral-Cultural education	3.59	1.16	1	6
Homework support	4.15	1.15	1	6

Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics of the HLE in both age groups as reported in Table 2.2, show that, in general, Turkish immigrant parents undertake relatively many educational activities with their child in the home environment, in both age groups. Parents with children in the younger age group reported more activities than parents with children in the older age group. Means differed per latent construct; the educational conversations for the younger age group ($M = 5.21$, $SD = 0.82$) and for the older age group ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 0.94$) occurred most often, which indicated that these activities happened between 'several times a week' to 'every day'. Storytelling for the younger age group ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 1.19$) and the literacy activities for the older age group ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 1.19$) occurred least often, showing that these activities happened around 'once or twice a month'. Other descriptive statistics will be discussed in Table 2.6 below, per acculturation profile.

Latent Profile Analysis

Based on the three indicators of parents' acculturation strategies, cultural maintenance, cultural adoption and preference for contact with the majority group, using the standardized scores of these measures, Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) was conducted on the whole sample using Mplus 8.1. Models with two to five latent profiles were compared. Table 2.3 shows the fit indices. Although the AIC and BIC values were lowest for a five profiles solution, the entropy was smaller than in the other models and the BLRT indicated that a five profile model did not significantly fit better to the data than the four profiles model. Therefore, based on statistical criteria as well as interpretability, we regarded the four profiles solution as the best fitting model.

Table 2.3*Fit Indices and Class Proportions for the Latent Profile Models*

		2 profiles	3 profiles	4 profiles	5 profiles
AIC		7345.49	7126.43	7071.03	6911.92
SsAdj. BIC		7362.20	7149.82	7101.11	6948.68
Entropy Value		0.95	0.95	0.90	0.89
BLRT <i>p</i> value			0.00	0.00	1.00
Profile proportions	1	447 (47.5%)	447 (47.5%)	79 (8.3%)	79 (8.3%)
(<i>n</i> , %)	2	494 (52.5%)	313 (33.3%)	143 (15.2%)	286 (30.4%)
	3		181 (19.2%)	351 (37.0%)	121 (12.8%)
	4			368 (39.1%)	368 (39.1%)
	5				87 (9.2%)

Next, we investigated the four profiles model in detail and found that the profiles matched the typology of acculturation strategies as proposed by Berry (2017) and Bourhis (1997) rather well (see Figure 2.1). Profile 1 was the smallest profile in the whole sample (8.3% of the parents fit this profile) and was characterized by below average cultural maintenance, below average cultural adoption and slightly below average preference for majority group contact. Therefore, this profile was typified as the ‘marginalization profile’. Profile 2 (15.2% of the whole sample) was characterized by below average cultural maintenance, above average cultural adoption and above average preference for majority group contact. Hence, this profile was characterized as the ‘assimilation profile’. Profile 3 (37.0% of the whole sample) showed above average scores on all three acculturation variables: relatively high cultural maintenance, cultural adoption and preference for majority group contact. Therefore, we labelled this profile the ‘integration profile’. Finally, profile 4 was the largest profile in the whole sample (39.1%). This profile was characterized by the highest cultural maintenance scores and lowest cultural adoption and preference for majority group contact scores. This profile was regarded as the ‘separation profile’. See Table 2.4 for the descriptive statistics of the profiles.

Figure 2.1

Standardized Scores of the Acculturation Profiles

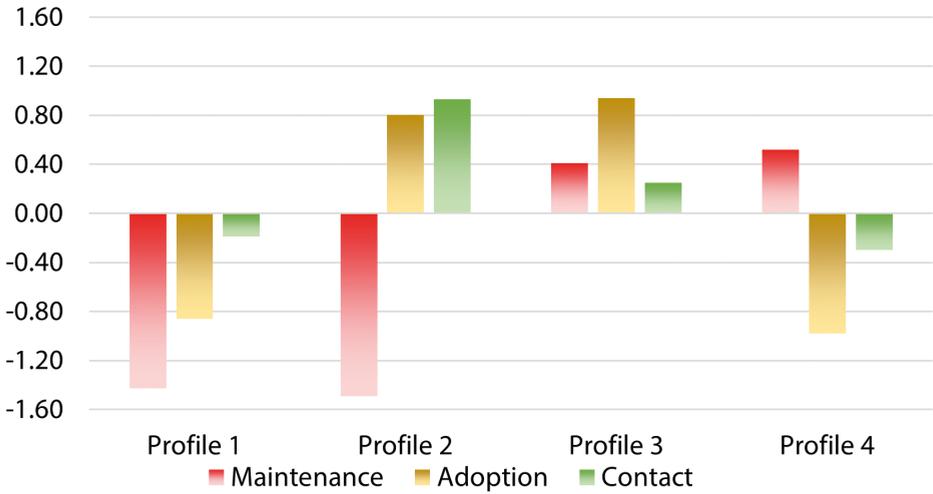


Table 2.4

Unstandardized Means and Standard Deviations for Acculturation Profiles

	Profile 1		Profile 2		Profile 3		Profile 4		Total	
	<i>Marginalization</i>		<i>Assimilation</i>		<i>Integration</i>		<i>Separation</i>			
	<i>n=79</i>		<i>n=143</i>		<i>n=351</i>		<i>n=368</i>		<i>n=941</i>	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Cultural Maintenance	2.37	0.76	2.31	0.77	4.54	0.55	4.67	0.50	4.07	1.13
Cultural Adoption	1.30	0.46	4.06	0.74	4.21	0.73	1.16	0.36	2.75	1.61
Preference for Contact	3.68	1.26	4.26	0.92	4.18	0.98	3.57	1.25	3.91	1.15

As a next step, the measurement invariance of the acculturation profiles across the four countries was examined. First, to test configural invariance, latent profile solutions were estimated separately for each country to determine the optimal number of profiles for each country. We identified the same number of four profiles across the countries. Examination of the structure of the profiles revealed that the profiles for Turkish parents in England, Germany and Norway were similar and could be interpreted and labeled in the same way as for the whole sample. The Turkish parents in the Netherlands showed similar Profiles 1 (marginalization), 2 (assimilation) and 4 (separation). Profile 3, however, differed from the other countries. The structure did not indicate an integration profile. Instead, Profile 3 in the Netherlands was characterized by below average cultural

maintenance and above average cultural adoption, but below average preference for majority group contact. We will return to this deviant pattern in the Discussion.

Finally, we tested the scalar invariance in a multi-sample analysis by constraining all means and variances of the profile indicators to be equal across the four countries. Comparison of the fully constrained and the unconstrained model using Likelihood Ratio Testing (Morin et al., 2016) revealed a significantly worse fit of the constrained model ($\chi^2(36) = 117.28, p < .01$), indicating that scalar measurement invariance could not be established. After freeing the third profile in the Dutch sample, partial measurement invariance could be established ($\chi^2(33) = 20.55, p = .94$), indicating that all means and variances of the four profiles were invariant across the four countries, except for Profile 3 in the Netherlands.

Table 2.5 displays the distribution of the parents over the four profiles per country. Both in England, Germany and the Netherlands, the marginalization profile was the smallest and the separation profile the largest profile. In Norway, the separation profile was the smallest and the assimilation profile the largest. Note that the small sample size in Norway makes the results less reliable. There are differences between the countries in the distributions of the profiles. The separation profile in Germany is much larger than in the other countries, while the assimilation profiles in the Netherlands and Norway are much larger than in England and Germany. The marginalization profile in Norway is much larger than in the other countries.

Table 2.5

Sample Sizes of the Acculturation Profiles per Country

	EN		GE		NL		NO	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Marginalization	47	16.04	46	13.65	25	10.12	18	28.12
Assimilation	67	22.87	74	21.96	85	34.41	20	31.25
Integration	80	27.30	67	19.88	45*	18.22	17	26.60
Separation	99	33.79	150	44.51	92	37.25	9	14.06
Total	293	100	337	100	247	100	64	100

*The third profile in the Netherlands cannot be seen as an integration profile

Relating acculturation profiles to educational support

Table 2.6 reports the means of the outcome variables and covariates per acculturation profile and for the two age groups. Mean differences on the HLE dimensions between the acculturation profiles of parents with a younger child were relatively small. Parents assigned to the separation group had lower educational attainment than parents assigned to the other three profiles, whose education level was roughly similar. Parents' proficiency in country's national language was roughly the same across the four profiles. For the older age group, more differences in the HLE dimensions were found

between the four profiles, especially in the moral and cultural education dimension and homework support dimension. Similar to the other age group, parents assigned to the separation profile had the lowest educational attainment when compared to the other profiles. Furthermore, parents assigned to the integration profile reported the highest proficiency in country's national language, whereas parents in the marginalization profile showed the lowest proficiency. Finally, that the educational aspirations of parents with an older child were slightly lower than the educational aspirations of parents with a younger child, except for parents assigned to the marginalization profile (who had the lowest educational aspirations overall).

Table 2.6

Means and Standard Deviations of the HLE Factors, Educational Aspirations and Covariates per Profile

Parents with a younger child	Profile 1		Profile 2		Profile 3		Profile 4		Total	
	Marginalization		Assimilation		Integration		Separation			
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>
Conversations	5.19	0.80	5.23	0.81	5.23	0.72	5.17	0.93	5.21	0.82
Reading	4.74	1.03	4.84	1.11	4.76	1.20	4.61	1.15	4.72	1.15
Storytelling	3.21	1.18	2.98	1.25	3.13	1.20	3.27	1.15	3.16	1.19
Math	4.72	0.95	4.76	0.98	4.51	0.99	4.40	0.98	4.54	0.99
Educational aspirations	4.24	0.91	4.49	0.89	4.51	0.73	4.47	0.90	4.47	0.84
Education level	2.18	0.80	2.22	0.75	2.19	0.75	1.91	0.77	2.10	0.77
Proficiency national language	4.88	1.25	4.96	1.27	4.95	1.22	4.91	1.26	4.93	1.24
Parents with an older child	Profile 1		Profile 2		Profile 3		Profile 4		Total	
	Marginalization		Assimilation		Integration		Separation			
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>
Informal conversations	4.91	0.91	4.90	1.02	4.94	0.94	4.89	0.93	4.92	0.94
Literacy	2.37	0.97	2.80	1.13	2.99	1.31	2.74	1.18	2.81	1.22
Moral-cultural education	3.46	1.21	3.09	1.05	3.58	1.14	3.77	1.15	3.59	1.16
Homework support	3.75	1.25	4.51	1.27	4.27	1.09	4.05	1.09	4.15	1.14
Educational aspirations	4.23	0.97	4.28	0.86	4.35	0.87	4.29	0.89	4.31	0.88
Education level	2.04	0.82	2.03	0.68	1.95	0.79	1.61	0.67	1.82	0.75
Proficiency national language	4.32	1.55	4.67	1.44	4.94	1.20	4.66	1.27	4.74	1.30

Structural Equation Models (SEM)

Parents with younger children

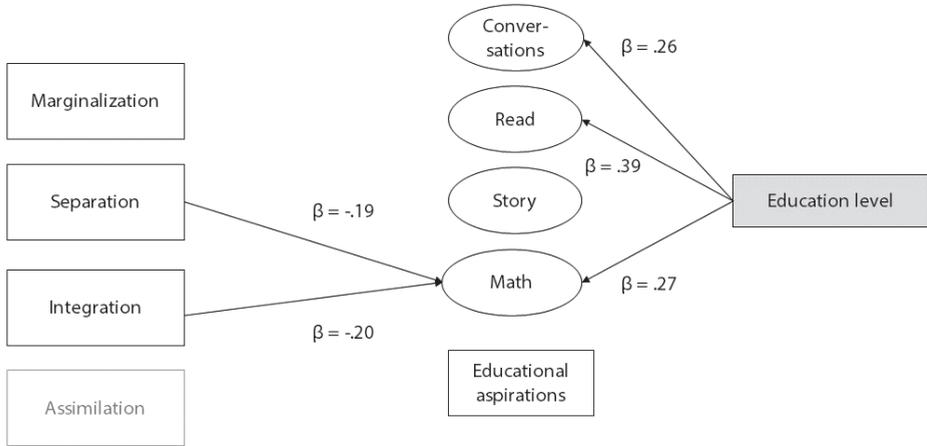
In subsequent analyses, the acculturation profiles were related to the HLE factors and parental educational aspirations for the child, separately for parents with younger and parents with older children. The acculturation profiles were regarded as predictors and the assimilation profile was used as reference profile to avoid multicollinearity. First, a full model was estimated with all regression paths between the profiles and the HLE factors and parental aspirations specified. Then, non-significant paths or paths with a standardized regression coefficient $< |.05|$ were eliminated. The remaining SEM model for parents with younger children had an acceptable fit (CFI = .90, TLI = .86, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .04). There were significant relations between the integration profile and mathematical activities provided at home (standardized regression coefficient $\beta = -.19$, $SE = .09$, $p < .05$) and the separation profile and mathematical activities ($\beta = -.26$, $SE = .09$, $p < .01$), but not for the other indicators of the HLE nor with parents' educational aspirations for their child.

Next, parents' education level was added, resulting in borderline acceptable fit (CFI = .89, TLI = .84, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .05). No further improvement of the model fit was possible. Initially, also parents' proficiency in the national language was included as a covariate, but this led to non-convergence of the model estimation, probably due to the low correlations with the HLE variables and to taking the education level into account. Therefore, this variable could not be included. Parents' education level was positively related to educational conversations ($\beta = .26$, $SE = .06$, $p < .01$), shared reading ($\beta = .39$, $SE = .05$, $p < .01$), and mathematical activities ($\beta = .27$, $SE = .06$, $p < .01$). The relationships between the integration profile and mathematical activities ($\beta = -.19$, $SE = .09$, $p < .05$) and between the separation profile and mathematical activities ($\beta = -.20$, $SE = .09$, $p < .05$) remained significant; see Figure 2.2. Parents assigned to the integration profile or to the separation profile provided less mathematical activities at home than parents assigned to the assimilation or to the marginalization profile. Higher educated parents reported to provide more home learning activities, especially shared reading, than lower educated parents. There were no significant relations found for parents' educational aspirations for their children. The effect sizes are small in terms of Cohen (1988), while the effects of parents' education level are somewhat stronger and relate to three of the four HLE factors.

To put the effects of acculturation profiles in perspective, we compared the mean scores and standard deviations reported in Table 2.6, without taking the partially shared variance of parents' education level into account. The difference in means for mathematical activities between the separation and assimilation profile is $-.36$ (pooled $SD = .99$), which equals an effect size Cohen's $d = .36$. The difference in means for mathematical activities between the integration and assimilation profile is $-.25$, equaling an effect size of $d = .25$. These effect sizes are small (Cohen, 1988).

Figure 2.2

Standardized Regression Coefficients for the Subsample of Parents with Younger Children.



Note: The probability of being assigned to the assimilation profile is the reference

Parents with older children

For the subsample of parents with older children, the same analysis steps were applied with the assimilation profile as reference category. The resulting trimmed SEM model had an acceptable fit (CFI = .93, TLI = .89, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .04), with a significant negative relation between the marginalization profile and homework support (standardized regression coefficient $\beta = -.18$, $SE = .07$, $p < .05$) and significant positive relations between the integration profile and moral-cultural education in the home environment ($\beta = .15$, $SE = .08$, $p < .05$) and the separation profile and moral-cultural education ($\beta = .20$, $SE = .08$, $p < .05$). Again, there were no significant relations with the educational aspirations parents hold for their children.

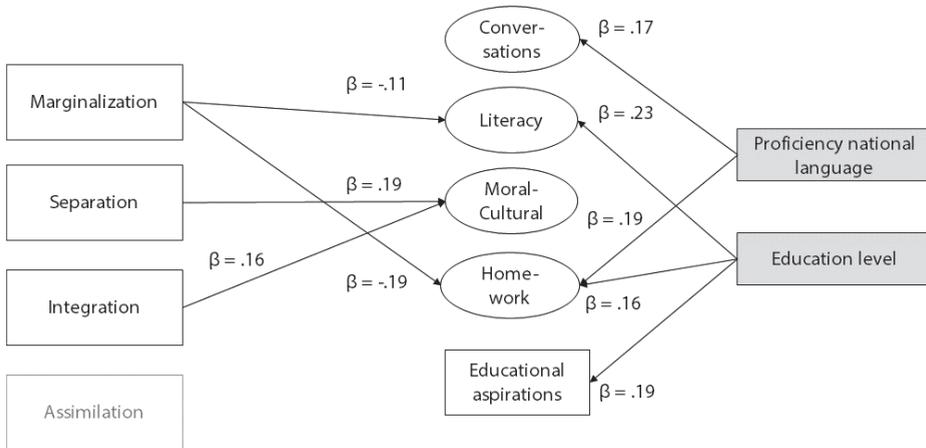
Next, parents' education level and proficiency in the country's main language were added to the model, resulting in acceptable model fit (CFI = .93, TLI = .89, RMSEA = .04, SRMR = .04); see Figure 2.3. Parents' education level was positively related to the literacy activities at home ($\beta = .23$, $SE = .06$, $p < .01$), homework support ($\beta = .19$, $SE = .06$, $p < .01$) and educational aspirations ($\beta = .19$, $SE = .05$, $p < .01$). Parents' proficiency in the country's main language was positively related to informal conversations ($\beta = .17$, $SE = .07$, $p < .01$) and homework support ($\beta = .16$, $SE = .05$, $p < .01$). The negative association of the marginalization profile with literacy activities became smaller when education level and proficiency in the country's language were included. A smaller borderline significant negative effect remained ($\beta = -.11$, $SE = .06$, $p = .05$), indicating that parents with a marginalization profile provided slightly less literacy activities at home. The negative association of the marginalization profile with homework support remained roughly the same after controlling for parents' education and language proficiency ($\beta = -.19$, $SE = .07$,

$p < .01$). Parents with a marginalization profile reported less support for homework compared to the parents with an assimilation profile. The positive relations between the integration profile and moral activities ($\beta = .16, SE = .07, p < .05$) and between the separation profile and moral activities ($\beta = .19, SE = .06, p < .05$) remained also roughly the same. Parents with an integration or separation profile, sharing a preference for cultural maintenance, provided more moral and cultural education to their children than parents with an assimilation profile. The effect sizes based on SEM, controlling for the covariates, are small according to Cohen (1988).

To put the differences between the acculturation profiles in perspective, without taking the partially shared variance of parents' education level and proficiency in the country's main language into account, we compared the differences in means between the profiles and computed Cohen's d as measure of the effect sizes based on Table 2.6. The difference between the marginalization and assimilation profile regarding literacy activities amounts to $d = .35$ and for homework support the difference between these profiles amounts to $d = .67$. The difference between the separation and assimilation profiles regarding moral and cultural education corresponds to $d = .59$ and the difference between the integration and assimilation profiles to $d = .42$. These effect sizes, not controlled for the covariates, are small to medium (Cohen, 1988).

Figure 2.3

Standardized Regression Coefficients for the Subsample of Parents with Older Children



Note: The probability of being assigned to the assimilation profile is the reference

Discussion

Integration policies in many countries currently urge immigrant families to adopt the country's national culture and language, while often ignoring or even denying the value of their heritage culture. Underlying this, is the strong, yet unproven belief that only assimilation will promote integration and upward social mobility, which would also pertain to providing an assimilation oriented education-supportive home environment to children (Song, 2019). However, this belief is contested by research on acculturation showing the psychological advantages of maintenance of the heritage culture and language to at least some extent (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). Also, several other studies indicate that for wellbeing, integration and participation in society, a balance between cultural maintenance and cultural adoption, and between an in-group and out-group orientation as indicated by a wish to have contact with members of the majority society while maintaining supportive in-group ties, is most conducive (Borrell et al., 2015; Mok et al., 2007). With regard to supporting children of immigrant families in their development, learning and education, it is largely unknown how the acculturation strategies of immigrant families are related to key supportive processes at home. The current study tried to fill this gap by examining the relationships between the acculturation strategies of immigrant parents and indicators of an educationally supportive home environment. We focused on immigrant parents with a Turkish background who have settled in four European countries with different national integration policies: England, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway. As first step, we conducted latent profile analysis (LPA) to identify the acculturation strategies of the parents, using theory-based indicators of acculturation following Berry (1997, 2017; Berry et al., 2006) and Bourhis et al. (1997). As second step, we applied structural equation modeling to examine the relationships between the identified acculturation profiles, the distinguished facets of the home learning environment (HLE) and the educational aspirations parents hold for their children. We did this for two subsamples: parents with a focus child in the 3-6 years, (i.e. the pre-school age-range) and parents with a focus child in the 9-12 years, (i.e., the end-of-primary-school age-range).

Acculturation profiles

The LPA resulted in a model with four profiles that fitted the data best in the total sample as well as in the samples per country. The four profiles showed metric invariance across England, Germany and Norway, and regarding three of the four profiles also the Netherlands. One profile in the Netherlands deviated. The profile characterizing the largest number of parents in the whole sample was labelled the *separation* profile. This was also the largest profile in England, Germany and the Netherlands, but not in Norway. This profile was characterized by a relatively strong preference for cultural maintenance and a relatively weak preference for cultural adoption and majority group contact. The second largest profile in the whole sample was labelled the *integration* profile. The profile was also second largest in England and relatively large in Norway,

but not in Germany, while in the Netherlands a different profile was found, as will be discussed below. Parents assigned to the integration profile expressed a relatively strong preference for maintaining their own culture while also preferring to adopt the culture of the country of residence and to have contact with the majority community. The third largest profile in the whole sample, and also in the sample in England, but the second largest profile in Germany and the Netherlands, and the largest profile in Norway (but note the small sample size in Norway), was the *assimilation* profile, characterized by a below average preference for cultural maintenance, and above average preference for cultural adoption and majority group contact. Finally, a small group of parents in the whole sample showed a *marginalization* profile, characterized by low cultural maintenance, low cultural adoption and below average preference for cultural contact. In England, Germany and the Netherlands this was the smallest profile. In Norway this profile was quite large, but due to the small sample size of Norway this finding is less reliable. Important to note is that the marginalization profile did not reveal severe marginalization in that parents with this profile reported only slightly below average preference for majority group contact. Also in another respect marginalization was not clearly present. Parents with this profile were not lower educated than parents with other acculturation profiles (see Table 2.6). They reported, however, to be less proficient in the country's national language than parents with other profiles. Therefore, it might be that in the present study this profile represents a group of immigrant parents who are searching how to combine both cultural frames and how to adapt to the country of residence, rather than being immigrant residents who have secluded themselves from the majority group, as was found in previous research (Berry et al., 2006; Del Pilar & Udasco, 2004; Schwartz et al., 2007).

Remarkably, the integration profile could not be established for the Turkish parents in the Netherlands. Instead, a unexpected profile was found showing aspects of assimilation but in a separated way. Parents assigned to this profile had a relatively weak preference for maintaining their culture and rather wanted to adopt the majority culture, but they expressed a relatively weak desire for contact with the majority group. A possible explanation for this partly assimilationist, partly separationist profile (characterizing 18.2% of the Dutch sample) might be the relatively high residential segregation in the Netherlands (Boterman, 2013) in combination with the reported strong intragroup ties of the Turkish community (Backus, 2013), which together may satisfy the need for contact and social support and decrease the experienced need for contact with the majority group.

Acculturation profiles as related to national policies

In the current study we focused on four countries that differ in national integration policies. We could replicate the four profiles in each country, with the exception of the integration profile in the Netherlands. However, across the four countries, the profiles differed in size, which might point to the influence of national policies. In England, where a multicultural policy is still predominant, at least at the level of local professionals in early

childhood education and care and in primary education (Slot et al., 2018), the integration strategy was more prevalent among parents (27.30%) than in Germany (19.88%), where an assimilationist policy currently predominates (Heinemann, 2017). Also in Norway, in line with the official multicultural integration policy, the integration profile pertained to a larger proportion of parents than in Germany. However, in Norway the assimilation profile was the biggest profile (31.25%), which may reflect the reported strong emphasis on language assimilation in the Norwegian early and primary education system, despite the official embrace of multiculturalism (Martiny et al., 2020; Romijn et al., 2021; Slot et al., 2018). The separation profile was the largest profile (44.51%) in Germany, where until recently exclusionary and separationist policies predominated (Heinemann, 2017).

Finally, the Netherlands may be an example of the complex interplay of national integration policies and other social policies, and how this interplay may create uncertainty and polarization within immigrant communities (Crul et al., 2012). Dutch integration policy used to promote multiculturalism until the end of the previous millennium, but shifted to a predominant assimilation policy which is also reflected in the beliefs and practices of early childhood and primary education professionals at the local level (Romijn et al., 2021; Slot et al., 2018). At the same time, despite the emphasis on assimilation, residential and (pre)school segregation based on the constitutional freedom of school choice is rather strong in the Netherlands (Boterman, 2013; Inspectorate of Education, 2018), also in an international perspective (Ladd & Fiske, 2011), which may influence the majority group contact dimension of acculturation. In this complex policy context, the present study revealed for the Netherlands both a relatively large assimilation profile and a relatively large separation profile, in addition to an unexpected profile that was a mix of assimilation and separation strategies, while a clear integration profile was absent. Altogether, the present results provide tentative support for the view that integration policies and other social policies of a country (e.g., regarding urban planning and freedom of school choice) influence the acculturation preferences of immigrant families.

Acculturation profiles as related to a nurturing home environment

The second aim of the present study was to examine the relationships between parents' acculturation strategies and the educational support they reported to provide to their children. First, the structure of the home learning environment (HLE) was examined, differentiating between parents with a younger focus child (pre-school age 3-6 years) and parents with an older focus child (end of primary school age 9-12 years). Overall, parents reported to engage frequently (several times per week to every day) in informal educational conversations with their children (e.g., talking about personal experiences, talking about topics of general interest), in both age-groups. Less frequent, but still regularly occurring were shared reading activities and informal mathematical activities in the younger age group and homework support in the older age-group (between once or twice per month to several times per week), in line with previous research (Davis & Lambie, 2005). Storytelling was least frequent in the younger age-group (less than once

or twice a month), while literacy activities (e.g., reading and discussing books) were least frequent in the older age-group (less than once or twice a month). Nonetheless, the findings indicated overall quite high engagement in informal educational and formal education supportive activities. This is important to highlight, given that public discourse and the research literature on immigrant communities tend to stress the limited parental involvement at home (Auerbach, 2001). The engagement was higher for parents with a younger child than for parents with an older child, which is in line with previous studies (e.g., Drummond & Stipek, 2004), and may reflect the fact that at this older age, the role of primary school has become more important and children spent more time out of home.

In the sample of parents with older children an additional home-education factor emerged, representing activities with a moral, religious or cultural content, such as telling stories about the country of origin and reciting poetry of the country of origin rather than storytelling or literacy activities in general. Moral and cultural education activities occurred rather frequently in families with an older child (between once or twice a month and once or twice a week). Although storytelling has been found to positively influence children's language and (emerging) literacy skills (Grolig et al., 2019; Isbell et al., 2004), research tends to underemphasize moral or narrative storytelling as a relevant informal home education practice since it is different from Western educational literacy practices such as shared book reading (Gardner-Neblett et al., 2012; Reese, 2012). It is plausible that parents deliberately pay more attention to these moral-cultural types of activities to reaffirm their own cultural and religious values as children grow older and are increasingly in contact with other and sometimes conflicting cultural values of the country of residence (Idema & Phalet, 2007).

Regarding the educational aspirations parents hold for their children, parents generally expressed high expectations for the educational careers of their children, which is in line with other studies on immigrant parents and especially Turkish immigrant parents, who were found to have higher educational aspirations than non-immigrant or other minority parents (Leyendecker et al., 2009; Salikutluk, 2016). Remarkably, the educational aspirations of parents with an older child were lower than the educational aspirations of parents with a younger child. This finding is in line with other research that concluded that the educational aspirations of immigrant parents may decline over time (Salikutluk, 2016). Whereas immigrant parents may be optimistic at the start of the educational career of their child, the challenge of dealing with schools, language barriers, and possibly negative experiences such as discrimination, and perhaps also disappointing school achievement of the children (Turney & Kao, 2009), can make them less optimistic over time.

To examine the associations between parents' acculturation profiles, the HLE and parents' educational aspirations for their children, structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied, while also taking parents' education level and proficiency in the national language into account. For parents with a younger focus child, the acculturation profiles were mostly unrelated to the HLE and not related to the educational aspirations they hold for their children. Parents with an integration or separation profile reported to

engage less in informal mathematical activities. The shared characteristic of these profiles is the relatively strong preference for cultural maintenance. Possibly, based on a shared cultural model, these parents do not prioritize activities that focus on emerging mathematics, because they consider this the responsibility of the school (Oğul et al., 2020). Note that the effect sizes were small.

Parents' education level was overall stronger and more consistently related to the HLE. In line with ample studies pointing the critical role of parents' education, literacy skills, and socioeconomic status in the early HLE (Davis-Kean, 2005; Hof, 2018; Leseman et al., 2019; Scheele et al., 2010; Sylva et al., 2008), the higher educated parents in the current study reported to provide a more nurturing HLE to their children. Parents' proficiency in the country's national language was not correlated with the HLE (and could probably therefore not be included in the SEM analysis), nor with parents' educational aspirations, suggesting that, in contrast to parents' education level, varying command of the national language does not affect the HLE for young children. Note that the parents reported to engage in HLE activities with their children either using the country's national language, the heritage language, or a mix of both languages (see Francot et al., 2020, Chapter 4 in this dissertation, and Francot et al., 2020, Chapter 3 in this dissertation). Altogether, the results for the Turkish immigrant parents with younger children show that the different acculturation preferences do not seem to matter for the educational support parents provide. Taking the reported rather high mean levels of engagement in HLE activities and the overall high educational aspirations into account, the results suggest that Turkish immigrant parents on average are committed to give their child a good start in education, regardless of their acculturation strategy.

Regarding the parents with an older focus child, in contrast to the parents with a younger child, several significant relations between the acculturation profiles and the HLE were found, with small to medium effect sizes, however again not with parents' educational aspirations for their children. Parents with a marginalization profile reported to engage less in literacy practices with their children at home and also to provide less homework support. Effect sizes were small to medium. Note that the parents with a marginalization profile were not lower educated than the other parents, yet they reported to be less proficient in the national language and had no clear preference for either cultural maintenance or cultural adoption, and also no clear wish for contact with the majority group. In this sense, they reflected uncertain acculturation. Parents with an integration or separation profile, sharing the preference for cultural maintenance, reported to engage more than the other parents in a type of activities that we labeled as moral and cultural, involving telling narratives with a moral or religious content and reciting poetry of the country of origin. This association was expected and reflects the value parents attach to maintaining and transferring their own culture upon their children. Assuming that these moral and cultural activities also provide general language and literacy learning experiences to children, besides the specific moral and cultural content, this should raise awareness that a preference for cultural maintenance can contribute to an education-supportive home environment.

Parents' education level was related to literacy activities and homework support at home, and to the educational aspirations held for the child. Higher educated parents provided a more nurturing education supporting home environment. This finding is in line with previous studies on the involvement and aspirations of parents with children in primary school age (Butler & Le, 2018; Stull, 2013). In contrast to what was found for the parents with younger children, also parents' proficiency in the country's national language was found to be related to informal educational conversations and homework support, suggesting that parents who have less command of the national language, are less engaged in children's learning at home. A possible explanation could be that with the child becoming dominant in the country's national language, the language taught at school, parents with limited proficiency in this language are, or feel, less equipped to support the child in education-related activities.

Altogether, the results indicate that parents' acculturation strategies matter more for a nurturing home environment when children are in primary school-age compared to early childhood. An uncertain marginalization profile is possibly a negative condition, whereas profiles with a preference for cultural maintenance may add value compared to the assimilation profile that was the reference in the current analysis.

Limitations and strengths

The most important limitation of the present study concerns the representativeness of the samples. The samples in the four countries were purposive, focusing on two to four (sub)urban areas in these countries that were selected to represent different local policy contexts. Within these urban areas, sample recruitment focused on neighborhoods with a substantial representation of Turkish immigrant families. Therefore, the country samples cannot be considered representative for the Turkish immigrant populations in these countries. Although the present samples represent relevant variation within the Turkish immigrant populations in these countries, caution is warranted when generalizing the findings. Second, the sample size in Norway was small, resulting in less reliable estimates of the acculturation profiles in Norway and limiting the possibilities for a more detailed analysis of the heterogeneity within and between the country samples. A third limitation is that information on the HLE was collected through parental self-reports in a personal interview situation. Although the use of self-reports is an efficient way of collecting data in large-scale studies, we cannot be sure that social desirability bias did not play a role. Future research could include more objective measures, for instance observations of parent-child interactions, to prevent report bias.

One of the strong points of this study is the use of a data-driven approach, such as Latent Profile Analysis, to identify the acculturation profiles. This is preferred over classifying individuals as high or low in categories, using a-priori cut-off points such as the midpoint of a range (Jang et al., 2017; Schwartz et al., 2010). We also included multiple dimensions to get a more integrative overview of the concept of acculturation, using the models proposed by both Berry (with the dimensions cultural maintenance versus majority group contact; 1997) and by Bourhis (with the dimensions cultural

maintenance versus cultural adoption; 1997). Correlational analyses confirmed that these dimensions are only moderately related to each other (cf. Van Acker & Vanbeselaere, 2011). In future research, using the latent profile approach, even more dimensions could be included, such as the practices, values, and identifications with the heritage culture and the receiving culture to more fully capture acculturation processes (Schwartz et al., 2010). Finally, a particular strong point of the current study was the successful strategy of reaching-out to often difficult to reach groups, immigrant parents with young children, often living in materially deprived circumstances, who are infrequently studied, thereby giving voice to these groups.

Conclusion

To return to the central issues of this study, we summarize the main findings. The sampled Turkish immigrant parents in England, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway showed different acculturation profiles in line with the Interactive Acculturation Model, and the present study provides tentative support that national integration policies and other relevant social policies (e.g., urban planning) influence the distribution of parents over acculturation profiles. The integration profile, generally regarded as most favorable based on several studies (e.g., Berry et al., 2006; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013; Tadmor et al., 2009), was more prevalent in countries with an official multicultural orientation, while the assumingly less favorable profiles of assimilation and separation were more prevalent in countries with an emphasis on assimilation in combination with segregation tendencies that followed from past or current social policies. The acculturation profiles of parents were not clearly related to the nurturing, education-supportive home environment they provide to their children in early childhood, before the start of formal primary education. The assimilation and integration profiles, both with a clear preference for cultural adoption and majority group contact, were thus not superior in this regard. The acculturation profiles of parents mattered more for children in the end-of-primary-school age. An uncertain marginalization profile was associated with a less supportive home environment, while the profiles characterized by a preference for cultural maintenance added a potentially supportive aspect to the home environment in the form of moral-cultural activities, while not differing from the assimilation profile in other respects. Parents' education level and, for parents with older children, their proficiency in the national language were rather consistently positive predictors of a nurturing home environment, regardless parents' acculturation choices.

The present findings may inform practitioners, local and national policymakers, and politicians. Although many countries have publicly renounced multiculturalism as national integration model, opting for an assimilation model instead (Malik, 2015), the present findings do not confirm that an assimilation model would be more beneficial for integration than other models, not from the point of view of the home support to immigrant children's development, learning and education. Immigrant families may need support to further the education of the parents and to help them acquire the national language.



3

Language choice and intercultural socialization in Maghreb and Turkish immigrant families: A study in six European countries

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Abstract

When supporting children's learning and integration in society, immigrant parents must make a choice which languages they use at home, and to what extent they support the intercultural socialization of their children. This study examines the interplay between parents' own acculturation preferences, religiosity and language skills, and the normative monolingual pressure in the wider context, to explain the variation in informal educational support provided at home in the heritage language (L1) and the majority language (L2), and parents' support for children's intercultural attitudes. Focusing on immigrant parents with a Turkish ($n = 943$) background in England, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway, and parents with a Maghreb background ($n = 866$) in France, Italy and the Netherlands, we conducted multiple group structural equation modelling. The results showed large variation in parental language and intercultural socialization choices, both between immigrant groups and between countries, although similar mechanisms were found to underlie their choices across groups and countries. Overall, we found that parents' language choice was not related to their acculturation preferences, but rather to their language proficiency. Furthermore, intercultural socialization of the children was strongly related to parents' own preference for majority group contact. Some differences between the Maghreb and Turkish group were found and discussed. Recommendations for integration policies are discussed in light of these findings.

Keywords: immigrant families, language choice, intercultural socialization, acculturation, integration policies

Introduction

The support families provide to children's development and learning and families' encouragement of children to establish friendships with peers, is crucial to children's wellbeing, school achievement and social integration (Anders et al., 2012; Melhuish et al., 2008; Rodriguez et al., 2009). For immigrant families, however, this can present major challenges, since they have to strike a balance between the expectations, norms and values of the mainstream society, and their own cultural preferences and acculturation strategies (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013).

The choice of the language or languages to be used at home represents one such challenge. On the one hand, immigrant parents are aware that being able to express oneself proficiently in the majority language (conveniently referred to as L2, the language that immigrant children usually learn second) is important for participation in the wider society (Song, 2019). For example, sufficient command of the country's national language facilitates communication with the teacher of the child, participation in (pre) school activities, and it is critical for supporting children's development and learning in the national language (Hammer et al., 2009; Hoff et al., 2014; Paradis, 2011). On the other hand, the heritage language (conveniently referred to as L1, the first language immigrant children are usually exposed to), also has an important sociocultural function, next to being part of a person's cultural identity. Command of the heritage language facilitates interaction with others of the community and is often essential for maintaining contact with relatives in the country of origin. Indeed, immigrant parents are reported to highly value their children acquire at least some command of the heritage language to be able to communicate with relatives, in particular grandparents (Agirdag, 2014; Worthy & Rodríguez-Galindo, 2006).

A related challenge immigrant parents face regards the ethnic-cultural socialization of their children, understood here as the messages adults communicate to their children about their ethnic identity, if and how they make children aware of potential discrimination and prepare them to cope with it, and which balance parents find between encouraging their children to engage in in-group and out-group relationships (Hughes et al., 2006). Studies examining the relationship between parents' identity and intercultural socialization practices found that parents with more salient ethnic identities were more likely to communicate positive messages about their own ethnic community to their children than about the majority society, while negative experiences such as discrimination tended to strengthen in-group focused cultural socialization (Cooper et al., 2015; Romero et al., 2000; White-Johnson et al., 2010).

The aim of the present study is to contribute to the understanding of parental choices regarding language use at home and the intercultural socialization of their children in face of the challenges and dilemmas they encounter.

Explaining varying choices of immigrant parents

Previous studies have found large variation among immigrant parents regarding both the language(s) used at home and the intercultural socialization of their children (Bezioglu-Göktolga & Yağmur, 2018a; Francot et al., 2020, Chapter 4 in this dissertation; Rodriguez et al., 2009; Scheele et al., 2010). Several explanations have been offered for this variation, which we will discuss briefly below.

Parents' acculturation preferences and religiosity

If immigrant parents strongly wish to maintain their own culture in the country of residence, transferring L1 upon children and fostering close in-group ties is often considered important for children's identity formation. In contrast, if parents prefer to have intercultural contact with the majority group, promoting learning of L2 is regarded as important and parents will stimulate their children to develop positive intercultural attitudes and to engage in friendships with peers from the majority group (Curd-Christian, 2009). These preferences, however, are not mutually exclusive and may coexist in a balanced acculturation profile aiming at integration (Berry, 1997). In a study among Turkish-Dutch immigrant parents, Bezioglu-Göktolga and Yağmur (2018a) found great diversity and complexity of the language practices at home. Parents often used the Turkish language in informal parent-child conversations in the home environment, whereas they relied on books or television programs for language activities in the national language of the country. Parents indicated to use the heritage language in order to preserve their Turkish culture and identity, while they used the national language to promote education and a successful school career for children (Bezioglu-Göktolga & Yağmur, 2018a). Similarly, Goma (2011) in a study among Maghreb immigrant families in England pointed to the close connection between maintenance of the Arabic languages and preservation of the own ethnic-cultural and religious identity, while these families also stimulated their children to improve their proficiency in the national language in order to increase their educational opportunities.

Recent research on language maintenance and intercultural socialization has found that also the importance of religion in daily life may have a major influence on parents' choices regarding language use and socialization at home (Abdelhadi, 2017; Baker, 2011). For instance, Fleischmann and Phalet (2018) report a cross-country study on the relation between national identity feelings and importance of religion in Muslim communities, including Turkish and Maghreb immigrant communities, finding an overall negative relation (see also Phalet et al., [2018] for a review on religion and acculturation). If religion had a more prominent role in daily life, identification with the country of residence was less strong. Likewise, Beek and Fleischmann (2020) found in a study among Turkish and Moroccan immigrants in the Netherlands that both first and second generation religious Moroccan and Turkish immigrants were less likely to have native Dutch friends and that across generations the importance of religion was negatively related to Dutch language use and language proficiency, which may

profoundly influence the language use with children and intercultural socialization practices.

Parents' language proficiency and sociolinguistic factors

Also the extent to which parents feel comfortable to use the different languages at stake plays a role. Parents' varying proficiency in L1, respectively L2, has consistently been found to shape parents' language choices when interacting with their children (Arriagada, 2005; Hoff et al., 2014; Leseman et al., 2019). This may depend on the generation of immigration, parents' level of education and whether they were educated in the country of residence (Prevoe et al., 2015). Particular sociolinguistic factors may be involved, which can differ between immigrant groups. Scheele and colleagues (Scheele et al., 2010; Leseman et al., 2019) examined the patterns of dual language use in informal home learning activities in a longitudinal study involving Moroccan-Berber and Turkish immigrant families with three- to six-year old children in the Netherlands, who were selected for using the heritage language at home most of the time when the children were three years old. Over time, the Moroccan-Berber parents were found to increasingly use Dutch when engaging in informal conversations, storytelling and reading with their children. The Turkish-Dutch parents, in contrast, more consistently maintained the use of their heritage language with growing age of the children. A likely explanation is that Turkish immigrants can maintain their heritage language more easily than Maghreb immigrants in the country of residence, because of the unified written Turkish language that is widely available to them via cable television, social media, newspapers and books, whereas Maghreb immigrants, in contrast, often speak different varieties of Arabic language and Tarafit-Berber, which moreover do not have a strong written tradition (Backus, 2013; Laghzaoui, 2011; Leseman et al., 2019). Parents with a Maghreb background often face communication difficulties within the in-group community because of this complex sociolinguistic situation (Shendy, 2019), enhancing the likelihood that the society's majority language will be used as a *lingua franca* and that parents loose competence in using the heritage language.

Local and national integration policies

In addition, prevailing norms and practices in the wider society can shape the language choices and intercultural socialization practices in immigrant families. Following a shift towards an assimilationist rather than multicultural integration policy, as has occurred in many European countries in recent years (Malik, 2015), a monolingual national language norm is nowadays often predominant in public and political discourse and also among professionals in education and care services who work with immigrant children and families on a daily basis (Akgündüz et al., 2015; Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yağmur, 2018b; Eisenclas & Schalley, 2019; Romijn et al., 2021; Sierens & Van Avermaet, 2017; Slot et al., 2018). Despite the research evidence that growing up bilingually as such is not detrimental (Hammer et al., 2009; Place & Hoff, 2011) and can have cognitive and social advantages (Barac & Bialystok, 2012; Blom et al., 2014; Goodrich

et al., 2014; however for a critical recent review, see Antoniou, 2019), this monolingual norm endorsed by professionals in care and education implicitly, and sometimes rather explicitly, sends out the message that immigrant parents who use L1 at home do not adequately support their children's academic learning at school (Curdt-Christiansen, 2020; Song, 2019). Likewise, society's tolerance of different religions may moderate the effects of religiosity on language choice and intercultural socialization practices of immigrant families. For example, Fleishmann and Phalet (2018) found substantial country differences in the strength of the negative relationship between religiosity and national identification for Muslim youth, indicating that in more tolerant societies, such as England, religiosity was less strongly related to in-group socialization than in countries with a less tolerant climate, such as Germany.

Thus, several factors may explain parents' varying choices regarding the languages used at home and the intercultural socialization of their children: parents' acculturation preferences, religiosity and language skills, and the normative monolingual pressure in the wider context. The purpose of the current study is to further clarify the interplay of these factors in explaining two key aspects of the socialization of children in immigrant families: the informal educational support in L1 and L2 provided at home and parents' support for children's intercultural attitudes. We focus on immigrant families with a Turkish or Maghreb background in six European countries with different national integration policies, allowing to review the moderating effect of the wider social context on parents' choices.

The current study

In this study we focus on parents with a Turkish immigration background in England, Germany, Norway and the Netherlands, and parents with a Maghreb immigration background in France, Italy and the Netherlands. These countries are characterized by different national integration policies. England and the Netherlands have for long been known for their support to multicultural integration. In the Netherlands, however, the political discourse has shifted towards a stronger emphasis on assimilation (Entzinger, 2009; Maan et al., 2014; Malik, 2015). In contrast, in the UK, the multicultural policy framework has remained rather stable over the past decades (Malik, 2015; Mathieu, 2018). Germany was late to officially recognize that it had become a country of immigration. As a consequence, German integration policy has for long been characterized by exclusion of immigrants from citizenship rights (Klusmeyer & Papademetriou, 2009). Cultural maintenance among migrants was promoted in view of the expected remigration, while participation in society was discouraged, resulting in segregated parallel communities. Recently, state and national level policies changed into an assimilationist approach and especially learning the German language is nowadays strongly promoted in early education programs and primary education (Heinemann, 2017). In comparison to the other countries, Norway became a country of immigration only recently. The official integration policy emphasizes equality and multicultural integration, but in education Norway is also known for its linguistic assimilation norms (Martiny et al., 2020). In

France, local and national policies explicitly opt for assimilation of immigrants. Mastery of French is seen as most fundamental to the acculturation of immigrants in order to assure integration, social cohesion and national unity (Yağmur & Van de Vijver, 2012). ECEC centers and schools represent the national policy and stress adoption of the French culture and language as much as possible (Abdelgadir & Fouka, 2020). Finally, major immigration to Italy also started later than in France, the Netherlands, Germany and England. Italian official national policy is regarded as assimilationist with rather restrictive controls on immigration and stressing learning the national language (Caneva, 2014). However, on the local level, especially in the North-Italian urban areas, a more a pragmatic multicultural approach prevails among social workers and teachers in interaction with immigrant families (Campomori & Caponio, 2017).

These national policies are reflected in a recent survey by Slot and colleagues (2018; Romijn et al., 2021) among professionals in early education and care, primary education and social youth work in ten European countries, including the six countries involved in the present study. The professionals reported on their multicultural practices and multicultural beliefs. The study found large differences between the six countries of the present study. Professionals in England were most positive about multiculturalism and multilingualism, and reported to implement more multicultural practices, followed by the professionals in Italy. Professionals in Norway also reported above average positive multicultural beliefs and implementation of multicultural practices, but were less positive about the value of multilingualism. Professionals in Germany and the Netherlands reported less positive multicultural beliefs and were especially less in favor of multilingualism, and they reported less multicultural practices than the professionals in the other countries. Finally, professionals in France reported the least diversity practices and had far below average scores on both multicultural and multilingual beliefs.

Based on the different national policies, we expected to find differences between countries in how immigrant Turkish and Maghreb parents decide about language use and intercultural socialization at home. In line with Scheele et al. (2010), we also expected to find differences between parents with a Turkish and Maghreb background. Furthermore, as studies suggest that both parents' language input and socialization support changes as children get older, influenced by children's own integration experiences and language learning at school (Hughes et al., 2006; Martínez-Roldan & Malavé, 2004), we expected to find differences between parents with a young focus child and parents with an older focus child.

Method

Participants

The current study used data from a large-scale structured interview study among parents with a disadvantaged background in ten European countries (Broekhuizen et al., 2018). The study was part of the EU funded Inclusive Education and Social Support to Tackle Inequalities in Society (ISOTIS) project (see Chapter 1). The analyses are based on 1801 interviews conducted with parents with a Turkish or Maghreb immigration background in six European countries: Immigrant parents with a Turkish background were interviewed in England ($n = 293$, $M_{age} = 38.90$ years, $SD_{age} = 5.84$), Germany ($n = 338$, $M_{age} = 37.88$ years, $SD_{age} = 6.04$), Norway ($n = 65$, $M_{age} = 37.07$ years, $SD_{age} = 5.76$) and the Netherlands ($n = 247$, $M_{age} = 37.26$ years, $SD_{age} = 5.43$). Immigrant parents with a Maghreb (i.e., Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian) background were interviewed in France ($n = 266$, $M_{age} = 35.65$ years, $SD_{age} = 7.01$), Italy ($n = 307$, $M_{age} = 36.85$ years, $SD_{age} = 6.39$) and in the Netherlands ($n = 293$, $M_{age} = 38.76$ years, $SD_{age} = 5.89$). The interviewed parents had a focus child in either the three to six years age-range who attended ECEC centers but did not yet start in formal education ($n = 823$) or a focus child in the nine to twelve years age-range who was in primary education before transitioning to middle school or secondary school ($n = 986$). Interviews were conducted with the primary caregiver of the child, in most cases the mother. See Table 3.1 for descriptive statistics.

On average, around 68 percent of the parents with a Turkish or Maghreb background were first-generation immigrants, though large country differences were found. The samples of Turkish parents in England and Maghreb parents in Italy had the highest proportions of first-generation immigrant parents (93.8% and 97.4%, respectively), whereas the Maghreb group in France had the highest proportion of second- or third-generation immigrant parents (59.5%). Parents with a Maghreb immigration background were on average lower educated than parents with a Turkish immigrant background (51.3% of the Maghreb parents were low educated vs. 33.1% of the Turkish parents) and material deprivation was higher for the Maghreb parents than for the Turkish parents ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 2.43$ vs. $M = 1.48$, $SD = 2.01$).

Table 3.1
Descriptive Statistics of the Turkish and Maghreb Families

	Turkish				Maghreb				
	EN	GER	NO	NL	Total	FR	IT	NL	Total
<i>n</i>	293	338	65	247	943	266	307	293	866
Gender, % women	85.3	93.2	93.8	99.6	92.5	99.2	100	99.7	99.7
Age (<i>M, SD</i>)	38.90 (5.84)	37.88 (6.04)	37.07 (5.76)	37.26 (5.43)	37.99 (5.81)	35.65 (7.01)	36.85 (6.39)	38.76 (5.89)	37.13 (6.54)
Generation %									
1 st generation	93.8	58.2	71.9	54.7	69.2	40.5	97.4	62.9	68.5
≥2 nd generation*	6.2	41.8	28.1	45.3	30.8	59.5	2.6	37.1	31.5
Education level %									
Low	30.4	36.1	10.9	38.1	33.1	51.4	57.2	45.1	51.3
Medium	35.5	40.9	53.1	40.1	39.8	23.6	32.9	41.6	33.1
High	34.1	23.0	35.9	21.9	27.1	25.1	9.9	13.3	15.7
Material deprivation (<i>M, SD</i>)	1.59 (2.22)	1.45 (1.78)	0.73 (1.49)	1.59 (2.10)	1.48 (2.01)	2.11 (2.06)	3.74 (2.60)	2.24 (2.19)	2.74 (2.43)

* We also included parents who were classified as 1.5 generation immigrants (not born in the current county of residence, but moved to the current country before the age of six, on average 6 percent across the samples), and third generation immigrants (less than 1 percent) here.

Procedure

Parents were recruited in two to four urban or suburban sites per country with a relatively high representation of the Turkish and Maghreb communities. Parents were eligible if they were either first-generation immigrants (born in Turkey, respectively in one of the Maghreb countries Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia), second-generation immigrants (with their parents born in Turkey or one of the Maghreb countries), or third-generation immigrants who identified themselves as members of the Turkish or Maghreb community, respectively. An additional criterion for eligibility concerned the age of the focus child. For the subsample of parents with a younger focus child (3-6 years old), the child had to be born in the country of residence and for the subsample of parents with an older focus child (9-12 years old), the child had to be living in the country of residence for at least five years. Recruitment strategies included approaching ECEC centers, primary schools, community centers, parent organizations and mediators to establish contact with eligible parents. Exact response rates were difficult to determine due to the stepwise recruitment procedure and strict privacy protection rules in some countries, but overall response rates on the organization level ranged between 36% and 69% across the six countries (for more information, see Broekhuizen et al., 2018). Structured face-to-face interviews were conducted by interviewers from the same communities with good command of the languages of the parents and the national language. Interview questions were programmed in an online survey tool (Lime Survey) in the countries' national languages, Turkish and standard Arabic. Several interviewers spoke Tarifit-Berber and were allocated to parents with a Maghreb-Berber background. For most questions, the interviewers read the question to the parent, the parent answered and the interviewer entered the response. The data were upon entry directly transferred to the central data server at Utrecht University via a safe https or 4G connection, where the data were stored on a protected data server in accordance with current data protection rules. For more sensitive questions (e.g., regarding experienced discrimination), parents could enter the answers themselves. The interviews took 45 to 60 minutes to complete. All parents received a gift voucher worth 5 to 10 € after participating in the interview, regardless whether they completed the interview. The interviews were conducted in the period from December 2017 to July 2018. The study was approved by the ethical committees of the research institutes involved in the study in each country.

Measures

Informal education at home in the heritage (L1) and national language (L2)

Two measures represented to what extent parents' used the heritage language, the national language or a mix of both languages when engaging with the child in informal educational conversations at home, based on existing questionnaires (Sylva et al., 2004; Scheele et al., 2010; Millennium Cohort Study, 2017; see also Francot et al., 2021, Chapter 2 of this dissertation). The measures were based on two underlying constructs.

First, parents' engagement in educational conversations with the child was determined regardless the language they would use, using three items that slightly differed by the age of the focus child (e.g., "How often do you talk with your child about your own or his/her everyday experiences?"). Answers were given on a six-point scale ranging from every day (1), several times a week (2), once or twice a week (3), once or twice a month (4), less often (5), to (almost) never (6). The responses were reverse-coded and the mean was computed, with a higher score indicating higher engagement in informal educational talk (Cronbach's alpha's were $\alpha = .69$ for the parents with a younger child and $\alpha = .65$ for parents with an older age child). The measurement invariance across immigrant groups and across countries was separately examined in another study for the complete questionnaire on the home learning environment, with the current measure as one of the four latent factors. Metric invariance could be established (see Appendix 3.1).

Second, parents were asked which language they used when engaging in informal educational conversations with the child. If only one language was used, a score of 1 was given for that language (either L1 or L2), and a score of 0 for the other language. If the target language was used mostly, but another language sometimes (which could be a third language), a score of .75 was given. If the target language and another language were used equally, a score of .50 was given. A score of .25 was assigned if another language was used more often than the target language, and finally, a score of 0 was given if the target language was never used with that particular type of activity. For instance, if the interviewee indicated that they used Turkish more often than the national language, a score of .75 was given for the first language, Turkish, and a score of .25 for the national language.

Two final measures of language-specific informal education in L1 and L2 were constructed as the product of the frequency measure (range 1-6) and the weights for the particular language used (range 0-1), indicating *informal education in L1*, respectively *informal education in L2* (range 0-6). Higher scores indicated more exposure to informal educational conversations in the specific language concerned.

Supporting children's intercultural attitudes and behavior

Supporting children's intercultural attitudes and behavior, in short: intercultural socialization, indicated to what extent immigrant parents encourage children to develop positive intercultural attitudes and to engage in contact with peers from the majority group. Three items from a scale for ethnic-cultural socialization were selected (e.g., "Do you encourage [name of the focus child] to make friends with children with a majority background?") and parents were asked to indicate to what extent they would do this on a scale ranging from never (1), rarely (2), sometimes (3) to often (4). This scale has not been psychometrically validated in previous research, but showed sufficient internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .67$, ranging from $\alpha = .52$ to $\alpha = .73$ across the seven subsamples). In addition, confirmatory factor analysis showed that the three items were indicators of a latent factor with all factor loadings $> .40$. Measurement invariance across immigrant groups and across countries was examined and metric invariance

was established (see Appendix 3.1). The measurement model with the latent factor was included in the subsequent SEM analyses.

Importance of religion

Religiosity was measured by a single item: "How important is religion in your personal daily life?". Parents' answers were rated on a five-point scale from not important (1), slightly important (2), moderate important (3), important (4) and very important (5).

Cultural maintenance

Cultural maintenance captured parents' preference for maintaining the heritage culture, based on parents' agreement with the statement (derived from Zagefka et al., 2014): "I think it would be good if members of my group kept as much as possible our culture of origin and way of living". Agreement was expressed on a five-point scale ranging from disagree (1), slightly disagree (2), undecided (3), slightly agree (4), to agree (5). Another statement, on language maintenance, originally part of the construct, was not included as preliminary analyses showed a weak correlation with the cultural maintenance item ($r = .36$ overall) and a different pattern of correlations with the other study variables.

Preference for majority group contact

Preference for majority group contact represented parents' wish to have intercultural contact with the majority group of the country. Parents were asked to indicate their agreement with two statements (based on Zagefka et al., 2011): "It is important to me that members of my group have friends with a [national] native background" and "It is important to me that members of my group spend some of their spare time with [nationality] native people". Agreement was indicated on a five-point scale ranging from disagree (1), slightly disagree (2), undecided (3), slightly agree (4), to agree (5). The intercorrelation of the two items was $r = .52$ in the whole sample (ranging from $r = .40$ to $r = .75$ across the subsamples). The final score was calculated as the mean of the answers to the two items. A high score indicated that parents found it important to have contact with the majority group.

Perceived proficiency in the heritage (L1) and host country language (L2)

Perceived language proficiency was measured by three items per language, asking parents to what extent they experienced difficulties in using either L1 or L2 when speaking to others, reading newspapers or listening to the radio or television (e.g., "When reading newspapers, do you have difficulty to understand the specific language that is used?"). The original answering scale ranged from never (1), rarely (2), sometimes (3), often (4) to always (5). Items were reverse-coded so that a higher score indicated higher self-reported proficiency in the heritage language of the family or country's main language. The mean score of the three recoded items per language was calculated. For proficiency in L1, Cronbach's $\alpha = .76$ (ranging from $\alpha = .59$ to $\alpha = .90$ across the

subsamples). For proficiency in L2, Cronbach's $\alpha = .93$ (ranging from $\alpha = .90$ to $\alpha = .96$ across the subsamples).

Generation of immigration

Generation of immigration indicated whether the parent was a first, one-and-a-half, second or third-generation immigrant. A parent was identified as a one-and-a-half generation immigrant when he or she was not born in the current country of residence, but moved to this country before the age of six, thus before formal primary education (cf. Rumbaut, 2004). For the present purpose, to facilitate interpretation, the variable was recoded into a dummy variable: first generation immigrant (1) versus one-and-a-half, second or third generation immigrant (0).

Parents' education level

Parents' education level represented the highest completed education level of the primary caregiver. The national qualification levels in the six countries were first equated to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels (ISCED, 2011) and then recoded into three levels of education to facilitate comparison between the national education systems, with the following cut-off points: low = ISCED 0, 1, 2 (primary education, lower secondary education or lower vocational training at most), medium = ISCED 3, 4, 5 (upper secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary and short cycle tertiary education), and high = ISCED 6, 7, 8 (full tertiary education at the bachelor level or higher).

Analysis plan

In a preliminary analysis (reported in Appendix 3.1) we tested the measurement model for the latent construct intercultural socialization using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in Mplus 8.1 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2010). After finding a good fitting measurement model, we examined the measurement invariance across the seven subsamples by using the alignment method, which is an alternative method for measurement invariance testing across many groups (Muthén and Asparouhov, 2013).

To answer the research questions, structural equation modelling (SEM), using Mplus 8.1, was applied on the whole sample to examine the relationships of the three outcome variables, informal education offered in L1 and L2, and intercultural socialization, with the predictors importance of religion, cultural maintenance and preference for majority group contact, parents' proficiency in L1 and L2, and the covariates generation of migration and parents' education level. Absolute model fit was evaluated based on the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), acceptable if both $> .90$, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), acceptable if $< .08$, and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), acceptable if $< .05$ (Bentler, 2006; Marsh et al., 2004).

Next, a series of SEM analyses was conducted to examine whether the estimated path coefficients were invariant across immigrant groups and countries, using the multi-

sample option in Mplus. Invariance across groups and countries was tested by comparing the unconstrained *configural* model (allowing path coefficients to differ across samples) with the fully *constrained* model (constraining all path coefficients to be equal across samples). Models were compared using the Chi Square difference test, with $p > .05$ indicating invariance, and the ΔCFI , with a value $< .01$ indicating invariance. Note that the Chi Square difference test is highly sensitive to small deviations from invariance in large samples ($n > 200$) as in the present study and therefore less suited to establish invariance than the ΔCFI (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002; Meade et al., 2008). If the Chi Square difference test and the ΔCFI indicated the models were not invariant across samples, we examined step-by-step which path coefficients should be freed to obtain acceptable model fit by checking the Modification Indices provided by Mplus and comparing the corresponding path coefficients of the unconstrained and constrained models to identify possible misfit. This led to final, partially constrained, multi-sample models with an acceptable fit.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics of the three outcome variables (informal education in L1, informal education in L2, and intercultural socialization) and the predictors (importance of religion, cultural maintenance, intercultural contact, parents' proficiency in L1 and L2) are shown in Table 3.2. For ease of interpretation, the descriptive statistics of the latent construct supporting children's intercultural attitudes in Table 3.2 are based on the unweighted mean of the three items, as the factor loadings of the items were highly similar. The descriptive statistics of the covariates parents' education level and immigration generation are reported in Table 3.1.

Table 3.2

Descriptive Statistics per Immigrant Group and Country

Turkish	Eng (n=293)		Ger (n=338)		Nor (n=65)		NL (n=247)		Total (n=943)		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range
	Informal Education L1	3.18	1.93	2.95	1.78	2.81	1.61	3.11	1.71	3.06	1.80
Informal Education L2	1.65	1.86	1.88	1.70	1.85	1.50	2.04	1.68	1.85	1.74	0-6
Intercultural socialization	2.72	0.92	2.36	0.93	2.78	0.86	2.13	0.85	2.44	0.94	1-4
Religion	2.82	1.40	3.77	1.46	3.45	1.60	4.45	0.94	3.63	1.47	1-5
Cultural Maintenance	4.43	1.12	4.13	1.36	3.87	1.20	4.40	1.09	4.28	1.22	1-5
Preference for Contact	4.17	1.06	3.82	1.16	4.08	0.96	3.68	1.22	3.91	1.15	1-5
Proficiency L1	4.83	0.49	4.63	0.66	4.54	0.64	4.78	0.44	4.72	0.56	1-5
Proficiency L2	3.70	1.28	3.96	1.18	3.94	0.94	3.83	1.24	3.85	1.22	1-5

Table 3.2 Continued

Maghreb	Fr (n= 266)		It (n=307)		NL (n=293)		Total (n=866)		Range
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
	Informal Education L1	0.80	1.44	2.24	1.57	1.64	1.83	1.61	
Informal Education L2	3.65	1.47	1.54	1.45	3.37	1.93	2.80	1.89	0-6
Intercultural socialization	1.69	0.86	3.01	0.96	2.20	0.85	2.33	1.04	1-4
Religion	3.75	1.01	4.75	0.53	4.64	0.62	4.41	0.85	1-5
Cultural Maintenance	4.30	0.92	4.26	1.16	4.25	1.22	4.27	1.11	1-5
Preference for Contact	3.89	1.01	4.22	0.97	3.64	1.22	3.92	1.10	1-5
Proficiency L1	4.66	0.75	4.72	0.65	4.49	0.81	4.62	0.74	1-5
Proficiency L2	4.56	0.87	3.23	1.15	4.06	1.14	3.93	1.20	1-5

To facilitate comparison of the immigrants groups across countries regarding language use in informal educational conversations and intercultural socialization, Figures 3.1 and 3.2 present the means and standard deviations in bar charts. The Turkish immigrant parents in the current study used their L1 more often for informal education at home than the Maghreb parents (see Figure 3.1). The Maghreb parents in the Netherlands and France used L2, the national language, evidently more often than their L1. For the Maghreb parents in Italy, the difference between reported L1 and L2 use was smaller. Figure 3.2 also shows large standard deviations, indicating high variability within each sample. Regarding supporting children's intercultural attitudes, parents on average reported to do this between 'sometimes' and 'often', but there was again large variability. There was no clear overall difference in this regard between the two immigrant groups. However, the differences between countries were more sizeable. Maghreb parents in Italy reported the highest intercultural socialization and the Maghreb parents in France the lowest. Moreover Turkish parents in England and Norway reported higher support than Turkish parents in Germany and the Netherlands.

Figure 3.1

Means and Standard Deviations of Informal Education in L1 and L2 per Subsample

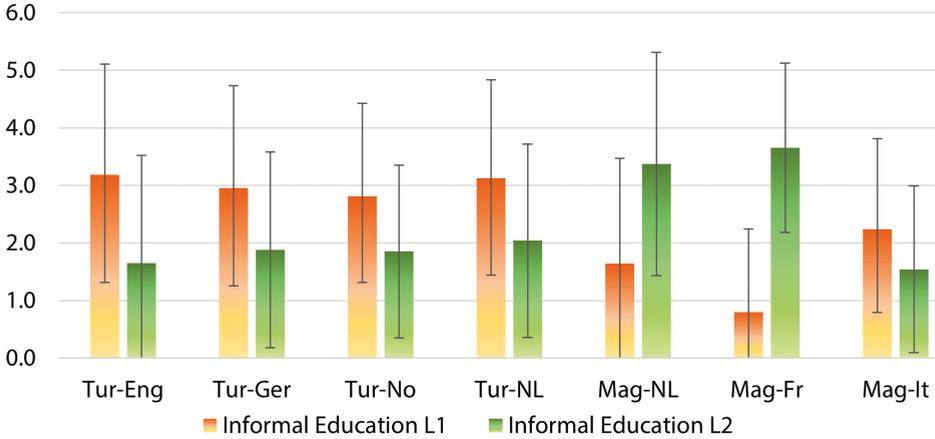
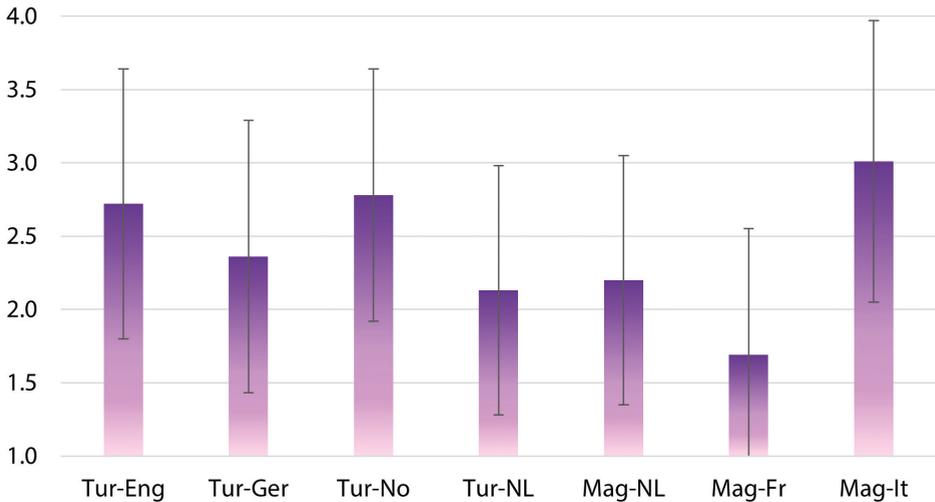


Figure 3.2

Means and Standard Deviations of Support to Children's Intercultural Socialization per Subsample



Regarding the characteristics of the parents, a few findings should be highlighted. The Turkish-English parents rated the importance of religion in daily life the lowest ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 1.40$) and the Maghreb-Italian parents the highest ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 0.53$). Immigrant parents from both target groups reported high preference for cultural maintenance (Cultural maintenance $M_{Turkish} = 4.28$, $SD_{Turkish} = 1.22$, $M_{Maghreb} = 4.27$, $SD_{Turkish} = 1.11$), but moderate preference for majority group contact across all subsamples (on average

parents reported to 'slightly agree' with statements on the importance of intercultural contact; $M_{Turkish} = 3.91$, $SD_{Turkish} = 1.15$, $M_{Maghreb} = 3.92$, $SD_{Maghreb} = 1.10$). Again, country differences were more sizeable, with a lower preference for intercultural contact of the Turkish and Maghreb parents in the Netherlands. For all subsamples in the current study, parents' reported proficiency in L1 was higher than their reported proficiency in L2. The Maghreb-Italian parents reported the lowest proficiency in L2 ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.15$), while the Maghreb-French sample reported the highest proficiency in L2 (almost equal to their proficiency in L1, $M = 4.56$, $SD = 0.87$).

Table 3.3 shows the correlations for the study variables, for both target groups. There was a strong negative correlation between informal education offered in L1 versus L2, reflecting that the time for exposure to one language competes with the time for exposure to the other language within the family context (Francot et al., 2020; Leseman et al., 2019; Place & Hoff, 2011). Intercultural socialization was positively related to informal education in L1 and negatively related to informal education in L2, but only for the Maghreb parents. Furthermore, a positive correlation between the importance of religion and intercultural socialization was found for the Maghreb groups, whereas a negative correlation was found for the Turkish groups. All other correlations showed a similar pattern across the immigrant groups, although for the Maghreb immigrant group overall stronger correlations were found than for the Turkish immigrant group.

Table 3.3

Correlation Matrix of Parents with a Turkish and Maghreb Background

Turkish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Informal Education L1	-									
2. Informal Education L2	-.86**	-								
3. Intercultural socialization	.02	-.02	-							
4. Religion	.08*	-.05	-.17**	-						
5. Cultural Maintenance	.09**	-.10**	-.07*	.33**	-					
6. Preference for Contact	.01	-.02	.36**	-.20**	-.07	-				
7. Proficiency L1	.15**	-.11**	.01	.03	.05	.04	-			
8. Proficiency L2	-.40**	.46**	.04	-.10**	-.07*	-.04	-.07*	-		
9. Generation	-.23**	.27**	-.13**	.17**	-.03	-.14**	-.19**	.51**	-	
10. Education level	-.09**	.17**	.16**	-.30**	-.23**	.11**	-.01	.32**	.11**	-

Table 3.3 Continued

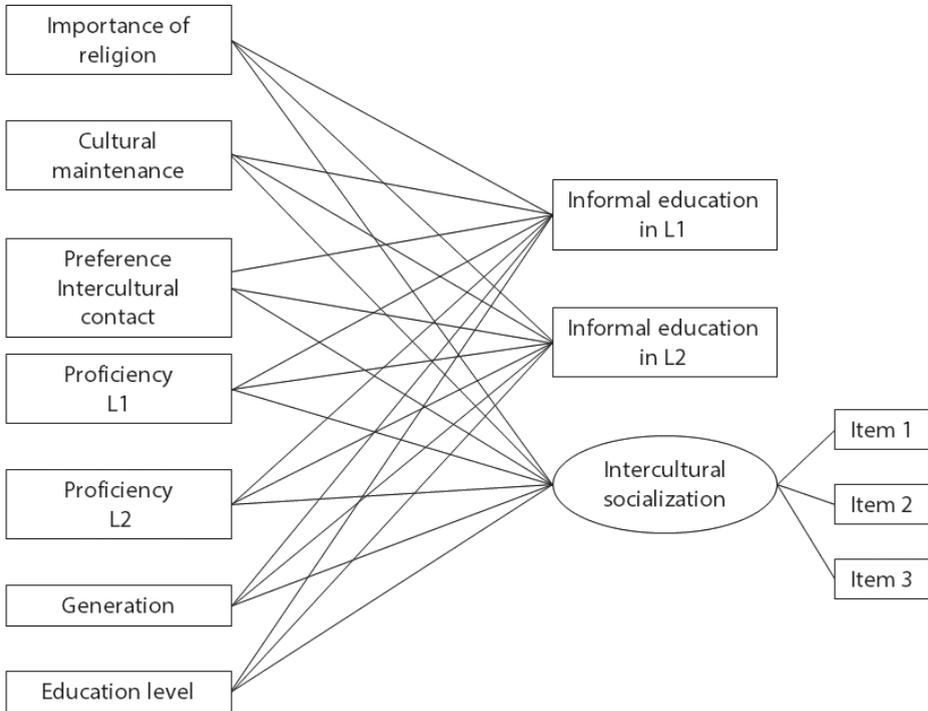
Maghreb	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Informal Education L1	-									
2. Informal Education L2	-.83**	-								
3. Intercultural socialization	.23**	-.25**	-							
4. Religion	.32**	-.30**	.32**	-						
5. Cultural Maintenance	.10**	-.11**	-.11**	.15**	-					
6. Preference for Contact	-.04	-.05	.26**	-.00	.14**	-				
7. Proficiency L1	.16**	-.17**	.00	-.02	.05	.06	-			
8. Proficiency L2	-.51**	.62**	-.23**	-.30**	-.11**	-.05	-.03	-		
9. Generation	-.47**	.53**	-.41**	-.44**	-.08*	-.17**	-.16**	.53**	-	
10. Education level	-.20**	.25**	.01	-.10**	-.10**	-.03	.00	.33**	.20**	-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Structural equation models

Overall model

First, we tested whether the variables importance of religion, cultural maintenance and intercultural contact, and parents' proficiency in L1 and L2 were related to the outcome variables based on the whole sample, controlling for the covariates generation of migration and parents' education level (see Figure 3.3 for the hypothetical model). The full SEM model had a good fit based on most fit indices ($\chi^2 = 113.27$, $df = 19$, $p < .01$, CFI = .98, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .03; note that the χ^2 statistic is highly sensitive to minor violations of the model assumptions in large samples). Although several stronger associations were found, most hypothesized associations were weak or absent. This could be due to the large heterogeneity within the whole sample. Therefore, as next steps, we examined whether there were differences between the two immigrant groups and differences per immigrant group between the countries, using multigroup comparisons in Mplus.

Figure 3.3*Hypothetical Overall Model***Multigroup Analyses per Target Group**

The unconstrained multigroup model showed a good fit ($\chi^2 = 194.67$, $df = 42$, $p < .01$, CFI = .96, TLI = .92, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05), confirming the configural invariance of the model across the Turkish and Maghreb groups. After constraining all path coefficients to be equal across both groups, the model fit was still good ($\chi^2 = 347.72$, $df = 63$, $p < .01$, CFI = .93, TLI = .91, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06), but the ΔCFI was larger than .01, indicating incomplete metric invariance across the groups (Maede et al., 2008). We checked the Modification Indices and compared the estimated path coefficients of the unconstrained model with the corresponding estimates of the constrained model to identify possible differences between the groups. After freeing the paths between religion and intercultural socialization, between cultural maintenance and parents' support for intercultural attitudes, and between generation and informal education in L2, the model fit was acceptable ($\chi^2 = 260.04$, $df = 60$, $p < .01$, CFI = .95, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05), while the ΔCFI between the unconstrained and partially constrained model was smaller than .01. Table 3.4 displays the standardized results per immigrant group. Note that minor differences between the standardized betas occur, despite being constrained to be equal, because of differences in the variances across samples.

The results in Table 3.4 show that the importance of religion in daily life (the unstandardized path coefficient $B = .12$, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$) and parents' proficiency in L1 ($B = .27$, $SE = .06$, $p < .01$) were positively related, while parents' proficiency in L2 ($B = -.53$, $SE = .04$, $p < .01$) was negatively related to informal education in L1, equally for both immigrant groups. Cultural maintenance, preference for contact with the majority group, generation of migration and parents' education level were not related to informal education in L1. Conversely, parents' proficiency in L1 ($B = -.21$, $SE = .06$, $p < .01$) was negatively and proficiency in L2 ($B = .63$, $SE = .04$, $p < .01$) was positively related to informal education in L2 for both groups. The association between immigration generation and informal education in L2 was negative in both groups, indicating that first generation immigrant parents were less likely to provide informal education in L2 than one-and-a-half, second and third generation immigrant parents, but this association was significantly stronger for the Maghreb group ($B = -.93$, $SE = .11$, $p < .01$) than for the Turkish group ($B = -.39$, $SE = .11$, $p < .01$), (Wald(1) = 30.33, $p < .01$). Parents' education level had a significant, but comparatively weak relationship with informal education in L2 in both target groups ($B = .11$, $SE = .05$, $p < .05$). The importance of religion, cultural maintenance and preference for intercultural contact were not related to informal education in L2.

Furthermore, the results in Table 3.4 show that in both groups parents' preference for majority group contact was comparatively strongly related to the support they reported to provide to children's intercultural attitudes ($B = .34$, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$). In addition, the importance of religion was positively and parents' preference for cultural maintenance was negatively related to intercultural socialization, but only in the Maghreb group (religion: $B = .43$, $SE = .05$, $p < .01$; cultural maintenance: $B = -.22$, $SE = .04$, $p < .01$). Finally, generation ($B = .51$, $SE = .08$, $p < .01$) and education level ($B = .17$, $SE = .04$, $p < .01$) were positively related to intercultural socialization, equally across both groups, indicating that first generation immigrant parents and higher educated immigrant parents were more likely to support their children's intercultural attitudes. The explained variance, R^2 , in the outcome variables was substantial.

Table 3.4*Standardized Path Coefficients of the Structural Model per Immigrant Group*

	Religion	Cult main	Cult contact	Prof L1	Prof L2	Gene- ration	Educ level	R ²
	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	
Turkish								
Informal education L1	.10** (.03)	.02 (.02)	-.04 (.02)	.08** (.02)	-.35** (.03)	.14 (.03)	.01 (.02)	.22
Informal education L2	-.03 (.03)	-.03 (.02)	.00 (.02)	-.07** (.02)	.42** (.03)	-.10** (.03)	.05* (.02)	.27
Intercultural socialization	-.02 (.04)	-.02 (.04)	.35** (.03)	-.03 (.02)	.00 (.03)	.21** (.03)	.12** (.03)	.21
Maghreb								
Informal education L1	.06** (.02)	.02 (.02)	-.04 (.02)	.12** (.03)	-.38** (.03)	.16** (.03)	.01 (.02)	.28
Informal education L2	-.02 (.02)	-.03 (.02)	.00 (.02)	-.09** (.02)	.42** (.03)	-.24** (.03)	.05* (.02)	.39
Intercultural socialization	.30** (.04)	-.20** (.04)	.32** (.02)	-.03 (.03)	.00 (.03)	.20** (.03)	.10** (.03)	.29

Note. The values in bold indicate the path coefficients that differed across the two immigrant groups.

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Multigroup Analyses per Subsample

Next, we examined per immigrant group possible country differences.

Turkish immigrant parents in England, Germany, Norway and the Netherlands.

The unconstrained multigroup model showed a good fit ($\chi^2 = 184.31$, $df = 85$, $p < .01$, CFI = .95, TLI = .90, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05), confirming configural invariance for the Turkish subsamples in England, Germany, Norway and the Netherlands. Constraining the path coefficients in the model to be equal across the four countries resulted in acceptable fit ($\chi^2 = 269.45$, $df = 148$, $p < .01$, CFI = .94, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05) and did not significantly decrease the model fit. The Δ CFI between the unconstrained and constrained model was smaller than .01, indicating metric invariance across countries. Table 3.5 displays the standardized path coefficients per country. The results are largely in line with the results presented in Table 3.4, however with a few differences. First, the association between the importance of religion and informal education in L1 was not significant anymore, when looking at the Turkish subsamples separately. Also the associations between generation and informal education in L2 and intercultural socialization, and the association between parents' education level and informal education in L2 were no longer significant in the country samples of Turkish parents. Parents' proficiency in L1 ($B = .31$, $SE = .10$, $p < .01$), however, remained relatively strongly

positively and parents' proficiency in L2 ($B = -.55, SE = .06, p < .01$) remained relatively strongly negatively related to the informal education in L1, equally across countries. Conversely, parents' proficiency in L1 ($B = -.21, SE = .09, p < .05$) remained negatively and parents' proficiency in L2 ($B = .60, SE = .05, p < .01$) remained positively related to the education offered in L2 across countries. Parents' preference for intercultural contact ($B = .32, SE = .03, p < .01$) had the strongest positive association with intercultural socialization, while also parents' education level ($B = .15, SE = .05, p < .01$) was positively related to this outcome across countries. The explained variance in the outcome measures varied, but was overall moderate.

Table 3.5*Standardized Path Coefficients of the Structural Model for the Turkish Subsamples*

	Religion	Cult main	Cult contact	Prof L1	Prof L2	Gene- ration	Educ level	<i>R</i> ²
	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	
Turkish-English								
Informal education L1	.04 (.03)	.03 (.03)	-.02 (.03)	.07** (.02)	-.37** (.04)	.04 (.02)	.06 (.03)	.14
Informal education L2	-.02 (.03)	-.04 (.03)	.01 (.03)	-.05* (.02)	.43** (.04)	-.03 (.02)	.03 (.03)	.21
Intercultural socialization	.02 (.04)	-.02 (.04)	.32** (.03)	.00 (.03)	.05 (.05)	.03 (.02)	.11** (.04)	.12
Turkish-German								
Informal education L1	.04 (.04)	.04 (.04)	-.02 (.03)	.11** (.04)	-.35** (.04)	.07 (.04)	.06 (.03)	.18
Informal education L2	-.02 (.04)	-.05 (.04)	.01 (.03)	-.08* (.04)	.39** (.04)	-.06 (.04)	.03 (.03)	.21
Intercultural socialization	.02 (.04)	-.02 (.04)	.34** (.04)	.00 (.04)	.05 (.04)	.07 (.05)	.11** (.04)	.14
Turkish-Norwegian								
Informal education L1	.05 (.05)	.04 (.04)	-.02 (.03)	.12** (.04)	-.31** (.05)	.08 (.04)	.05 (.03)	.13
Informal education L2	-.03 (.05)	-.05 (.04)	.01 (.03)	-.09* (.04)	.36** (.05)	-.06 (.04)	.02 (.03)	.17
Intercultural socialization	.02 (.05)	-.02 (.04)	.29** (.04)	.00 (.04)	.04 (.03)	.07 (.05)	.09** (.03)	.10
Turkish-Dutch								
Informal education L1	.03 (.03)	.04 (.03)	-.02 (.04)	.08** (.03)	-.40** (.04)	.08 (.05)	.06 (.04)	.23
Informal education L2	-.01 (.03)	-.04 (.03)	.01 (.03)	-.06* (.03)	.45** (.04)	-.06 (.04)	.03 (.03)	.27
Intercultural socialization	.01 (.03)	-.02 (.03)	.35** (.04)	.00 (.03)	.05 (.04)	.07 (.05)	.10** (.04)	.15

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

As a final analysis, we tested possible differences between Turkish immigrant parents with a younger and Turkish immigrant parents with an older focus child. The constrained model showed a good fit ($\chi^2 = 171.45$, $df = 62$, $p < .01$, CFI = .95, TLI = .90, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05) and the Δ CFI was smaller than .01 compared to the unconstrained model ($\chi^2 = 134.99$, $df = 41$, $p < .01$, CFI = .95, TLI = .92, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06), indicating metric invariance between both subsamples.

Maghreb parents in France, Italy and the Netherlands. The unconstrained multigroup model had a good fit ($\chi^2 = 124.92$, $df = 63$, $p < .01$, CFI = .97, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .06), confirming configural invariance for the Maghreb subsamples in France, Italy, and the Netherlands. The fully constrained model resulted in a good fit as well ($\chi^2 = 205.12$, $df = 105$, $p < .01$, CFI = .95, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .07), but the ΔCFI was .02. Based on the Modification Indices and comparison of the estimated path coefficients of the unconstrained model with the corresponding estimates of the constrained model, the path between the importance of religion and parents' support for children's intercultural attitudes was set free to vary across the three countries. The final partially constrained model had a good fit ($\chi^2 = 197.32$, $df = 103$, $p < .01$, CFI = .95, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .07) and, compared to the unconstrained model, the ΔCFI was $< .01$.

Table 3.6 displays the standardized coefficients per country. The results are largely in line with the results presented in Table 3.4, however the association between the importance of religion and intercultural socialization was now only significant for the Maghreb parents in France ($B = .34$, $SE = .07$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, in contrast to Table 3.4, the importance of religion was now significantly *negatively* related to informal education in L2 ($B = -.15$, $SE = .03$, $p < .01$), equally across the three countries but with a small effect size. Again, parents' proficiency in L1 ($B = .25$, $SE = .07$, $p < .01$) was positively and parents' proficiency in L2 ($B = -.44$, $SE = .06$, $p < .01$) was negatively related to informal education in L1, while generation ($B = .86$, $SE = .14$, $p < .01$) was positively related to this outcome across countries. Conversely, parents' proficiency in L1 ($B = -.20$, $SE = .07$, $p < .01$) and generation ($B = -.87$, $SE = .14$, $p < .01$) were negatively, while parents' proficiency in L2 ($B = .55$, $SE = .05$, $p < .01$) and parents' education level ($B = .17$, $SE = .07$, $p < .05$) were positively related to informal education in L2 across countries. Finally, cultural maintenance ($B = -.14$, $SE = .04$, $p < .01$) was negatively related to intercultural socialization, while their preference for intercultural contact ($B = .28$, $SE = .04$, $p < .01$), generation ($B = .32$, $SE = .12$, $p < .01$) and education level ($B = .16$, $SE = .06$, $p < .01$) were positively related to this outcome, equally across countries. The explained variance in the outcome measures varied, but was overall substantial.

Table 3.6*Standardized Path Coefficients of the Structural Model for the Maghreb Subsamples*

	Religion	Cult main	Cult contact	Prof L1	Prof L2	Gene- ration	Educ level	<i>R</i> ²
	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	
Maghreb-Dutch								
Informal education L1	.07** (.02)	.04 (.03)	-.06 (.03)	.11** (.03)	-.28** (.04)	.23** (.04)	-.04 (.03)	.28
Informal education L2	-.05* (.02)	-.04 (.03)	.05 (.03)	-.09** (.03)	.33** (.04)	-.23** (.04)	.06* (.03)	.32
Intercultural socialization	.01 (.07)	-.16** (.04)	.32** (.04)	-.08 (.05)	.02 (.05)	.15** (.05)	.10** (.04)	.14
Maghreb-French								
Informal education L1	.14** (.05)	.04 (.03)	-.07 (.04)	.13** (.04)	-.28** (.04)	.31** (.05)	-.07 (.04)	.37
Informal education L2	-.10* (.05)	-.04 (.03)	.05 (.03)	-.11** (.04)	.34** (.04)	-.30** (.05)	.10* (.04)	.38
Intercultural socialization	.30** (.06)	-.11** (.03)	.26** (.04)	-.07 (.04)	.02 (.04)	.14** (.05)	.12** (.04)	.18
Maghreb-Italian								
Informal education L1	.07** (.02)	.04 (.03)	-.05 (.03)	.10** (.03)	-.30** (.04)	.09** (.02)	-.05 (.03)	.16
Informal education L2	-.05* (.02)	-.05 (.04)	.05 (.03)	-.09** (.03)	.42** (.04)	-.10** (.02)	.07* (.03)	.26
Intercultural socialization	.02 (.06)	-.15** (.04)	.26** (.03)	-.06 (.03)	.02 (.05)	.05* (.02)	.10** (.04)	.11

Note: The values in bold indicate the path coefficients that differed across the three subsamples
* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

As a final analysis, we tested possible differences between Maghreb immigrant parents with a younger and Maghreb immigrant parents with an older focus child. The constrained model showed a good fit ($\chi^2 = 155.41$, $df = 62$, $p < .01$, CFI = .96, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05) and the Δ CFI was smaller than .01 compared to the unconstrained model ($\chi^2 = 130.12$, $df = 41$, $p < .01$, CFI = .95, TLI = .92, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .06), indicating metric invariance between both subsamples.

Discussion

Children's wellbeing, school achievement and social integration is importantly dependent on the support their families provide to them at home by informal educational language activities and by encouraging children to engage in friendships with peers (Anders et al., 2012; Melhuish et al., 2008; Rodriguez et al., 2009). For immigrant families, however, this often presents a challenge as they have to strike a balance between the expectations of the mainstream society and their own acculturation preferences (Curd-Christian, 2013). Previous studies have shown that immigrant families differ in their choices regarding the languages used at home when interacting with their children and the focus of the intercultural socialization of their children as a consequence of the interplay of parents' acculturation preferences, religiosity and language skills, and the prevalent integration policies in the wider society, including norms regarding language use.

The current study examined parents' choices regarding language use and intercultural socialization in two major immigrant groups in Europe, originating from Turkey respectively the Maghreb countries Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, who settled across different countries. We focused on the informal educational support provided by parents in the heritage language (L1) and the country's national language (L2), and on parents' support to children's development of intercultural attitudes and engagement in intergroup peer relations, conveniently referred to as 'outcome variables'. We examined how these types of support to children were related to parents' acculturation preferences, religiosity, language proficiency, and the age of the focus child in these families, conveniently referred to as 'predictors', while controlling for generation of immigration and parents' education level. Comparing the same immigrant groups across the countries of residence, we could also, though tentatively and not without the necessary caution, address the role of national integration policies. Using multigroup structural equation modelling, we compared the 1) Turkish and Maghreb immigrant parents overall, 2) Turkish parents in England, Germany, Norway and the Netherlands, 3) Maghreb parents in France, Italy and the Netherlands, and 4) parents with a younger child (3-6 years old) and parents with an older child (9-12 years old).

The descriptive results confirmed the large variation in parents' language and intercultural socialization choices, both between and within the two immigrant groups, and between the countries within each immigrant group, in line with previous reports (Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yağmur, 2018a; Hughes et al., 2006; Prevoo et al., 2015). Overall, Turkish parents were found to use their L1 more often for informal education at home than the Maghreb parents did. In particular, the Maghreb parents in France and the Netherlands reported to use L2, the national language of the country, far more often than their L1, in line with previous studies (e.g., Abdelhadi, 2017; Leseman et al., 2019; Scheele et al., 2010). The Maghreb parents in Italy, in contrast, reported to use their L1 somewhat more often than L2 at home, likely because the Maghreb-Italian sample in the current study mainly consisted of recent first generation immigrants.

Parents' support for the intercultural attitudes of their children was higher in the Turkish-English and Turkish-Norwegian samples than in the Turkish-German and Turkish-Dutch samples. Maghreb parents' support of children's intercultural attitudes was lowest in the Maghreb-French sample and highest in the Maghreb-Italian sample.

Structural equation models

The multigroup SEM analysis revealed differences between the Turkish and Maghreb immigrant parents regarding the relationships between outcome measures and predictors. Therefore, as a next step, multigroup SEM analyses were conducted separately for each group to test possible differences per country. For the Turkish immigrant parents, the country models were found to be equivalent in terms of the relationships between outcomes and predictors. For the Maghreb immigrant parents, most relationships were equivalent across countries as well, with the exception of the relationship between the importance of religion and intercultural socialization in France. We also checked for both immigrant groups whether there were differences between parents with a younger and parents with an older focus child. We found none. Thus, overall, there was high structural equivalence. However, note that the mean scores did differ substantially between the countries for both immigrant groups. The results are discussed in more detail below.

Parental language choices in informal support

Overall, we found that parents' choices for the languages used in informal educational conversations with the child were most strongly related to their proficiency in L1 and L2. If parents were more proficient in L1, they more often chose to use L1 and not L2 in informal education, and vice versa. The relationship between choosing L2 and parents' proficiency in L2 was stronger than the relationship between choosing L1 and parents' proficiency in L1. In the Maghreb group also parents' generation of immigration and to a lesser extent their education level were related to language choice. First generation Maghreb immigrant parents chose L1 as language more often than one-and-a-half, second and third generation Maghreb immigrant parents, and vice versa, while higher educated Maghreb parents more often chose for L2. In the Turkish group, generation and education level were not related to language choice, which may be explained by the fact that Turkish parents according to several studies tend to maintain L1 across generations and regardless education and socioeconomic status more than Maghreb parents do, given the more complicated sociolinguistic situation of the latter (cf. Backus, 2013; Bozdağ, 2014; Leseman et al., 2019; Prevoo et al., 2015). Remarkably, in both immigrant groups, neither parents' preference for cultural maintenance nor their wish for contact with the majority group, as indicators of parents' acculturation strategy, were associated with the language choice in informal education. However, in the Maghreb group, the importance of religion was found to matter somewhat. Maghreb parents for whom religion was more important in daily life, chose more often for L1 in informal educational interactions with the child. It may point to a stronger in-group

orientation and even a separationist acculturation strategy among the more religious Maghreb parents (Fleishmann & Phalet, 2018; Friedman & Saroglou, 2010).

Altogether, the present results suggest that for language choice immigrant parents' language proficiency and characteristics related to language proficiency are more decisive than their acculturation strategies, with perhaps the exception of religiosity in the Maghreb group. The stronger relationships found between parents' L2 proficiency and the use of L2 as language for informal education compared to the relationship between L1 proficiency and L1 use in both immigrant groups, moreover suggest that when possible immigrants parents opt for L2 education at home. These results contradict the findings in previous studies that suggested that families' language policies are intricately part of immigrants' cultural identity and are motivated by the preference for cultural maintenance (e.g., Bezcioglu-Göktolga & Yağmur, 2018a; King & Fogle, 2008).

Studies have suggested that there can be a discrepancy between what parents prefer (maintaining the heritage language and culture) and what they are observed to do in daily practice (e.g., use of L2), which might be a consequence of the prevailing national integration policy and monolingual assimilation norm conveyed to parents (Curd-Christian, 2016; Song, 2019). In our study we indeed found differences in parents' L1 versus L2 use in educational interactions with their children between countries for the Maghreb parents, but not clearly for the Turkish parents despite similar differences in the national integration policies of the countries of residence of the Turkish. Maghreb parents in Italy used L1 more often than the Maghreb parents in France. However, this may rather reflect differences in proficiency related to generation of migration, while possibly the higher assimilationist pressure in education in France may have made Maghreb parents more proficient in French. It is important to keep in mind that the structural relationships between language choice and the proficiency and acculturation measures were equivalent across countries.

Thus, our results suggest that language proficiency and, related to that, particular sociolinguistic factors are more important than acculturation preferences for parents' language choice. Language choice among the studied immigrant parents may be pragmatic rather than identity-related, in line with the findings of Hatoss et al. (2011) regarding the language choices of African-Australian parents.

Parents support for intercultural socialization

With respect to parents' support for intercultural socialization, a different pattern was found. In both immigrant groups, in all countries, parents' wish for intercultural contact with the majority group, indicative of an integration or assimilation oriented acculturation strategy, was strongest associated with a socialization practice of fostering positive intercultural attitudes in children and encouraging them to relate to majority group peers. Thus, immigrant parents' own attitudes towards intercultural contact were relatively strongly reproduced in the reported intercultural socialization of their children. Also, although less strongly, a higher education level was associated with intercultural socialization, equally in both immigrant groups and in all countries. Parents' proficiency

in L1 and L2 were unrelated to the intercultural socialization of the child, again in both groups and all countries, supporting the previous presupposition that proficiency in the languages at stake (and the consequential language choice in education activities with the child) are not aspects of a deliberate acculturation strategy but dependent on generation of migration, education and sociolinguistic factors.

Furthermore, in the Turkish group in all countries, there was no relation between the other two indicators of parents' acculturation, the preference for cultural maintenance and the importance of religion, and the intercultural socialization of the child, suggesting that all these dimensions of acculturation were independent of Turkish immigrant parents' wish for intercultural contact and focus on the intercultural socialization of their children (cf. Berry, 1997), which is in line with previous evidence suggesting that Turkish immigrants distinguish between the private and public sphere with regard to culture and language maintenance (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2004). In the Maghreb group, in contrast, there were small but significant negative relations between the preference for cultural maintenance and intercultural socialization, which may indicate a separation strategy (Berry, 1997). While religiosity was unrelated to intercultural socialization for the Maghreb parents in Italy and the Netherlands, for the Maghreb parents in France, however, an unexpected relatively strong positive relation was found. A clear explanation is lacking. Note that the French Maghreb parents reported relatively low religious involvement overall (especially compared to the other Maghreb groups) and the lowest support to children intercultural attitudes in the whole sample. Therefore, this strong positive relation between religiosity and intercultural socialization may concern a specific subgroup within the French Maghreb sample. Upon a closer look at the available data, this likely concerned a small group of relatively high educated, self-conscious and religious Maghreb parents who want themselves and their children to participate in society.

Country differences

Overall, our analyses of the relationships between the outcome measures and the predictors in the two immigrant groups revealed only one country difference (the relation between religiosity and intercultural socialization in France), indicating nearly full equivalence at the level of variances and covariances of the model variables. This suggested that, within the two groups, mostly the same mechanisms underlie parents' choices regarding language use and intercultural socialization. However, the means of the model variables differed substantially by country. With respect to parents' language choices, the differences between countries were less prominent than the differences between the Turkish and Maghreb groups for reasons explained above, although L1 use of Maghreb parents in France was quite below that of the other Maghreb parents (and far below that of the Turkish parents in other countries), which may reflect the assimilationist pressure in France. Differences between countries were more apparent regarding the socialization of intercultural attitudes in children. Regardless the differences between the Turkish and Maghreb groups, parents' support to children's intercultural socialization

was overall higher in countries with a stronger multicultural integration policy, that is, England, Italy and Norway (reflected in local education and care professionals' beliefs and practices within these countries; Romijn et al., 2021; Slot et al., 2018) and lower in countries with a stronger assimilationist policy, that is Germany, the Netherlands and in particular France (likewise reflected in local professionals' beliefs and practices). Given the relatively strong relationship between parents' own wish for intercultural contact and the socialization of intercultural attitudes in children (equivalent across countries), the present findings tentatively suggest that national integration policies affect children's integration and participation in society via their parents' attitudes towards contact with the majority. Assimilation pressure, in this respect, does not seem to support the integration of the next generation.

Limitations and conclusions

The current study has several limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the results. First of all, caution is warranted when generalizing the current findings to the larger population. We deliberately selected countries, multiple sites within countries, and respondents to represent relevant variation in policy contexts and target groups. However, the samples cannot be said to be a true representation of the Turkish and Maghreb immigrant populations in Europe. Future research is recommended that includes more sites per country and uses a random or stratified-random sampling design for the recruitment of participants in order to increase the generalizability of the research findings. In addition, several possible other parent, family and context characteristics could have been included to explain parents' language and socialization choices, including especially perceived in-group social support, residential and (pre) school segregation, and related to that the opportunities for contact with members of the majority, and parents' experiences of being discriminated. However, this would have been beyond the scope of the present study which focused specifically on the role of parents' acculturation strategies and language proficiency in L1 and L2. Future research is recommended examines the role of these socio-psychological factors to further deepen our understanding of the choices immigrant parents make to support their children. Finally, we focused on informal educational conversations at home as a key-indicator of parents' support to children's development and learning, whereas the home learning environment is much broader, entailing also shared reading, storytelling, mathematical and creative activities (Francot et al., 2021, Chapter 2). It is plausible that parents' language choices would have been different for these other home learning activities, especially reading activities, where the availability of language specific resources (i.e., children's books in the immigrant languages) and parents' literacy skills would likely have influenced parents' choices (cf. Scheele et al., 2010).

To conclude, despite these limitations, the present findings lend support to the notion that cultural maintenance does not seem to impede parents' support for their child in their learning and integration. Rather, parents' own preference for majority group contact was found to be highly important for the socialization practices of supporting

intercultural attitudes in their children, across both target groups and across all countries, whereas parents' own language proficiency, alongside educational and sociolinguistic factors, strongly influenced their language choices and input at home. In order to help immigrant parents in their encouragement for their children, they should be provided the opportunity to improve their language proficiency, in the language of the country of residence but equally in their heritage language, and they should be given the opportunity to interact with majority group members, for themselves, but also to support the integration of their children.

Appendix 3.1

Construct of Home Learning Environment and Measurement Invariance across subsamples

The HLE measure was designed to address activities that adults engage in with their children at home and was adapted for both age groups. Items covered five dimensions of the HLE; educational conversations, shared reading, storytelling, (emerging) mathematics, and creative and practical activities, three items per dimension. The latent structure of the HLE measure (for the educational dimensions, without the practical items) was examined in another study on the relations between the Home Learning Environment and parents' acculturation among parents with a Turkish background in four countries (Francot et al., 2021, Chapter 2). This study found that for the Turkish younger children, the HLE items reflected the theoretical dimensions well; four scales of educational conversations, shared reading, storytelling, and (emerging) mathematics were found. For the Turkish older children, a different though satisfactory structure was found, with four dimensions focusing on informal educational conversations, literacy, moral-cultural education and homework support. Measurement invariance across the four countries showed that for both age-groups metric invariance was reached. Furthermore, in another study the measurement invariance of the entire HLE measure across eight countries participating in the ISOTIS project was checked and only minor invariance between the countries was found (see Broekhuizen et al., 2018).

For the current study, we only focused on the informal educational conversations. We examined the measurement invariance for the seven subsamples by comparing the configural, metric, and scalar models (Muthén and Asparouhov, 2013). For the younger age group, we found that the metric model, which specifies invariant loadings across countries, held against the configural model, ($\Delta\chi^2 = 2.63$, $\Delta df = 6$, $p = .85$), but scalar invariance, which specifies invariant thresholds and loadings showed a significantly worse fit ($\Delta\chi^2 = 92.70$, $\Delta df = 18$, $p < .01$). For the older age group, we found again that the metric invariance held against the configural model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 7.15$, $\Delta df = 6$, $p = .08$), but no scalar invariance ($\Delta\chi^2 = 90.55$, $\Delta df = 18$, $p < .01$). The usual multigroup CFA approach, relaxing invariance constraints one parameter at a time, is too cumbersome with many groups, due to the many possible minor violations of invariance, and the exploration of the modification indices could lead to the wrong model due to the scalar model being far from the true model (Van de Schoot et al., 2013). Asparouhov and Muthén (2014) presented a new method for multiple-group CFA, referred to as the *alignment method*. The alignment method can be used to estimate group-specific factor means and variances without requiring exact measurement invariance. A strength of the method is the possibility to conveniently estimate models for many groups, such as comparisons of countries or different target groups, as is the case for the current study. The alignment method is based on the configural model (i.e. metric and scalar invariance are not required) and essentially automates and greatly simplifies measurement

invariance analysis. It provides a detailed account of parameter invariance for every model parameter (both loadings and intercepts) in all groups (see Table 3.7).

Table 3.7

Approximate Invariance Results For Aligned Threshold Parameters for all Items (Numbers in Brackets Refer to Significant Non-Invariance For This Parameter)

item	Thresholds/intercepts							Loadings						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Young children														
Informal conver 1	1	2	3	4	5	(6)	7	1	2	3	(4)	(5)	(6)	7
Informal conver 2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	(4)	5	(6)	7
Informal conver3	1	2	3	4	5	(6)	(7)	1	2	3	(4)	5	(6)	7
Older children														
Informal conver 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Informal conver 2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Informal conver 3	1	2	3	(4)	(5)	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

For the younger children, the first item (i.e., “Talk with your child about your own or his/her everyday experiences”) was not invariant for the Maghreb-French group, who showed a significantly lower intercept (value = 5.29) when compared to the other groups. Furthermore, for the third item (i.e., “Talk about topics of general interest (such as history, dinosaurs, space...) with your child”), the Maghreb-French (value = 3.87) and Maghreb-Italian (value = 3.85) subsample showed significantly lower intercepts when compared to the other groups. Regarding the loadings across the subsamples, we found that the first item had significantly smaller loadings for the Turkish-Dutch, Maghreb-Dutch or Maghreb-French group, when compared to the other groups. For the second (i.e., “Talk with your child about past events”) the Turkish-Dutch and Maghreb-French showed significantly higher loadings, and for the third item, the Turkish-Dutch and Maghreb-French showed significantly lower loadings when compared to the other groups. In total, 23.80% of the parameters were not invariant. For the older children, the third item (i.e., “Talk about religious or moral topics with your child”) of informal conversations showed a significantly higher for the Maghreb-Dutch (value = 4.90) and Turkish-Dutch group (value = 4.91) when compared to the other subsamples. When checking the loadings, proximate measurement invariance holds for all subsamples for the group of older children. In total, for the older children, 4.76% of the parameters were not invariant. Given the rule of thumb, provided by Muthén and Asparouhov (2014), a limit of 25% non-invariance may be safe for trustworthy alignment results. Therefore, although it should be noted that the younger age group displayed moderate non-invariance, it can be concluded that we can compare, at least with some certainty, parents in the different seven subgroups on their informal conversations with their child.

Construct of Supporting intercultural attitudes and Measurement Invariance across samples.

A measurement model for the latent construct of support for intercultural attitudes was tested using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Since a factor model with three indicators in CFA results in a saturated model where the number of free parameters equals the number of elements in the variance-covariance matrix (i.e., the degrees of freedom is zero), we fixed the variance of the latent factor to one for identification purposes. Absolute model fit was evaluated partly based on nonsignificant χ^2 -value ($p > .01$), but due to its sensitivity to minor deviations in large samples, we also checked the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), indicating acceptable fit if both are $> .90$, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), acceptable if $< .08$, and Standardized Root Mean Square residual (SRMR), acceptable if $< .05$ (Bentler, 2006; Marsh et al., 2004).

The results from the CFA showed that the measurement model had a good model fit ($\chi^2 = 15.64$, $df = 1$, $p < .01$, $CFI = .98$, $TLI = .95$, $RMSEA = .08$, $SRMR = .04$). The three observation variables comprising the latent variable in the model had significant loadings, with standardized factor loadings between $.55$ and $.73$. These values were above the lower bound value of acceptable factor loading value of $.3$ (Agnew, 1991). Therefore, all of the observed variables selected in this study effectively reflected the intrinsic structure of the latent variable, showing a well-fitting model.

As valid country comparisons require measurement invariance between countries or groups, the next step was again to examine invariance of the CFA across the seven subgroups. We used the alignment method to examine measurement invariance (see Table 3.8).

Table 3.8

Approximate Invariance Results for Aligned Threshold Parameters for all Items (Numbers in Brackets Refer to Significant Non-Invariance For This Parameter)

item	Thresholds/intercepts							Loadings						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Intercultural socialization 1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Intercultural socialization 2	1	2	3	4	5	(6)	(7)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Intercultural socialization 3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

It can be concluded that although there is some non-invariance across the groups, this is limited to only one parameter. The second item of supporting intercultural attitudes (i.e., "telling your child that other cultural traditions and religions are of equal value"), had a significantly lower intercept for the Maghreb-French (value = 2.79) and Maghrebian-Italian group (value = 2.50) when compared to the other subsamples. When checking the loadings, proximate measurement invariance held for all

subsamples. In total, only 9.5 % of the intercepts and 0 % loadings were found to be non-invariant. Given the rule of thumb, provided by Muthén and Asparouhov (2014), a limit of 25% non-invariance may be safe for trustworthy alignment results. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is only minor non-invariance, meaning that we can compare, at least with some certainty, parents in the different seven subgroups on their support for their children's intercultural attitudes and behavior.



4

Profiles of bilingualism in early
childhood:

A person-centered Latent Profile
Transition approach

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Author contributions: *RF, EB, and PL designed the study. RF analyzed the data and wrote the manuscript. MB, EB and PL critically reviewed the manuscript.*

Abstract

Bilingualism as it occurs in current societies is a complex, multidimensional and dynamic phenomenon, calling for new approaches to capture this concept. This study shows the feasibility of a person-centered approach by combining measures of the use of and proficiency in the first and second language from 110 young Turkish–Dutch children at two measurement waves, using two existing datasets. Latent Profile Analysis revealed four profiles, equivalent at age four and six: 1) *Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency*, 2) *Dual L1 and L2 use, around average L1 and L2 proficiency*, 3) *Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency* and 4) *Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency*. Latent Transition Analysis indicated that children changed in profiles over time. Regression analyses showed that profiles were differently related to the family's socioeconomic status and children's nonverbal intelligence at age four. No relations were found at age six.

Keywords: bilingualism, bilingual profiles, second language acquisition, latent profile transition analysis, early childhood

Introduction

One of the biggest challenges in research on bilingualism is the concept of bilingualism itself and, related to this, how bilingualism can be best defined and measured in research (Grosjean, 1998; Kaushanskaya & Prior, 2015; Luk, 2015). The lack of consensus on the definition and measurement is, at least in part, an explanation of the fact that findings in bilingualism research are sometimes contradictory and often difficult to compare (Bialystok, 2015; De Bruin et al., 2015; Paap et al., 2015).

Most educational and linguistic research on bilingualism to date has used a dichotomous definition of bilingualism to describe the sample: individuals are considered either bilingual or monolingual (Surrain & Luk, 2017). Likewise, many previous studies have treated bilingualism essentially as a unidimensional phenomenon that can be characterized by scores on separate variables (e.g., proficiency in either first or second language, or use of either first or second language). This approach is currently criticized, as it fails to recognize the large variability within bilingual populations and does not account for the variability within bilingual individuals over time or across contexts (Bialystok et al., 2012; Dixon et al., 2012; Kroll & Bialystok, 2013). The present study proposes an alternative approach to capture the variability and multidimensionality of bilingualism. By applying a person-centered rather than a variable-centered approach, the present study aims to identify distinct subgroups within a population of bilinguals, involving the dimensions of proficiency and use in both languages simultaneously. Focusing on young Turkish–Dutch immigrant children enrolling in Dutch language kindergarten classrooms from age four, we examine which bilingual proficiency and use profiles can be distinguished, how children’s profiles change between age four and six, and how profiles are related to non-linguistic factors such as socioeconomic background and cognitive abilities.

Addressing the complexity of bilingualism

The awareness that bilingualism is a complex phenomenon is not new. In previous work researchers have sought to find a definition that does justice to the heterogeneity of bilingualism. Terms have been used such as ‘imbalanced bilinguals’ or ‘semilinguals’ to address strong differences in proficiency levels between the two languages in particular bilinguals (Martin-Jones & Romaine, 1986; Ng & Wigglesworth, 2007). Thomas-Sunesson et al. (2016) and Chen et al. (2014) included bilingualism as a continuous variable, defined as the level of *proficiency* of bilingual children to effectively express themselves in two languages. Likewise, Sorge et al. (2017) included a gradient of bilingualism as a continuous variable, but in this case defined in terms of the degree of *use* of the two languages. This reveals an important point of discussion: should we refer to individuals’ use of the two languages, to their proficiency in the two languages, or to both when describing the level or degree of bilingualism?

Language proficiency and language use are related concepts. According to Grosjean (2010) and Li (2012), an individual’s proficiency will increase when the language is

frequently used. Conversely, successful use of a language requires a sufficient level of mastery of that language. Yet, use and proficiency cannot be used interchangeably to define bilingualism, as is often assumed, but constitute separate, although related, dimensions (Grosjean & Li, 2012). Luk and Bialystok (2013) used exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis to examine the dimensional structure of bilingualism in a sample of bilingual young adults. Two continuous factors, only moderately correlated ($r = .36$), were found that represented the variability of bilingualism best: proficiency and use. This suggests that focusing on one dimension only (either use or proficiency) cannot sufficiently capture the multidimensional nature of bilingualism (Bialystok, 2016).

According to Baker (2011), an important step forward would be to include several dimensions of bilingualism simultaneously, such as the productive and receptive abilities in both languages, the degree of use of both languages, the age and order of acquisition, and the structural differences and similarities of the languages concerned when addressing the bilingual experience, or profile, of an individual. Although this theoretical proposal has been welcomed (e.g., Francot et al., 2017; Gertken et al., 2014; Grosjean & Li, 2012; Kaushanskaya & Prior, 2015), to the best of our knowledge only a few empirical studies to date have actually attempted to apply a multidimensional approach. Anderson et al. (2018b) developed the Language and Social Background Questionnaire, an extensive questionnaire to examine the heterogeneity of the bilingual experience. An exploratory factor analysis confirmed the finding of Luk and Bialystok (2013) that use and proficiency in both languages are separate dimensions to characterize bilinguals in a heterogeneous sample. In addition, they stressed the importance of language use in different contexts as an important dimension. While the researchers acknowledged the multidimensionality of bilingualism, they created a single composite measure of all dimensions to examine the association between the bilingual experience and executive function tasks, rather than creating profiles based on multiple dimensions and examining the differences between the profiles. We will briefly discuss these two different approaches, variable-centered versus person centered, below.

Variable-centered versus person-centered approaches

A key challenge for bilingualism research is to capture the heterogeneity that may arise from the complex interplay of multiple dimensions of bilingualism. Variable-centered approaches are less appropriate to this end, since this approach aims at describing general associations among variables, with the goal to characterize the entire sample. The underlying assumption is that the population is homogeneous with respect to how the predictors operate on the outcomes (Howard & Hoffman, 2018; Laursen & Hoff, 2006). In comparison, the person-centered approach aims to describe differences among individuals in how variables are related to each other, while assuming the population to be heterogeneous. Since the population of bilinguals is notoriously heterogeneous and we aim to capture inter-individual differences on multiple dimensions, a person-centered approach is well suited here. Several studies applied a person-centered approach to do justice to the heterogeneity of bilingualism, but struggled with including multiple

dimensions. Dixon and colleagues (2012) used an a priori categorization approach in a study among bilingual Singaporean kindergartners. They defined four bilingual profiles by systematically combining below versus above median scores on oral vocabulary tests in both the first and second language (respectively L1 and L2) of the children, and examined whether non-linguistic factors (such as socioeconomic status, abbreviated as SES) contributed to the differentiation between these profiles. They found that children from families with a low SES were most likely to experience low proficiency in both languages or low proficiency in English, compared to children from middle and high SES backgrounds. However, children from low SES backgrounds were also represented in the dual high proficiency profile. In a longitudinal study with dual language learning preschoolers, Collins et al. (2014) determined bilingual profiles by applying conceptually derived cut-off criteria, using the monolingual norm-referenced mean scores on oral proficiency. The results revealed five dual language profiles; dual proficient, Spanish proficient, English proficient, limited proficient and borderline proficient. Their results showed substantial change in children's dual language profiles during their first years of school. Child, family and home linguistic factors (e.g., children's non-linguistic cognitive abilities, maternal education, maternal language proficiency) were predominantly related to the profiles at the first time point (kindergarten), whereas the school linguistic factors (e.g., school language use) had a larger impact at the second time point (second grade). Note that both Dixon and colleagues (2012) and Collins and colleagues (2014) only included children's proficiency in L1 and L2 to define profiles, rather than including both language use and language proficiency in the two languages. It can be easily seen that if the number of dimensions of bilingualism increases, a priori categorization would lead to a rather large number of theoretically derived profiles (e.g., 16 if proficiency and use of two languages are included). Moreover, systematically defining a priori profiles may result in profiles that do not accurately represent the population under study (Hickendorff et al., 2018).

A person-centered data-driven approach, yielding a limited number of profiles that accurately characterize subgroups of individuals in a given population based on multiple dimensions of bilingualism, offers an alternative. A recent study by Lonigan et al. (2018) has shown the benefits of using Latent Profile Analysis to evaluate subgroups of young bilingual children, based on their language proficiency in both languages. Examining the latent heterogeneity, they found nine distinct groups, each with unique patterns of absolute and relative levels of proficiency in L1 and L2, and examined whether different proficiency profiles predicted subsequent development in language-minority children's early literacy skills. The current study will apply a similar approach, though adding an important dimension to establish more comprehensive bilingual profiles of young children: the use of L1 and L2.

Associations with bilingual profiles

The way in which bilingualism manifests itself in individuals can change over time and across contexts, and can be susceptible to both linguistic and non-linguistic

influences (Bialystok, 2001; Hoff, 2013; Luk & Bialystok, 2013; Melzi et al., 2017). Several studies have shown that time-dependent factors such as age, transitions in social and educational contexts, and the development of general cognitive and academic abilities affect both dual language proficiency and dual language use in bilinguals (e.g., Bialystok, 2001; Blom et al., 2014; Collins et al., 2014; Hoff, 2013; Leseman et al., 2019). In young bilingual children, in particular, the transition from the predominantly first language home environment to preschool, kindergarten or primary school, in which children become immersed in the second language, can have a big impact on the use of the two languages and the language proficiency in both languages (Collins et al., 2014; Prevoo et al., 2015; Leseman et al., 2019).

Previous research often pointed to family's SES or children's cognitive abilities as important non-linguistic factors related to either the (possible) effects of bilingualism or the degree of bilingualism (for an overview, see Thomas-Sunesson et al., 2016). However, the relations of these non-linguistic factors with bilingualism may be more complex when multiple dimensions of bilingualism are combined into profiles. For example, several studies have found that maternal education, as an indicator of SES, is differently related to children's development of their L1 and L2; for Latino immigrant families, maternal education is found to be related to children's proficiency in English, but not in Spanish (Place & Hoff, 2016). In addition, Hoff et al. (2018) found that the language in which mothers achieved their highest level of education might explain this finding: the maternal education level completed in English was related to their children's English skills, but not their children's Spanish skills. Conversely, the level of education completed in Spanish was related to their children's Spanish skills, but not their children's English skills. Second, the relationship between SES and bilingual language use is also complex (Prevoo et al., 2011; Scheele et al., 2010). Immigrant families with a higher SES often stimulate their children's L1 development in the home environment because they value bilingualism and the linguistic richness (and they have more resources to support L1), while low-SES immigrant parents use their L1 more because that is the language they often feel most comfortable with (Arriagada, 2005; Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; Prevoo et al., 2015; Tovar-García & Podmazin, 2018).

When focusing on nonverbal cognitive abilities, it has been found that the relationship between bilingualism and cognitive abilities is bidirectional; a higher general learning potential may facilitate bilingual competences, and vice versa, the experience of learning and using two languages may influence the cognitive system (Bialystok, 2010; Bohlmann et al., 2015; Collins et al., 2014). Recent studies have shown that children's cognitive abilities are differently related to the competences in L1 and L2. Blom (2019) found, in her study on young bilingual children with an immigrant background in the Netherlands, that nonverbal cognitive abilities influence L2 receptive vocabulary development, but not the development of L1 receptive vocabulary. Hoff (2020) confirmed these findings for young English-Spanish speaking children, showing that nonverbal intelligence only predicted the rate of English expressive vocabulary growth. The current study examines

the associations between family's SES and children's nonverbal intelligence and distinct bilingual profiles over time.

The present study

The present study addresses the issues regarding the complexity of bilingualism by applying a three-step person-centered profiling approach to capture the bilingual experience of a cohort of young bilingual Turkish–Dutch children. First, we conducted Latent Profile Analysis (LPA)² at two time-points, when the children were four and six years of age, to identify the bilingual profiles of the children that emerge from the variation along the main dimensions of bilingualism: proficiency and use of the two languages. Second, using a longitudinal design, we examined the stability and developmental changes of these profiles by conducting Latent Transition Analysis (LTA). Third, we investigated the relations of the identified profiles with two non-linguistic factors, the family's SES and children's nonverbal intelligence, by including them as predictors of class-membership at age four and six. The Turkish–Dutch population is the largest non-Western immigrant population in the Netherlands (Statistics Netherlands, 2016). Until kindergarten entry, most Turkish–Dutch children are mainly exposed to Turkish, their first language (L1), in the home and wider family environment because of the close social ties within the Turkish community and the strong maintenance of the heritage language (Backus, 2013). Although they become gradually introduced to Dutch (L2), for example via part-time use of a Dutch language day care center or preschool in this period, for most children Turkish is the language they hear most before age four (Scheele et al., 2010). From age four, almost all Turkish–Dutch children, like native Dutch peers, are introduced to the kindergarten departments of primary schools, which offer a program of 20 hours per week in which Dutch is the only language. Preschool and kindergarten attendance leads to a gradual increase of children's use of and proficiency in Dutch as L2. Consequently, the use of L2 in mother-child communication has been reported to increase in this period, while the use of L1 decreases (Leseman et al., 2019; Prevoo et al., 2011). Thus, the period between age four and age six is an important transition period in which the increasing exposure to and use of Dutch is expected to influence the bilingual profiles of the Turkish–Dutch children.

The study addresses the following research questions:

- 1) Which bilingual profiles can be distinguished at age four and age six, respectively, based on children's proficiency in L1 (Turkish) and L2 (Dutch) and on their use of L1 and L2 at home?
- 2) To what extent do children change in bilingual profile between age four and age six?

2 Note that the current study uses continuous variables as indicators. Therefore, we refer to 'profiles' as the latent subgroups rather than 'classes' (Williams & Kibowski, 2016), and we use the terms Latent Profile Analysis rather than Latent Class Analysis.

- 3) Are the identified profiles at both ages related to the socioeconomic status of the children's families and to children's nonverbal intelligence?

Method

Participants

The current study focused on second-generation Turkish children living in the Netherlands. Existing data from two parallel studies (conducted in 2006–2009) were used, one focusing on the influence of environmental factors on bilingual language development (Scheele, 2010; Turkish–Dutch subsample $n = 50$) and the other on the development of verbal short-term memory in bilingual children (Messer, 2010; Turkish–Dutch subsample $n = 67$). Given the aims of the current study, we did not include the monolingual children from Scheele (2010) and Messer (2010). The two datasets were merged to create a sufficiently large sample. Solely measures that were exactly the same in the two original studies were used for the current study. T-tests revealed that children in both studies were comparable on degree of use of the Turkish and Dutch language at home, and Dutch receptive vocabulary (all p 's $> .05$) at both age groups. In Scheele (2010), children were slightly older (only at age four) and the average family SES and the proficiency in Turkish of the children were slightly higher at age four than in Messer (2010), but the score distributions largely overlapped and these differences disappeared at age six (see Appendix 4.1, for the descriptive statistics of both datasets).

Multivariate regression analyses were run to check whether there was an interaction effect of family SES and the dataset on the language use and language proficiency variables at both ages. No significant interaction effects were found, indicating that the two datasets do not differ in the way SES predicts the outcome variables (see Appendix 4.2, for the regression analyses). Data from the final sample were collected in two waves; when children were approximately four and six years old. At wave 1, all children were recently enrolled in all-Dutch kindergarten classrooms. Data were missing on the four key variables (Turkish and Dutch language use at home, and Turkish and Dutch receptive vocabulary) for 5.13% and 11.96% of the 117 children at wave 1 and 2, respectively. Furthermore, one outlier on the age variable was found (same participant in both age groups). This child was tested at a substantially later age than the other children in the same wave (66 months at age four and 84 months at age six). Analyses were run with and without this one child, and no differences were found for the Latent Profile Analyses. For reasons of homogeneity of the sample, it was, however, decided to exclude this participant. The final sample included 110 children (50.90% males) at wave 1 and 102 children at wave 2. At wave 1, the mean age was 52.10 months ($SD = 1.74$, range = 49–57 months). At wave 2, at the end of kindergarten, the mean age was 71.42 months ($SD = 2.21$, range = 67–83 months). Hereafter, the two waves are referred to as the age four and age six measurements.

Procedure

Both original studies followed a largely similar procedure. In Messer (2010), researchers approached Dutch primary schools with a moderate to high percentage of ethnic minority children (25–100%). For this study, the primary caregivers (mainly mothers) of the children were administered a pre-screening questionnaire to ensure that only children and families were included in which the language interactions with the target child in the family context were at least for 70% in Turkish. Trained research assistants, who were fluent in the native (Turkish) and second language (Dutch) of the children, tested each child individually. Standardized tests were administered to the children in a fixed order using laptop computers. After the children were tested, the parental questionnaire was administered in personal interviews with the mother in the mother's language of preference. Scheele (2010) used the same criterion for inclusion of families, followed the same testing procedure and used the same measures and parental questionnaire as Messer (2010). There were two minor differences between the two studies. In Scheele (2010), immigrant families in two large municipalities were approached directly (rather than via schools), and, whereas in Messer (2010) children were tested in two sessions at school, the children in Scheele (2010) were tested at home during two visits. For more details on the procedures and measures, see Messer (2010) and Scheele (2010).

Measures

Language Use

Children's use of L1 and L2 in different activity domains was investigated at each wave via personal interviews with the mothers using a structured parental questionnaire. Mothers were asked to indicate how frequently these verbal interaction activities occurred. The answers were scored on a five-point Likert scale with scores ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (daily). Four scales, comprising of 9 to 30 items, were constructed representing different types of activities involving language use by the child: personal conversations at home (e.g., "How often do you talk with your child about how he or she feels?"), personal conversations outside home (e.g., "How often do you talk about the things your child experiences, for example about the children your child plays with?"), playing games (e.g., "How often does your child play with board games?"), and school-related activities (e.g., "How often do you talk with your child about what happened at school?"). All scales had satisfactory internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .82 to .92.

For each type of language activity (e.g., personal conversations at home), mothers were also asked to indicate which language was used for that activity. If only one language (either L1 or L2) was used for an activity, a score of 1 was given for that language, and a score of 0 for the other language. If the target language was mostly used, but another language sometimes, a score of .75 was given. If the target language and another language were used equally, a score of .50 was given. A score of .25 was

assigned if another language was used more often than the target language, and finally, a score of 0 was given if the target language was never used with that particular type of activity. For instance, if the interviewee indicated that the child used “more Turkish than Dutch” while playing games, a score of .75 was given for the first language, Turkish, and a score of .25 for the other language, Dutch. Eventually, four language-specific use variables were constructed as the product of the average scores on the language activity scales (range 1 to 5) and the weights for language use (range 0 to 1), for both L1 and L2 respectively, yielding scores that ranged from 0 to 5³. Preliminary examination of the data showed high correlations (ranging between $r = .45$ and $r = .90$, all p 's $< .01$) between the language-specific variables. Therefore, two variables were created for each measurement wave, computed as the mean of the four language use variables, indicating overall *Language Use L1* and *Language use L2* for the family.

Language proficiency

Vocabulary size is a significant predictor of academic achievement and literacy acquisition (Bialystok, Luk, Peets & Yang, 2010), and receptive vocabulary knowledge is the best single indicator of the language skills of a bilingual child (e.g., Hulstijn, 2011; Luo et al., 2010). Children's receptive vocabulary was assessed in both languages using the receptive vocabulary test of the Diagnostic Test of Bilingualism, developed by the national educational testing service, CITO (Verhoeven et al., 1995). The test requires children to match a target word, mentioned by the research assistant, with one out of four pictures. For instance, when the research assistant says “pile up”, the child is required to point to the picture where a man piles up several boxes. The vocabulary test with 60 items (numbered 1 to 60) of increasing difficulty was split in two parts, one part consisting of the odd-numbered items and a parallel part consisting of the even-numbered items, yielding equivalent forms with each 30 items of increasing difficulty. In the present study, children were administered the odd-numbered items to assess vocabulary in L1 and the even-numbered items to assess vocabulary in L2. Testing continued until the child failed five consecutive items or completed all 30 items of the test. Cronbach's alpha values for the receptive vocabulary tests ranged from .77 to .89 at both measurement occasions. The scores were normally distributed (as indicated by non-significant Shapiro-Wilk W tests per language and age group, ranging from $W[103] = .98$, $p = .07$ to $W[107] = .99$, $p = .17$), and did not reveal floor or ceiling effects.

3 We are aware of the longstanding controversy regarding using ordinal data (e.g., Likert-scales) as continuous data (i.e. interval data). Several researchers have found consistent support for the use of variables measured on five-point ordinal scales as approximately continuous. Likert scales with five or more categories can often be used as continuous without any harm to the analysis (Johnson & Creech, 1983; Norman, 2010; Sullivan & Artino, 2013). Given that we combined multiple Likert scales with a broad range of items for all variables, we can describe the variables as ‘ordinal approximation of a continuous variable’.

Nonverbal fluid intelligence

Raven's Colored Progressive Matrices (Raven, Raven & Court, 1998) was administered to measure nonverbal fluid intelligence at Wave 1. The task was presented on a laptop computer using the software package MINDS (Brand, 1999). The children had to conduct 36 perceptual and conceptual exercises by completing a pattern correctly by choosing one out of six pieces. Correct answers on each exercise were summed, yielding a total score between 0 and 36. According to Pearson Talentlens (2011), Cronbach's alpha value for the Dutch version of the Raven's test is .81.

Socioeconomic Status

Family SES was based on questions about the level of education of the parents at Wave 1 and was computed as the mean of the highest attained education level of both parents, ranging from 1 (primary school or less) to 6 (university degree). Parental education is the most commonly used index of SES background, is highly predictive of other SES indicators (e.g., income, job status), and is a better predictor of children's academic performance than other SES indicators (see also Calvo & Bialystok, 2014).

Statistical analyses

Latent Transition Analysis (LTA) was conducted in a three-step approach (Hickendorff et al., 2018). First, bilingual profiles were identified based on use and proficiency in both languages for age four and age six using Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) in Mplus version 8.1 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998). LPA models the heterogeneity inherent in response patterns and detects latent profiles of children with similar response patterns. Since latent profile indicators do not need to be measured in the same metric and using group or grand mean centered variables leads to information loss, raw data were used (Muthén & Muthén, 2018; Seltzer et al., 1994). The statistical criteria applied were the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and the sample size adjusted Bayesian Information Criterion (SS Adj. BIC). The best solution was chosen based on the smallest indices of both criteria. An additional index of entropy was calculated to evaluate homogeneity, with values close to 1 indicating sufficient homogeneity of the profiles (Celeux & Soromenho, 1996). In addition, the parametric Bootstrapped Likelihood Ratio (BLRT) was consulted to determine if models that differed by one profile differ significantly from each other in model fit (Nylund et al., 2007). If the BLRT has a p -value smaller than .05, it indicates that the model with more profiles indeed has a better fit than the model with fewer profiles. Next to these statistical guidelines, also the interpretability of the profiles was checked. After retaining the best fitting models for age four and age six, we examined the measurement invariance of the profiles across time to test whether the four profiles at age four and age six display a similar structure (i.e., whether the four profiles can be considered to be the same across time).

The stability of profile membership over time was examined with LTA. The LTA models used in this study were estimated using the robust maximum likelihood estimator (Collins & Lanza, 2010). To avoid the problem of local maxima (i.e., selection by

chance of a suboptimal solution), the analyses of each model were conducted with 1000 random sets of start values to ensure that the best loglikelihood value was adequately replicated. Moreover, the default was increased to 100 iterations for these random starts and retained the 100 best solutions for final stage optimization (Hipp & Bauer, 2006). Finally, in order to examine the relations of the bilingual profiles with SES and nonverbal intelligence, multinomial logistic regression (MLR) analyses were applied, yielding odds ratios [OR] with 95% confidence intervals [CI].

Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 4.1 reports the means of the variables in the current study: two language proficiency variables, two language use variables, family SES, and nonverbal intelligence score of the children. The assumptions of normality were met for the variables, therefore parametric paired sample t -tests were applied, revealing that both the proficiency in L1 (Turkish) and L2 (Dutch) increased significantly over the years. Also the use of L2 increased significantly, while the use of L1 decreased significantly. The mean score of family SES implies an average level of educational attainment, approximately corresponding to the senior vocational training level. The mean score of nonverbal intelligence indicates an average level that did not differ from the mean score of the monolingual Dutch children with varied socioeconomic backgrounds in the studies of Scheele (2010) and Messer (2010). To better interpret the proficiency scores of this bilingual sample, proficiency scores of the monolingual Dutch children from the original studies are shown in Table 4.1 as well. As was expected, the monolingual peers scored significantly higher in Dutch than the bilingual children at both ages (age 4, $t[229] = 14.49, p < .01$, age 6, $t[225] = 12.81, p < .01$).

Table 4.1*Descriptive Statistics of Age Four and Age Six*

	Age 4 (n=110)	Age 6 (n=102)	Range	t
	M (SD)	M (SD)		
Proficiency L1	13.70 (4.73)	19.69 (2.79)	1-30	12.96**
Proficiency L2	13.36 (5.12)	21.54 (3.28)	1-30	16.86**
Use L1	2.97 (0.97)	2.67 (1.08)	0-5	-2.64**
Use L2	0.87 (0.97)	1.29 (1.10)	0-5	3.96**
SES	2.74 (1.14)		1-6	
Nonverbal Intelligence	12.48 (2.74)		1-36	
Proficiency in Dutch monolingual children (n = 124) ^a	21.01 (3.97)	26.95 (2.34)	1-30	

^a Monolingual sub-group study Scheele (2010) and Messer (2010)** $p < .01$

Table 4.2 presents the Pearson correlations of the variables for age four and age six. There was a strong negative correlation between the use of L1 and the use of L2 at both ages, reflecting that the time for exposure to one language competes with the time for exposure to the other language within the family context (Leseman et al., 2019; Place & Hoff, 2011). Moreover, proficiency in L1 was positively related to the use of L1 for both age groups and negatively to the use of L2 at age four. Note that the correlations between proficiency and use were rather weak, confirming that language use and language proficiency are two different dimensions of bilingualism (Luk & Bialystok, 2013). SES was positively related to the use of L2 at age four and positively related to the proficiency in L2 at age six. Nonverbal intelligence was positively correlated to both L1 and L2 proficiency at age four, but not at age 6.

Table 4.2*Correlation Matrix of Measures at Age Four and Age Six*

	Age 4					Age 6						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Proficiency L1	-						-					
2. Proficiency L2	.11	-					.13	-				
3. Use L1	.29**	-.11	-				.20*	.02	-			
4. Use L2	-.23*	.16	-.88**	-			-.16	-.01	-.92**	-		
5. SES	.01	.19	-.09	.21**	-		-.03	.28**	-.05	.10	-	
6. Nonverbal Intelligence	.24*	.25*	.09	-.01	.29**	-	-.00	.11	.04	.02	.29**	-

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Latent Profile Analysis (LPA)

In order to determine the optimal number of latent profiles (based on proficiency in L1, proficiency in L2, use of L1, and use of L2), several LPA models were compared ranging from two to five latent profiles. Table 4.3 shows the four fit indices for both measurement occasions. The AIC and BIC indices showed that a five-profiles model would fit best at age four. However, given the unequal distribution of number of children in this profile, there was more support for the four-profiles solution, which had slightly higher AIC and BIC scores. The BLRT was uninformative as its value was significant for each model analyzed at age four.

Similar to the LPA at age four, the five-profiles model at age six resulted in small, unequal profiles, although the AIC and BIC values were slightly lower than for the four-profiles model. An insignificant BLRT value indicated that the four-profiles solution had a significantly better fit than the five-profile solution. The entropy values of the four-profiles model indicated good homogeneity of the profiles, .87 and .86 for age four and age six respectively. Therefore, it was decided that a four-profiles model was the best fitting model on both measurement occasions.

Table 4.3

Fit Indices for the Latent Profile Models Age Four and Age Six

Model	AIC ^a	SSAdj. BIC ^a	Entropy ^b	BLRT <i>p</i> -value	Profiles: <i>n</i> %
Age 4					
2 Latent Profiles	1748.62	1742.65	.94		1: <i>n</i> = 33 29.19% 2: <i>n</i> = 77 70.81%
3 Latent Profiles	1697.76	1689.48	.96	.00	1: <i>n</i> = 77 70.00% 2: <i>n</i> = 22 20.00% 3: <i>n</i> = 11 10.00%
4 Latent Profiles	1677.50	1666.93	.88	.00	1: <i>n</i> = 54 49.09% 2: <i>n</i> = 23 20.91% 3: <i>n</i> = 22 20.00% 4: <i>n</i> = 11 10.00%
5 Latent Profiles	1667.97	1655.10	.88	.00	1: <i>n</i> = 8 7.27% 2: <i>n</i> = 53 48.18% 3: <i>n</i> = 24 21.81% 4: <i>n</i> = 3 2.73% 5: <i>n</i> = 22 20.00%

Table 4.3 Continued

Model	AIC ^a	SSAdj. BIC ^a	Entropy ^b	BLRT <i>p</i> -value	Profiles: <i>n</i> %
Age 6					
2 Latent Profiles	1546.73	1539.79	.86		1: <i>n</i> = 56 54.90% 2: <i>n</i> = 46 45.10%
3 Latent Profiles	1475.47	1465.87	.94	.00	1: <i>n</i> = 52 50.98% 2: <i>n</i> = 40 39.22% 3: <i>n</i> = 10 9.80%
4 Latent Profiles	1466.04	1453.77	.86	.03	1: <i>n</i> = 31 30.39% 2: <i>n</i> = 41 40.21% 3: <i>n</i> = 20 19.61% 4: <i>n</i> = 10 9.80%
5 Latent Profiles	1462.30	1447.36	.88	.11	1: <i>n</i> = 9 8.82% 2: <i>n</i> = 25 24.51% 3: <i>n</i> = 6 5.88% 4: <i>n</i> = 27 26.47% 5: <i>n</i> = 35 34.31%

^a Lower AIC and SS Adj. BIC values indicate better fit.

^b Entropy should be greater than .70.

Prior to interpreting the profiles and examining the transitions over time, models were compared reflecting varying degrees of measurement invariance across the assessments at age four and age six, using standardized scores to adjust for changes in means over time (Nylund, 2007). A full measurement invariance model was fitted and compared to other models with less restrictive invariance assumptions. Log likelihood ratio tests indicated that at least partial invariance (equality constraints imposed on one of the four profiles) could be established ($\chi^2(4) = 4.39, p = .35$), though not full measurement invariance ($\chi^2(16) = 41.83, p < .01$). The four-profiles models indicated similar structures over time (as will be discussed below). Therefore, we retained a similar interpretation and terminology of the latent profiles over time. Table 4.4 displays the raw average scores per profile.

Table 4.4*Raw scores Four Profiles at Age 4 and Age 6*

Age 4	Profile 1	Profile 2	Profile 3	Profile 4	Total
<i>n</i>	54	23	22	11	110
L1 proficiency age 4 (<i>M, SD</i>) ^a	12.60 (4.09)	13.18 (4.70)	18.19 (3.95)	11.89 (4.71)	13.71 (4.71)
L2 proficiency age 4 (<i>M, SD</i>) ^a	11.23 (5.21)	14.00 (3.71)	15.90 (4.48)	15.50 (4.54)	13.35 (5.10)
L1 use age 4 (<i>M, SD</i>) ^b	3.27 (0.33)	2.16 (0.35)	4.05 (0.35)	1.01 (0.46)	2.97 (0.97)
L2 use age 4 (<i>M, SD</i>) ^b	0.41 (0.36)	1.69 (0.34)	0.09 (0.16)	2.97 (0.56)	0.88 (0.97)
Age 6					
<i>n</i>	31	41	20	10	102
L1 proficiency age 6 (<i>M, SD</i>) ^a	19.05 (3.11)	19.52 (2.53)	21.17 (2.34)	19.39 (2.76)	19.69 (2.79)
L2 proficiency age 6 (<i>M, SD</i>) ^a	19.94 (3.11)	21.76 (3.05)	23.15 (3.78)	22.11 (2.68)	21.50 (3.31)
L1 use age 6 (<i>M, SD</i>) ^b	3.39 (0.35)	2.12 (0.33)	3.99 (0.31)	0.56 (0.36)	2.73 (1.11)
L2 use age 6 (<i>M, SD</i>) ^b	0.57 (0.45)	1.90 (0.50)	0.12 (3.31)	3.31 (0.47)	1.27 (1.09)

^a Range 1-30^b Range 0-5

For the overall pattern of responses of the four profiles, see Figure 4.1 and 4.2. Note that the measures of proficiency and use had different measurement scales. In order to display the four measures in one graph, we used a primary vertical axis for the proficiency scores (represented by the two left bars) and a secondary vertical axis for the use scores (represented by the two right bars). When creating the graph, we did not standardize on the group mean of each variable (i.e., by computing z-scores). Although this would have enabled us to display the four scores on the same scale, taking the highly divergent means per variable (as displayed in Table 4.1) as baselines would have led to a distorted display of the profiles, and the change in means over time would have disappeared. Note that children's proficiency in both L1 and L2 increased significantly over time (as illustrated by the higher proficiency bars at age 6) and that the variation between the profiles decreased. Use of L1 and L2, in contrast, due to the nature of the measurements (frequency of use) did not show a clear developmental increase, although presumably both the conceptual content and linguistic structure of L1 and L2 use did change between age four and age six.

Figure 4.1

Raw scores of Profiles at Age 4

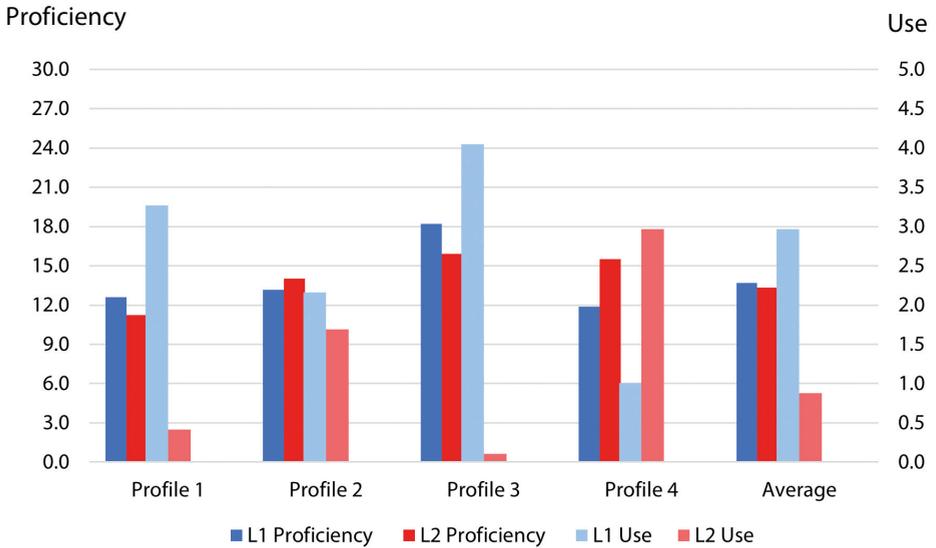
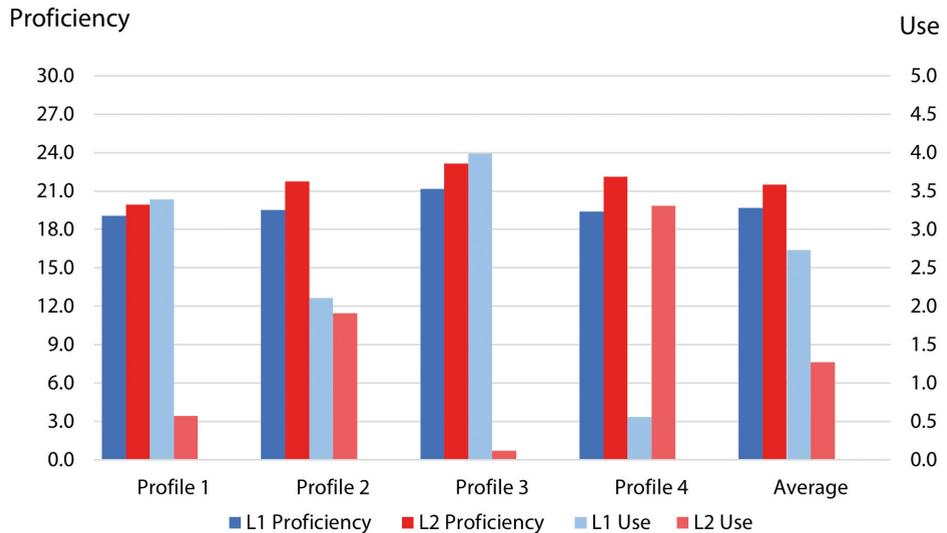


Figure 4.2

Raw scores of Profiles at Age 6



Profile 1 (see Figure 4.1 and 4.2, 49.09% of the children at age four and 30.39% at age six) was characterized by relatively below group average proficiency scores in both L1 and L2 at both ages. Children assigned to this profile did improve in proficiency over

time, similar to the other profiles, but proficiency scores overall remained the lowest when compared to the other profiles, especially regarding their L2 proficiency. The use of L1 was clearly above average and use of L2 was relatively below average at both age four and age six. This profile was termed a '*Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency*' profile. Profile 2 (20.91% of the children at age four and 40.21% at age six) showed a profile that was more balanced in children's L1 and L2 use. L1 was used somewhat more than L2, but note that the use of L2 was also above the average of the whole sample at both ages. Although children showed slightly higher proficiency in their L2 than in their L1 at both ages, proficiency in both languages was around average. Therefore, this profile was defined as a '*Dual L1 and L2 use, around average L1 and L2 proficiency*' profile. Profile 3 (20.00% of the children at age four and 19.61% at age six) was characterized by (slightly) above average proficiency scores in both L1 and L2. This profile showed the highest proficiency scores compared to the other profiles, at both ages. Raw scores indicated that there is almost monolingual L1 use at home. This profile, therefore, was regarded as representing a '*Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency*' profile. Note that while experiencing a strong L1 support in the home situation, L2 proficiency scores were above average compared to the other profiles. This is the largest distinction between profile 1 and profile 3; children assigned to profile 1 score around 0.8 to 1.0 standard deviation lower on both proficiency measures than children assigned to profile 3. Finally, Profile 4 (10.00% of the children at age four and 9.80% at age six) was characterized by evidently more L2 than L1 use at home, especially at age 6. Moreover, raw scores showed that children in this profile obtained higher proficiency scores in L2 than in L1, especially at age 4, with L1 proficiency scores being (slightly) below average compared to the other profiles. The profile represented here, therefore, was termed the '*Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency*' profile. It was the smallest profile and showed the highest use of L2 at home compared to the other profiles.

Latent Transition Analysis

Next, we examined the transition probabilities, representing the likelihood to either maintain a particular profile or to move from a particular profile at age four to another profile at age six. The estimated transition and stability probabilities derived from LTA are presented in Table 4.5. The results show that the stability of maintaining the same profile over time was moderately low, indicating developmental changes in the bilingual profiles of the children in the period between age four and six. Children assigned to profile 3 at age four (*Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency* profile) were most likely to be assigned to the same profile at age six (probability = .62). If they did change profile, children were assigned to profile 2 (*Dual L1 and L2 use, around average L1 and L2 proficiency* profile) at age six (probability = .38). Most children assigned to profile 1 at age four (*Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency* profile) maintained the same profile at age six (probability = .55), but a substantial proportion was found to change to profile 2 (probability = .40). A similar pattern was found for profile 4 (*Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency* profile). Children were more likely to maintain the same

profile (probability = .52), but children also had a probability of .37 to move to profile 2, though this only concerns three children. Hence, the number of children in profile 2 increased over time (at age four $n = 23$ and at age six $n = 41$), whereas the number of children in profile 1 decreased. Remarkably, a small percentage of children with profile 4 at age four also moved to profile 1 at age six (probability = .12). This concerned only one or two children and, thus, may be coincidental. No children assigned to profile 3 (*Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency profile*) at age four changed to profile 1 or to profile 4 at age six.

Table 4.5

Transition Probabilities from Age Four to Age Six.

Profile Age 4	Profile Age 6			
	1. ($n = 31$)	2. ($n = 41$)	3. ($n = 20$)	4. ($n = 10$)
1. Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1/L2 proficiency ($n = 54$)	0.55	0.40	0.05	0.00
2. Dual L1/L2 use, around average L1/L2 proficiency ($n = 23$)	0.22	0.47	0.06	0.24
3. Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1/L2 proficiency ($n = 22$)	0.00	0.38	0.62	0.00
4. Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency ($n = 11$)	0.12	0.37	0.00	0.52

Relations with non-linguistic factors.

Multinomial logistic regression (MLR) was conducted to explore to what extent the non-linguistic factors SES and nonverbal intelligence predicted profile-membership at age four and age six. Profile 1 (the *Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency profile*) was chosen as the first reference profile, since it was the largest profile group at age four. Additional analyses with other reference profiles were conducted to examine the contrasts with other profiles. The results showed that both SES and nonverbal intelligence predicted profile membership, but only at age four. Bilingual children with a higher SES were more likely to be assigned to the *Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency profile* ($OR = 2.03, p = .05, CI = 1.22-3.39$) than to the *Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency profile*. Moreover, bilingual children with a higher nonverbal intelligence were more likely to be assigned to the *Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency profile* ($OR = 1.53, p = .03, CI = 1.12-2.10$) than to the *Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency profile* or the *Dual L1 and L2 use, around average L1 and L2 proficiency* ($OR = 1.42, p = .05, CI = 1.05-1.95$). No significant relations between SES, nonverbal intelligence and the four bilingual profiles at age six were found.

Discussion

The present study demonstrated a person-centered approach as an alternative to traditional variable-centered approaches to model the complexity of bilingualism in a group of immigrant children.

First, we examined whether different bilingual profiles could be distinguished in a sample of Turkish–Dutch four- to six-year-olds. These profiles were based on the variation in language proficiency *and* language use in both the first (Turkish, here L1) and second language (Dutch, here L2). Second, we examined the changes in children’s bilingual profiles from age four to age six, a period in which all children enrolled in Dutch language kindergarten. Third, we examined the relations of the bilingual profiles at both age four and six with the families’ socioeconomic status and children’s nonverbal intelligence. The present results confirm the heterogeneity and multidimensionality of the ‘bilingual experience’ (Baker, 2011; Lonigan et al., 2018; Luk, 2015). The results are in line with the findings of Luk and Bialystok (2013) and Anderson and colleagues (2018b), showing that bilingualism involves at least four distinct and only moderately interrelated dimensions: degree of use of the two languages and proficiency in the two languages. Our latent profile analyses provided further confirmation. The heterogeneous sample revealed four profiles, similar for both age groups, which we labelled 1) *Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency*, 2) *Dual L1 and L2 use, around average L1 and L2 proficiency*, 3) *Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency* and 4) *Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency*.

Profile 1 (*Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency profile*) was the largest profile at age four, characterized by below average scores on both L1 and L2 proficiency measures, above average use of L1 and below average use of L2 in the home environment compared to the other profiles. Children assigned to profile 2 (*Dual L1 and L2 use, around average L1 and L2 proficiency profile*), encompassing the largest number of children at age six, showed around average proficiency in L1 and L2, and dual language use at home. Profile 3 (*Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency profile*) was characterized by above average scores on both L1 and L2 proficiency measures and strikingly above average use of L1 and clearly below average use of L2 at home. Profile 4 (*Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency profile*) was the smallest profile at both ages, and showed above average use of L2 and clearly below average use of L1 at home. Related to this, children assigned to this profile had above average L2 proficiency and slightly below average L1 proficiency at both ages.

Remarkably, both the more favorable profile 3 (with above average proficiency in both languages) and the more unfavorable profile 1 (with below average proficiency in both languages) were characterized by above average use of L1 at home. This may indicate that predominant use of L1 at home is neither a risk nor success factor in itself, but rather that other factors determine whether a child develops a more favorable or unfavorable bilingual profile (Hammer et al., 2009). The quality of L1 use, especially regarding lexical diversity and grammatical complexity, is a likely candidate to explain

at least partly the difference between the two profiles (Leseman, 2000; Leseman et al., 2019; Snow & Uccelli, 2009). Learning potential is another factor that could explain the difference between the two profiles, as will be further explored below.

Profile 2 (*Dual L1 and L2 use, around average L1 and L2 proficiency*), is the only profile that showed balanced use of both L1 and L2 in the home environment. The other profiles showed either a high degree of use of L1, and only limited use of L2, or the other way around. Note that balanced L1 and L2 use as in profile 2 could indicate that children received less input in each of their languages due to the fact that the time and interaction opportunities for exposure have to be divided between two languages (Leseman et al., 2019; Place & Hoff, 2011). This relates to the timely issue whether it is better for dual language development when a child is exposed to both languages to an equal degree from early on, or whether a period of intensive exposure to L1 is more beneficial, also in view of parents' higher proficiency in L1. The findings regarding profile 3 (*Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency profile*), seem to indicate that a high quantity of L1 exposure, assuming that the exposure is also of sufficient quality, can contribute to higher L1 and L2 proficiency, possibly through positive transfer (Cummins, 2008; Leseman et al., 2019). More research is needed to identify the mechanisms that underly positive transfer between languages, such as quantity and quality of language input (Prevoe et al., 2015; Sierens et al., 2019; Verhoeven et al., 2019).

The latent transition analysis revealed overall only moderate stability of the four profiles over time, indicating that, at least at this young age, children are likely to change profiles. The most stable profile was profile 3, indicating that high L1 and L2 proficiency can be maintained in a situation of relatively high L1 use. The exposed changes in profile membership are supported by the work of Anderson et al., (2018a) who found large differences in language use in bilingual children, young adults, and older adults, and by Collins and colleagues (2014) who found substantial change in young children's dual language profiles during their first years in school. A likely explanation is that the enrolment in kindergarten at age four, introducing the children to a Dutch immersion context, profoundly influenced the language development of the children over the four profiles from age four to age six. Profile 1, the least favorable profile, included the largest group of children at age four, but at age six many children changed to profile 2, representing a more balanced L1 and L2 profile. A possible explanation of this pattern is twofold. First, probably due to enrolment in kindergarten, children's L2 proficiency improved, suggesting a compensating effect of kindergarten attendance (see Leseman et al., 2017, for a discussion on the effects of participating in high quality early education and care provision). This could also influence the language use in the home environment, leading to a gradual increase of the use of L2 (Leseman et al., 2019; Prevoe et al., 2011). Second, but more speculatively, the influence of kindergarten on family life may have resulted in improved quality of L1 use for children assigned to profile 1 at age four. For instance, by introducing new topics for conversation, new educational activities, and using more (specialized) academic language, as was found in another Dutch study with a similar sample (Prevoe et al., 2011).

The current study and other studies have shown that the second language can become the dominant language of bilingual children after several years of consistent exposure to L2 at school (Collins et al., 2014; Montrul, 2012; Paradis & Jia, 2017). Importantly, all profiles demonstrated improvement of both L1 and L2 proficiency: Although children improved their L2 proficiency more than their L1, there was no L1 proficiency loss. These findings are in line with Collins and colleagues (2014), but are contrary to other studies documenting L1 loss (e.g., Kohnert et al., 2005) in which dual language children often develop their L2 but suspend development of their L1 when they enter school. These contradictory findings might be explained by the language maintenance and language policy in families from different immigrant backgrounds. Blom (2019) found differences in L1 vocabulary development (i.e., maintenance of the first language) between children with a Moroccan background and children with a Turkish background in the Netherlands: Turkish-speaking participants improved their vocabulary over time, whereas Tarifit-speaking participants showed stagnation in their L1 vocabulary. These findings can be explained, at least partly, by the stronger language maintenance of the Turkish group in the Netherlands (Backus, 2013). The four profiles were associated with SES and nonverbal intelligence, as a general measure of learning capacity, at age four, but not at age six. At age four, consistent with findings from other studies (Deanda et al., 2016; Dixon et al., 2012; Hoff, 2013), bilingual children of relatively low SES families or with relatively low nonverbal intelligence were more likely to be assigned to profile 1 (*Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency*).

As was argued above, both profile 1 and profile 3 (*Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency*), showed above average use of L1 at home, yet differed strongly regarding children's proficiency in both L1 and L2. A possible explanation is that children's intelligence moderated language learning, since it was shown that children with higher intelligence scores were more likely to be assigned to the more favorable profile. More specifically, children with a higher general learning potential, as indicated by higher intelligence, may have learned more from language input at home and may have been better able to transfer conceptual knowledge and communicative competence to the second language than children with lower learning potential (see Sierens et al., 2019, for a discussion on linguistic interdependence theories and the role of language learning abilities). Finally, family SES was to a lesser extent associated with the profiles. Bilingual children from families with a higher SES were more likely to be assigned to a *Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency* profile, than to a *Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency* profile. This is in line with some previous research on the use of the dominant language of a society by immigrant groups and may reflect successful integration and social mobility through higher educational attainment (Hoff et al., 2014; Van Tubergen & Kalmijn, 2009). Note that we did not find that family SES influenced the assignment to *Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency* profile, which confirms the complex non-linear relationship between SES and language use (Dixon et al., 2012; Prevoo et al., 2011; Scheele et al., 2010).

At age six, SES and nonverbal intelligence were not related to the four profiles. A possible explanation is again the compensating influence of kindergarten. At age six, the children participating in the current study had been intensively exposed to Dutch language, (pre)academic learning content and broader educational support by attending a 20 hours per week kindergarten program for approximately two years, which may have dampened SES and intelligence-related differences in proficiency and use of L1 and L2 by improving children's proficiency in L2, on the one hand, and by stimulating parents to interact at a higher level of quality with their children, on the other hand. This corroborates the findings of Collins and colleagues (2014), who found that the association between school-related factors and bilingual profiles increases over time as the child is more exposed to the school environment.

Limitations and future research

The present study has several limitations. First, only a limited set of language proficiency and language use measures could be used to model the heterogeneity and multidimensionality of bilingualism. To obtain a sufficiently large sample, existing data sets had to be merged on overlapping variables, which were receptive first and second language vocabulary and parent-reported information on children's language use at home. Although receptive vocabulary knowledge is the best single indicator of the language skills of a bilingual child (e.g., Hulstijn, 2011; Luo et al., 2010), including other aspects of language proficiency, such as morpho-syntactic skills and productive vocabulary, could have enriched and strengthened the current findings. In addition, the measures of language use in the present study only focused on language use in the home situation in interaction with the mother.

Moreover, the measures of language use were based on frequency ratings and were not sensitive enough to capture developmental shifts in the quality of language use. Although it can be assumed that in the (pre)school and kindergarten classrooms attended by the children only L2 was spoken, future research should examine the use of L1 and L2 across different contexts, individuals and activities, as research has shown that depending on interlocutors, contexts, and topics, different bilingual profiles can emerge (Anderson et al., 2018b; Melzi et al., 2017).

In addition to the limited set of bilingualism measures, there was also limited information available about the home environment of the participants. Investigating family characteristics such as immigration history, language proficiency of the parents, and the family language policy was beyond the scope of the current study, but should be taken into account in future research in order to better understand how the home environment can shape bilingual profiles and to examine the emerging bilingual profiles in different environments (Collins et al., 2014; Hoff, 2006; Sorenson Duncan & Paradis, 2020).

Also, the sample size was relatively small for the advanced statistical modelling applied in this study. It should be noted, however, that, in contrast to the more traditional analytic methods, when conducting latent profile and latent transition analyses, statistical

power is not only a function of the sample size, but also of the possibility to identify the optimal model based on multiple fit indices (Solari et al., 2019). Nevertheless, future research should include larger samples to be able to draw statistically well-supported conclusions regarding the defining characteristics of profiles and the transitions over time.

Conclusions and implications

Despite these limitations, the present study provides a convincing case for the feasibility and relevance of a data-driven, person-centered profiling approach to bilingualism as it occurs in current linguistically diverse societies. The findings from correlational analyses and the latent profile analyses confirm that, in defining bilingualism, both language proficiency and language use are needed to capture the heterogeneous and dynamic nature of bilingualism. The findings also suggest that the identified bilingual profiles are associated with different prospects of further language development. Early identification of children with a less favorable profile can initiate well-timed targeted interventions to prevent delays.

By including additional measures of proficiency and use in future research, as well as other, non-linguistic, characteristics of the child and his or her environment, and by applying longitudinal research designs, richer profiles of bilingualism and deeper insight in the processes underlying transitions between profiles over time can be obtained. These insights may inform education practice and family support programs to the benefit of bilingual children.

The present study was not designed to examine the optimal conditions for young children's bilingual development. Nonetheless, a number of tentative implications in this regard can be derived. First, above average use of L1 at home is not a risk factor as such, but outcomes for children may critically depend on the quality of L1 use and the moderating effect of children's cognitive abilities. Second, enrolling in preschool and kindergarten might support children who are at risk for suboptimal language learning in both L1 and L2. Enrolling in early education programs may have a double effect: increasing the use of and proficiency in L2, and improving the quality of L1 use at home.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix 4.1

Table 4.6

Descriptive Statistics and Differences between Scheele (2010) and Messer (2010) at Age 4 and Age 6

	Scheele (<i>n</i> = 44) <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Messer (<i>n</i> = 66) <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	η^2
Age 4						
Age in months	52.60 (1.85)	51.77 (1.63)	107	-2.46	.02*	.05
Gender	1.55 (0.50)	1.44 (0.50)	108	-1.32	.19	.01
Vocabulary Dutch ^c	14.08 (4.93)	12.83 (5.17)	103	-1.32	.19	.01
Vocabulary Turkish ^c	15.02 (5.15)	12.82 (4.21)	104	-2.42	.02*	.05
Language Use Dutch ^d	0.98 (0.95)	0.80 (0.97)	107	-0.95	.35	.00
Language Use Turkish ^d	3.02 (1.02)	2.92 (0.93)	107	-0.58	.56	.00
SES ^a	3.22 (0.99)	2.40 (1.13)	102	-3.77	.00**	.11
Non-verbal intelligence ^b	13.02 (2.73)	12.11 (2.69)	105	-1.71	.09	.02
Age 6						
Age in months	71.24 (2.16)	71.53 (2.25)	104	0.68	.51	.00
Vocabulary Dutch ^c	21.43 (3.36)	21.64 (3.24)	100	0.32	.75	.00
Vocabulary Turkish ^c	19.35 (3.22)	19.96 (2.38)	100	1.11	.27	.00
Language Use Dutch ^d	1.33 (1.06)	1.26 (1.15)	98	-0.32	.75	.00
Language Use Turkish ^d	2.83 (1.06)	2.54 (1.10)	98	-1.36	.18	.01

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Effect sizes η^2 according to Cohen (1988): .01 = small effect, .06 = medium effect, .14 = large effect

^a Socioeconomic Status, range 1- 6.

^b Range 1- 36

^c Range 1- 30

^d The language use variables here are the mean of four distinct language use variables, range 0-5.

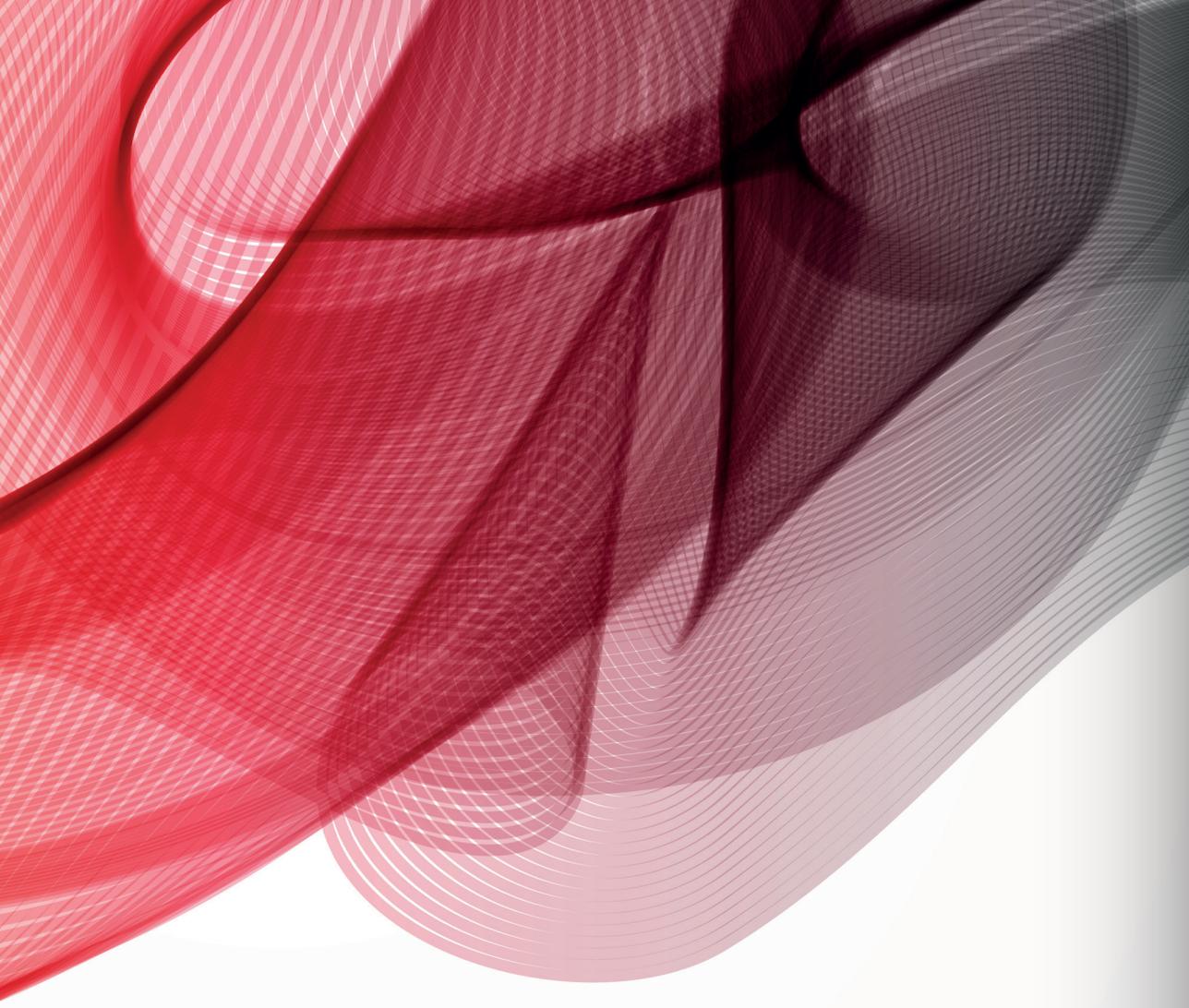
Appendix 4.2

Table 4.7

Interaction Effects Family SES and Dataset on Outcome Variables

SES * Dataset	Sum of Squares	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	η_p^2
L1 Proficiency Age 4	100.81	9	0.39	.94	.02
L2 Proficiency Age 4	194.15	9	0.84	.58	.04
L1 Use Age 4	17.56	9	0.99	.45	.05
L2 Use Age 4	22.63	9	1.25	.25	.06
L1 Proficiency Age 6	102.88	9	0.80	.62	.04
L2 Proficiency Age 6	76.42	9	0.78	.63	.04
L1 Use Age 6	11.42	9	0.73	.68	.04
L2 Use Age 6	9.75	9	0.64	.76	.03

Results from the multivariate regression analyses showed that there is no significant interaction effect between family SES and the dataset (Messer or Scheele) on the language use and language proficiency variables at both ages, $F(48, 289.45) = 1.00$, $p = .47$, Wilk's $\Lambda = .47$, partial $\eta^2 = .12$. This seems to indicate that the two datasets do not differ in the way SES predicts the outcome variables.



5

Teacher relationships and parental participation of Turkish and Maghreb immigrant parents in ECEC: Associations with family, context and country characteristics

Francot, R., Ereky-Stevens, K., Broekhuizen M. L., Erdem-Möbius, H., & Leseman, P. P. M. (2021). Teacher relationships and parental participation of Turkish and Maghreb immigrant parents in ECEC: Associations with family, context and country characteristics. *Journal of Social Issues* [Under review]

Author contributions: RF, KES, MB and PL designed the study. RF analyzed the data. RF and KES wrote the manuscript. MB, HEM and PL critically reviewed the manuscript.

Abstract

Immigrant parents may encounter certain barriers when they try to establish a partnership with Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) centers, although this can be related to a complex interplay of factors at various levels. The current study examines the differences in parents' relationships with teachers and parental participation across immigrant groups and countries, and the associations with family-, context- and country characteristics, for parents with a Turkish or Maghreb immigrant background, living in Germany, France, and the Netherlands ($N = 487$). Multigroup regression analyses showed that across countries and groups, immigrant parents are in general positive regarding their personal relationship with the teacher and show moderate participation in ECEC. The direct associations with demographic characteristics were limited. Different cultural characteristics, such as acculturation attitudes and language proficiency in the national language, were found to be related to both outcome variables, though differences were found between the immigrant groups and between countries. The findings are discussed in the light of national educational and integration policies in a diverse Europe.

Keywords: Educational partnerships, immigrant families, ECEC, integration and educational policies

Introduction

Parent-school collaboration, with strong and supportive relationships, can enhance children's achievement and long-term success in school, and can contribute towards their life chances (e.g., Jeynes, 2012; Semke & Sheridan, 2012; Sheridan et al., 2013). This is particularly important for children at risk in their academic achievement, including those with an immigrant background, for whom (early) education plays an important role in their integration and upward social mobility (Becker et al., 2016; Halgunseth et al., 2009; OECD, 2015; Passaretta & Skopek, 2018). Parental support for their child's education can be a key predictor of immigrant children's academic achievement (Behnke et al., 2004; DeGarmo & Martinez, 2006). Yet, it has been found that immigrant parents report less positive relationships and less school participation than parents without an immigrant background (Bossong & Keller, 2018; Kim, 2009; Lopez, 2007), indicating that in the context of immigration, families can face additional barriers to establishing strong parent-school partnerships (Jeynes, 2005).

School and teacher characteristics can play an important role in shaping parents' relationships with schools (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2002; Kim, 2009; Passiatore et al., 2019; Romijn et al., 2020; Schneider & Arnot, 2018; Slot et al., 2021). However, less research investigated the perspective of immigrant families in relation to parent-school partnerships, and specifically, how parent-school relationships and parental participation can vary across different immigrant groups and different countries. Studies on immigrant families in Europe found that families' background characteristics, such as socioeconomic status (Eccles & Harold, 1996; Fantuzzo et al., 2000), as well as families' personal resources and cultural and psycholinguistic characteristics (including parents' linguistic capabilities, acculturation attitudes, parental self-efficacy and experiences of discrimination) have been found to be relevant in the quality of parent-school collaborations (Intxausti et al., 2013; Matthiesen, 2019; Minke et al., 2014).

Beyond school and family characteristics, contextual and societal characteristics also need to be considered as factors that shape educational partnerships. The presence and the proportion of the majority group in neighborhoods and schools can hinder or help immigrant parents in establishing collaboration with school (Ackert et al., 2018). At the macro level, countries in Europe vary considerably in their integration policies and educational policies (Gregurović, & Župarić-Ilić, 2018; Hampden-Thompson et al., 2013). National resources and policies in education can explain some of the identified country-differences in the levels of parent involvement and parent-school collaboration (Willems, 2017). Integration policies can influence factors which are relevant to building and maintaining strong parent-school collaboration. An assimilationist approach has been found to be linked to higher perceived group discrimination (Borrell et al., 2015), lower parental self-efficacy among immigrant parents (Kogan et al., 2018), and parents' perception that speaking the national language is a necessary condition for involvement in their child's education (Hogan-Brun et al., 2009).

Importantly, within countries, family characteristics and contextual characteristics can vary between immigrant families with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and affect their experiences and outcomes in different ways. For example, Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands maintain their culture and language more strongly than immigrants with a Moroccan background, which may be related to their close in-group ties and their unified language (Backus, 2013). However, little is known so far about how differences in migration backgrounds within countries can help to explain differences in how and to which extent immigrant parents maintain educational partnerships.

The current paper reports on a large-scale interview study among parents with an immigrant background in Europe (Broekhuizen et al., 2018). Our purpose is to examine the differences in parents' relationship with teachers and parental participation in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) between immigrant groups and countries, and how this is associated with family-, contextual- and country characteristics. We focus here on parents with a Turkish or Maghreb immigrant background, living in three different countries in Europe (Germany, France, and the Netherlands). We focus on children's pre-primary and early school age (age 3-6 years old), when parents and teachers start constructing their relationships in ECEC and immigrant parents have to familiarize themselves with their new role as a parent in the education system of the country of residence.

Educational partnerships in the context of migration

The construct of educational partnerships is viewed as multidimensional (Minke et al., 2014), focusing on several dimensions such as a trustful relationship between parents and (pre)school teachers, and involvement with children's learning in both the school environment and home environment by both parties (see for example Epstein's typology [1992; 2018]). This can be traced back to the bio-ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), where the family and the school, as two important microsystems, are responsible for creating an optimal environment for the learning and development of the child (Christenson, 2004). Participation at the ECEC center captures parental behaviors and activities such as going to parent-teacher meetings, volunteering in the classroom or helping with field trips. In addition to being physically present at the center, parent participation can include contacting the center about the child's progress, behavioural concerns, upcoming activities, or opportunities to volunteer (Barnard, 2004; Glick & White, 2004). In order to establish a climate that motivates and enables parent involvement in school, reciprocal and trusting relationships between (pre)school and parents are regarded essential, characterized by shared beliefs in the importance of the relationship and commitment to establishing and maintaining a positive relationship to support a child's learning and wellbeing (Clarke et al., 2009).

Creating and stimulating trustful relationships and parental participation can be challenging for both schools and parents. This may be particular true in contexts where substantial cultural differences exist between the school and the home environment

(Cooper et al., 2010). Previous studies have shown that values, aspirations and beliefs about the child's development, and how to support it, can vary significantly between immigrant parents and early childhood professionals (Antony-Newman, 2019; Bossong & Keller, 2018; De Gaetano, 2007; Otyakmaz & Westphal, 2018). Discrepancies can arise because of language barriers, differences in communication styles and cultural norms which all shape expectations on how parents and teachers should relate to each other and what is important for the child (Auerbach, 2007; Erdem-Möbius et al., 2019; Harkness et al., 2007). These differences can create feelings of discomfort or exclusion (Allen & White-Smith, 2018; Doucet, 2011; LeFevre & Shaw, 2012), and cause parental frustration about expectations teachers have of them (Bendixsen & Danielsen, 2020), or parents' lack of trust in teachers, which in turn might hinder children's educational achievements (Adams et al., 2009; Crozier & Davies, 2007; Kim, 2009). Considering given challenges, research that helps to identify facilitators and barriers to parent-school partnerships is important in order to inform strategies that help to create and maintain educational partnerships in contexts of migration.

Associations between family characteristics and educational partnerships

In previous research, several demographic and personal and family characteristics have been linked to educational partnerships. Regarding family's *socioeconomic status* (SES), findings indicate that higher education levels can promote parental involvement (Fantuzzo et al., 2000; Kohl et al., 2000), while lower SES can relate to lower involvement (Green et al., 2007; Turney & Kao, 2009). Higher levels of stress, lack of financial resources, lower neighborhood quality, lower levels of wellbeing, and lower self-efficacy have been found to explain some of the differences in parental involvement between higher and lower SES families (Altschul, 2012; Conger et al., 1994). In addition, parents with lower levels of education seem to be less confident about having the skills and knowledge needed to get involved in, and support their child's schooling (Green et al., 2007). When examining family SES, *working hours* are important to consider. Mothers who work part-time rather than full-time, and parents' whose employment is more flexible have been found to be more involved in their children's schooling (Garcia Coll et al., 2002; Turney & Kao, 2009; Weiss et al., 2003), and this is particularly true for their participation in school-based activities (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Inflexible and demanding work hours can be barriers to educational partnerships for parents with and those without migration background (Mantovani & Gasperoni, 2018).

Migration history (i.e. the generation of immigration or years of residence in the host country) has been found to play a role, though with contrasting results. Studies have shown that because of their willingness to build new lives in the host countries, first generation immigrant families frequently see education as an important investment for their children, as well as for the entire family (Portes & Fernández-Kelly, 2008). Immigrant parents can have high levels of educational aspirations and high expectations for their children (Broekhuizen et al., 2019; Salikutluk, 2016). These, in turn, may translate into higher levels of parental participation (Brinbaum & Cebolla-Boado, 2007). However, first

generation immigrant parents may face particular challenges in their engagement with school, due to language barriers or a lack of information about the education system (Schnell, 2015; Turney & Kao, 2009).

Alongside demographic background characteristics, personal resources and positive individual experiences can facilitate parents' relationships and involvement with school. In the context of immigration, linguistic and cultural family factors deserve particular attention. Importantly, these factors can also be related to demographic characteristics of families and thus play a mediating role. First, previous studies found that immigrant parents can feel less comfortable about talking to teachers or helping with activities if their *proficiency in the host language* is lower (Turney & Kao, 2009), and it has been found that immigrant parents who mainly use their heritage language can be less involved in school and feel less positive about their child's school and their relationships with teachers (Lopez, 2007). Parents from diverse immigrant backgrounds can differ in their preferences and levels of language proficiency. Turkish language maintenance, for example, is highly valued in the Turkish immigrant community, and facilitated by easy access to different sorts of official Turkish media in the Netherlands (Backus, 2013) and Germany (Bozdağ, 2014). By contrast, several different languages and dialects are used in Maghreb immigrant communities, and some of the languages are non-scripted. Many of these dialects are not used in education or official public media in Maghreb countries or other host countries. Hence, parents with a Maghreb background have fewer resources available for first language maintenance; this can result in higher proficiency in and use of the host country language (see Francot et al., 2021, Chapter 3 in this dissertation).

Perceived discrimination, here specifically at the ECEC center, has often been found to be a barrier, though this can vary between different immigrant groups. Thijs and Eilbracht (2012) found in their study on parent-teacher relationships in Dutch primary schools ethnic differences regarding parent-teacher conflicts and alliances. Teachers were less positive about parents with a Moroccan background than Turkish background. For Moroccan parents in the Belgian and Dutch education systems, experiences of discrimination at the (pre)school were prevalent (Hermans, 2006). Teachers were found to belittle immigrant parents and children, and did not respect but rather denigrate the cultural and linguistic background of the families.

Third, psychological *acculturation* is a process of cultural change resulting from intergroup contact (Redfield et al., 1936). One of the most influential models of integration and acculturation is that of Berry (1997). His framework proposes that there are two underlying dimensions that characterize a person's overall attitude towards acculturation: the endorsement or rejection of the minority culture, and the desire for intergroup contact. These two dimensions, when crossed, result in four distinct acculturation preferences: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization. Differences in acculturation preferences can relate to parents' experiences with schools; larger discrepancies between the school and home culture can result in less positive relationships between parents and teachers and hinder parental participation (Bossong & Keller, 2018; Grzymala-Kazłowska & Phillimore, 2018; Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Where

parents with a minority background wish to maintain their culture, while the school stresses the majority group culture, connection and communication between school and parents can be affected (Yazdani et al., 2020). On the other hand, if immigrant parents prefer contact with the majority group, this can facilitate interaction with teachers or other parents at the school with a majority group background (Zagefka et al., 2011). Yazdani and colleagues (2020) found in their longitudinal study that parents' acculturation (including language proficiency and identity feelings) was a predictor of change over time in parent ratings of parent-teacher communication and perceptions of shared responsibility, and influenced the teacher ratings of general parent involvement.

Finally, *parental self-efficacy* (the belief of a parent in their own competencies to achieve a desired parenting outcome; Downer & Mendez, 2005) has also been identified as a parent resource that can facilitate parent participation in their children's education (e.g., Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005; Minke et al., 2014). Importantly, studies have shown that immigrant parents score lower on parental self-efficacy compared to non-immigrant parents, and that this can relate to their parental involvement (Liu et al., 2020) and positive parenting practices (Boruszak-Kiziukiewicz & Kmita, 2020).

Contextual characteristics and country differences

Contextual factors can shape families' personal characteristics and their experiences with ECEC centers. The current study focuses on two contextual levels; the presence of the majority group in immigrant parents' neighborhood and ECEC, and the national integration and education policies of different countries.

From a minority perspective, the experience of contact with the majority group of a country can lead to developing friendships; yet contact with the majority group can also relate to feeling discriminated or socially excluded. It has been found that an ethnically more mixed environment could positively influence the desire of people to interact with each other (Hewstone, 2009), however, a higher interethnic composition can also lead to more hostile out-group attitudes as the level of discrimination increases (Oliver & Wong, 2003; Putnam, 2007). To date, only a few studies examined the effects of the presence of the majority group in ECEC centers or neighborhoods on educational partnerships, and findings show a complex picture. Living in neighborhoods with low representation of majority (versus minority) population can negatively relate to parental participation in school, and this association can be stronger for low-educated parents (Cutler et al., 2008). On the other hand, in ECEC centers with higher majority group representation, immigrant parents can be less likely to enroll their children, and be less involved, especially if they are less integrated (Ackert et al., 2018). Researchers also found that more segregated neighborhoods can be characterized by the presence of more social capital (Gordon, 1964; Van der Meer & Tolsma, 2014), which can facilitate immigrants' ability to bond with and adapt to institutions, and increases a sense of self-efficacy. Such processes can increase 'immigrant optimism' (Kao & Tienda, 1995), which results in greater parental desire to be involved in their children's education (Klugman et al., 2012).

These seemingly contradictory results could partly be explained by the different macro-contexts of each study. Cross-country studies have shown that segregation and ethnic diversity have opposite relationships with school performance (Veerman & Dronkers, 2013), ethnic tolerance (Janmaat, 2012) and classroom disruption (Veerman, 2015) in different countries. In countries with a more inclusive immigration policy, segregation can have less of an impact, or even show no negative influence. Furthermore, a recent study compared European countries on their integration policies, and found that in countries with tolerant multicultural policies, the difference between the national identification of people with and without an immigrant background is small, indicating that the integration policy of a country influences the acculturation preference of immigrant groups (Igarashi, 2019).

In culturally diverse Europe, one would expect to find cross-national differences between the levels or quality of educational partnerships for immigrant families. Despite their differences in migration history, immigrant populations across countries also share some background characteristics. In France, the Netherlands and Germany, first wave immigrants from Turkey and Maghreb countries were often males, relatively low educated and originating from rural areas. Nowadays, the immigrant populations in these three countries roughly have the same age composition and they show the same concentration pattern (United Nations, 2020).

Yet, there are many differences between the three welfare states regarding their integration and education policies. Rather than supporting cultural and linguistic pluralism in school and society, French policies explicitly opt for assimilation of immigrants. Mastery of French is seen to be the most fundamental aspect of the acculturation process, because language is considered to be the overarching value to achieve social cohesion and national unity in France (Yağmur & Van de Vijver, 2012). ECEC centers and schools represent the national policy and stress the adoption of the French culture and language as much as possible (Abdelgadir & Fouka, 2020). Rather similar to France, monolingualism has been seen as a central component of the national identity in Germany, and this ideology has also influenced educational contexts where a mainly assimilationist model has been applied (Gogolin, 1994; Yağmur & Van de Vijver, 2012). Germany denied its status as an immigration country for many years, hereby maintaining a separationist approach: little to no attention was paid to minority families' cultural and linguistic resources (Faas, 2008), and little initiatives for integration were made (Kratzmann et al., 2017). In contrast to France, ECEC centers in Germany have their own local autonomy in the implementation of educational practices – including those addressing family-preschool partnerships – that can vary from state to state (Hachfeld et al., 2016). The Netherlands was known for a long period of support for multicultural integration both among policy makers and the public, with more independence given to educational institutions to control their own cultural or religious orientation. Compared to France and Germany there are more schools with different religious, including Islamic, foundations. However, more recently, the Netherlands has taken a right-wing turn and

the current Dutch policy makers' approach has been identified as "assimilationist" (Entzinger, 2009; Maan et al., 2014).

The present study

The present study aimed to examine the differences in parents' relationship with teachers and parental participation in ECEC, and how this is associated with family, local context, and country characteristics. We focus on parents with a Turkish or Maghreb immigrant background, living in three different countries in Europe (Germany, France, and the Netherlands). We distinguish between the background characteristics of the immigrant families (parental education, material deprivation and generation) and the personal characteristics of the parents (language abilities, perceived discrimination, acculturation attitudes, parental self-efficacy). Furthermore, we examine associations between our outcome variables and the presence of the majority (versus minority) population in the neighborhood and in the ECEC center. We compare the Turkish group in Germany with the Turkish group in the Netherlands, the Maghreb group in France with the Maghreb group in the Netherlands, and the Turkish group and with the Maghreb group in the Netherlands.

Given the complexity of the study, with three different countries and two different immigrant groups, and many family and context characteristics, we do not express specific hypotheses for every association per country and immigrant group, but rather state general expectations. First, we expect to find differences in the experiences of immigrant parents between the three countries regarding their relationship with the teacher and parental involvement in the ECEC center. We also expect to find differences between the Turkish and Maghreb groups in the Netherlands. We hypothesize that the personal family characteristics (i.e. proximal variables) are associated with both outcome variables of the study, and can play a mediating role for the background characteristics (i.e. distal variables), hereby decreasing the direct influence of the background characteristics on the outcome variables. For example, we assume that first generation immigrant parents have lower abilities in the national language, which affects their relationship with the teacher and their participation at the ECEC center. The current study allows an in-depth analysis of the interactions between individual-level factors, such as the demographic and personal characteristics of immigrant parents, and contextual and national institutional arrangements. This will shed light on the uncertainty of various explanations that seek to clarify cross-national variations in the educational partnerships of immigrant parents. In this way, the paper aims to inform strategies to strengthen educational partnerships in the context of migration.

Methods

Participants

The current study uses data from a large-scale structured interview study among parents with a disadvantaged background in ten European countries (Broekhuizen et al., 2018). The study was part of the EU funded Inclusive Education and Social Support to Tackle Inequalities in Society (ISOTIS) project (see Chapter 1). The analyses are based on 487 interviews conducted with parents with a Turkish or Maghreb migration background in three European countries: 119 parents with a Turkish migration background in Germany ($M_{age} = 35.33$ years, $SD_{age} = 6.33$), 117 parents with a Maghreb (i.e. Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian) background in France ($M_{age} = 31.62$ years, $SD_{age} = 4.91$), and in the Netherlands 110 parents with a Turkish background ($M_{age} = 35.10$ years, $SD_{age} = 5.14$) and 144 parents with a Maghreb (i.e. Moroccan) background ($M_{age} = 36.62$ years, $SD_{age} = 5.73$). Included in this study were parents who had a child in the three to six years age-range who attended ECEC centers but did not start formal education yet. Interviews were conducted with the primary caregiver of the child, in most cases the mother. See Table 5.1 for descriptive statistics.

The Maghreb immigrant parents sampled in France were on average younger than the parents in the other groups (31.65 years), the group had the highest rate of parents with a second generation or third generation background, and the lowest rate of parents with a first generation background (72.2% and 26.1% respectively). A smaller proportion of parents in this group lived with a partner (68.4%). Interviewed primary caregivers with a Maghreb background in the Netherlands and their partners had the lowest rates of employment (23.4% and 74% respectively); this group also had the lowest rate of parents with a second- or third generation immigration background, and the highest rate of parents with a first generation background (27.9% and 57.1% respectively). Across both groups with a Maghreb immigration background, material deprivation was higher than in the groups with a Turkish immigrant background ($M = 2.22$, $SD = 2.19$ vs. $M = 1.23$, $SD = 1.82$), and a higher rate of the interviewed parents had a low education level (46.9% vs. 28.1% respectively).

Table 5.1*Descriptive Statistics of the Turkish and Maghreb Immigrant Families*

	Turkish background			Maghreb background		
	GE	NL	Total	NL	FR	Total
<i>N</i>	110	119	229	141	117	258
Gender, % woman	92.4%	99.1%	95.6%	100%	99.1%	99.6%
Age (<i>M, SD</i>)	35.33 (6.33)	35.10 (5.14)	35.22 (5.76)	36.47 (5.73)	31.62 (4.91)	34.27 (5.88)
Generation %						
1 st generation	52.9%	43.6%	48.5%	57.1%	26.1%	43.1%
1.5 th generation	3.4%	4.5%	3.9%	15.0%	1.7%	9.0%
≥2 nd generation	43.7%	51.8%	47.2%	27.9%	72.2%	47.9%
Education level %						
Low	28.8%	27.3%	28.1%	44.0%	50.4%	46.9%
Medium	39.0%	39.1%	39%	42.6%	28.7%	36.3%
High	32.2%	33.6%	32.9%	13.5%	20.9%	18.8%
Material deprivation (<i>M, SD</i>)	1.12 (1.57)	1.34 (2.05)	1.23 (1.82)	2.38 (2.28)	2.03 (2.08)	2.22 (2.19)
Participant employed %	46.6%	34.5%	40.8%	23.4%	58.3%	39.1%
Living with partner %	92.4%	86.4%	89.4%	87.9%	68.4%	79.1%
Partner employed %	84.4%	91.6%	88.2%	74.0%	94.9%	84.2%

Procedure

Parents were recruited at two to four large urban sites in each country. To meet the inclusion criteria, they had to be categorized either as first generation immigrants (born in Turkey or one of the Maghreb countries Algeria, Morocco or Tunisia), second generation immigrants (with their parents born in Turkey or one of the Maghreb countries), or third generation immigrants who identified themselves as members of the Turkish or Maghreb community. Recruitment focused on areas with a relatively high representation of our target groups. Recruitment strategies included approaching ECEC centers, primary schools, community centers, parent organizations and mediating key persons who worked with our target groups. Exact response rates were difficult to determine due to the stepwise recruitment procedure and strict privacy protection rules in some countries, but overall response rates on the organization level ranged between 36% and 69% across the three countries (for more information, see Broekhuizen et al., 2018).

Structured face-to-face interviews were administered by interviewers from the same communities with good command of the languages of the parents and the national languages. Interview questions were programmed in an online survey program (Lime Survey) in the countries' national languages, as well as Turkish and standard Arabic, and

several interviewers for the Maghreb groups spoke Tarifit Berber. Parents could switch between languages during the interview. For most questions, the interviewers read the question to the parent, the parent answered, and the interviewer entered the response. For more sensitive questions (e.g., perceived discrimination), parents could enter the answers themselves. The survey took 45 to 60 minutes to complete. Parents received an incentive after participating in the interview (a gift voucher of €10 in the Netherlands and Germany, and cinema tickets in France). Data-collection for the interviews ran from December 2017 to July 2018. For more information about the interview study and training of the interviewers, see Broekhuizen and colleagues (2018). The study was approved by the ethical committees of the research institutes involved in the study in each country.

Measures

Outcome measures

Parent-teacher relationship was measured by asking parents to rate 11 statements on the quality of the parent-teacher relationship (e.g., “I feel comfortable to talk to my child’s teachers”; disagree [1] to agree [5]; Petrogiannis & Penderi, 2013). A mean across the 11 items was computed, with a higher score indicating a better parent-teacher relationship, as perceived by the parent (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .88$, ranging from $\alpha = .84$ to $\alpha = .92$ across the subsamples).

Parental participation was measured by asking parents four questions on how often they had been involved in different activities at the child’s ECEC center during the last six months (e.g., “I take part in meetings offered by the preschool to hear about what my child learns in preschool”; never [1] to more than once per month [5]). Higher scores indicated more frequent parent participation at the ECEC center. A mean score for parental participation was computed across the four items (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .80$, ranging from $\alpha = .69$ to $\alpha = .86$ across the subsamples).

Background characteristics of the parents

Education level of the parent represented the highest completed education level of the primary caregiver. Each national qualification level in the three countries was equated to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels (ISCED, 2011) and then recoded into three levels of education to facilitate comparison between different national education systems, using the following cut-off points: low = ISCED 0, 1, 2 (primary or lower secondary education or lower vocational training), medium = ISCED 3, 4, 5 (upper secondary, post-secondary non-tertiary and short cycle tertiary education) and high = ISCED 6, 7, 8 (full tertiary education at the bachelor level or higher).

Material deprivation indicated whether a family experienced difficulties affording certain items or entities. The scale was composed of 13 questions (e.g., “Could you tell me if you can replace worn-out clothes by some new [not second-hand] ones?”; ‘yes’ [0 points] or ‘no’ [1 point]; Guio et al., 2016). An overall score was created, with higher

scores indicating higher material deprivation (Cronbach's $\alpha = .68$, ranging from $\alpha = .53$ to $\alpha = .79$ across the subsamples).

Generation of immigration indicated whether the parent was a first, one-and-a-half, or second generation immigrant in the country of residence. A parent was identified as a one-and-a-half generation immigrant when he or she was not born in the current county, but moved to this county before the age of six, before starting in the formal education system of the country (Rumbaut, 2004). For the present purpose, to facilitate interpretation, the variable was recoded into a dummy variable: first generation migration (1) versus one-and-a-half and second generation migration (0).

Presence of the majority group in the neighborhood represented the proportion of people with a majority background (i.e. native background) in the neighborhood. Parents were asked to give a rough estimate, with answers ranging from (almost) none (1) to (almost) all (5). Higher scores indicated that a higher proportion of the population in the neighborhood had a majority group background (Laurence et al., 2018).

Personal and family characteristics

Perceived proficiency in the national language of the country of residence was determined based on three items, asking parents to what extent they experienced difficulties in using the current country's national language when speaking to others, reading newspapers or listening to the radio or television. (e.g., "When reading newspapers, do you have difficulty to understand the specific language that is used?"; never [1] to always [5]). Items were reverse-coded and a mean score was calculated, with a high score indicating high self-reported proficiency in the country's language. The mean score across the three recoded items was calculated (Cronbach's $\alpha = .93$, ranging from $\alpha = .90$ to $\alpha = .96$ across the subsamples).

Perceived discrimination at the ECEC center was measured by asking parents two questions about the frequency of discrimination by teachers and by other parents experienced at the ECEC center (e.g., "How often do you feel discriminated or unfairly treated because of your background or situation by teachers in the ECEC center of your child?"; never [1] to often [4]). A mean across the two items was calculated (correlation $r = .53$; ranging from $r = .38$ to $r = .64$ across the subsamples). Higher scores indicated that immigrant parents perceived more discrimination.

Cultural maintenance captured the preference of immigrant parents for maintaining their heritage culture, calculated as the mean of two items addressing the maintenance of the language and culture of the country of origin (e.g., "I think it would be good if members of my group speak our original language often"; disagree [1] to agree [5]; Zagefka et al., 2014). Correlation of the two items was $r = .39$ (ranging from $r = .23$ to $r = .53$ across the subsamples). Higher scores indicated a stronger preference for cultural maintenance.

Preference for majority group contact indicated the preference of immigrant parents to have intercultural contact with the majority group of the country (e.g., "It is important to me that members of my group have friends with a [X-]native background"

[here: Dutch, German or French]; disagree [1] to agree [5]; Zagefka et al., 2011). A mean was calculated across the two items; correlation of the two items was $r = .57$ (ranging from $r = .32$ to $r = .80$ across the subsamples). A higher score indicated that the parent preferred to have intercultural contact with the majority group.

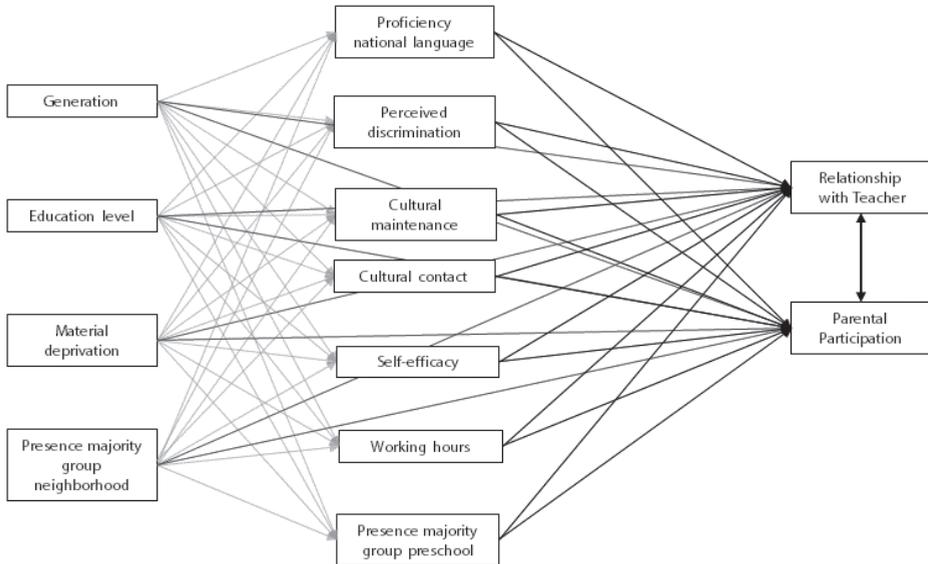
Parental self-efficacy was measured with the short version of the Parenting Self-Agency Measure (PSAM, Dumka et al., 1996). The scale consists of five items (e.g., “I feel sure of myself as a parent”; disagree [1] to agree [5]). A mean score was computed, with higher indicate higher parental self-efficacy (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .77$, ranging from $\alpha = .58$ to $\alpha = .86$ across the subsamples).

Working hours was measured by asking parents to report on their weekly hours of paid work, ranging from zero (no paid job) to 50 hours per week.

Presence of the majority group in the ECEC center represented, similar to the neighborhood variable, the proportion of parents in the ECEC center with a majority group (native) background. Parents were asked to give a rough estimate, with answers ranging from (almost) none (1) to (almost) all (5). Higher scores indicated that a higher proportion of the parents in the ECEC center had a majority group background (Laurence et al., 2018).

Analysis plan

Preliminary analyses and descriptive statistics were performed using SPSS 25.0 software. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), using Wilks’ lambda and Bonferroni-corrected post hoc comparisons, evaluated target group and country differences in the outcome variables. Path models were evaluated in Mplus 8.1 using multiple group comparisons to evaluate the different groups in different countries (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2010). Using multigroup regression analyses via Mplus is a preferred method over traditional regression analyses as it allows researchers to analyze models with multiple dependent variables as in this study, and examining differences in path coefficients across different groups. Missing data were addressed with full-information maximum likelihood estimation (Schafer & Graham, 2002). To answer the research questions, a multivariate regression model was built specifying (1) direct effects of all demographic and personal factors as predictors of the perceived parent-teacher relationship and parental involvement in ECEC center and (2) indirect effects of demographic factors as mediated by personal characteristics. Furthermore, (3) we assumed a correlation between the two dependents. The model is depicted in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1*Baseline Model with all Direct and Indirect Paths*

The model was first estimated as baseline model. Next, the multigroup option was used to test the equivalence of the baseline model across groups and across countries. Multigroup equivalence across groups and countries was tested with the Chi Square difference test, by comparing the unconstrained baseline model (allowing all parameters between the outcome variables and the family characteristics to be estimated freely and, thus, differ across groups) with the fully constrained model (constraining all parameters to be equal across the groups and, thus, not to differ across groups). Absolute model fit was evaluated based on the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), acceptable if $> .90$, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), acceptable if $< .08$, and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), acceptable if $< .05$ (Bentler, 2006; Marsh et al., 2004). After examining the model fit of the fully constrained model, Modification Indices were checked together with the unconstrained parameters in the path models, to release meaningful paths that differed across groups and led to a significantly improved fit (indicated by a MI higher than 10.0). This led to a final, partially constrained, model with an acceptable fit.

Results

Descriptive results

Descriptive statistics of the outcome variables (relationship with the teacher and parental participation at ECEC) and the family characteristics of parents with a Turkish and Maghreb background are shown in Table 5.2. Overall, parents with a Turkish or Maghreb background rated their relationship with the ECEC center teachers as positive ($M_{Turkish} = 4.38, SD_{Turkish} = 0.62$ and $M_{Maghreb} = 4.08, SD_{Maghreb} = 0.82$, on a scale ranging from 1 to 5), and showed moderate levels of parental participation ($M_{Turkish} = 2.57, SD_{Turkish} = 1.04$, and $M_{Maghreb} = 2.21, SD_{Maghreb} = 1.01$, on a scale ranging from 1 to 5). MANOVAs showed significant differences between the target groups (Wilks' $\lambda = .945, F[2, 471] = 13.71, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .06$) and countries (Wilks' $\lambda = .777, F[4, 940] = 31.66, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .12$) on both outcome variables. Parents with Turkish immigrant background scored significantly higher on both outcome variables than parents with Maghreb background, and parents with an immigrant background in France scored significantly lower than parents with an immigrant background in Germany or the Netherlands.

Parents with a Maghreb background had significantly higher proficiency scores in the national language of the host country than parents with a Turkish background ($t[485] = -2.43, p < .05$). Mean scores for perceived discrimination were relatively low for parents with both a Maghreb and Turkish background. The groups did not significantly differ in their acculturation attitudes, both in their preference for cultural maintenance and contact with the majority group. Parental self-efficacy was relatively high in both groups, though parents with a Turkish background scored significantly higher than parents with a Maghreb background ($t[484] = -4.75, p < .01$). Large variation was found for the number of working hours per week across and within groups. This is linked to the large variation in parents' employment rates (see Table 5.1). The presence of the majority group (i.e., the estimated proportion of people with a native background) in both the neighborhood and ECEC center was significantly higher for parents with a Turkish background than for parents with a Maghreb background (presence majority group in neighborhood $t[484] = 6.61, p < .01$, presence majority group in ECEC center $t[485] = 5.50, p < .01$). Given these findings, and the design of the study with the two target groups not represented across all countries, follow-up analyses were conducted cross-country and cross-immigrant group.

Table 5.2*Descriptive Statistics per Immigrant Group and Country.*

Turkish background	NL		GER		Total		Range
	n=110		n=119		n=229		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Relationship with teachers	4.47	0.54	4.31	0.67	4.38	0.62	1-5
Parental participation	2.66	1.01	2.48	1.06	2.57	1.04	1-5
Proficiency national language	3.91	1.33	4.09	1.12	4.01	1.23	1-5
Perceived discrimination	1.26	0.50	1.32	0.62	1.29	0.57	1-4
Preference for cultural maintenance	3.90	1.12	3.87	1.31	3.89	1.22	1-5
Preference for contact	3.63	1.34	3.89	1.06	3.76	1.21	1-5
Self-efficacy	4.75	0.35	4.65	0.47	4.70	0.42	1-5
Working hours	9.05	13.66	12.62	16.29	10.90	15.16	0-50
Presence majority group neighborhood	2.61	1.20	3.34	1.10	2.99	1.20	1-5
Presence majority group ECEC center	2.19	1.38	3.01	1.19	2.62	1.35	1-5

Maghreb background	NL		FR		Total		Range
	n=141		n=117		n=258		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Relationship with teachers	4.39	0.77	3.72	0.74	4.08	0.82	1-5
Parental participation	2.62	1.06	1.75	0.69	2.21	1.01	1-5
Proficiency national language	4.11	1.13	4.66	0.82	4.36	1.04	1-5
Perceived discrimination	1.24	0.53	1.14	0.37	1.20	0.47	1-4
Preference for cultural maintenance	3.96	1.10	4.16	0.86	4.05	1.00	1-5
Preference for contact	3.43	1.33	3.71	1.11	3.56	1.24	1-5
Self-efficacy	4.72	0.46	4.18	0.61	4.47	0.59	1-5
Working hours	4.92	10.38	19.20	17.15	11.40	15.56	0-50
Presence majority group neighborhood	2.41	1.13	2.26	0.64	2.34	0.94	1-5
Presence majority group ECEC center	1.82	1.08	2.30	0.61	2.04	0.92	1-5

Multigroup path analysis

First, models were estimated with all parameters constrained to be equal across groups and countries. Model fit was evaluated and if not acceptable, parameters were one-by-one set free until satisfactory fit was obtained. Given the design of the study, three groups were compared: the Turkish groups in Germany and the Netherlands, the Maghreb groups in France and the Netherlands, and the Turkish and Maghreb groups in the Netherlands. This provides us the opportunity to compare both influences from different national policies and differences between immigrant groups within the same country.

Multigroup analysis Turkish groups

Fit indices showed that the unconstrained baseline model for the two Turkish groups had an excellent fit ($\chi^2 [43] = 56.18, p = .09, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .05$), confirming the configural invariance of the model. Constraining the structural parameters in the model to be equal across the two groups decreased the model fit significantly ($\chi^2 [93] = 140.02, p < .01, CFI = .88, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .10$). Next, modification indices were checked and compared with the unconstrained baseline model to identify meaningful parameters that could not be constrained to be equal across groups. After freeing the path between generation and proficiency in country's national language and the path between proficiency in country's national language and the relationship with the teacher, the model fit improved significantly ($\chi^2 [91] = 120.30, p < .05, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .09$), ($\Delta\chi^2 = 64.12, \Delta df = 48, p = .06$). Figure 5.2 reports the unstandardized⁴ results of the significant path coefficients of the final model. Note that the bidirectional path between both outcome variables was not significant ($B = 0.04, SE = 0.03, p = .11$), indicating that there is no significant association between the relationship with the teacher and parental participation at the ECEC center for both Turkish groups.

Relationship with the teacher. First generation parents with a Turkish background scored higher than second generation parents (standardized regression coefficient $\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = .19, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = .16, p < .05$). For the Turkish-German group, parents' proficiency in the national language was significantly positive related ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = .22, p < .01$), though this was not the case for the Turkish-Dutch group. Perceived discrimination in the ECEC center was negatively related ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.39, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = -.41, p < .01$). Furthermore, the preference for majority group contact ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = .22, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = .16, p < .01$) and higher parental self-efficacy ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = .18, p < .05, \beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = .20, p < .05$) were positively associated with the relationship with the teacher.

Parental participation at the ECEC center. In the Turkish group, education level of parents with a Turkish background was negatively related to parental participation ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.22, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = -.22, p < .01$). Furthermore, parents who preferred more contact with the majority group, participated more ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = .17, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = .14, p < .05$) than parents who scored lower on the preference for majority group contact. Number of working hours of the parents was negatively related ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.16, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = -.19, p < .01$).

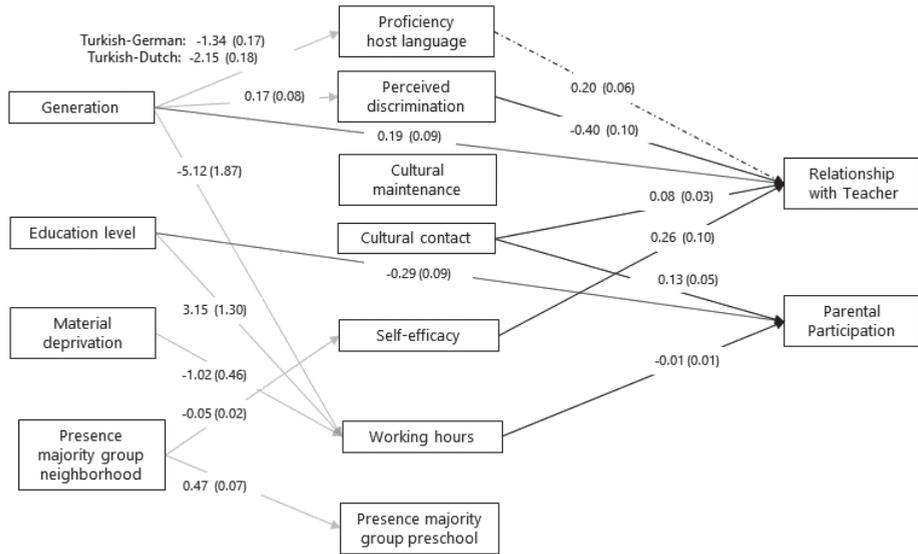
Focusing on the freed path between generation and proficiency in country's national language, it was found that in the Netherlands generation was more strongly related to the proficiency in the country's national language than in Germany, but for both groups it was found that first generation parents have a lower proficiency in the host language than second generation parents ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = .22, p < .01, \beta_{\text{Turkish-German}} = .16, p < .01$). The partially constrained model explained 31 percent of the variance for the relationship with

4 Since the variances differ per group, each group has its own standardized path coefficient that differs slightly from the other group. Therefore, the standardized results for each group are mentioned in the text, and the unstandardized results are mentioned in the Figures 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4.

the teacher for the Turkish-German group, and 26 percent for the Turkish-Dutch group. For the parental participation at ECEC center, 15 percent of the variance was explained for the Turkish-German group, and 16 percent for the Turkish-Dutch group.

Figure 5.2

Significant Results Unstandardized Path Coefficients Turkish groups



Note. Dotted line includes Turkish-German group only.

Finally, we examined the indirect effects in the Turkish model to see the mediating roles of the personal characteristics of the parents between the demographic characteristics (i.e. generation, education level, material deprivation and proportion of the majority group in the neighborhood) and the outcome variables. The results showed that the parent and family characteristics almost always served as significant mediators (e.g., perceived discrimination was a significant mediator for generation on parents' relationship with the teacher) with a few exceptions when the paths showed a marginal effect (e.g., self-efficacy did not act as a significant mediator for the indirect path between the presence of the majority group in the neighborhood and the relationship with the teacher).

Multigroup analysis Maghreb groups

Similar to the Turkish groups, the baseline model of the Maghreb groups had a good fit (χ^2 [43]= 72.72, $p < .01$, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05), confirming the configural invariance of the model for the Maghreb groups. After constraining the paths between the two groups, the model fit was not acceptable (χ^2 [93]= 205.62, $p < .01$, CFI = .71, RMSEA = .10, SRMR = .12). Six paths were freed in order to find a better fitting model (χ^2

[87] = 132.57 $p < .01$, CFI = .88, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .08). The fit of the final model was not satisfactory with regard to some of the fit indices (CFI < .90), but the RMSEA and χ^2/df ratio (< 2) were acceptable. Modification indices provided by Mplus did not suggest other paths that could be freed for significant improvements. This suggests that there are several differences in the associations between the Maghreb groups in the two countries, and that there are more differences between the Maghreb groups than between the Turkish groups. These differences are described below.

Figure 5.3 reports the unstandardized results of the significant path coefficients for the final model. Note that the bidirectional path between both outcome variables was not significant (unstandardized regression coefficient $B = 0.04$, $SE = 0.03$, $p = .20$), indicating that, similar to the Turkish group, there was no significant association between the relationship with the teacher and parental participation for both Maghreb groups.

Relationship with the teacher. Similar to the Turkish groups, generation was positively associated with the parent-teacher relationship for parents with a Maghreb background (standardized regression coefficient $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .18$, $p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .17$, $p < .05$). The results showed that perceived discrimination at the ECEC center was negatively related ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.21$, $p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = -.16$, $p < .05$) and language proficiency in the country's national language positively ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .30$, $p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .33$, $p < .01$). For the Maghreb-French group, parental self-efficacy had a strong positive association ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .48$, $p < .01$), though this is not the case for Maghreb-Dutch parents.

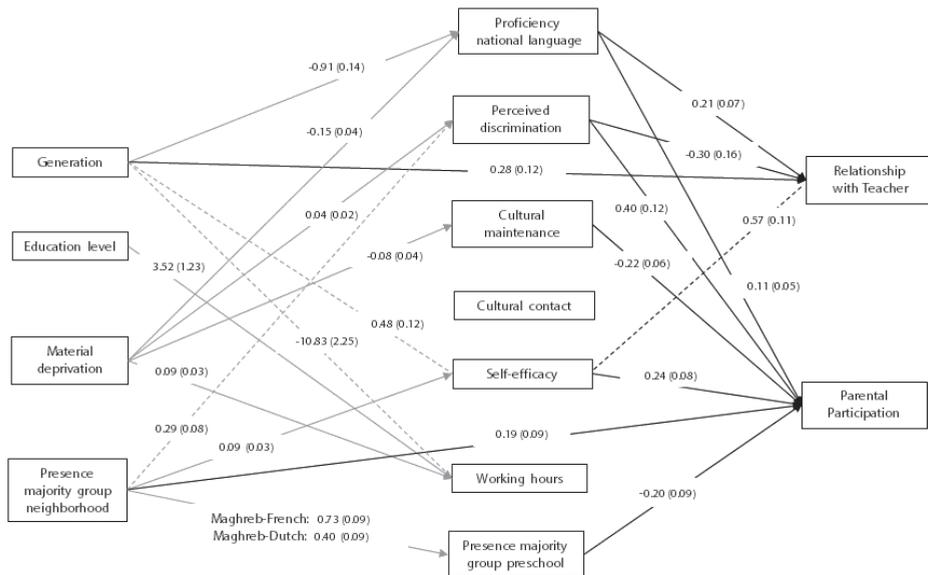
Parental participation at the ECEC center. It was found that proficiency in the host language ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .11$, $p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .18$, $p < .05$) and parental self-efficacy ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .10$, $p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .22$, $p < .01$) were positively related to parental participation, but cultural maintenance was negatively related for both Maghreb groups ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.22$, $p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = -.29$, $p < .01$). Interestingly, there was a significant positive relation between perceived discrimination in the ECEC center and parental participation ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .20$, $p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .24$, $p < .01$). Furthermore, the presence of the majority group in the neighborhood had a positive relation, indicating that when parents lived in more mixed neighborhoods, they reported more parental participation ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .20$, $p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .18$, $p < .05$). However, presence of the majority group in the ECEC center was negatively related for both groups ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.20$, $p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = -.18$, $p < .05$). These results will be taken up in the discussion.

Four paths between the demographic characteristics and personal characteristics of the parents had to be freed. First generation parents in France showed higher levels of parental self-efficacy ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .35$, $p < .01$) and worked fewer hours per week ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = -.29$, $p < .01$) than second generation parents, but this generation effect was not found for the Maghreb-Dutch group. If Maghreb parents in France lived in a neighborhood with a high representation of the majority group, they experienced more discrimination ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .47$, $p < .01$), but this effect was not found for Maghreb parents in the Netherlands. Finally, the path between the presence of the majority group

in the neighborhood and the presence of the majority group in the ECEC center was stronger for the Maghreb-French than for the Maghreb-Dutch ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .41, p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-French}} = .76, p < .01$). Overall, the partially constrained model explained 17 percent of the variance for the relationship with the teacher for the Maghreb-Dutch group, and 37 percent for the Maghreb-French group. For the parental participation in the ECEC center, 17 percent of the variance was explained for the Maghreb-Dutch group, and 27 percent for the Maghreb-French group.

Figure 5.3

Significant Results Unstandardized Path Coefficients Maghreb groups



Note. Dotted line includes the Maghreb-French group only.

Examining the indirect effects, it was again found that most of the paths between the outcome variables and the demographic characteristics were mediated by the more personal characteristics. One exception was the influence of families' material deprivation. Although material deprivation showed small significant paths with several personal characteristics of the Maghreb families, no mediating effects were found.

Multigroup analysis Dutch groups

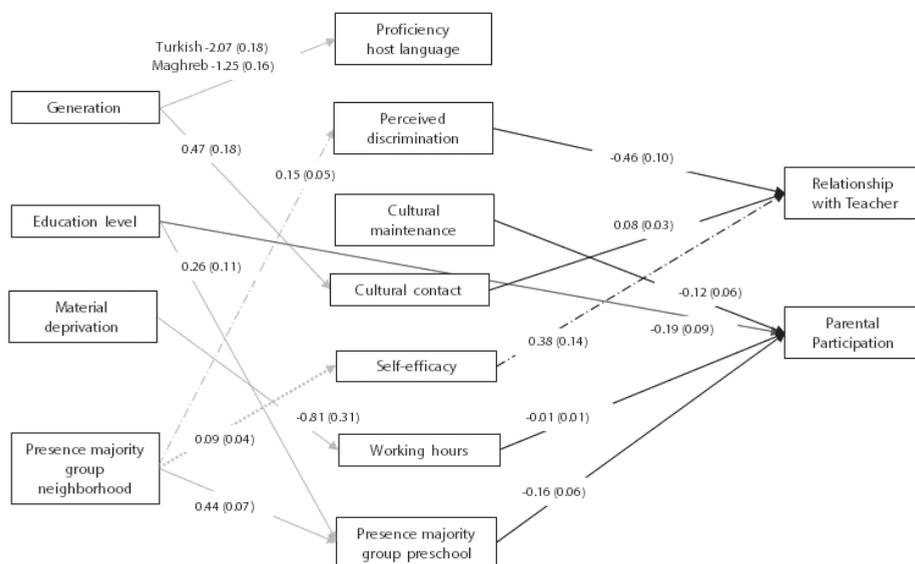
The third multigroup analysis compared parents with a Turkish and Maghreb background in the same country, the Netherlands. The baseline model confirmed the configural invariance ($\chi^2 [43] = 55.74, p = .09, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .05$). Constraining the model decreased the model fit significantly ($\chi^2 [93] = 166.62, p < .01$,

CFI = .82, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .10). Freeing four paths led to significant improvement of the model ($\chi^2 [89] = 113.66, p < .01$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .07), ($\Delta\chi^2 = 57.92, \Delta df = 46, p = .11$). Figure 5.4 reports the unstandardized significant path coefficients for the final partial constrained model. Similar to the other two models, the bidirectional path between relationship with the teacher and parental participation was not significant ($B = 0.02, SE = 0.02, p = .45$).

Relationship with the teacher. Perceived discrimination in the ECEC center had a negative association with the parent-teacher relationship ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.45, p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.33, p < .01$), whereas the importance of majority group contact was positively associated for both groups ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = .18, p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .13, p < .01$). Parental self-efficacy also has a significant positive association with the relationship with the teacher, but only for the Turkish group ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = .24, p < .05$).

Parental participation in the ECEC center. Negative associations with the outcome variable were found for the education level of the immigrant parents in the Netherlands ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.15, p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.13, p < .05$), the preference for cultural maintenance ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.14, p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.13, p < .05$), the amount of working hours ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.16, p < .05$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.13, p < .05$) and the proportion of majority group parents in the ECEC center ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.21, p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.16, p < .01$).

When focusing on the differences between the immigrant groups regarding the paths between the background characteristics and personal characteristics of the parents, we found that the path between generation and proficiency in Dutch was stronger for the Turkish group than for the Maghreb group ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = -.77, p < .01$, $\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = -.55, p < .01$). Furthermore, we found a significant positive relation for the Turkish group between proportion of the majority group in the neighborhood and perceived discrimination ($\beta_{\text{Turkish-Dutch}} = .34, p < .01$), but not for the Maghreb group. Furthermore, for the Maghreb group only we found a significant positive relation between proportion of the majority group in the neighborhood and parental self-efficacy ($\beta_{\text{Maghreb-Dutch}} = .23, p < .01$). The partially constrained model explained 33 percent of the variance for the relationship with the teacher for the Turkish-Dutch group, and 17 percent for the Maghreb-Dutch group. For the parental participation in the ECEC center, 13 percent of the variance was explained for the Turkish-Dutch group, and 9 percent for the Maghreb-Dutch group.

Figure 5.4*Significant Results Unstandardized Path Coefficients Dutch groups*

Note. The two dashed lines includes the Turkish-Dutch group only. Dotted line includes the Maghreb-Dutch group only.

As a last step, the indirect effects between the background characteristics, personal characteristics and the two outcome variables were checked. Most of the more personal characteristics were found to be significant mediators. Similar to the Maghreb model, material deprivation only had marginal associations with working hours, implying that working hours per week was not a mediator between material deprivation and parental participation.

Discussion

Partnerships between parents and teachers in early childhood education and care (ECEC) are widely acknowledged as important for children's well-being and learning, especially for children at risk for educational delays (Epstein, 2018; Norheim & Moser, 2020). The present study aimed to examine the differences in parents' relationships with teachers and parental participation in ECEC, across different immigrant groups and countries, and how this is associated with family, local context, and country characteristics. We focused on parents with a Turkish or Maghreb immigrant background, living in three different countries in Europe. We compared Turkish parents in Germany with Turkish parents in the Netherlands, Maghreb parents in France with Maghreb parents in the Netherlands, and Turkish parents with Maghreb parents in the Netherlands.

This provided the unique opportunity to disentangle the possible differences between countries versus differences within countries between immigrant groups.

Our results showed that parents with a Turkish and Maghreb background are in general positive about their relationships with teachers in the ECEC centers and are moderately involved in the ECEC centers. This is not in line with studies that focused on the parent-teacher relationship from the teachers' perspective, as teachers tend to rate the parent-school relationship and parental involvement lower than immigrant parents themselves (Yazdani et al., 2020). However, our results are in line with studies that also explicitly focused on personal relationships. Immigrant parents tend to be satisfied with the relationship with the specific teacher of their child, but there are often discrepancies between the (expectations of the) overall school system and the views of immigrant parents (Bendixsen & Danielsen, 2020). We also examined the differences between countries and the two immigrant groups. Immigrant Maghreb parents in France showed significantly lower trusting relationships and lower parental participation than immigrant Turkish parents in Germany and immigrant Turkish and Maghreb parents in the Netherlands. Turkish parents rated their relationships with teachers and their participation in ECEC significantly higher than the Maghreb groups.

We found across groups and countries no association between the relationship with the teacher and parental participation at the ECEC center. This suggests that in this context and for our target groups, the two aspects of the educational partnerships should be seen as separate dimensions. This contradicts findings from previous studies which indicate that the quality of the parent-teacher relationship and parent participation in school should be seen as distinct, but related aspects of an educational partnership (Kohl et al., 2000; Minke et al., 2014; Waanders et al., 2007). Parent involvement levels are usually related to aspects of teachers' and educators' attitudes toward parent involvement, and their engagement behaviors (Calzada et al., 2015; Grolnick et al., 1997). Yet, it has been found that associations can vary. Grolnick and colleagues (1997) concluded that teachers' attempts to involve parents may not reach those who live in more difficult contexts and those who have different values and attitudes than those expressed by the school or teachers. Thus, in more challenging and diverse contexts, general school engagement strategies, the school climate, and parents' relationships with other parents, may play a more important role to support parents' involvement in schools than individual parent-teacher relationships. Importantly, recommendations on how to strengthen partnerships emphasize a whole-school approach (e.g., Slot et al., 2021), and more research is needed to better understand the effects of school engagement strategies versus teacher strategies and teacher relationships with parents in facilitating educational partnerships.

This study investigated associations between family, context, and country characteristics and outcome variables per immigrant group and per country. Results for the Turkish groups in Germany and in the Netherlands were largely equivalent. More differences were found between the Maghreb groups in France and in the Netherlands,

and equivalence was also less for the Maghreb and Turkish group in the Netherlands. The main findings are discussed below.

Associations with the background characteristics of immigrant families

Only few direct associations were found between background characteristics of the parents and the outcome variables, suggesting that lower education, higher material deprivation, or being a first generation immigrant parent were no direct barriers to building and maintaining educational partnerships. This finding contradicts previous studies (Green et al., 2007; Park & Holloway, 2017) which included background characteristics as a direct or as a control variable. We specifically investigated how associations of background characteristics with our measures of educational partnerships were mediated by the characteristics of the parents and the families. This provided important information on how structural background variables affect levels and quality of educational partnerships. One of the few direct associations we found was between the generation status of the immigrant parents and the parent-teacher relationship. First generation immigrant parents reported more trusting parent-teacher relationships than second generation parents in both the Turkish and Maghreb groups, across countries. Remarkably, this direct generation effect was found while taking into account the negative association of first generation parents' lower national language abilities with the parent-teacher relationship. A possible explanation is that, despite more communication difficulties, first generation parents are more optimistic about the school (Kao & Tienda, 1995) and have higher expectations regarding the education system (Salikutluk, 2016).

Associations with the personal and family characteristics

While there were only few direct associations between the more distal background characteristics and the outcome variables, we found that several of the personal parent and family characteristics were associated with the outcome variables.

Parents' *ability in the national language* of the country of residence had a positive association with the relationship with the teacher for the Turkish-German and French-Maghreb parents, but not for the Turkish-Dutch and Maghreb-Dutch parents. A possible interpretation is that the three countries differ in the importance assigned to immigrants having strong skills in the national language, and in the level of support that is provided to bridge communication problems (Laakso et al., 2016). Both Germany (Panagiotopoulou & Rosen, 2018) and France (Yağmur & Van de Vijver, 2012) are known for their assimilationist and even exclusionary monolingual educational policy, while emphasizing the value of the national language within schools and ECEC, which devalues immigrants' heritage languages and provokes negative attitudes towards parents who are less able in the national language (Pulinx et al., 2017). This is reflected in the finding that in these countries, competencies in the national language facilitated immigrant parents' relationships with teachers. For the Maghreb-French group specifically, there was also an association with parental participation; immigrant parents who had lower

proficiency in French were less likely to participate at the ECEC centers. The Netherlands on the other hand, while in the past being characterized by a multicultural educational policy, also took a turn towards an assimilationist policy (Maan et al., 2014; Penninx, 2008). The fact that immigrant parents in the Netherlands did not experience a language barrier in establishing educational partnerships can possibly be explained by the current national educational equity policy, which attempts to enroll immigrants from early age in the preschool system by actively reaching out to families. Early education and care providers working in poor neighborhoods with targeted programs under the national equity policy, who are successful in reaching out to immigrants, are indeed reported to be culturally more inclusive and to try to overcome communication barriers (Romijn et al., 2020; Van der Werf et al., 2021).

As expected, parents' *perceived discrimination* at the ECEC center was found to be associated with their perceived relationships to teachers. Associations were negative for the Turkish groups, but positive for the Maghreb groups. When interpreting this finding, the bidirectional effect should be kept in mind. If immigrant parents are more involved at the ECEC center, they can be more exposed to discrimination at the ECEC center than parents who are not participating – especially in countries with a specifically negative public discourse on certain immigrant groups (as is the case for the Maghreb group in the Netherlands). Second, but more speculatively, this may point to a mechanism of parental protection. Experiences of discrimination at school may make immigrant parents more vigilantly involved with their children's education to make sure that their child is not mistreated at school (Rowley et al., 2010).

Regarding the acculturation attitudes of parents with an immigration background, we found different patterns across immigrant groups and countries. Parents' *cultural maintenance* attitudes were not associated with the perceived relationships with teachers. In France and the Netherlands, however, higher ratings on cultural maintenance related to lower ratings on participation in ECEC. This was particularly true for the Maghreb groups in these countries. If parents preferred to maintain the heritage culture and language, their participation at the ECEC center was lower. This could point to exclusionary mechanisms at preschool beyond the personal relation with the teacher. Involvement in school activities can imply contact with other teachers and other parents, with whom parents have no trusting relation or who may have less positive attitudes towards other cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, previous studies have shown that the Turkish immigrants often choose to maintain the heritage culture in the private domain but prefer contact with the host country culture in the public domain (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2004). This deliberate distinction between the public and private domain could explain why cultural maintenance does not play a large role for the Turkish community in the school context when compared to the Maghreb community. At the same time, parents' *preference for contact* with the majority group was positively associated with the perceived quality of the parent-teacher relationship and with parental participation in the Turkish groups (in line with Van Acker & Vanbeselaere, 2011), equally across countries, but not in the Maghreb groups.

Consistent with the literature, *parental self-efficacy*, as an indicator of the psychological wellbeing of immigrant parents, was related to both outcomes, though some differences were found across groups and countries. Especially for the Maghreb-French group, where self-efficacy was found to be lower than in the other groups, this characteristic was found to be important. In countries such as France where institutions such as schools and ECEC centers have different views on successful parenting and acculturation when compared to immigrant parents, hereby possibly creating conflicts, self-efficacy of immigrant parents has been found to be lower (Ali, 2008; Boruszak-Kiziukiewicz, & Kmita, 2020).

Finally, the *number of working hours per week* was not associated with the parent-teacher relationship but had a negative association with parental participation at the ECEC centers for the Turkish groups in Germany and the Netherlands and also for the Maghreb group in the Netherlands. As expected, this indicates that parental participation is also sometimes depending on the availability of parents, whereas the ability to build a trusting relationship with the teacher is not. Furthermore, this characteristic was associated, and assumingly bidirectional, with the background variables material deprivation and education level.

Presence of the majority group

Our results suggest that Turkish and Maghreb immigrant families in our study mostly live in neighborhoods with low presence of members of the majority group, indicating ethnic segregation at the neighborhood level. Overall, if parents report higher presence of the majority background in the neighborhood, this relates to higher majority group presence at the ECEC centers. This is particularly true in France, where the presence of the majority group at ECEC centers can be largely explained by presence in the neighborhood, likely because the French education system limits school choice to a (pre)school close to where a family lives (Keskiner, 2015; Ünver & Nicaise, 2019). However, in the Netherlands the presence of majority members at the ECEC centers is lower than expected based on the presence of the majority in the neighborhood, that is, school segregation exceeds neighborhood segregation. This is likely due to the constitutional freedom of school choice in the Netherlands which has previously been reported to underlie the ‘white flight’ and ethnic-specific choices among both majority and immigrant groups in mixed neighborhoods (Boterman, 2013).

Across immigrant groups and countries, both the presence of the majority group in the neighborhood and at the ECEC center were found to be unrelated to the quality of the personal parent-teacher relationship as perceived by the parents. However, some associations were found with parental participation, particularly so for the Maghreb group. The pattern of associations for the Maghreb groups, however, was complex. While higher presence of the majority group in the neighborhood was related to higher participation in preschool, higher presence of the majority group at preschool was in both Maghreb groups negatively related to participation. A clear explanation is lacking. The positive association between a more mixed neighborhood and participation may reflect

subgroups within the Maghreb groups who are higher educated, socioeconomically better off, have managed to move to a less segregated neighborhood and are more inclined to participate in society in general and in preschool in particular (note however that the separate relations of acculturation and integration attitudes with preschool participation were already taken into account in the analyses). It may also be that in a more mixed neighborhood, a different norm regarding participation is propagated by the preschool, which the Maghreb parents in these neighborhoods try to follow up. These explanations are supported by the finding that there is a positive relation between presence of the majority group in the neighborhood and parental self-efficacy for the Maghreb groups (though not for the Turkish groups, who might gain more self-efficacy from the close in-group ties rather than the presence of the majority group [Gijssberts & Dagevos, 2005]). The negative relation of a higher presence of majority parents at the preschool with Maghreb parents' participation is in this respect remarkable. It may point to mechanisms described by Baeck (2010), who found that participation in school is dominated by a specific category of parents, since parents that 'match' the school system are more inclined to participate, and the voices of other less resourceful groups of parents therefore are less heard. This also fits with abovementioned explanation that was discussed regarding feeling welcome and respected. Romijn et al. (2020) found in their study that the intercultural practices of teachers are related to the diversity of the classroom; when the majority group is overrepresented at ECEC centers, this might negatively affect the intercultural attitudes, competences and practices of the professionals and the schools. Note that, at least for the French-Maghreb parents in the current study, living in a more mixed neighborhood was associated with increased experiences of discrimination.

Limitations and conclusion

This study has several limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the results. First, the cross-sectional design, rather than a longitudinal design, prevents drawing strong conclusions about causality. We feel that the implied direction for many of the assumed associations is plausible, though bidirectional tendencies could partially account for patterns we report in our data. For example, the acculturation attitudes of immigrant families could also be a reaction to the multicultural beliefs, practices and attitudes of the teachers and the ECEC center (Slot et al, 2021; Zagefka et al., 2011). Data better suited for causal analysis are needed to fully address these questions of causality and selection. Furthermore, although we thoughtfully selected multiple sites in each country for recruitment to best represent the target groups and their host country context, differences at site-level and country-level regarding social policies, levels of segregation and acculturation attitudes should be kept in mind (Romijn et al., 2020). Future research should therefore include more sites per country and more participants, to confirm whether our results can be generalized. Future research should also take the heterogeneity of the immigrant groups more into account, since the participants

in our study showed large intragroup variation in both background characteristics and personal characteristics (Elveren, 2018).

Our index of parental involvement only captured some of the ways in which parents can take part in activities at the ECEC center, and does not capture all the potential ways in which parents may be involved in their children's education and learning. Parents may have different ways of demonstrating their commitment to their children's education, especially in the home environment (Francot et al., 2021, Chapter 2 in this dissertation). Given that we specifically focused on the connection and interaction between the ECEC centers and the parents, this was beyond the scope of the current paper, but further research is needed to clarify the family and societal factors related to all family investments in children's education.

Despite these limitations, our study contributes to the existing knowledge on educational partnerships, by taking a multi-group and cross-country perspective. Our results can help to explain some of the contradictory results in the literature by comparing different macro characteristics. Results can be used in pre-service teacher education and professional development courses on educational partnerships and diversity policy for education professionals. Professionals might be unaware of the impact of characteristics of parents and families, such as parents' self-efficacy, and the role of contextual characteristics, such as the proportion of majority group members, on immigrant parents' attempts to establish an educational partnership. The differences found between countries can be used as a starting point for discussion on the effects of national integration and educational policies on the experiences of immigrant families.

The image features an abstract background on the left side, composed of overlapping, wavy, semi-transparent lines in shades of orange and red. These lines create a sense of depth and movement. The right side of the image is a plain, light gray gradient. A large, bold, red number '6' is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the page.

6

Moroccan immigrant mothers' experiences with Italian preschool institutions: A mixed-method study

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Abstract

Being an immigrant mother demands both the redefinition of one's identity as a woman and as a mother and a 'double cultural mediation' in children's upbringing, between the culture of origin and that of the host country. Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings are key to bridging cultures, building relationships, and to supporting the wellbeing and the integration of mothers and children, these being among the conditions to achieve educational equality. This contribution presents research conducted in Northern-Italy within the international ISOTIS project (www.isotis.org). Drawing on quantitative data (114 structured interviews) and qualitative data (12 narrative-biographical interviews), this mixed-methods paper analyses how Moroccan mothers in Italy described their relationship with the ECEC system, teachers, and other parents. The results from both the quantitative and qualitative analyses showed that immigrant mothers are overall positive about the personal relationship with the teacher, though showing moderate participation, but that they experience several linguistic and cultural barriers. These barriers are related to mothers' own characteristics, but also point to the bureaucratic barriers of the education system and the exclusion of immigrant mothers from the social network of non-immigrant parents. The findings may contribute to identifying factors facilitating or hindering immigrant parents' full inclusion and participation in community life, and have implications for developing interventions and strategies to support them from children's early years.

Keywords: Immigration and motherhood, parent-school relationship and communication, educational inequalities, mixed-methods, narrative research

Introduction

This study presents research conducted in Northern Italy within the international ISOTIS project (see Chapter 1) that aims to contribute to effective policy and practice development at different system levels in order to effectively combat early arising and persisting educational inequalities. The focus of the current study is on the role of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in bridging cultures and supporting immigrant mothers' and children's well-being and integration.

In Europe, ECEC indicators show significant socioeconomic and ethnic-cultural disparities in the quantity and quality of ECEC use. For example, in Italy preschool attendance by children of immigrants is 28% lower than for non-immigrants (Santagati, 2016), and it has been found that immigrants often access poor quality ECEC (Bove & Sharmahd, 2020). Nonetheless, ECEC can play a key role in countering early emerging inequalities (Archambault et al., 2020). In Italy, the interplay between educational inequalities and immigration has mainly been investigated at primary and secondary school-level, while ECEC research is limited (Santagati, 2015). To address this gap, Moroccan-background mothers' descriptions of their experiences in preschools were analyzed, using mixed methods. The questions guiding this study were:

- What are the experiences of mothers with a Moroccan background with preschools in Italy?
- How did they describe the relationship with the ECEC system, the teachers and other parents and their involvement with preschools?
- What are the facilitators and barriers in strengthening relationships?

The relations between immigration and educational inequalities in ECEC were examined, considering the overlap of socioeconomic deprivation, language acquisition, parental knowledge of the educational system, and educational aspirations (Azzolini, 2011). The mothers' narratives were analyzed with reference to European studies with immigrant parents and/or their descendants, which helped to frame the intergenerational dynamics and the parents' subjective insights regarding their children's education (Brinbaum & Delcroix, 2016; Delcroix, 2013; Delcroix & Lagier, 2014).

Theoretical framework

According to Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), children's development occurs within a system of interactions involving the child, family, social actors and institutions. ECEC and school contexts are educational microsystems that promote children's development and can contribute to reducing educational and social inequalities, supporting integration into communities, and decreasing adversity. These opportunities are influenced by daily proximal interactions between the teacher and children, teachers' competencies and structural characteristics like curriculum, pedagogy, and school characteristics. Alongside the importance of the school environment, the family, as another important microsystem, can interact with the ECEC

and school environment in several ways. Epstein's model (2011) is relevant in suggesting *overlapping spheres of influence*, suggesting six types of family involvement which correspond to specific responsibilities for both parties: parenting (when schools assist parents in understanding child and adolescent development, and schools understand the different families and their views), effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications, volunteering (when parents help and support at the school and parents are seen as possible support and resources), learning at home (when parents support their children's learning at home with a high quality informal learning environment, and when schools support parents in providing this), decision making (when schools include parents as participants in school decisions, through school councils, action teams, and other parent organizations) and collaborating with the community (when community services, resources, and partners are integrated into the educational process). The quality of parents' relationship with both teachers and the education system from children's early years can be crucial for children's academic careers (Driessen et al., 2005), social competence (Hill & Craft, 2003), and behavior (Sheldon & Epstein, 2002), but also for immigrant parents' broader challenges. As argued in immigrant parenthood research (Maher, 2012; Pastori & Zaninelli, 2008), in ethno-psychiatric studies (Moro, 2002), and in immigrant parental support theories (Iavarone et al., 2015), being an immigrant mother is complex, demanding both the redefinition of one's identity (as a woman and as a mother) and a 'double cultural mediation' in child-upbringing, that is the mediation between the culture of origin (passing on cultural elements in the inculturation-filiation process) and that of the host country (accepting and selecting elements of the new culture in the acculturation-affiliation process) (Moro, 2002).

Research has highlighted how the social networks present in ECEC centers and schools can provide opportunities for immigrant women to reduce the social and cultural isolation that often characterizes the immigration experience and provide them with a new socialization network (Maher, 2012). Such processes intersect with larger structural factors like finding a job with a regular contract - which allows to obtain or renew one's permit of stay - housing, and material needs. However, relationships with teachers and the school community proves complex for immigrant families. Cultural, linguistic, and relational misunderstandings might obstruct productive exchanges and deepen social barriers (Bossong & Keller, 2018; Kim, 2009). Also, characteristics of the education system, such as teachers' attitudes towards immigrants or the general (lack of) inclusiveness of the (pre)school might interfere with the parent-school relationship or with the accessibility of ECEC services (Passiatore et al., 2019).

The Italian context

Immigration in Italy has increased steadily since the 1960s and in 2018 non-EU legally resident citizens numbered more than 3.7 million. Their origins are heterogeneous, but almost one third come from three countries: Morocco (11.9%), Albania (11.6%) and China (8.3%). Moroccan immigration to Italy is relatively recent, compared to other European countries. Single males started arriving in Italy in the 1970s as workers in many formal and

informal sectors, while later years witnessed the consolidation of Moroccan immigration, culminating in the 2000s with increased family reunifications, and the requests for citizenship and long-term residence permits. The current study focuses on two Northern-Italian urban sites, Milan and Turin, both characterized by a large immigrant community, especially from Morocco (Simina Duma et al., 2018). Despite becoming a well-rooted community in Italy, Moroccan immigrants have experienced an increasingly xenophobic and Islamophobic socio-political context (Brancato et al., 2016). Since 1992, conservative and ethnocentric legislation regarding citizenship has been passed, based on *ius sanguinis*, and deportations of immigrants have increased. Conversely, the local legislation and cultural-pedagogical guidelines regarding multiculturalism and inclusion of foreign children are quite progressive: recognizing the right of minors to education, inclusion in public schools and in mixed classes, giving value to diversity (gender, disability, social heterogeneity), and avoiding separate learning environments (MIUR, 2014, 2015). A recent study compared professionals in ECEC, primary education and social youth work in ten European countries on their diversity practices and multicultural and multilingual beliefs in schools (Slot et al., 2018). Compared to countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, Greece, Czech Republic and France, professionals in Italy are more open towards multiculturalism and multilingualism in their schools and displayed more diversity practices.

The Italian ECEC curriculum framework and pedagogy is holistic (Mantovani, 2007); home-school relationships and parental involvement are highly valued in decisions concerning children's education (see National Guidelines, 2012). Since 1991, national guidelines have explicitly referred to immigrant families and to a multicultural society. However, it is suggested that while there is widespread hospitality both in infant-toddler centers and preschools, pre-primary schools often have naive, folklore-based perspectives focused on stereotypical cultural differences (foods, dresses), caused by insufficient pre- and in-service training on multiculturalism and immigration. A mono-cultural identity mainly predominates, with limited sensitivity to preventing discrimination, and linguistic-cultural mediators are rare (Caneva, 2012).

Method

Procedure and participants

This study uses quantitative data from a large-scale structured interview study among parents with a disadvantaged background in ten European countries (see Broekhuizen et al., 2018) and a subsequent in-depth qualitative study (Nurse & Melhuish, 2018). This paper concerns mothers of Moroccan background in Italy at two different urban sites: Turin and Milan. Regarding the quantitative study, data-collection ran in the selected urban sites from December 2017 until July 2018. In total, 307 mothers with a Moroccan background were interviewed in Italy. For the present study, we only included mothers who had a child aged 3-6 years that attended preschool but not primary education, which led to a total of 114 interviewees (age $M = 34.8$ years, $SD = 6.5$ years). Most of

them (95.6%) were first generation immigrants. The average time living in Italy was 11.9 years ($SD = 5.9$ years).

Recruitment strategies included approaching ECEC services, primary schools, community centers, parent organizations and mediating key persons who worked with our target groups. The structured interviews were administered by interviewers, who were from the same communities or who had a good command of the languages of the parents - Standard Arabic, Moroccan Arabic and Italian - using a paper-copy questionnaire, available in Italian and Standard-Arabic to allow language switching during the interview. For most questions, the interviewers assisted the interviewees in reading and writing, but any request from parents to answer alone was fully respected, especially in case of sensitive questions. The survey took 45-60 minutes to complete and parents received an incentive (a small present) after participating in the interview, regardless whether they finished the interview.

Measures quantitative analyses

Two outcome variables were used: *Parent-teacher relationship*, measured by a scale composed of 11 items, with answering scales ranging from disagree (1) to agree (5) (e.g., "I feel comfortable to talk to my child's teachers"; Petrogiannis & Penderi, 2013). A higher score indicated a better parent-teacher relationship from the parent's perspective, Cronbach's $\alpha = .86$. *Parental participation* indicated how often an adult from the home got involved in activities at the child's preschool in the last six months, calculated as the mean of four items (e.g., "Taking part in meetings offered by the preschool to hear about what my child learns in preschool and how I can help my child's learning at home"; based on questionnaires from Fantuzzo et al., [2013] and Waanders et al., [2007]). The answering scales ranged from never (1) to more than once a month (5), Cronbach's $\alpha = .62$. Higher scores indicated that the parent was participating in the preschool more frequently.

Two demographic variables: first, the *education level of the parent* was based on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) levels (ISCED, 2011). *Material deprivation* of the family indicated whether a parent experienced difficulties affording certain items. The scale was composed of 13 questions (e.g., "Could you tell me if you can replace worn-out clothes by some new [not second-hand] ones?" 'yes' [0 points] or 'no' [1 point]), higher scores indicating more material deprivation (Guio et al., 2016).

Several cultural and psychological maternal characteristics were included: *Perceived proficiency in Italian* and *Perceived proficiency in the mother language* indicated whether a parent experienced difficulty when talking, reading, or listening to their languages. The three items per language were reversely recoded, ranging from always (1) to never (5), so that a higher score indicated higher language proficiency. The level of *Perceived discrimination at the preschool* was calculated as the mean of two items, discrimination by other parents and discrimination by teachers, answers ranging from never (1) to often (4). Higher scores indicated that immigrant parents perceived more discrimination at the preschool. *Cultural maintenance* captured the preference of parents for maintaining their own culture, calculated here as the mean of two items, one focusing on maintaining the

heritage language and one focusing on maintaining the heritage culture (Zagefka et al., 2014). The desire of immigrant parents to have intercultural contact with the majority group, or *preference for contact*, was also calculated as the mean of two statements (e.g., "It is important to me that members of my group have friends with a [X-]native background"; Zagefka et al., 2011). *Parental self-efficacy* was measured with the short version of the Parenting Self-Agency Measure (PSAM; Dumka et al., 1996), with five items ranging from disagree (1) to agree (5) (e.g., "I feel sure of myself as a parent"). A mean score was computed, with higher scores indicating higher parental self-efficacy.

Subsequent qualitative in-depth study

After the structured interviews, mothers were asked whether they could be contacted for a subsequent in-depth interview. In total, 24 mothers who gave permission to be contacted, were interviewed again, balanced regarding study site (Turin and Milan), education level (low, medium, high) and age of children. For the current study we included the 12 mothers who had a child aged 3-6 years. They were on average 35.8 years old and had an average education level of 2.6 (range from 0 to 5; ISCED, 2011).

The qualitative in-depth interview consisted of an introduction, a spontaneous narrative by the mother about her life, a semi-structured part that dived deeper into key themes, and a conclusion. The interview covered the support in parenting, experiences with the education system, home-(pre)school relationship, the home environment, identity, lifestyles and interests, attitudes towards education and employment, and aspirations regarding the child's future. Interviewers used paper and pencil for short notes, a map of Europe, Italy, and Morocco and a family tree template for clarification. Interviews were audio-recorded, lasted 1.5 hours typically, were conducted in the language most convenient to the informant and fully transcribed (Nurse & Melhuish, 2018). In the transcription, names and any other potentially identifying information were anonymized.

Analysis

We used a mixed methods approach with parallel comparison of quantitative and qualitative datasets, followed by discussion among the four authors. Both types of data were analyzed separately, and results were complementarily merged in the interpretation. The qualitative study elaborated on the findings of the quantitative study, hereby going deeper in the personal experiences of the mothers, not only regarding the relationship with the teachers, but with the entire preschool system and other parents as well. This strategy facilitated an understanding of how well the qualitative data were in line with the quantitative results, and any dissonance among the results triggered a return to the data for further consideration.

The quantitative analysis focused on two outcome variables; the relationship with the teacher and parental participation at the (pre)school. Preliminary analyses and descriptive statistics were performed using SPSS 25.0 software. Given that some variables were not normally distributed, Spearman Rank correlations were calculated. Using Mplus

(Muthén & Muthén 1998-2017), a multivariate regression model was estimated including both outcome variables simultaneously to examine the associations with the maternal and family characteristics. Full information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) estimation was used to address missing data.

In the first step of the qualitative analysis, a thematic approach (Braun & Clark, 2008) was applied, based on coding trees derived from the qualitative interviews. The relevant codes and subcodes for research questions were refined in multiple cycles of coding (see Supplemental Table S1 for codes in Appendix 6.2) and in a second stage, their distribution was analyzed with attention to the positive versus negative values attributed to experiences. To avoid the risk of adopting a merely illustrative approach, the thematic analysis was combined with a biographical one: some life-stories were reported with the aim of embedding the themes in the specificity of the interviewees' lives. In doing so, the aim was to connect subjective meanings with cultural, historical, social and institutional dimensions.

Within the coding tree, the most relevant codes were selected:

- mother's experiences with the system (Supplemental Table S2)
- mother's experiences with teachers (ST S3)
- mother's experiences with other parents (ST S4)
- mother's involvement in the preschool center (ST S5)

Results

Quantitative results

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 6.1. In total 56.1% of the mothers had a low level of education (indicated by ISCED level 0-2), 34.2% a medium level (ISCED level 3-5) and 9.6% a high level (ISCED level >5). Families' material deprivation was relatively high and showed large variations between immigrant families ($M = 4.25$, $SD = 2.42$, range 0-13). Participants stated that their proficiency in their heritage language ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 0.61$) was higher than their proficiency in Italian ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.17$). Parental self-efficacy was relatively high ($M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.51$) and perceived discrimination at the preschool setting was relatively low ($M = 1.57$, $SD = 0.76$). Scores on both cultural maintenance ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.01$) and preference for majority group contact ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.11$) were relatively high, which implies that Moroccan-Italian mothers wish to maintain their cultural and linguistic background to a certain extent, but also value contact with the majority group as well. Overall, Moroccan-Italian mothers rated their relationship with the preschool teachers as very positive ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.74$), and showed moderate levels of parental participation ($M = 2.09$, $SD = 0.82$) - indicating that, on average, they participated in their child's preschool once or twice in the past six months (see Table 6.1). Table 6.3, containing the correlations between the outcome variables and characteristics of the mothers, can be found in Appendix 6.1.

Table 6.1*Descriptive Statistics Quantitative Study (n = 114)*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range
Relationship with teachers	4.28	0.74	1-5
Parental participation in preschool	2.09	0.82	1-5
Material deprivation	4.25	2.42	0-13
Proficiency in heritage language	4.74	0.61	1-5
Proficiency in Italian	3.09	1.17	1-5
Self-efficacy	4.63	0.51	1-5
Perceived discrimination	1.57	0.76	1-4
Cultural maintenance	3.96	1.01	1-5
Preference for contact	4.17	1.12	1-5

Multivariate regression analysis (see Table 6.2) showed a trend towards significance for the paths between education level ($p = .05$), material deprivation ($p = .05$) and the relationship with the teacher. This indicated that Moroccan-Italian immigrant mothers who are higher educated and more deprived, tended to have more trusting relationships with the teacher. Furthermore, mothers with a higher proficiency in Italian were more likely to have better relationships with teachers, but proficiency in the heritage language was not related. Mothers with higher self-efficacy were more likely to report better relationships with the teachers. There was a negative association between perceived discrimination and the relationship with the teacher. Finally, Moroccan-Italian mothers who preferred to maintain their culture more, tended to display less positive relationships with the teacher, whereas preference for majority group contact was unrelated.

For parental participation in preschool, a different pattern emerged. Material deprivation was negatively related, which implied that mothers who were more deprived tended to show less participation at the preschool. Immigrant mothers who perceived more discrimination at the preschool, also participated less. No other cultural, linguistic, or psychological characteristics were related to this outcome.

Table 6.2*Standardized Path Coefficients from Regression Analysis*

	Relationship with teacher		Parental participation at preschool	
	β	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>SE</i>
Education level	-0.17 [^]	.09	-0.01	.10
Material deprivation	0.20 [^]	.10	-0.23*	.10
Proficiency in heritage language	-0.05	.06	0.01	.11
Proficiency in Italian	0.32**	.10	-0.06	.12
Self-Efficacy	0.21**	.10	0.03	.08
Perceived discrimination	-0.20*	.07	-0.19*	.09
Cultural maintenance	-0.15*	.09	0.00	.12
Preference for contact	0.06	.08	0.02	.09
<i>R</i> ²	.34		.10	

[^] $p < .10$ * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Qualitative results

Qualitative analyses depicted an ECEC context that was generally perceived as welcoming and inclusive when accessible for the immigrant mothers, but not equipped to overcome several language barriers and cultural differences. In the next section, we will highlight the main findings.

The benefits of entering the ECEC system: a social and educational integration turning point

First, the mothers were very positive about the infant toddler centers and preschools as an institution that did not only benefit their children, but also themselves. When their children accessed ECEC services - especially preschool – this enabled mothers to attend Italian classes at NGOs or public schools, where they could obtain the lower secondary Italian qualification, thus improving their chances of professional training and employment, and increase their knowledge of public services and the education system, positively influencing communication with the school and participation and socialization in the Italian society.

Preschools and infant toddler centers introduced children and parents to the education system and were considered as the foundation for children's educational careers. The insights of Zohr⁵ (see narrative 1) highlighted her aspirations for a different educational trajectory for her child than her own trajectory. She also hinted at the "educational investment" (Brinbaum & Delcroix, 2016, p.54) at the core of immigrant parents' educational endeavor and transnational mobility (Delcroix, 2013). Zohr's

5 This name and the other mothers' names are pseudonyms, not real names.

narrative illustrated the role of mediation between the host country and the country of origin.

Narrative 1:

Forty-seven-year-old Zohr attended the university in Casablanca although without enjoyment. Yet, she found a job she liked and regretted leaving it when joining her husband in Turin, where she was unemployed. For eleven years in Italy, she had been attending language and training courses and caring for her two daughters (10 and 5 years of age) and a son (8 years). In their upbringing she mobilized her "subjective resources" (Brinbaum & Delcroix, 2016) in accessing the Italian health, childcare, and educational services and in participating in third sector organizations.

Zohr's experience with the education system was generally positive, although the communication with the teachers was sometimes awkward, particularly because at the beginning she "still didn't speak well, didn't know what to do, how things worked". Zohr and her husband faced economic constraints, unemployment, and little welfare support, which pushed them to rethink their migratory project. Zohr perceived the Italian system first as unsupportive and wondered about her children's future education. Nevertheless, she supported them by getting involved since preschool:

Z: "My daughter's preschool teacher asked me if I wanted her to start primary school in advance, but I said no. I wanted her to attend preschool for three years. I don't want her to do like us, when you're five you still want to play, our generation [in Morocco] was pushed to start learning earlier."

While stressing the importance of education, she claimed that – unlike herself – they should "do things because they like them".

Accessing and positively experiencing ECEC consolidated immigrant mothers' migratory project, reinforced their role and constituted an achievement, particularly if parents did not rely on or never accessed their home country's education system, as was the case for some interviewees. The preschool was often the first social experience with other children and majority group adults.

Accessibility barriers: the short circuit of employment and eligibility

Although ECEC is generally aimed at families with a socioeconomic vulnerability, ECEC accessibility is partly conditioned by parents' employment: unemployed immigrant mothers, those working with precarious or no job contract, have less or no opportunities for their children to be admitted to the infant-toddler center and sometimes even to preschool, despite their material hardship since informal and precarious work makes it harder to obtain or renew one's permit of stay and to access public and welfare services. This adds to the bureaucratic barriers immigrant parents face. Notably, some mothers, if

unemployed, did not even apply to the infant-toddler center, or the application failed, as Rabiaa explains.

Narrative 2:

Rabiaa, 35 years old, was born in Casablanca where she obtained a professional diploma in accounting. She came to Italy 14 years ago with a sibling. Her two sons (8 and 2 years) and a daughter (5 years) were born in Turin. In Italy, Rabiaa had unstable non-qualified jobs before maternity, but - being undocumented - mostly without any contract. She had not applied for the infant-toddler center because she preferred to care for her children until they reached age 3. Then, the first preschool application for her older child failed:

R: "I enrolled him again and he wasn't accepted, I don't know why, the scores weren't enough, I was pregnant, and I also took the medical certificate. They told me 'it doesn't matter', so he stayed at home. Then we moved to this district and he was accepted, as he went to primary school, he was basically replaced by his sister! I already knew the teachers and they knew me."

When Rabiaa became familiar with the system, she consolidated her positive experience with her children's preschool, praising parental involvement and home-school relations.

R: "I'm the one who takes care of everything [regarding school] more than my husband (.....) me talking to the teachers (....) he knows that I'm capable of doing these things (laughs) (...) for him the important thing is that the children feel good when they go to preschool (.....) as long as they feel good at preschool, then we do too."

Rabiaa was ambivalent about her daughter spending "more time at school than at home", but being far from her extended family, educational services were key for her "educational mobilization" (Brinbaum & Delcroix, 2016). She agreed upon any preschool activity aimed at "children's development, education and well-being, not touching upon religion" and enjoyed preschool initiatives on diversity. Rabiaa's children's preschool was in a highly diverse neighborhood, where her two older children attended Arabic classes at the weekend.

In line with the quantitative analyses the lack of language proficiency in Italian was among the barriers mothers often mentioned regarding the bureaucratic procedures to access educational services (language barriers within the preschools will be discussed below).

A good relationship with the teacher as a protective factor

Findings from the qualitative analysis confirmed the quantitative results (see Table 6.1) that Moroccan-Italian mothers' experiences with the teachers of the infant-toddler centers and preschools were generally positive. Mothers considered ECEC favorably, as long as teachers worked for children's well-being, by caring for them, treating them

with equity and providing formative experiences. This relationship often went beyond the teachers' institutional role: in early childhood services, teachers were open to the broader needs of the immigrant families. This is also in line with the quantitative results; especially the mothers that faced more economic hardship were more positive about their relationship with the teacher, as they perceived the relationship with the teacher as an important resource. Teachers' empathy helped to build trust, and most mothers enjoyed communicating with them. Teachers were also perceived as a source of advice on education and care of children, since the immigrant mothers felt they lacked places or people to turn to about these themes, as illustrated in Miriam's narrative.

Narrative 3:

Miriam, 31 years old, was from Rabat and had been in Milan for five years. She was married and lived in a rented flat with her husband and their two children: a girl (6) and a boy (4). Initially Italy was "very, very hard" and "With my husband it was always a big mess. Alone, I was always alone". Miriam's situation in Italy gradually improved. She learned Italian, made friends, and found a certain balance with her husband. The ECEC services played an important role in this process. Miriam enrolled both children in an infant-toddler center and preschool. Where she could not rely on others to support her in raising her children, these services met practical and emotional needs. In addition, Miriam enjoyed having some free time instead of a suffocating exclusive mother-children relationship:

M: "It's better at (...) the infant-toddler center. So, they keep quiet, both at the infant-toddler center and at home. [...] [Otherwise] they're with me all the time, they're always with me 24/7, I can... I cannot."

Miriam found ECEC services one of the first welcoming environments in Italy thanks to the good relationship with teachers. She appreciated communicating with them and their commitment to her children, particularly their efforts to help her son overcome his initial isolation:

M: "[In preschool] it is very beautiful! The teachers... they are good. And the communications with the teachers... are very beautiful. [...]"

Int: "Maybe if you need something ... can you ask them?"

M: "Yes. Yes."

Int: "For example, did it happen? That you asked for something, and they helped you?"

M: "Before, my son didn't want to play with the kids. I found this difficult to deal with and they are ... good, slowly they understood my son and helped him to play with the other kids."

This was a sensitive issue for Miriam, who formed social relationships slowly. But with time she built a good rapport with other Moroccan-Italian mothers.

Support from teachers also conveyed the feeling of an educational alliance between family and service, which promoted collaboration between two educational agencies

that recognized and valued each other. Sometimes, the parent-teacher relationship addressed multiple needs, providing even material support, for example, giving food not consumed at lunch to take home.

Communication and cultural barriers: not finding “the right words”

However, results from the in-depth interviews also showed that the parent-teacher relationship could sometimes be weak. In three interviews the relationship with teachers was described as distant, with little communication. This seemed related to language barriers altogether with poor cultural knowledge within the educational institution, as in Arianna’s experience, confirming the quantitative results regarding the relation with parents’ proficiency in Italian.

Narrative 4:

Arianna, 35 years old from Casablanca, living in Milan for five years, was married and had two children: a 4-year-old boy and 2-year-old girl. When she joined her husband in Italy, she found life very difficult, because of language barriers and loneliness, so she decided to focus on children: INTERPRETER: *“The first thing she thought was getting pregnant in order to have at least children”.*

Arianna tried to enroll both her children in infant-toddler center and then in preschool, but they were refused, so her son entered preschool one year later than planned. This was partially due to the Italian bureaucratic enrolment regulations and to Arianna’s difficulties in understanding the new education system. At the interview, the relationship with the preschool was described as quite weak. She thought that her lack of cultural knowledge of the education system, Italian language and poor communication with the teachers might be the cause:

INT: “As for her it is the first year at the preschool, there is nothing that is 100% clear, a deep knowledge of the preschool, of the teachers, of the relationship also with them. Even doing interviews... a little bit, she doesn’t do so many interviews” [...]

“Her obstacle is that she understands what they say, but to answer she does not find the ... the right words.”

During the first meeting of her son’s class, Arianna’s husband intervened: INT: *“Her husband told the teachers that she can’t understand Italian [...].They said that they would let her take pictures of the communications, she goes home, and he explains her...”.* This might have been a facilitator for the communication, but it simultaneously weakened Arianna’s relationship with teachers. Her Italian improved with time, but perhaps the teachers did not believe so. Therefore, they rarely talked to each other, which did not benefit neither Arianna nor her son. Notably, Arianna would have liked to share her worries about her children’s education, but she still had not talked to the teachers, especially about her main concern; that her son could not speak yet.

“On the threshold” of the school and Italian parents’ network

ECEC services were important in providing possibilities for interactions between parents. However, relationships with other parents often appeared limited to polite exchanges or rather formal relationships: *“Hi’ Hi’ [...] ‘How are you?’ ‘Fine’, that’s all”* (Arianna). This could be linked to poor language competence, but sometimes the relationships with other majority group parents were perceived as strongly negative, for example Miriam believed that: *“the Italian mothers don’t communicate with the foreign ones”*. Episodes marked by prejudices and discrimination were reported, negatively affecting mothers’ participation in school life. This was confirmed by the quantitative analysis, as we found that perceived discrimination is negatively related to parents’ participation.

Nevertheless, some experiences were positive and included deep relationships, especially with other Moroccan mothers. The feeling of closeness with mothers from the same ethnic background was stronger: similar cultural background, mutual language comprehension and sharing the migration experience, all contributed to meaningful relationships (as in Miriam’s case). Also some relations with majority group Italian mothers were described as good, especially thanks to key-figures who played a facilitating role between the immigrant and non-immigrant parents, and to the preschools that showed interest in people from different cultures, carefully introducing them to the rest of the school.

The limited relationships with parents probably also affected parents’ involvement in activities at the preschools, which most interviewees experienced on specific occasions, such as festivities and celebrations (Christmas or other feasts) and parent meetings with teachers (one or two per year, and on demand). WhatsApp groups facilitated information sharing for parents regarding events at school, but without really engaging them in the school’s life: *“If there is something important, they write and... that’s all”* (Miriam). Low levels of participation depended on the lack of time and resources, family-management, poor social support, and work-related reasons. However, Moroccan immigrant mothers’ active involvement in daily school life was not uncommon overall, sometimes featuring intensive communication with teachers and high motivation to volunteer. So did Rabiaa (narrative 2), who was fluent in Italian and engaged in several school activities.

Events encouraging mothers to share elements of their cultural background were appreciated as opportunities for involvement, as for Rabiaa: *“We made Arabic reading, the tea, you know, the msaman [a kind of Moroccan pastry], to let them see how our culture is”*. These emerged as opportunities to recognize diversity and to promote intercultural dialogue.

Discussion

As immigrant mothers with a Moroccan background might face several challenges in their encounters with the preschool system in Italy, the current study examined their experiences on multiple dimensions: the relationship with the ECEC system, the teachers

and other parents and their involvement in preschools. Findings from both qualitative and quantitative analyses presented a complex picture with some positive and other more critical aspects.

The quantitative analyses indicated overall positive opinions regarding the relationship between immigrant mothers and teachers, and moderate parental participation in the preschool. Regression analyses showed that more adaptation to the country of residence (reflected by higher language proficiency in Italian and less strong preference for cultural maintenance), lower perceived discrimination and higher self-efficacy were related to better relationships with the teachers. For parental participation, we found perceived discrimination and families' material deprivation as the main barriers.

Access to preschool services can represent a turning point in an immigrant woman's life, with increased respect for autonomy and new energy to invest in the social (meeting friends and relatives), professional (looking for a job), and educational activities (attending Italian language classes). Competence in Italian was key for integration both in the enlarged social sphere and in the school. However, it was sometimes difficult to start this change, as the often unemployed mothers, or mothers working without a secured job contract, did not meet the criteria for accessing the service (which vary locally), or experienced many language barriers in the bureaucratic process. Failure to enter preschool services generated a deep concern for immigrant parents, as the preschool service was often considered as fundamental in children's educational paths. The achievement of a better life is conditioned by children's educational success, for which personal resources (ability to communicate, reflect, coping) rather than economic or educational resources come into play (Delcroix & Lagier, 2014). Both obstacles, access criteria and linguistic-bureaucratic barriers, should be considered by policy makers, given the importance of preschool services for the integration and empowerment of immigrant women.

Participation in preschool also provided an opportunity for socialization in the local community. The teacher was a point of reference in children's education and care. The experience of the interviewees highlighted a widespread perception of the need of an educational alliance between families and services, but, above all, for a meaningful and supportive relationship with a person from the local community who cared for your child, shared with you this responsibility, and supported your motherhood. In the parent-teacher relationship some actions indicated by Epstein (2011) were evident in the interviews, in particular *supporting parenting*, *bidirectional communication* and, partially, *volunteering*, here intended as a teacher's openness to respond to needs beyond the role of educator, offering support also to combat economic and material deprivation. This was also confirmed by the quantitative results, indicating that immigrant mothers who faced more material deprivation, tended to have more trusting relationships with the teachers.

This study demonstrates that ECEC services can enrich immigrant parents' social networks (Maher, 2012). However, language and cultural differences may still hinder the

establishment of strong, trusting social relationships (Bossong & Keller, 2018; Kim, 2009), especially among parents of different backgrounds, while teachers' positive and inclusive attitudes (Passatore et al., 2019) are not enough to fully involve immigrant parents. This is in line with Francot et al. (2021, see Chapter 5), implying that in more challenging and diverse contexts, general school engagement strategies, the school climate, and parents' relationships with other parents, may play a more important role to support parents' involvement in schools than individual parent-teacher relationships.

Mothers mostly talked about a segmented experience of social inclusion and exclusion, with exchanges of information and coexistence at the preschool, but social distance and mostly polite but formal relationships with majority group Italian parents outside the preschool. Although the quantitative results showed that immigrant parents perceived low levels of discrimination at the preschool, the qualitative results indicated that several majority group parents were not inclusive. As a result, most immigrant mothers had mainly contact with parents who had the same ethnic background. This points again to the importance of an inclusive school climate and suggests that more attention should be given to the attitudes of majority group parents.

Social media as communication tools with the preschool were not significant levers for improving parent-preschool relationships, although they facilitated the dissemination of organizational information (in line with Francot et al., 2019, Chapter 7). Besides key-figures like sociable and dedicated majority group mothers, language and cultural differences presented an important obstacle to deepen the relationships and marked boundaries that may vanish at preschool only if the preschool is inclusive enough, but may reappear outside it. Sometimes these barriers were present also within the preschool, even in the relationships with teachers. It was consistently found that the perception of positive relationships with teachers increased as mothers' fluency in Italian grew. Although the preschools were likely to be welcoming, few resources were provided to overcome the language and cultural barriers, as the preschools were not competent enough on an intercultural and multilingual level to reach those who were less proactive and needed more support.

The current study focused on the experiences of immigrant mothers with a Moroccan background with their children's ECEC centers. Overall, we found that the immigrant mothers were positive about the personal relationship with the teacher. However, in the in-depth interviews they acknowledged the multiple challenges they encountered. More attention should be given to the parents who are less adopted to the Italian culture and language, as they seem to face more challenges, and also to the parents who face more economic hardship, as they seem to benefit most from a trustful relationship with the teacher. Inclusive policies and support to the professional development of professionals in education and public administration seem crucial to allow ECEC services to fully realize their potential to promote social integration and to fully play their role of *generative welfare* (Vecchiato, 2015) in breaking the cycle of poverty and disadvantage.

Appendix 6.1

Table 6.3

Spearman Correlation Coefficients for the Quantitative Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Relationship with teacher	-									
2. Parental Participation	.12	-								
3. Education level	.01	.06	-							
4. Material Deprivation	.05	-.19*	-.14	-						
5. Proficiency in Italian	.20*	.11	.42**	-.22*	-					
6. Proficiency in heritage language	.02	-.06	-.05	.28**	.02	-				
7. Perceived discrimination	-.30**	-.20*	.02	.15	-.13	.13	-			
8. Cultural Maintenance	-.16	-.10	-.08	.11	-.12	.15	.02	-		
9. Preference for Contact	.09	.04	.20*	.09	.26**	.13	-.14	.02	-	
10. Self-efficacy	.32**	.05	-.06	.11	.10	.14	-.09	-.04	-.04	-

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Appendix 6.2

S1. Selected codes from the coding tree (see Nurse & Melhuish, 2018 for more information)

04 experiences and opinions about education-system

04.01 infant-toddler center education

04.01.01 children's experiences with other children

04.01.02 children's experiences with teachers

04.01.03 children's experiences with the system

04.01.04 mother's experiences with other parents

04.01.05 mother's experiences with teachers

04.01.06 mother's experiences with the system

04.02 preschool education

04.02.01 children's experiences with other children

04.02.02 children's experiences with teachers

04.02.03 children's experiences with the system

04.02.04 mother's experiences with other parents

04.02.05 mother's experiences with teachers

04.02.06 mother's experiences with the system

04.06 negative experience

04.07 positive experience

04.08 areas of improvement of education system

04.09 Diversity in the learning setting

05 Accessibility of education system

05.01 Role of ethnic origin and faith

05.02 Role of language

05.02.01 barriers

05.02.02 facilitators

05.03 Transport availability (distance)

05.04 Financial resources

05.05 Areas of improvement

06 home-school relationship

06.01 mother's involvement

06.03 institution's orientation to parents' involvement

06.04 Mother's knowledge of the education system

06.05 Mother's skills to support child's learning at school

06.06 Type of communication between mothers and school

Table S2*Mothers' Relation with the System in Infant-Toddler Center and Preschool*

n=11	Positive experiences	#	Negative or poor experiences	#
	As a support to working and job seeking mothers; to mothers attending Italian classes; to mothers' autonomy in general	5	Bureaucratic barriers (mothers without job contract or lacking of other eligibility conditions); weak knowledge of the system	4
	As an introduction of children and parents to the preschool/primary school system	5	Other support arrangements (relatives, husband...); service not needed	1
	As a (first) socialization experience	4	Language barriers	2
	In relation to diversity	2	Different or conflicting views on educational roles of preschool and parents	2
			Conflict due to alleged child neglect or maltreatment at school	2
			Mother's negative insights or doubts on preschool socialization	2
			Perceptions of discrimination	1

Table S3*Mothers' Relation with Teachers in Infant-Toddler Center and Preschool*

n=12	Positive experiences	#	Neutral experiences	#	Negative experiences	#
	Emotional support (personal relationship also outside school)	4	Little communication	3	Accident between teacher and child	1
	Source of advice about children	1	Language barriers	3	No attention to children from teacher	1
	Teacher/mother collaboration	1	Push to learn Italian	1		
	Treating all equally	1	Lack of cultural knowledge	1		
	Good communication	2				
	Positive environment for children (good learning experience for child; teachers paying a lot of attention to children)	2				
	Practical support	1				

Table S4*Mothers' Relation with Other Parents in Infant-Toddler Center and Preschool*

n = 9	Positive experiences	#	Neutral experiences	#	Negative experiences	#
	Good relationships with native parents (talking about children)	2	Not deep relationships	6	Prejudices and discrimination experiences	3
	Good relationships with other Moroccan parents	3	Relations limited to inside school	1	Misunderstandings due to economic difficulties	1
			WhatsApp groups	3		
			Language barriers	1		

Table S5*Mothers' Involvement in Infant-Toddler Center and Preschool*

n = 5	High participation	#	Medium participation	#	Low participation	#
	Perceived high participation	2	Perceived medium participation	2	Perceived low participation	1
	Events to share culture	1	Parties	3	Lack of time and resources for participation	1
	Actively involved in daily class life	2	Meetings	3		
			Interviews with teachers	1		
			WhatsApp groups	3		



7

The Utrecht Virtual Learning Environment project:

Improving educational partnerships in a multicultural preschool

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Abstract

The increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in European countries leads to new challenges for current education systems. One important challenge is establishing trustful educational partnerships with parents from diverse backgrounds. This holds especially true for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) centers. The *Utrecht Virtual Learning Environment (U-VLO)* project is a small-scale project that explores the prerequisites of successfully implementing an educational digital tool that has the potential to improve the educational partnerships between parents and a preschool, in a highly diverse multicultural environment in the Netherlands. The digital tool in the current study aims at (a) improving the engagement of parents by incorporating parents as important resources for (b) enriching the preschool education practices with an intercultural and multilingual focus. The current project follows the principles of Design-Based Research and describes the iterative process of implementing the digital tool, together with the preschool (two preschool teachers working in four classrooms) and parents, to collaboratively create intercultural content via the digital tool. These bottom-up implementations, combined with the results of observations and evaluations among teachers and parents, show that it is possible to implement a digital tool in this specific local context. However, many factors and prerequisites, both social and technical, need to be considered before the tool can impact the existing partnerships. Implications for theory and practice focusing on improving educational partnerships in multicultural and multilingual settings for young children, and the use of innovative digital tools herein, are provided.

Keywords: educational partnerships, preschools, ICT, intercultural approach, Design-Based Research

Introduction

European societies experience increasing cultural and linguistic diversity. As a consequence, education systems face new challenges: How can we do justice to this diversity, and how can we ensure equal opportunities for children from diverse backgrounds? One important strategy to combat inequality and to increase inclusiveness in education for all children from various backgrounds, is to strengthen the connections between the child's school and home environment (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Halgunseth et al., 2009; OECD, 2015). However, it can be difficult for schools and preschools to communicate with and to actively involve parents who have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Bossong & Keller, 2018; Putnam, 2007). This can be due to communication barriers, cultural differences, or insufficient intercultural competences. Therefore, it is important to focus on innovative strategies that can overcome these barriers and possibly support educational partnerships in multicultural preschool environments, while using the cultural and linguistic diversity as an educational resource. The current study is part of the *U-VLO* project, which stands for *Utrecht Virtual Learning Environments*. In this study, we focus on the educational partnerships between the parents and the preschool in a multicultural environment, and explore how a digital tool can be implemented to promote educational partnerships.

Educational partnerships

Educational partnership refers to the belief that both the (pre)school and parents are responsible for creating an optimal environment for the learning and development of the child (Christenson, 2004). The aim is to establish meaningful communication and collaboration in which both parties help and support each other to promote the learning and development of children (De Wit, 2005). Although the term educational partnership is becoming increasingly popular in research and practice, previous studies have been inconsistent in their terminology. Educational partnership, parental involvement, and parental participation are used interchangeably, although each term refers to different parental behaviors and practices. Parental participation is often defined as the involvement of parents in (pre)schools, but this disregards the involvement of parents in children's learning and development in the home environment. Moreover, the term parental involvement suggests that solely parents should take a step towards the school, instead of both taking a step towards each other (Prins et al., 2013). Several theoretical frameworks show that parental involvement can be considered a multidimensional concept (see for example Epstein's [1992, 2018] or Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler's [1995] typology), while often distinguishing between the involvement in school and at home. In the current study, we involved the parents from the start, and called on their cultural and heritage language expertise to collaborate as partners with the teachers (Young & Hélot, 2007).

The importance of an educational partnership between parents and (pre)school can be traced back to the bio-ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner,

1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The child's personal development is central in this model and results from the recurrent interactions (i.e., *proximal processes*) of a child with his or her immediate environments, the so-called *microsystems*, such as the family, peer group, and (pre)school classroom. These microsystems are embedded in larger meso-, exo-, macro-, and chronosystems that directly and indirectly influence the child or his or her immediate environment. For optimal development of the child it is essential that there is coherence and continuity between the microsystems, such as the (pre)school and the family context (Rosa & Tudge, 2013). This coherence requires common aims, shared understandings, and mutual actions (Tayler, 2006).

Much research has been conducted on the positive consequences of educational partnerships on individual child outcomes. Supporting vulnerable parents and stimulating parental involvement and participation are seen as important strategies to improve the academic outcomes of children (Brooks-Gunn & Markman, 2005; Carolan & Wasserman, 2015; Fan & Chen, 2001; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Respler-Herman et al., 2012). A positive relationship between parents and school may stimulate children's self-regulation skills, learning attitude, homework practices, and the educational ambitions (Semke & Sheridan, 2012). Studies on partnerships with vulnerable or disadvantaged parents have shown that the number of children who have to repeat a class, drop out, or are referred to special education, is lower when parents are more involved in the education of their child (Barnard, 2004; Semke & Sheridan, 2012; Temple et al., 2000). Other studies have shown that when parents are more involved, this can mitigate the negative influences of poverty, low parental education level, and ethnic minority status on the academic outcomes of children (De Civita et al., 2004; Eamon, 2002; Schreiber, 2002). Also for very young children, a good relationship between parents and the (pre) school has a positive influence, especially on the early language and social development of the child (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Hill & Taylor, 2004; Jeynes, 2005).

Challenges for establishing and improving educational partnerships

Most of the European countries experience a large variety of cultures and languages that, moreover, constantly change by an interplay of factors, a phenomenon for which the term *superdiversity* is coined (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015). As a consequence of this superdiversity, there is less self-evident alignment between parents and schools regarding their educational norms, values, aspirations, and actions. Research focusing on ECEC has shown that early childhood professionals differ significantly from immigrant parents in their values, developmental aspirations, and beliefs (Bossong & Keller, 2018). Hence, parents perceive differences between the home environment and the school environment, and can choose to withdraw from interactions with teachers (Crozier & Davies, 2007; Kim, 2009). It has been suggested that professionals working in these educational settings should acknowledge the diversity in (pre)schools rather than ignoring it, and be responsive to the needs of the culturally diverse group of parents. Moreover, it implies that the teachers should acquire or strengthen their intercultural competences in order to cope with the diversity of parents and children (Van Gorp &

Moons, 2014; Michel & Kuiken, 2014; OECD, 2013; Romijn et al., 2020; Slot et al., 2021; Young, 2014).

When compared to primary education, preschools are facing additional challenges regarding educational partnerships. Preschools are parents' first encounter in their role as parents with the education system, and for first-generation immigrant parents this is often the first contact with the education system of the new country of residence (Rimm-Kaufmann & Pianta, 2005). Here, an educational partnership is established that may serve as a long-term model for the relationship between parents and school throughout the school career of the child. However, at the start of preschool, parents often do not know what to expect from the preschool or what is expected from them, making it difficult for parents to initiate the partnership.

Digital tools as support

The nature of the communication between parents and schools has changed over the past decades, as new technologies have been introduced (Palts & Kalmus, 2015). There are now multiple ways of exchanging information via ICT. Parents often receive e-mails from school, can check the school website, follow the school on social media, are member of a WhatsApp group with the teacher, and can find the academic results of their child in the digital tracking system. Based on these developments, we presuppose that digital tools can support educational partnerships in various ways.

First, digital tools could support and improve the *communication* between parents and schools, and especially make it easier for parents to be informed about the daily practices of their child (Jewitt & Parashar, 2011; Kraft & Rogers, 2014). Grant (2011) examined the experiences with the use of digital tools to enhance educational partnerships in secondary education. She found that both parents, teachers, and children were convinced that digital tools, such as email or text messages, can enhance the communication, since it can take place more regularly and more directly. Moreover, when parents or teachers use digital tools, they report that they rethink and carefully formulate their question or message more often than in a face-to-face meetings (Byron, 2008; Thompson et al., 2015). Blau and Hameiri (2017) suggest that the teacher should initiate the online interactions between the school and the parents; when the teacher is more active via a digital communication tool, parents are more likely to also increase their online communication.

Furthermore, digital tools may help to overcome *language barriers* between parents and schools in a multicultural and multilingual setting (Davies, 2004; Webb, 2006). Many translation apps or multilingual apps have been developed that can help to understand each other or to learn another language (Van Laere et al., 2017). Non-verbal aids, such as emoticons, speech messages, and pictures facilitate understanding of the message. Because of the worldwide use of social media, many people are familiar with the features and possibilities of online platforms such as Facebook, which makes it easier to introduce and implement similar platforms, despite language differences.

Finally, given the challenge of understanding other cultures and languages, digital tools can be a source of information to learn about other cultures or to enrich classrooms with *intercultural* and *multilingual practices* (in line with Banks, 2015). It has become more easy to explore the world with all its cultures, languages, traditions, norms and values, types of food, Holidays, geography, et cetera, using ICT. Professionals in educational settings can use ICT tools to support their intercultural competences, and to reflect upon their attitudes, knowledge, and practices, in order to improve their collaboration with parents (Slot et al., 2019). Intercultural and multilingual practices using ICT send out the important message that the preschool accepts and celebrates the pluralism of cultures and languages, focuses on the inclusion of all views and strives to strengthen the relationships between the different cultural and language communities (Holm & Zilliacus, 2009).

Although digital tools could potentially support partnerships in a multicultural context, it should be noted that the use of digital tools in educational settings has raised some concerns and challenges. For instance, the privacy and safety of the exchanged information via ICT, especially when young children are involved, is a serious issue (Selwyn et al., 2011). Furthermore, it is important to pay attention to the knowledge of and the attitudes towards the use of digital tools, both on the part of the parents and the preschool teachers (Hollingworth et al., 2011). Preschool teachers' views and attitudes regarding ICT influence the use and implementation of ICT in the classroom. These attitudes themselves are influenced by a range of factors, for instance, years of service, knowledge of ICT, ICT usage at home and confidence (Kerkaert et al., 2015; Petrogiannis, 2010). Wang and colleagues (2014) implemented a program to improve the ICT practices of secondary school teachers, following a Design Based Research approach. They concluded that teachers could improve their ICT skills, but that it requires a long, thoughtful implementation, with an elaborate training, instruction, and evaluation process, and the inclusion of all stakeholders. Furthermore, certain prerequisites are needed when digital tools are implemented, such as devices in both the home (e.g., smartphones, tablets, computers) and preschool environment (e.g., laptops, digital white boards), and stable (and strong) internet connections. Because of these factors, it should be thoroughly explored on beforehand whether digital tools can be implemented in a particular context, and how the stakeholders are expected to respond to the implementation (Plowman et al., 2012).

The present study

Previous research explored the role of digital tools in different educational settings, ranging from preschool to higher education (e.g., Blau & Hameiri, 2017; Hatzigianni & Margetts, 2012; Liu et al., 2013). However, to the best of our knowledge, this is one of the first studies to focus on the use of digital tools for improving educational partnerships in a preschool setting. The current small-scale study explored the prerequisites of implementing an educational interactive digital tool that could enable or strengthen the partnership between parents and preschool, in a multicultural urban neighborhood

in the Netherlands. The Design-Based Research approach implies working closely together with the stakeholders (i.e., parents and preschool teachers) in a specific local context, hereby giving a voice to parents from diverse backgrounds. The digital tool was implemented with two aims: 1) improving the engagement of parents in the preschool by acknowledging them as an important partner and resource for intercultural and multilingual instructional content; and 2) enriching preschool classroom practices by including and celebrating cultural and linguistic diversity. The focus of this explorative study was to examine the conditions and challenges that arise when trying to implement such a digital tool in a diverse environment.

In the Netherlands, the ECEC system is complex with full-day day-care for 0 to 4-year-olds, universal kindergarten for 4- to 6-year-olds (part of the primary school system) and half-day preschool for 2½ to 4-year-olds. The present study focused on the latter system. Furthermore, in the specific context of the Netherlands, children only go the preschool for a limited amount of time (maximum 1.5 to 2 years, for 10 to 16 hours per week). This implies that there is only limited time to enhance the educational partnership in preschools.

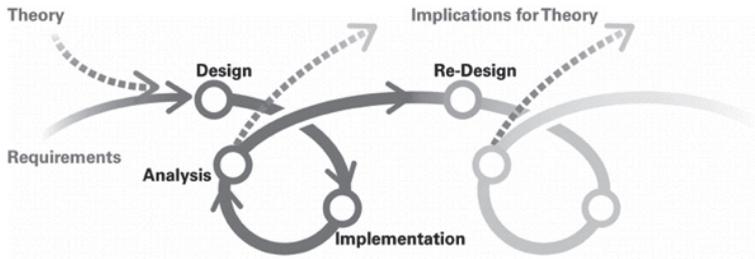
Method

Research design

The overarching methodology used in this study is the design-based research (DBR) approach, which informs design, theory, and practice concurrently through iterative implementations (Hoadley, 2004; Sandoval, 2014). DBR has a different approach than experimental research since it acknowledges the difficulty of ensuring experimental control over factors and interactions between factors in complex field situations. It includes theoretical knowledge in concrete actions and materials, involvement of stakeholders and researchers, adjustment to local contexts, and use of repeated formative evaluations based on observation and interviewing (Hoadley, 2004). Its ultimate goal is “to build a stronger connection between educational research and real-world problems” (Amiel & Reeves, 2008, p.34).

The current study meets the five requirements of a DBR study (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012): (1) the study is situated in a real educational context; in this case, a preschool in a multicultural neighborhood in Utrecht, the Netherlands; (2) focuses on the design and testing of an intervention; here, a digital educational tool; (3) adopts a mixed-methods approach to provide better guidance for educational improvement; in this study, focus group-studies, content analyses, observations, and a parent survey; (4) involves multiple iterations to test the best design of the intervention; two full iterations were completed; and (5) promotes collaboration between stakeholders; that is, the researcher, practitioners and parents were working closely together to identify general ICT principles and educational partnership principles for the future.

Figure 7.1
Design-Based Research Approach



Procedure

Figure 7.1 displays the DBR approach with the different phases. Table 7.1 provides the timeline, including the data collection, divided into four phases. Phase one entailed the exploration and preparation phase. First, a core research team was established - two preschool teachers, two parents and a researcher – who worked closely together during the study. The local context was explored in a focus group session with the core team. After this, a possible digital tool was evaluated together with the core team. In phase 2, the first implementation cycle was started and the tool was implemented in the two classrooms where each of the preschool teachers worked. The implementation was observed and documented. This led to further improvement of the implementation. In phase 3, a second cycle in two other classrooms, in addition to the two original classrooms, was started. Focus groups, classroom observations, content analyses of the posts on the digital platform and a parent survey were conducted throughout this second implementation. Parents and preschool teachers signed informed consent forms and data were anonymized. The last phase, phase 4, involved evaluation and reflection to generate design principles for future research, and to provide recommendations for the improvement of educational partnerships for policymakers and practitioners. These design principles and recommendations are summarized in the discussion and conclusion.

Table 7.1*Time schedule Design Based Research study*

Phase	April – July 2017	Sept – Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April – May 2018
1	Exploration and evaluation of context with core team							
2	First implementation cycle: Implementation in two classrooms							
	Analyses, evaluation and redesign for second iteration							
3	Second implementation cycle: Implementation and data collection in four classrooms							
	Analyses							
4	Evaluation and reflection to generate design principles							

Intervention with a digital tool: Padlet

Given the small scale of this study, it was not feasible to design and implement a completely new tool. Therefore, the core team explored an existing, though adaptable, digital tool: Padlet. Padlet (www.padlet.com) is a free, multi-device, educational tool. Padlet enables to create an online bulletin board (also called a *padlet*⁶) that can contain messages, photos, audio files, movie clips, presentations, web links, drawings, locations and other files. Collaborators who have access to this padlet (here: parents, teachers and the researcher) can add content, comment upon, like, or edit the content. More information about the tool will be discussed below.

An interactive process between parents and preschool was started via the tool. As a first step, a group-padlet for the parents and the preschool teacher was created. The parents gave input to the padlet that exposed the cultural and linguistic richness of the families (e.g., pictures, songs, movies, stories, web links, et cetera). Second, this content

6 Note that we use capital letter P of Padlet when referring to the name of the digital tool, though a small letter when referring to the actual group bulletin boards that have been created during this study.

was used in the classrooms by the teachers to create intercultural teaching practices. Third, parents received information on these classroom practices and their outcomes via the padlet, so they could continue with these practices in the home environment. By stimulating parents to provide input for the classroom practices that derives from their own cultural and linguistic background, hence including them as partners, it was hypothesized that the collaboration and eventually the educational partnership would improve.

Participants

Two preschool teachers (both female, age 34 and 40 years), each working in two classrooms, participated in the study. Both teachers had been working in this preschool setting for five to six years. Two parents, one father and one mother, both with a Moroccan background, joined the core team. The preschool has nine classrooms in total, where young children in the age of 2.5 to 4 years old are enrolled for maximum 1.5 year before their transition to kindergarten, which is part of primary education. Four classrooms participated in the current study (total $n = 34$ children). The children and their parents had diverse backgrounds that mirrored the multicultural composition of the neighborhood in which the preschool is located: the traditional immigrant groups, such as Turkish and Moroccan families, who originally came to the Netherlands as guest workers, expat families, such as Chinese and Indian families, and refugee families from countries such as Syria.

Data collection and analyses

The study adopted a mixed-methods approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2006) to collect and analyse the following data: focus group-studies with the core team, content analyses of the use of the digital tool, observations of the use of the digital tool, and a short survey among the parents.

Focus groups with core team. The researcher met with the core team approximately every six weeks to evaluate and refine the process.

Content analyses of Padlet. One month after the second implementation, both the extent to which the tool was used and the content posted on the digital tool were analysed. We checked the amount of posts, by whom (teachers and parents) the tool was used, the content of the posts, and whether the content provided intercultural enrichment.

Observation on the use of Padlet. Similar to the content analyses, classroom observations of the use of the group-padlets by the preschool teachers were conducted during phase three, the second implementation. A semi-structured observation scheme was used (see Appendix 7.1), focusing on the content of the bulletin boards and on the group communication while using the tool.

Parent survey. At the start of the second implementation, a short survey was conducted with parents from the two classrooms. The goal of the survey was to receive more information on the parents' perspective on the educational partnership and the

multicultural richness within the preschool. The survey was based on the structured parent interview study from the ISOTIS-project (Broekhuizen et al., 2018), but adapted together with the core team for this study. The survey had three scales with items on (1) the communication and relation with the preschool, (2) parental participation within the preschool, and (3) stimulating activities and language use in the home environment. Furthermore, the degree of attention for their own heritage language and culture at the preschool and parents' attitudes about this were assessed with open questions. The survey was available in English, Turkish, Standard-Arabic and Dutch, and included visual aids for the response scales, so parents could fill out the short paper and pencil survey by themselves, which took approximately ten minutes. Parents could also get support from one of the Moroccan-Arabic or Turkish-speaking research assistants that were present during the data collection.

Results

The results from phase one (the inventory phase), phase two (the first iteration) and phase three (the second iteration and analyses) are described below. The evaluation and resulting implications and recommendations (phase four) are described in the discussion and conclusion section.

Phase one: exploration of the context and tool

As a first step, an inventory of the local context was conducted through a focus group with the core team. This inventory examined the needs, possibilities, and wishes of the parents and the teachers, in order to ensure that the digital tool and the implementation of the tool were adapted as much as possible to the local context. The most important points from this inventory are discussed below. After the inventory, the digital tool, Padlet, was piloted and evaluated.

Cultural and linguistic diversity and practices

There was no official intercultural, nor multilingual policy at the preschool. It was stated that Dutch is the main language in the preschool for all children, parents, and teachers. Teachers stressed that this is a daily issue for them; they stated that children should learn Dutch at the preschool, but that the heritage language is important for the socio-emotional development of the young children. They mentioned that when the child does not speak Dutch, it is perhaps better for children to use the mother language to communicate, at least to a certain extent.

Both parents and teachers stated that they were open towards other cultures and that they valued other cultures. Different feasts and holidays were celebrated at the preschool, sometimes also engaging the parents, such as Christmas and Eid al-Fitr. Moreover, some of the preschool teachers had an immigrant background themselves, which facilitated the communication with parents who had similar backgrounds.

Educational partnership

The partnership was already stimulated in several ways. There was a parent board, parent-meetings to talk about the child, teachers went on home visits, and regular activities and courses for parents were organized (e.g., language courses). During the preschool-primary school transition, parents and teachers worked closely together to ensure a smooth transfer for both the child and the parents. Despite the aforementioned activities, the core team stated that the communication was mostly uni-directional; from the preschool to the parents, and not vice versa. They also experienced language barriers and cultural differences, which often led to frustrations on both sides. According to the teachers, parents were not really engaged in the preschool and many of them did not attend meetings, despite the attempts of the preschool. Parents were usually enthusiastic about participating in the cultural activities, but not regarding other organized activities, such as creative activities or preschool field trips.

ICT possibilities

Parents and teachers had a WhatsApp⁷ group together, in which photos of activities, general messages, and reminders were shared. Parents stated that they liked the WhatsApp group as an informal way of being updated about the daily activities of their child. However, the direction of communication via WhatsApp was also predominantly from the teachers to the parents. To the knowledge of the core team, all parents had smartphones, but not all parents had access to a tablet or a computer. In addition, the preschool teachers had recently received Digi boards⁸ with internet access in their classrooms, which could be used for the current study.

Evaluation of the digital tool Padlet

The Padlet tool was evaluated together with the core team, to explore whether it was suitable for implementation in this context. Some considerations on why we used Padlet:

- Padlet creates an interactive platform that stimulates mutual communication and collaboration. Parents and teachers have more or less equal user rights, meaning that they can both upload and comment on the content (though teachers could also delete items).
- The app is suitable for Digi boards, smartphones, (laptop) computers and tablets. The tool is also linked to the camera of smartphones, which makes it easier to upload pictures.
- The tool scores high on inclusiveness: it is pictorially rather than textually oriented with many colors and pictograms, and the interface is available in multiple language.
- The group-padlet of each classroom can be secured with personal accounts, accessible only via a password, and the padlets are not traceable by search

7 A popular messaging app that can be used to send messages, photos, videos and other files.

8 A digital school white board that teachers can use for ICT purposes.

engines such as Google. To further ensure security, the core team drafted a contract for the parents, to ensure that nobody would use the uploaded content by other parents outside the padlet, and to stress the ethical aspects of the use of the tool and this study.

Phase two: first implementation cycle

After the inventory and evaluation, the tool was introduced to two classrooms, starting with an information meeting. Parents of 16 children were invited to the information meeting, of which nine parents came, seven mothers and two fathers. They received a manual for the tool, the ethics and rules were discussed, and they were assisted in downloading and accessing the tool. After this meeting, parents should have had access to their group bulletin board so they could upload content, inspired by the themes of the preschool (e.g., the theme 'family'). However, during the implementation of the tool, many barriers and issues emerged that hindered the parents in accessing and using the tool. These issues are listed below and guided the improvements for the next iteration:

Linguistic and educational barriers

Parents' proficiency in Dutch was more limited than we expected. The invitation letter, manual, and information meeting, in which only the Dutch language was used, were too difficult for most of the parents. As a result, parents did not fully understand the information about the study and were unable to download and use the tool. For the second iteration, the invitation letter and the manual were translated into English, Turkish, and Standard-Arabic. Furthermore, Turkish, Standard-Arabic and Tarifit-Berber speaking assistants helped during the information meeting to ensure that all parents understood the information.

Cultural and intergroup barriers

Parents did not have much contact with each other outside the preschool, especially with parents outside their own ethnic community. They were not used to sharing personal experiences with other parents or with the teacher, and also not open to do this. Second, during the information meeting, the issue of gender arose, since some mothers were not comfortable being in the same room with strange men. When adapting the implementation, it was decided together with the core team that the themes on the bulletin board should not be too personal (e.g., *summer* is less personal than *family*), and that the teachers should upload content on the padlet first to show the feasibility and possibilities of the tool (i.e., modelling), and to encourage the parents to use it as well.

Technical barriers

During the information meeting, several technical issues emerged. Many parents did not have a 3G/4G internet connection on their smartphone; they tended to use only Wi-Fi connections. The preschool, however, did not offer free Wi-Fi to the parents, so

they were unable to download the tool and to ask questions regarding the tool during the information meeting. Moreover, some parents could not recall their own e-mail address, so it was not possible to create a personal account for them on the tool. For the second iteration, we established an internet connection during the information meeting, so the parents could directly download the tool, and new e-mail addresses were created on the spot for parents who did not have an e-mail address or could not recall their personal email address.

Phase three: Second implementation cycle and analyses

In phase three, the second implementation, two other classrooms also participated, in addition to the two previous classrooms. Parents from 16 out of 18 children of the two new classrooms were invited to the information meeting. Two parents were not invited because one child would start primary school soon and the other child's family had planned to move to a new house in another neighborhood. Eight parents, only mothers, came to the meeting and were provided with the improved manual and received information in their own language from multilingual research assistants. During the information meeting, mothers also filled out the parent survey. Since the other two classrooms already participated in the first implementation of this DBR study, only the mothers from the two new classrooms filled out the survey.

During this phase, content analyses of uploaded content and classroom observations were conducted in the two new classrooms. Parents from the previous classrooms participated in an improved information meeting and continued with their own padlets, but it was decided to focus on the two new classrooms for the analyses. All experiences from the four classrooms were considered for the evaluation phase. Despite the relatively low number of mothers attending the meeting, the second cycle of implementation was more successful than the first cycle since more parents understood the aims of the tool and afterwards accessed and used the tool. However, again some issues emerged (e.g., lack of thorough intercultural focus on part of the teachers) or remained (e.g., hesitance of the parents to share experiences with each other), which will be discussed below.

Parent survey results

In total, nine mothers ($M_{age} = 36.11$ years, 4 from classroom A and 5 from classroom B) filled out the questionnaire; eight mothers during the information meeting and one mother afterwards. Two mothers were second-generation immigrants from Turkey and Morocco. The other seven mothers were first-generation immigrants and born in Turkey ($n = 1$), India ($n = 3$) or Morocco ($n = 3$), and migrated to the Netherlands between 1976 and 2015. Eight mothers stated that they used multiple languages at home, including both the mother language and Dutch. There was a large variation in education level. Two mothers did not finish primary school and two mothers obtained a Master's degree. Table 7.2 shows the descriptive results for the three scales on the communication and relationship with the preschool, parental participation at the preschool, and the provision of stimulating activities in the home environment.

Table 7.2*Results Parent Questionnaire (n = 9)*

	<i>M (SD)</i>	Range
Relationship with preschool teacher ^a	3.87 (0.40)	3-4
Parental engagement ^b		
Helping in the classroom	2.22 (0.79)	1-3
Helping with school trips	1.89 (0.93)	1-3
Attending parent-teacher meetings	2.56 (0.82)	1-4
Attending events at preschool	2.89 (1.05)	2-5
Activities in the home environment ^b		
Reading (e.g., storybook reading)	4.56 (0.48)	4-5
Conversations (e.g., asking how child's day was)	4.33 (0.53)	4-5
Educational activities (e.g., practice counting)	3.67 (0.69)	3-5
Cultural activities (e.g., talk about culture or country of origin)	2.11 (1.15)	1-5
ICT activities (e.g., use tablet together with my child)	2.78 (1.27)	1-5

^a Answer scale 1–4^b Answer scale 1–5

The scale *Relationship with the teacher* consisted of five statements (e.g., “My child’s teacher sees me as an important partner of the preschool”), measured with a four-point scale, ranging from disagree (1) to agree (4). Higher scores indicated that they were more positive about the relationship. On average, mothers were very positive about the relationship, showing a low variation.

Parental engagement was measured by asking the mothers how often they participated in four parent-preschool activities (e.g., “Helping in the classroom, by reading to the children or cleaning the toys”). This was measured by a five-point frequency scale, ranging from never (1) to more than once a month (5). There was large variation between the different items and between the mothers. The mothers scored lowest on the item helping with school trips and highest on the item attending events at the preschool. In addition, some mothers indicated that they were never engaged in preschool activities, while other mothers indicated that they participated at least three to five times a year.

For *Activities in the home environment*, the frequency of and language use during five domains of parent-child activities (e.g., shared reading) was measured on a five-point scale, ranging from never or rarely (1) to everyday (5). Mothers scored quite high on reading and conversation activities, with relatively low variation. In addition, all mothers stated that multiple languages were used during these activities; the heritage language, Dutch, or English (for the Indian mothers). There was more variation between the mothers regarding the educational activities item (indicating emerging literacy and numeracy activities), and mothers indicated that Dutch was used more than the mother

language during these activities. In contrast, the mother language was mostly used during cultural activities. There was a large variation between the mothers in performing ICT activities with their children. Some mothers reported to use ICT in their activities with their children every day, while other mothers answered that they never did this. Both the mother language, Dutch, and English were used for these activities.

Next to the three scales, we asked the mothers in the survey how they perceived the attention at the preschool for intercultural and/or multilingual practices, and how they evaluated this. Most mothers indicated that there was some attention for multiple cultures at the preschool, and that they liked this. Interestingly, two mothers stated that there was no attention for this. This could mean that not all mothers were aware of the intercultural focus of the preschool, but also that they perceived little or no attention for their own specific culture and language. Six mothers indicated that there was no multilingual support at the preschool. Three mothers said that there should be more attention for this, however, the other three mothers stated that they preferred the focus on the Dutch language. One mother even responded: "They should learn Dutch here; they have the other languages at home!"

Content analyses of the group-padlets

One month after the information meeting, content analyses of the posts on the group-padlets were conducted. Table 7.3 provides the user statistics from both classrooms A and B. Classroom A had eight children, of which four parents signed up for the Padlet tool after the information meeting. Three parents actively posted one or two pictures and a movie clip, the other parent was passively involved by liking and commenting on content, but not uploading herself. The preschool teacher posted 20 content items on the padlet. She posted pictures of daily activities and educational content that fitted the theme of the preschool at that moment. Classroom B consisted of ten children, of which seven parents signed up for the group-padlet. Four of these parents were actively using the tool, posting 14 items in total. The other three parents were passively involved. Also here, the teacher was more active than the parents by uploading 23 content items.

Table 7.3*Content Analyses of the Group-padlet during Second Iteration*

	Classroom A	Classroom B
Children in the classroom	8	10
Parents who signed up for padlet	4	7
Parents participation on padlet		
Actively involved – Uploading content	3	4
Passively involved – Only responding to or liking content	1	3
Posts by preschool teacher	20	23
Posts by parents	5	14

More content was uploaded in classroom B than in classroom A, by the parents. This suggests some group-influence: when some parents were more active, other parents were more inclined to be more active as well. The specific topics of the uploaded content did not differ per group, but differed between the teachers and parents. The teachers uploaded content that was related to the specific preschool theme during that month (e.g., how to play together, what is illness, what are the words the children learned that week), while the parents uploaded general content items that were more often related to the upcoming feasts and holidays (e.g., Saint Nicholas and Christmas). Sometimes, teachers uploaded content in different languages (Turkish, Standard Arabic, English and Dutch), to ensure that more parents would understand the meaning.

Observations in the classroom

Short observations in the classrooms were conducted to examine how teachers used the tool and its content, how the children responded to the tool and to which extent there was an intercultural focus. The observations in both groups took place on the same day in the morning between approximately 9 am and 10 am and were guided by a short semi-structured observation scheme (Appendix A).

Observations classroom A. Children had an active role during the activity; they were placed around the Digi board and could touch the board themselves. The teacher showed each item on the board and asked many (open and closed) questions: “Who do we see here? What were you doing?”. She showed recent and older pictures on the digital tool, mainly of preschool activities. She tried to connect the pictures by repeating the educational content of that activity: “Remember this, we learned about... and then we went to...”. One child saw her grandfather on one of the pictures and called him ‘grandfather’ in her mother language. The teacher responded to this in Dutch, asking her to repeat that word, and a short multilingual conversation started. During the Padlet activity, the children were very enthusiastic about touching the Digi board and seeing the large pictures. They were completely focused on the content and wanted to tell about the pictures they recognized. The Padlet activity lasted 15 minutes.

Observations classroom B. In contrast to classroom A, children were sitting in a circle in the middle of the classroom, and there was a distance between them and the Digi board. The teacher asked many questions, mainly closed questions, and the children responded. However, the children were less actively involved compared to classroom B, and probably therefore less enthusiastic, and they did not start to tell about the pictures themselves. Hence, it did not lead to a mutual interaction between the teacher and the child. The teacher asked whether the children could see some similarities between the pictures and tried to emphasize the resemblance between the pictures that the parents had uploaded. The activity lasted about five minutes.

It should be noted that these two observations were only short snapshots. Nonetheless, it can be concluded that there were differences between the two preschool teachers: their use of the tool, the extent to which they tried to involve the children, the open versus more closed questions they asked, and the responses and engagement of the children. It became clear that it was difficult for the teachers to grasp the different cultural aspects of the content of the tool and to use this for intercultural educational practices.

Discussion

Among the increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in Europe, schools, and especially preschools, face the challenge of establishing trustful educational partnerships with parents from diverse backgrounds. It has been suggested that new communication tools could help to improve the relationship with and collaboration of parents, hereby enabling parents to be a partner and seeing them as a cultural and linguistic resource in the preschool environment. The current small-scale study explored the prerequisites of implementing an educational digital tool, Padlet, that in theory enables a potential partnership between parents and a preschool, in a multicultural urban neighborhood in the Netherlands. The study followed a Design-Based Research approach to optimally adapt the tool and its implementation to the local context, and to involve all relevant stakeholders. Results from the focus group discussions with parents and teachers, the classroom observations, and the analyses of the uploaded contents showed that it was possible to use an existing digital tool in a superdiverse context by taking a bottom-up approach and adjusting the implementation of the tool to fit the local context. However, although the second implementation was more successful, the digital tool was still not used to its full potential. The group-padlets were moderately used by both the teachers and the parents, which was not enough to make a difference for the educational partnerships, according to the core team. The content analyses showed that only around 60% percent of the parents engaged in using the tool (both actively and passively).

During the last phase, a focus group discussion was held with the core team to evaluate the tool and reflect upon the entire process of the study (phases 1, 2 and 3). In addition to this, general principles regarding educational partnerships and the involvement of digital tools were generated. Below we list and discuss six implications

for theory, policy, and practice that focus on strengthening educational partnerships in culturally diverse and multilingual settings for young children, and the use of innovative digital tools herein.

Principles and implications for theory and practice

Importance of parental awareness of the role of preschools and educational partnerships

According to the core team, some parents enjoyed the tool since they could see the daily activities of their child, but they were not motivated to be more actively involved. It was stated that a substantial number of parents consider the preschool to be more like a daycare facility, where the parents can drop off children to play with other children, but that they do not perceive many educational benefits for their children there, in contrast to primary education, where 'learning starts'. This is in line with findings from other studies (Degotardi et al., 2018; Manigo & Allison, 2017). Fenech (2017) stresses that preschools should build parents' understanding of the importance and quality of ECEC. If the educational opportunities of preschool are not brought to their awareness, it is plausible that parents do not feel committed to be involved at the preschool. This might be an explanation for the lower motivation of the parents to invest in the educational partnerships. As a first step, the importance of the preschool for children's development should be emphasized more strongly to these parents. Second, the importance of parents' involvement in education, also at an early age, should be explained. Hereafter, strategies can be introduced to enhance the partnership, but parents should understand the value of a partnership first.

Good start and warm welcome

Preschools strive for a smooth transition to primary school. This helps the child and parents to build a warm relationship with the primary schools from the very start. However, there is no smooth transition to the preschool itself, according to the core team. Vandebroek and colleagues (2009) stressed the importance of a warm welcome in the preschool setting for parents and children. They found the first few weeks prior to and following upon the start in the preschool to be crucial for creating a sense of belonging and establishing reciprocal relationships, both for children and their parents. This is related to the first principle; a warm welcome can shape parents' feelings of (importance of) being involved.

Superdiversity: intergroup relationship and sharing experiences

One of the reasons why the tool was not fully used by the parents, is the lack of strong intergroup relationships, according to the core team. Parents did not have much contact with each other inside nor outside the preschool context. Inter-ethnic group relations were virtually absent. Research has shown that a superdiverse environment can increase trust in other groups, but only if there is enough intergroup contact (Schmid et al.,

2014). When intergroup relations are not strong, people are less likely to share personal experiences across groups. Moreover, we should be aware of the fact that the focus on self-expression and sharing personal thoughts and experiences with others might be a Western cultural construct (Vandenbroeck, 2007), with which immigrant parents are not familiar and to which they are not immediately attracted. Therefore, it is essential that there is a sense of community within the preschool or classroom context and that parents know and trust each other, before inviting them to actively contribute and share experiences and expertise.

Strengthening the intercultural competences of teachers

Results from the observations showed that there was no clear intercultural and multilingual focus in the ICT practices of the preschool teachers, despite the intercultural and multilingual contents that were made available through the digital tool. According to the teachers, this can be explained on the one hand by the limited input from the parents. They stated that if more personal experiences had been shared on the tool, teachers could have used this more systematically to introduce an intercultural perspective in the classroom. On the other hand, the teachers admitted that they themselves found it difficult to seize the opportunities for enriching their education with intercultural and multilingual content. The preschool's diversity has been increasing over the last years, and this adds to the complexity of providing intercultural and multilingual practices. Therefore, the teachers would prefer a training to strengthen their intercultural competences, especially to learn to critically reflect on their own intercultural attitudes, knowledge and actions. This would help them in their work in a superdiverse environment (Deardorff, 2006; Slot et al., 2019).

Importance of bottom-up approaches

The current study has shown the importance of adapting both the digital tool and its implementation to the specific linguistic, cultural, and cognitive competences, needs, and wishes of all stakeholders. Both parents and teachers expressed to enjoy this approach and to prefer it over a top-down approach. Special attention was given to the multilingualism aspect. The tool and its implementation should be multilingual and rely on visual aids as much as possible, to increase the inclusiveness of the approach. Parents appreciated it that the tool could be adapted to their own mother language, that content was translated, that the survey was translated into different languages and that there were multilingual research assistants to support them. Note that this does not imply that ECEC settings should become fully multilingual regarding their educational practices. Results of the parent survey showed that several parents explicitly valued the emphasis on Dutch language in the preschool and used Dutch themselves for educational activities in the home environment. Some of the parents did not think it was important that children should be supported in their mother language at the preschool. Preschools should therefore collaborate with parents, to 1) understand their

wishes and needs, to make an adequate adaptation and 2) to call in the expertise of parents when multilingual or cultural resources are needed.

Technological challenges and requirements

Previous studies concluded that in order to successfully implement a digital tool, certain practical and psychological factors should be taken into account, such as the attitudes of the stakeholders regarding ICT, teacher training regarding the digital tool, and a sufficiently long timeframe to get used to the tool (Kerkaert et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2014). The current study provides some additional practical principles for ICT tools. An individual account for the digital tool is necessary to guarantee the privacy of data, but results of the first implementation also underscore the importance of using a simple login procedure that requires parents to login only once. Teachers could support the parents by providing them with personal e-mail addresses and accounts. Furthermore, it needs to be assured that both parents and teachers have a stable 3G/4G connection or a Wi-Fi connection to be able to use the digital tool. Results of our first implementation showed that, although all parents have smartphones and regularly use ICT, this does not imply that they have access to a stable internet connection. Moreover, future research should provide a thorough training for the teachers in using the software (the digital tool) and hardware (the new Digi boards). Although the preschool teachers were confident about their ICT skills and practices, they appeared to struggle multiple times with the tool. Since it is likely that the use of ICT in (pre)schools will increase in the future, more attention should be paid to these technological factors that will eventually determine whether a digital tool can be successfully implemented.

Conclusions

This is, to the best of our knowledge, one of the first studies to explore how innovative ICT-based strategies can be implemented, when aiming to enhance educational partnerships in a multicultural and multilingual preschool environment. The study showed the feasibility and added value of a bottom-up DBR approach to give voice to parents from diverse backgrounds and to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Laleka & Rasheed, 2018). Given its explorative nature, there are several limitations to this study. We only included one preschool in the Netherlands, hence, the number of teachers and parents and the variety of perspectives is small, and the generalizability of the results is limited. Note that the current explorative study was conducted within a short timeframe (one year from phase 1 to phase 3), when compared to other DBR studies focusing on implementation of digital tools. In the current study, we only had limited time to implement the tool, whereas Wang and colleagues (2014) stress the importance of a long-time span to implement ICT in educational settings. Results of the fourth phase showed that there are many recommendations to improve the implementation. It is plausible that more time could have led to more improvements, more refined cycles, and therefore better results. It should be noted that the limited time

for this study stresses the complex reality many early education and care settings face: They often have only little time to build a trustful educational partnership with parents, regardless of digital tools.

Related to this small-scale study, though at a later timeframe, the ISOTIS project (Chapter 1) conducted a large-scale study in which a prototype of a Virtual Learning Environment was developed, implemented and evaluated in family, community and school settings (both preschool and primary schools) in order to contribute to a coherent and comprehensive support system for professionals, children and families from different systems perspectives, and to encourage collaboration between sectors (e.g., early education and family support) (see Pastori et al., 2019). For this study, also a DBR approach was applied. The main conclusions from that project matched several conclusions from this study, regarding the technological challenges and requirements, the importance of a step by step implementation for all stakeholders and how multilingual and multimedia digital tools can eventually contribute to provide inclusive and multilingual learning and communication environments, for improving the communication and bi-directional exchange between family and school, and communication between teachers, children and parents.

The current study provided a first step in the demonstration of the use of ICT for educational partnerships, and pointed out remaining questions and critical issues regarding the complexity of intercultural educational partnerships for future research. Although this was a small-scale study, the results underscore that a DBR methodology is a promising approach for future research on this topic. The implications outlined above can likely be transferred to other contexts to continue and further refine this innovative approach.

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Appendix 7.1.

Semi-structured Observation Scheme for Classroom Observations

Content Related	Indicators
Which pictures are described?	
How are the pictures described?	
Is there attention for the different cultures?	
Is there attention for the different languages?	
Are the relations or similarities between the pictures described?	
How is the content from the digital tool integrated in the practices?	previous lessons, theme of the week etc.
Communication Related	
Where are the children located during the activity?	proximity, freedom to move etc.
How is the interaction between the teacher and the children while using the digital tool?	duration, reciprocal conversations etc.
To what extent are the children actively involved while using the digital tool?	invited to play/touch, stimulated to answer questions etc.

An abstract background featuring a complex, layered geometric pattern. The pattern consists of overlapping, curved lines and grids in various shades of red and orange, creating a sense of depth and movement. The lines are thin and closely spaced, forming a mesh-like structure that curves and folds across the frame. The colors transition from a deep red on the left to a lighter orange and then to a pale yellow on the right. In the bottom right corner, there is a large, bold, red number '8'.

8

Summary and discussion

The aim of this dissertation was to examine the diverse ways in which immigrant parents support their children's development, learning, education in school, and integration into the wider society. To explain the variation in immigrant parents' support to children at home and in collaboration with children's (pre)schools, we examined the complex interplay of parents' acculturation strategies and other personal characteristics, on the one hand, and factors in the wider social context, in particular the equity and integration policies at the local and the national level, on the other hand. Throughout this dissertation, we focused on the perspectives of immigrant families with pre- and primary school aged children across Europe as they navigate their way through the country of residence and try to strike a balance between their own deeply held cultural values on the one hand and societies' expectations on the other hand. We focused on immigrant families originating from Turkey or one of the Maghreb countries Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, as they comprise the largest non-Western immigrant groups in Europe (Eurostat, 2020). These immigrant groups have settled in different European countries with different (early) education systems and national integration policies, and therefore comparisons across countries were regarded to be informative to the central issue how to promote integration and inclusion.

This final chapter starts with a summary of the main findings of the six studies reported in this dissertation and continues with a general discussion. Implications for both policy and practice are discussed, together with the limitations, strengths and suggestions for future research.

Summary

The study reported in **Chapter 2** examined how the acculturation strategies of immigrant families are related to key processes at home regarded as supporting children's development, learning and educational achievement, referred to as the home learning environment (HLE), and parents' educational aspirations. We focused on immigrant parents with a Turkish background living in four European countries with different national integration policies: England, Germany, the Netherlands, and Norway. Using Latent Profile Analysis, we identified four acculturation profiles in the total sample as well as in the samples per country: *assimilation*, *integration*, *separation* (largest profile in total sample) and *marginalization* (smallest profile in total sample), in line with Berry's (1997) Integration Acculturation Model and the amended version of it, referred to as the Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis et al., 1997). Although nearly complete metric measurement equivalence of the profiles across countries was established, in the Netherlands one deviating profile was found, indicating a partial assimilation, partial separation profile; a profile characterized by low preference for cultural maintenance and high preference for cultural adoption, but a low desire for contact with the majority group. The profiles across countries differed in size, which was tentatively related to the predominant integration policies of the countries. In countries with a multicultural national integration policy (England) the integration profile was

more prominent compared to other countries, whereas in countries with a stronger emphasis on assimilation (the Netherlands, Norway regarding language education) or with a history of exclusion and segregation (Germany), the assimilation and separation profiles were relatively large.

As a next step, we examined how the acculturation profiles were related to the HLE and parents' educational aspirations, differentiating between two educational phases: early childhood and end of primary education, while controlling for parents' education level and language abilities. Overall, we found quite high engagement in informal and formal education-supportive activities and high aspirations for both age groups. For parents with a younger focus child, in early childhood, the acculturation profiles were only minorly related to the nurturing home environment, while parents' education level was more important to explain differences between parents. The acculturation profiles of the parents mattered more for children in the end-of-primary-school age. The marginalization profile was associated with a less supportive home environment, while the integration and separation profiles, both characterized by a preference for cultural maintenance, added a potentially supportive aspect to the home environment in the form of engagement in moral-cultural conversations and storytelling, while not differing from the assimilation profile in other respects. Parents' education level and, for parents with an older focus child, also their proficiency in the national language were rather consistently positive predictors of a nurturing, education-supportive home environment, regardless parents' acculturation choices.

In **Chapter 3** we reported on a study that examined the support parents provided to their children to facilitate children's integration, in particular regarding the choice of languages when engaging in informal educational conversations, either the heritage language (L1) or the main language in the country of residence (L2), and the support provided to children's intercultural socialization. We focused on families with a Turkish or Maghreb immigration background in six countries: England, Germany, Norway, France, Italy and the Netherlands. We found large variation between and within the two immigrant groups. Turkish parents engaged in educational conversations more often in L1, while Maghreb parents overall more often used L2. While both immigrant groups did not clearly differ in the support they provided to children's intercultural socialization, there were within both groups remarkable differences by country.

To further explain this variation, we examined the relationships of parents' acculturation strategies, religious commitment, education level, generation of immigration, and reported proficiency in L1 and L2, with the language choice and socialization support provided at home, using multigroup structural equation modelling. The results showed that the choice of parents to provide informal education in either L1 or L2 was mainly associated with the language proficiency of the parents in respectively L1 and L2, but not with parents' acculturation preferences, in both immigrant groups and in all countries alike. This suggests that the studied immigrant parents' language choice in educational interactions with the child is pragmatic and dependent on sociolinguistic factors rather than a matter of cultural identity. In contrast, parents' support of children's

intercultural socialization was mainly associated with their own preference for contact with the majority group, in both groups and all countries alike. For the Maghreb parents but not for the Turkish parents, in addition, preference for cultural maintenance was negatively associated with the support for the intercultural socialization of the child, equally in all countries. Parents' language proficiency in L1 or L2 was not related to intercultural socialization. While all analyses revealed almost full metric equivalence across the countries, the mean levels of support parents reported to provide to children's intercultural socialization differed remarkably. We tentatively concluded that in countries with a more multicultural national integration policy (England, Italy, Norway) this support tended to be stronger than in countries with a more assimilation-oriented national integration policy (France, Germany, the Netherlands).

In **Chapter 4**, a longitudinal study is reported that focused on the bilingual experience of young Turkish-Dutch immigrant children. Bilingualism as it occurs in current societies is complex. It is not a dichotomous characteristic (monolingual versus bilingual), and it cannot be captured by looking at only language use only or language proficiency only. In addition, there is a large variability within bilingual populations with changes over time and across contexts, calling for a person-centered approach to model the complexity of bilingualism. The findings confirmed that, in defining bilingualism, both language proficiency and language use are relevant and partly independent dimensions to capture the heterogeneous and dynamic nature of bilingualism. Latent Profile Analysis, applied to a heterogeneous sample of Turkish-Dutch children who were assessed at two time points (when they were four and respectively six years old), revealed four profiles, equivalent at both measurement times, which we labelled 1) *Dominant L1 use, relatively low L1 and L2 proficiency*, 2) *Dual L1 and L2 use, around average L1 and L2 proficiency*, 3) *Dominant L1 use, relatively high L1 and L2 proficiency* and 4) *Dominant L2 use, relatively high L2 proficiency*. Profile 1 was the largest profile at age 4 and considered to be an unfavorable profile given the low proficiency in both languages. Profile 2 was the largest profile at age 6. Latent Transition Analysis revealed overall moderate stability of the four profiles over time but also changes from a less favorable to a more favorable profile in terms of children's language proficiency, likely as a consequence of being enrolled in a Dutch school context from age four. The four profiles were differently associated with families' socioeconomic status (SES) and children's nonverbal intelligence at age four. Bilingual children of relatively low SES families or with relatively low nonverbal intelligence were more likely to be assigned to the unfavorable profile 1, whereas children from relatively high SES families were more likely to be assigned to profile 4.

In **Chapter 5** we shifted our attention from the home environment to the partnership between the home and school environment. We examined the differences in the perceived quality of parents' relationships with teachers and their participation in activities at the early childhood education and care (ECEC) center attended by their children, and how the quality of the parent-teacher relationships and parents' participation were associated with several family, neighborhood and country characteristics. We compared immigrant parents with a Turkish background in Germany with immigrant parents

with a Turkish background in the Netherlands, parents with a Maghreb background in France with parents with a Maghreb background in the Netherlands, and parents with a Turkish background with parents with a Maghreb background in the Netherlands, all with young children. The results showed that immigrant parents were in general positive about their relationships with teachers in the ECEC centers and moderately involved in activities at the centers. We found that background characteristics, such as parents' education level, material deprivation, or generation of migration were not or only minorly directly related to building and maintaining educational partnerships, but they often influenced other important characteristics at the family level, such as parents' language proficiency, which in turn were related to their educational partnerships. For the family characteristics, several differences were found between the target groups (e.g., a significant negative association between parents' preference for cultural maintenance and parental participation for the Maghreb groups) and also between the countries (e.g., a significant positive association of L2 proficiency with having a trusting relationship with the teacher for the Turkish immigrant parents in Germany and the Maghreb immigrant parents in France). Finally, the study also showed the importance of including the ethnic-cultural composition of the ECEC center and the neighborhood context of immigrant families, which may influence in particular parental participation.

Chapter 6 reported a study, using mixed-methods, on the experiences of mothers with a Moroccan background in Northern-Italy with the preschools attended by their children, the relationships with teachers, other parents and the (pre)school system in general. The quantitative results showed that economic stress, proficiency in the Italian language, perceived discrimination, cultural maintenance and parental self-efficacy were related to the perceived quality of the relationship with the teacher and to parents' participation in the preschool. The qualitative results of the in-depth interviews confirmed and elaborated on the findings of the quantitative study. The mothers were overall positive about the trusting relationships with the teachers and highly valued teachers' support that sometimes went beyond the regular education and care provided to the child and especially included supporting families that experienced severe economic hardship. However, language and knowledge barriers were mentioned several times. The quality of the relationship with other parents depended, at least partly, on the ethnic-cultural background of the other parents. Some mothers mentioned feelings of exclusion by parents from the majority group, while they reported stronger and deeper bonds with other immigrant parents. This also tended to affect their participation at the ECEC centers, where an overall inclusive climate was sometimes lacking.

Finally, in **Chapter 7** a small-scale study on a local intervention project was reported. In this project we explored the conditions and challenges of implementing an educational digital tool (Padlet) in four classrooms of a multicultural preschool in the Netherlands, with the aim of improving the educational partnerships between the parents and the preschool. The preschool was located in a highly diverse multicultural neighborhood. We followed a Design-Based Research approach to optimally adapt the tool and its implementation to the local context, and involved representatives of

all relevant stakeholders. The results showed that it was possible to use an existing digital tool in a superdiverse context, at least to a certain extent, by taking a bottom-up approach and adjusting the implementation of the tool to fit the local context. However, the educational tool was not used to its full potential by parents and preschool teachers. Nevertheless, several principles and implications for theory and practice were derived, such as the importance of parents' awareness of the role of preschools and educational partnerships, the importance of a high quality, personalized introduction of new parents to the preschool, and the importance of strengthening the intercultural competences of teachers. All parents valued the multicultural content of the shared tool, but were less unanimous about the importance of supporting children's multilingual development at the preschool. Some parents argued for a stronger emphasis on learning the national language. Furthermore, we found that establishing trusting relations between parents from different backgrounds was an important precondition for using the shared tool. Lack of trusting relationships among parents of different immigrant groups was a barrier to the implementation of the tool.

General discussion

Overall, our results provide a mixed picture regarding the educational support Turkish and Maghreb immigrant parents across Europe provide to their children in early childhood and primary-school age. On the positive side, we found clear indications that immigrant parents on average stimulate their children's development, educational achievement and intercultural attitudes, as was reflected in overall quite high engagement in informal educational activities at home and the support provided to children's school-related work (*Chapters 2 and 3*), and that they build trusting relationships with the teachers of the child in ECEC (*Chapters 5 and 6*). Regarding immigrant parents' wellbeing, we found on average overall high parental self-efficacy and low levels of perceived discrimination as indicators of wellbeing (*Chapter 5*). On the negative side, however, literacy support at home was on average less frequent, possibly due to lower literacy skills of the parents, but this was partly compensated by frequent informal conversations and storytelling that express the moral and cultural values of the families. In addition, we also found large variation between and within immigrant groups, and between countries (*Chapter 2, 3, 4, 5*), indicating that there are also immigrant families who are less supportive to their children's education and integration. Furthermore, only moderate parental participation at the ECEC centers was found (*Chapter 5*). Altogether, the results seem to imply that immigrant parents are overall motivated to support their children and have high educational aspirations for them, but within their own preferences and competences, and against the odds of several disadvantages.

Several studies reported in this dissertation suggest that the impact of families' socioeconomic status, as indicated by parents' education level and the level of material deprivation, is large, often beyond the effects of other family-related aspects such as parents' acculturation preferences and language proficiency. A lower level of education, lower levels of language skills, and a lack of material resources were rather consistently

associated with reduced educational support to children at home (*Chapter 2*), less support to the intercultural socialization of children (*Chapter 3*), less use of the country's national language in educational interactions with the child (*Chapters 3 and 4*), below average language development of the children in both L1 and L2 (*Chapter 4*), and more limited participation at the ECEC center (*Chapters 5, 6 and 7*). Importantly, alongside the direct relations, we also found indirect relations, as parents' education level was also related to parents' own language proficiency. Parents who were higher educated and less materially deprived, reported more proficiency in the country's main language, which in turn contributed to the educational partnerships with teachers (*Chapter 5*).

In the next section, we will elaborate on the main contributions of this dissertation to the field, starting with the contributions to theory and ending with implications for policy and practice.

Research on Acculturation

In the context of increasing diversity in current societies, understanding acculturation processes and how to support these processes has become a major issue for the social sciences. So far, however, research has mainly focused on the effects of acculturation on the cognitive, psychological, and social outcomes on individuals with an immigration or ethnic-minority background (e.g., Borrell et al., 2015; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). Less research has explicitly focused on how acculturation strategies of immigrant parents relate to education and socialization practices at home of the next generation, the children growing up in these families. Given the importance of a nurturing home environment, especially for young immigrant children, the present dissertation is among the first to fill this gap. We only found minor relations for parents with a younger child, though when children were older, we found that the so-called marginalization profile showed the least favorable outcomes regarding educational support at home, which is in line with other acculturation studies for different outcome domains (e.g., Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). In contrast, both separation and integration acculturation strategies, characterized by a preference for cultural maintenance, added a potentially supportive aspect to the home environment in the form of moral-cultural activities, while not differing from the assimilation profile in other respects.

Berry's two-dimensional *Integration-Acculturation* framework (1997) has been highly influential, though it has also received criticism over the years (see Rudmin, 2003, and Schwartz et al., 2010). Hereafter, we address two main points of criticism and how the current dissertation approached these issues and contributes to the literature. First of all, creating the 2x2 matrix of acculturation strategies requires classifying individuals as either high or low on culture acquisition and culture maintenance. If a priori values, such as sample medians (e.g., Giang & Wittig, 2006) are used as cut off points, the likelihood increases that equal numbers of participants will be classified as high or low on each dimension, and therefore all four of Berry's categories will be well represented in the sample. The use of a priori classification methods assumes that all four categories exist and are equally valid in the study population (Rudmin, 2003). However, given the large

variation among immigrants and the highly varying circumstances under which they live, this assumption is disputable. Studies using empirical, data-driven ways of classifying individuals have shown that the four expected profiles are not always extracted or that different subtypes may exist (e.g., Stevens et al., 2004). The current dissertation adds to the existing literature by using such a data-driven approach, Latent Profile Analysis, to identify the acculturation preferences of Turkish immigrant parents in a cross-country study (*Chapter 2*). Overall, we could replicate Berry's model for our sample of parents with a Turkish background in four different countries, but we found large size differences per profile, with the marginalization profile being the smallest. Examining the country differences, we could replicate Berry's framework in England, Norway and Germany, and we found again that profile sizes differed per country, which might point to the influence of national policies, as will be discussed below. For the Netherlands, also a separation, marginalization and assimilation profile were found, although we could not identify the integration profile, but rather found an unexpected profile. Other studies also found different subtypes of acculturation, which points to the idea that acculturation in itself is influenceable by external variables, such as social and integration policies (Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008).

A second point of criticism is the validity of the marginalization profile. As suggested by several scholars, the likelihood that a person will develop a sense of self without drawing on either the heritage or the receiving culture, is low. Indeed, several studies could not identify a marginalization profile (e.g., Schwartz & Zamboanga, 2008). In the study reported in *Chapter 2* among Turkish immigrant parents we could identify a marginalization profile, showing a relatively low preference of parents for cultural maintenance but also for cultural adoption and contact with the majority group. Yet preference for majority group contact was only slightly below the overall group average. Therefore, it might be that this profile does not resemble a true marginalization profile where one radically writes off both cultures, but that this profile applies to a group of immigrant parents who are still searching how to combine both cultural worlds or who have doubts about their cultural identity, without completely secluding themselves from the majority group, which is also suggested by other researchers (Berry et al., 2006; Del Pilar & Udasco, 2004; Schwartz et al, 2007). We agree with Crul and Schneider (2010) who emphasized that acculturation strategies, and the underlying cultural preferences, are dynamic and represent processes that can change over time and also can differ between contexts, for example between private and public spheres as has been found for Turkish immigrants (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2004). Therefore, future research should examine how these acculturation strategies develop over time, whether parents can switch between strategies depending on the context, and especially if and how immigrant parents assigned to the so-called marginalization profile develop their preferences over time. In line with the Interactive Acculturation Model, future research should also address how changes in the policy context and in public discourse regarding integration affect parents' acculturation strategies. The present dissertation provides

several indications that the policy context is of influence on the acculturation strategies of parents.

In the study reported in *Chapter 2*, we included measures of parents' preferences for cultural maintenance, contact with the majority group contact and cultural adoption. While the first two measures were derived from Berry's framework, the third one was adopted from Bourhis et al., (1997), who argued that cultural adoption as an attitude might provide a theoretically more coherent match with the attitude of cultural maintenance (Matera et al., 2012). The studies in *Chapters 2, 3, and 5* confirmed that the three dimensions represent different aspects of acculturation and are not strongly intercorrelated, indicating that all three dimensions add to the understanding of the concept of acculturation. Among other scholars, Nieri, Lee, Kulis and Marsiglia (2011) stressed that a more flexible approach is necessary when examining acculturation strategies, one that captures the diversity among individuals within distinguished groups of immigrants. This diversity emerges from the multiple possible combinations of several acculturation dimensions. We tried to realize such an approach in this dissertation by applying person-centered Latent Profile Analysis (*Chapter 2* and also in *Chapter 4*).

Superdiversity

In line with the concept of superdiversity (Meissner & Vertovec, 2015), our study confirmed the large within-group variation of our samples that is likely a consequence of the complex interplay of many parent-, family- and (local and national) context-related characteristics. For example, the study in *Chapter 3* found large differences in the languages used at home in educational interactions with children between parents with a Turkish or Maghreb background, but also large differences within these immigrant groups between the different countries. The study in *Chapter 4* confirmed the large within-group variation by identifying different bilingual profiles among Turkish-Dutch children, which pertained to both children's dual language skills and the language choices of their families.

We tried to disentangle the various factors explaining this within-group variation, but the interplay of all factors, either at family level, the particular sociolinguistic situation or the policy context level, created a complex picture. For example, being a first generation immigrant parent was positively associated with experiencing trusting relationships with the teachers in a multivariate analysis, likely reflecting what is referred to as 'immigrant optimism' (Kao & Tienda, 1995), but the lower proficiency in the country's main language of first generation immigrants, in turn, was overall negatively associated with the quality of the parent-teacher relationship in the same analysis.

Moreover, to what extent a lack of proficiency in the country's language was a barrier to establishing trusting parent-teacher relationships, differed across the countries and this was likely dependent on the predominant integration policies of these countries. Parents' L2 proficiency was strongly associated with using L2 and not L1 at home (*Chapter 3*), across immigrant groups and countries, and also with the informal education support at home for older children (*Chapter 2*). But parents' L2

proficiency was not related to their acculturation preferences. Instead, L2 proficiency seemed to depend on the generation of immigration, parents' education level and particularly the sociolinguistic context. While Turkish immigrant parents can rely on various resources to maintain their L1 (and, therefore, use L1 more consistently at home than Maghreb immigrant parents), while not being much less proficient in L2 (see Table 3.2), Maghreb parents face a less unified variety of Arabic and Tarifit-Berber languages in their community, they lack access to formal and written use of their languages and are reported to switch to the national language of the country also for ingroup communication. This can explain why it has been found that Maghreb immigrant children start school with stronger L2 skills than Turkish immigrant children (Leseman et al., 2019; Vanbuel et al., 2018). However, the language situation of Maghreb immigrants may hinder full educational support at home if parents are neither very proficient in L1 nor L2, and children in these families cannot benefit from strong support in L1 to (later) learn L2 (Leseman et al., 2019). Disadvantages can be advantages and vice versa in a complex sociolinguistic situation.

A number of studies reported in this dissertation focused on immigrant parents' feelings about contact with the new society: their wish for intercultural contact and their support to the children to develop positive intercultural attitudes and to engage in intercultural relationships with majority peers. We again found a complex picture. The presence of majority group members in the neighborhood and in ECEC centers was positively related to parents' wish for intercultural contact, which makes the case for more mixed neighborhoods and desegregation of ECEC and primary schools. However, especially for Maghreb parents, more opportunities for intergroup contact at (pre) schools with a higher presence of parents from the majority group also appeared to be associated with less participation at (pre)school, possibly because of an enhanced risk of experiences of discrimination in a context of a negative public discourse on Maghreb immigrants, as in the Netherlands and to some extent France and Italy (*Chapters 5, 6 and 7*). The complexity is in line with other studies focusing on the effects of diversity and segregation, pointing at the influence of many external factors such as perceived discrimination (e.g., Putnam, 2007; Schmid et al., 2014). Regarding the socialization of intercultural attitudes and the encouragement of intercultural relationships, the main determinant seemed to be parents' own wish for intercultural contact and, thereby, indirectly the composition of the neighborhood and the (pre)school. In addition, the small-scale design-based intervention study reported in this dissertation (*Chapter 7*) indicated that the issue of intergroup relations is even more complex and not only concerns contact and interaction between immigrants and members of the majority group, but also between different immigrant groups.

It is important that research on immigrant families takes this heterogeneity caused by the interplay of multiple parent, family and context characteristics into account. This calls for appropriate research approaches. Often applied variable-centered methods seem less suited because of the assumption that the population is homogeneous with respect to how predictors operate on outcomes (Howard & Hoffman, 2018; Laursen &

Hoff, 2006). Person-centered approaches, that consider the possibility that the sample might include multiple subpopulations characterized by different combinations of variables, would be an alternative. The studies reported in *Chapters 2* and *4* demonstrate the feasibility of a person-centered approach to capture the complexity of acculturation and multilingualism.

Influence of local and national integration policies

Previous cross-country studies have shown that national integration policies can influence the immigration attitudes of majority group members (Guimond et al., 2014), the degree of positive intergroup contact between immigrants and non-immigrants (Green et al., 2020), and the identification of immigrants with the country of residence (Igarashi, 2019). This dissertation adds to these studies by providing further tentative evidence that national and local policies are indeed related to the acculturation strategies of immigrant parents, and possibly also to the quality of parent-teacher relationships and to parents' participation at (pre)schools.

In the study in *Chapter 2* we identified acculturation profiles of the Turkish immigrant parents in the four participating countries where they had settled, but the proportions of parents that could be assigned to each profile differed remarkably, which we tentatively related to characteristics of the national integration policies in these countries (see above). In addition, we found indications that other local or national policies can influence parents' acculturation profile as well. For example, urban planning (related to residential segregation) and freedom of school choice (related to school segregation), are typically policies that as such are not part of the national integration model, but through either limiting or enhancing the opportunities for intergroup interactions, these policies may influence the attitudes of immigrant parents towards the majority society, their wish for intercultural contact and, thereby, indirectly impact on the intercultural socialization of the next generation. The unexpected acculturation profile of Turkish immigrant parents in the Netherlands, revealing a mix of assimilation (adopting the culture of residence) and separation strategies (no preference for majority group contact), may be related to the relatively strong residential and (pre)school segregation in the Netherlands in the context of a predominant assimilation model in the local and national policy context.

Furthermore, the study reported in *Chapter 5* revealed that low L2 proficiency was a significant barrier for establishing a trusting relationship with the teacher for Turkish immigrants in Germany and Maghreb immigrants in France, possibly as a consequence of the explicit assimilation pressure in these countries, but not for Turkish and Maghreb immigrants in the Netherlands. It should be noted that Dutch teachers in early childhood and primary education were *on average* found to reflect the national assimilation norms in their beliefs and practices, however with variation between teachers (Romijn et al. 2021; Slot et al., 2018). A possible explanation concerns the current national educational equity policy, which attempts to enroll immigrants from early age in the preschool system by actively reaching out to families, with apparent success. Early education and care providers working in poor neighborhoods with targeted programs under the

national equity policy, who are successful in reaching out to immigrants, are indeed reported to be culturally more inclusive and to try better to overcome communication barriers compared to other providers (Romijn et al., 2020; Van der Werf et al., 2021). These organizations at the local level have adopted a more pragmatic approach to the issue of integration and thereby deviate from the national model (Poppelaars & Scholten, 2008). Thus, yet another policy, the educational equity policy in this case, could be at stake.

The present findings on possible country differences and the interpretation of these differences in terms of local and national integration policies are tentative and warrant utmost caution. More research with stronger research designs, is needed to further examine the joint effects of multiple policies on parents' acculturation strategies and how they prepare children for society, while taking other relevant characteristics as discussed in the previous section into account as well.

Implications for practice and policy

The findings of the current dissertation may have several implications for practices and policies aiming at integration and upward social mobility of immigrants. First of all, although many countries have publicly renounced multiculturalism as the national integration model, opting for an assimilation model instead (Malik, 2015), the present findings do not confirm that an assimilation model would be more beneficial for the integration of immigrants than other models, at least not from the point of view of the support immigrant parents provide to their children's development, education and integration. On the contrary, assimilation policies, especially in combination with other social policies that enhance segregation and separation, may actually hamper the integration of immigrant families and the next generation they raise.

The multicultural model, welcoming immigrants, respecting their background and striving for trusting relationships, is in this regard to be preferred. Such a model acknowledges that acculturation strategies characterized by a preference for cultural maintenance may add potentially supportive aspects to the home environment in different ways than the cultural model of the Western middleclass specifies. This includes activities such as storytelling with a cultural, moral or religious content, which may also contribute to children's learning of general language and literacy skills. It is important for teachers and other professionals working with immigrant families to be aware of the additional cultural and language resources of immigrant families and to build upon them, for instance in technology supported learning environments (*Chapter 7*).

The marginalization profile was found to be negatively related to the educational support provided to children in the primary school age. As discussed above, this profile did not seem to indicate a radical rejection of both the heritage culture and the culture of the country of residence. Rather, this profile seemed indicative of parents who were still searching to find a balance between the two cultures and who were perhaps uncertain about their preferences. Helping these parents by dissolving the challenges that may arise from presenting them with the simple binary choice to assimilate or to separate,

is recommended. In (early) education it would require an inclusive, intercultural climate that is open to new, co-constructed cultural models (Romijn et al., 2021; Slot et al., 2019).

Focusing on language specifically, we found that the use of the heritage language does not impede children's language development as such, as we found both a more favorable bilingual profile, in which children used their L1 predominantly with their parents and showed a high proficiency in both languages, and a more unfavorable profile, in which children used also L1 predominantly at home, but had low L1 and L2 proficiency scores. Rather, other factors seemed to play a role here, such as the quality of the language input by the parents, families' SES or children's general learning abilities. This could also be an important starting point for practice and policy: support families in providing rich conceptual or academic language regardless the specific language they prefer to use and support children's general cognitive development, for instance by providing home-based intervention programs in the language parents are most proficient in (Cohen et al., 2018; Leseman et al., 2019; Leseman & Van Tuijl, 2001).

Furthermore, we found indications that immigrant parents have mixed feelings towards maintaining and using the heritage language. This was shown by the low correlation between cultural adoption and language adoption (and to some extent also between cultural maintenance and language maintenance), based on the structured-interview data but also on the qualitative data (*Chapters 6 and 7*). Parents repeatedly stated that it is important that the child becomes proficient in the national language to increase the educational opportunities of the child. Some parents stated that the school or ECEC setting should provide education in the national language, whereas the heritage language is a private matter which parents will try to stimulate at home. While this might be partly related to the pressure of national assimilationist policies, it might also be that researchers tend to overestimate the preference of immigrant parents for multilingual education of their children. Perhaps it should be acknowledged that parents' view that learning the national language is important for children to succeed in education and society, reflects their educational and social mobility aspirations, while parents' language choice as such is a pragmatic rather than cultural identity related issue. Therefore, we suggest a pragmatic view on the use of the heritage languages in education and care institutions working with immigrant families, with a focus on the emotional value the heritage language represents. This pragmatic view entails the use of the heritage language whenever possible to facilitate the communication and interaction with children and parents within an inclusive and safe climate, to recognize the value of the heritage languages and cultural resources of immigrants in general, and, most importantly, to avoid devaluing the heritage language as this may be experienced as unfair treatment and negatively impact the partnerships with parents.

Limitations, strengths and future directions

The research reported in this dissertation has several limitations. The most important limitation concerns the representativeness of the samples. The samples in all countries of the ISOTIS project were purposive, focusing on two to four (sub)urban

areas in these countries that were selected to represent different local policy contexts. Within these urban areas, sample recruitment was conducted in a similar way for each country. By working with key-organizations, key-persons and research assistants of the same communities as the parents, we maximized the opportunities to reach out to our target groups. The present samples represent relevant variation within both the Turkish and Maghreb populations in these countries. However, caution is warranted when generalizing the findings, as the country samples cannot be considered exactly representative for the entire Turkish and Maghreb immigrant populations in these countries.

Our aim was to examine the experiences of Turkish and Maghreb parents regarding many different aspects of their lives. The large-scale study of the ISOTIS project conducted in ten countries provided unique rich data for this purpose from over 1800 Turkish and Maghreb immigrant parents. The unique strength of the research reported in this dissertation is that it was based on information provided by immigrant parents who were personally interviewed in a well-designed, culture-sensitive cross-national interview study. As this is only part of the enormous diversity we can find in Europe, future studies should also include other important immigrant groups, such as the East-European immigrants in West-European countries and refugees. Moreover, as this dissertation has shown the large influence of the wider context, future research should include the perspective of majority group members as well.

Regarding the methodology, most of our results, with the exception of the study reported in *Chapter 4*, are based on cross-sectional data, implying that we cannot draw strong conclusions about the possible causal direction of the relations between variables. It is likely that bidirectional causality can partially account for the patterns in the data we reported (e.g., it is possible that a good relationship with the teacher also enhances parents' self-efficacy, besides the other way around), underlining the complex interplay of factors we discussed in our dissertation. Finally, the effect sizes we found in the different studies reported in this dissertation were overall small to medium. This is a general characteristic of research in social sciences (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2003) and it underlines the heterogeneity and complexity of the social reality, in particular the social realities of immigrant families.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings reported in this dissertation underscore the diversity in the experiences of immigrant families across Europe. As they try to strike a balance between the demands and expectations of the wider society on the one hand and their own cultural and linguistic preferences on the other hand, while facing serious adversities due to their disadvantaged socioeconomic position, most immigrant parents try to do their best in supporting their children's development, education and integration in society. The interplay of various parent and family related characteristics, together with factors in the wider social and policy context, present a complex puzzle to researchers, professionals and policymakers alike, that can only be solved when the heterogeneity

of immigrant groups and the contexts in which they live are respectfully, without bias or prejudice, taken into account. Professionals and policymakers trying to improve the position of immigrant families should foster inclusive intergroup interactions, policies, and norms at the local and national level. It is important that professionals, policymakers and politicians are aware, and publicly acknowledge, that the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of immigrant families can be a resource rather than a barrier.



Samenvatting.

Summary in Dutch

Acculturatiestrategieën van immigrantenouders en hun betrokkenheid bij het onderwijs van hun kinderen: Ervaringen van Turkse en Maghrebijnse ouders in Europa

De Europese samenlevingen worden steeds diverser als gevolg van de toenemende globalisering en immigratie van buiten en van binnen Europa. Denk aan diversiteit in etniciteit, religie, taal, tradities en culturele normen en waarden. Dit zorgt voor nieuwe uitdagingen. Hoe kunnen we de integratie en participatie van nieuwkomers het beste ondersteunen? Hoe kunnen we onze onderwijssystemen, in het bijzonder de voorschoolse opvang en educatie en het basisonderwijs, aanpassen zodat ze effectief kunnen omgaan met de toenemende diversiteit en alle kinderen gelijke kansen kunnen bieden?

De toenemende diversiteit roept ook politieke en publieke discussies op. De laatste twintig jaar heeft in veel Europese landen een verschuiving plaatsgevonden van een *multiculturele* insteek, waarbij diversiteit in de samenleving wordt gewaardeerd en actief ondersteund, naar nadruk op *assimilatie*: er wordt verwacht dat immigranten zich zo snel mogelijk en zoveel mogelijk aanpassen aan de dominante cultuur en taal van het land. De veronderstelling is dat assimilatie de beste manier is om gelijke kansen en inclusie te bevorderen, zeker voor de kinderen van immigranten. Echter, assimilatie houdt ook in dat immigranten afstand dienen te doen van hun eigen cultuur en taal, en impliciet is de boodschap dat zij zelf verantwoordelijk zijn voor de afstand tot de samenleving. Onderzoek laat zien dat dit een negatieve invloed kan hebben op het welzijn van immigranten, ook op de ouders onder hen, met mogelijk negatieve gevolgen voor de ontwikkeling van kinderen. Onderzoek laat ook zien dat een op assimilatie gericht klimaat de afstand kan vergroten tussen mensen met en zonder een migratieachtergrond. Dit risico is er ook in de kinderopvang, voorschoolse educatie en het onderwijs, waar pedagogisch medewerkers en leerkrachten een cruciale rol vervullen als verbindende en overbruggende factor tussen immigrantengezinnen en de samenleving. Dit roept de vraag op of het huidige op assimilatie gerichte klimaat wel de gewenste effecten heeft op immigrantenouders, met name op de educatieve steun die ze hun kinderen kunnen bieden, zowel in de thuisomgeving als door betrokken te zijn bij de opvang of de school van hun kinderen.

In dit proefschrift richten we ons op de vraag hoe immigrantenouders hun kinderen ondersteunen in hun ontwikkeling, bij hun onderwijs en bij hun integratie in de samenleving, terwijl ze een balans zoeken tussen hun eigen culturele normen en waarden en de verwachtingen vanuit de samenleving. We onderzoeken hoe persoonlijke kenmerken van ouders, in het bijzonder hun acculturatiestrategieën, en externe factoren, zoals het beleid op lokaal of nationaal niveau, elkaar beïnvloeden en hoe het samenspel van deze kenmerken en factoren variatie tussen immigrantengezinnen kan verklaren. Hoewel er veel is geschreven over immigranten, is het van belang dat er meer onderzoek wordt gedaan vanuit het perspectief van immigranten. We richten ons in dit proefschrift op ouders uit de twee grootste niet-Westerse immigrantengroepen in

Europa: ouders met een Turkse achtergrond en ouders die oorspronkelijk afkomstig zijn uit een van de Maghreb-landen in Noord-Afrika, met name Algerije, Marokko en Tunesië. Deze immigranten hebben zich gevestigd in verschillende Europese landen en hebben te maken met verschillende opvang- en onderwijssystemen en verschillende vormen van lokaal en nationaal integratiebeleid.

Opbouw van dit proefschrift

Dit proefschrift rapporteert de resultaten van zes verschillende onderzoeken. De Hoofdstukken 2, 3 en 4 richten zich op de thuisomgeving van de immigrantengezinnen. We onderzoeken verschillende facetten van de educatieve steun en interculturele socialisatie die ouders hun kinderen bieden en verkennen de relatie daarvan met macro-factoren zoals het integratiebeleid van de verschillende landen. De Hoofdstukken 5, 6 en 7 gaan over de relaties van immigrantenouders met pedagogisch medewerkers in de voorschoolse opvang van hun kinderen.

De onderzoeken die in de Hoofdstukken 2, 3, 5 en 6 worden gerapporteerd maken gebruik van data die verzameld zijn in het kader van het ISOTIS project⁹, een Europees onderzoek waaraan 11 landen deelnamen. Het project werd uitgevoerd tussen januari 2017 en december 2019. ISOTIS staat voor *Inclusive Education and Social Support to Tackle Inequalities in Society*. Het overkoepelende doel van het project was inzichten aan te dragen voor praktijk en beleid ten behoeve van de integratie van immigranten, etnisch-culturele minderheden en autochtone groepen met een lage sociaaleconomische status. Het ISOTIS project kende verschillende pijlers. In dit proefschrift zijn voornamelijk gegevens uit een grootschalig gestructureerd interviewonderzoek onder bijna 4000 ouders in tien verschillende landen gebruikt, waaronder ruim 1800 ouders met een Turkse of Maghrebijnse immigratieachtergrond. Het onderzoek gerapporteerd in Hoofdstuk 4 maakt gebruik van de gegevens van twee parallelle onderzoeksprojecten van de Universiteit Utrecht naar de taalontwikkeling van jonge tweetalige Turkse kinderen in Nederland. Hoofdstuk 7, ten slotte, beschrijft een lokaal interventieproject, het Utrechtse Virtuele Leer Omgeving (U-VLO) project.

In het navolgende worden de belangrijkste onderzoeksresultaten beschreven, waarna wordt afgesloten met de belangrijkste implicaties en conclusies.

Hoofdstuk 2: Acculturatiestrategieën van immigrantenouders en de relatie met de educatieve ondersteuning van hun kinderen

In dit eerste onderzoek werd gekeken naar de verschillende acculturatiestrategieën van ouders met een Turkse immigratieachtergrond in Engeland, Duitsland, Nederland en Noorwegen, en of er relaties waren tussen deze strategieën en de educatieve steun die ouders hun kinderen boden. Om acculturatie te definiëren, hebben we ons gebaseerd

9 Zie ook www.isotis.org. Het ISOTIS project werd gecoördineerd door Universiteit Utrecht (Wetenschappelijk coördinator: Prof. Paul Leseman; co-coördinatoren: Prof. Edward Melhuish en Prof. Thomas Moser). ISOTIS werd gefinancierd door de Europese Unie (Horizon 2020, Grant Agreement No. 727069).

op de veelgebruikte theoretische modellen van Berry (1997) en Bourhis (1997), waarin wordt gesteld dat acculturatie gedefinieerd kan worden aan de hand van twee min of meer onafhankelijke dimensies: de voorkeur van immigranten om hun eigen cultuur te behouden (hier korthedshalve: cultuurbehoud), die sterk of juist minder sterk kan zijn, en de voorkeur van immigranten om de dominante cultuur in het ontvangende land tot zich te nemen en contact te maken met de mensen die tot de meerderheidsgroep behoren (hier korthedshalve cultuuradoptie en intercultureel contact genoemd), die ook sterk of juist minder sterk kan zijn. De combinatie van deze dimensies leidt tot vier mogelijke acculturatiestrategieën: *integratie* (zowel een relatief sterke voorkeur voor behoud van de eigen cultuur én een voorkeur voor cultuuradoptie en intercultureel contact), *assimilatie* (een sterke voorkeur voor cultuuradoptie en intercultureel contact, maar geen sterke voorkeur voor behoud van de eigen cultuur), *separatie* (een sterke voorkeur voor behoud van de eigen cultuur, maar geen sterke voorkeur voor cultuuradoptie of intercultureel contact) en *marginalisatie* (geen sterke voorkeur voor behoud van de eigen cultuur én geen sterke voorkeur voor cultuuradoptie en intercultureel contact). Onder educatieve steun verstaan we hier enerzijds informele educatieve activiteiten van ouders en kinderen, zoals voorlezen, verhalen vertellen, rekenspelletjes spelen en educatieve gesprekken voeren (de zogenoemde Home Learning Environment), en anderzijds de educatieve aspiraties die ouders hebben voor hun kinderen.

De resultaten laten zien dat het veelgebruikte acculturatiemodel van Berry van toepassing is op Turkse immigranten ouders in de vier landen. We vinden inderdaad de vier acculturatiestrategieën, of acculturatieprofielen, terug in de data. Het separatieprofiel is het grootste profiel, dat op de meeste ouders van toepassing is, het marginalisatieprofiel is het kleinste. Wanneer we naar de landen afzonderlijk kijken, zien we dat we in Engeland, Duitsland en Noorwegen alle vier profielen worden teruggevonden onder de Turkse ouders in deze landen (hoewel de grootte van de profielen verschillen per land). In Nederland vinden we drie van de vier profielen terug. Het integratieprofiel blijkt echter niet van toepassing op de Turks-Nederlandse ouders. In plaats daarvan is er een afwijkend profiel, waarin ouders aangeven geen sterke voorkeur te hebben voor behoud van de eigen cultuur en wel een sterke voorkeur voor adoptie van de Nederlandse cultuur, maar ze spreken geen sterke wens uit om contact te hebben met mensen met een Nederlandse achtergrond. De resultaten lijken er, met alle slagen om de arm, op te wijzen dat het landelijke integratiebeleid invloed heeft op de acculturatiestrategieën van de immigrantenouders. In Engeland bijvoorbeeld, waar een relatief stabiel multicultureel integratiebeleid van toepassing is, is het integratieprofiel duidelijk groter dan in de andere landen, terwijl in Duitsland het separatieprofiel relatief groot is, wat te maken zou kunnen hebben met het nationale beleid dat tot voor kort uitging van de verwachting dat immigranten slechts tijdelijk in Duitsland zouden verblijven en dus weinig investeerde in de immigrantengroepen. Het afwijkende profiel van Nederland duidt mogelijk op een complex samenspel van het nationale integratiebeleid, dat tegenwoordig de nadruk legt op assimilatie, en andere beleidskaders. Nederland kent, in vergelijking met andere Europese landen,

een hoge mate van wijk- en schoolsegregatie (denk aan ‘witte’ en ‘zwarte’ scholen) en er is sprake van polarisatie in de samenleving met een soms negatief publiek debat over immigranten. Dit zou kunnen verklaren dat een relatief sterke voorkeur voor adoptie van de Nederlandse taal en cultuur kan samengaan met een geringe wens voor meer intercultureel contact.

Verder vonden we dat, over het algemeen, ouders redelijk tot veel educatieve steun bieden aan hun kinderen en hoge aspiraties hebben ten aanzien van de schoolloopbaan van hun kinderen. Voor ouders met een jonger kind (in de leeftijd van 3 tot 6 jaar, vóór de start van formeel onderwijs) vonden we nauwelijks verband tussen de acculturatiestrategieën van ouders en de educatieve steun die zij hun kinderen gaven. Wel was er een duidelijk verband met het opleidingsniveau van de ouders: hoger opgeleide ouders boden meer educatieve steun. Voor ouders met een ouder kind (in de leeftijd van 9 tot 12 jaar, vóór de overgang naar het voortgezet onderwijs) vonden we wel een verband met de acculturatiestrategieën van ouders. Ouders met een marginalisatieprofiel boden minder educatieve ondersteuning aan hun kinderen dan ouders met een assimilatieprofiel. Ouders met een integratieprofiel of een separatieprofiel (waarbij ouders in beide profielen een relatief sterke voorkeur hebben voor behoud van de eigen cultuur) verschilden niet van ouders met een assimilatieprofiel wat betreft de educatieve steun aan hun kinderen. Sterker nog, zij lieten juist hogere scores zien op educatieve activiteiten met een culturele of morele inhoud, zoals verhalen vertellen over de eigen cultuur en poëzie uit het land van herkomst delen. Verder was er opnieuw een verband met het opleidingsniveau van de ouders en ook met hun taalvaardigheid in de nationale taal: hoger opgeleide Turkse ouders en Turkse ouders die een betere beheersing hadden van de nationale taal, boden meer educatieve steun, ongeacht hun acculturatiestrategie.

Hoofdstuk 3: Taalkeuze en steun voor de interculturele socialisatie van kinderen in Turkse en Maghrebijnse immigrantengezinnen

In dit onderzoek bouwen we voort op het onderzoek van Hoofdstuk 2. We richten we ons op de taalkeuze van immigrantenouders in hun educatieve interacties met hun kinderen, met als vraag of ze vooral de taal van het land van herkomst gebruiken, ook wel de eerste taal (L1) genoemd, of de nationale taal van het land van vestiging, ook wel de tweede taal genoemd (L2). We richten ons ook op de vraag in welke mate ouders een positieve interculturele houding stimuleren bij hun kind en bevorderen dat hun kinderen vriendschapsrelaties aangaan met leeftijdsgenoten uit de meerderheidsgroep, korthedshalve hun steun voor interculturele socialisatie genoemd. Het onderzoek vond plaats onder ouders met een Turkse immigratieachtergrond in Engeland, Duitsland, Noorwegen en Nederland en ouders met een Maghrebijnse achtergrond in Frankrijk, Italië en Nederland.

De resultaten van het onderzoek bevestigen eerder gevonden verschillen tussen Turkse en Maghrebijnse ouders: Turkse ouders bieden meer informele educatieve steun in hun L1 en de Maghrebijnse ouders meer in L2, maar er zijn binnen deze groepen

ook grote verschillen tussen de landen. In Frankrijk wordt maar weinig steun geboden in L1, in Italië juist veel meer (maar hierbij moet worden opgemerkt dat in Italië veel eerste generatie immigrantenouders hebben deelgenomen aan dit onderzoek, die maar relatief kort met de dominante taal van de samenleving in aanraking zijn gekomen). Er zijn geen duidelijke verschillen tussen beide immigrantengroepen als het gaat om de interculturele socialisatie van hun kinderen, maar er zijn opnieuw binnen beide groepen wel verschillen tussen de landen. Turkse ouders in Engeland en Noorwegen, landen met een meer multicultureel beleid, geven meer steun voor interculturele socialisatie dan Turkse ouders in Duitsland en Nederland. Maghrebijnse ouders in Frankrijk scoren relatief laag op hun steun voor de interculturele socialisatie van hun kinderen in vergelijking met Maghreb ouders in Italië en Nederland.

In tegenstelling tot conclusies uit eerder onderzoek, lijken de taalkeuzes van immigrantenouders niet gerelateerd te zijn aan hun eigen acculturatievoorkeuren, maar worden de verschillen in taalkeuzes voornamelijk verklaard door de taalvaardigheid van de ouders. Is de taalvaardigheid van ouders groter in L1, dan gebruiken ze vooral L1 in educatieve interacties met hun kinderen, en omgekeerd, ongeacht hun voorkeur voor cultuurbehoud of juist cultuuradoptie. Er zijn nog enkele andere verschillen tussen ouders met een Turkse of Maghrebijnse achtergrond: generatie heeft een grotere invloed bij de Maghrebijnse ouders dan bij de Turkse ouders; tweede generatie Maghrebijnse ouders gebruiken vaker hun L2 dan eerste generatie Maghrebijnse ouders. Dit is in overeenstemming met literatuur die laat zien dat het voor Turkse immigrantenouders gemakkelijker is om de vaardigheid in L1 te behouden, ook in de tweede en zelfs derde generatie, vanwege het feit dat Turks als taal uniformer is, een sterke geschreven traditie kent en via verschillende media toegankelijk blijft voor Turkse immigranten. Voor Maghrebijnse immigranten ligt dit anders. Zij spreken vaker verschillende varianten van het Arabisch of van een van de Berber-Tarifit talen, er is geen (sterke) geschreven traditie in deze talen en taalvariëteiten, en de toegang tot media waarin deze talen worden gebruikt is aanzienlijk beperkter.

Bij de steun voor de interculturele houding van hun kinderen, zien we dat de voorkeur van ouders om zelf intercultureel contact te hebben het sterkst samenhangt met hun steun voor de interculturele socialisatie van hun kinderen. De voorkeur voor cultuurbehoud speelt slechts een kleine rol, en alleen voor de ouders met een Maghrebijnse achtergrond. Maghrebijnse ouders die sterk willen vasthouden aan hun eigen cultuur, stimuleren hun kinderen minder om interculturele contacten aan te gaan en zich positief beeld te vormen van de meerderheidssamenleving. Ook het opleidingsniveau van de ouders lijkt daarnaast van belang: hoger opgeleide ouders stimuleren hun kind meer om interculturele contacten aan te gaan. Ook hier vinden we een verschil in de generatie-effecten tussen Turkse en Maghrebijnse ouders: eerste generatie Maghrebijnse ouders stimuleren hun kinderen meer om interculturele contacten aan te gaan dan tweede generatie ouders. Bij de Turkse ouders is dit verschil er niet.

Hoofdstuk 4: Taalgebruik in het gezin en taalvaardigheid: profielen van tweetaligheid van Turks-Nederlandse vier- tot zesjarigen

In Hoofdstuk 4 bespreken we een longitudinale studie naar de complexiteit van tweetaligheid, in een heterogene groep van jonge Turks-Nederlandse kinderen, waarin we kijken naar zowel hun taalvaardigheid in L1 (Turks) en L2 (Nederlands) als hun gebruik van L1 en L2 in de thuisomgeving. De taaldiversiteit in de hedendaagse samenleving neemt toe en steeds meer kinderen groeien op met twee of meer talen, die ze in verschillende contexten voor verschillende doelen kunnen gebruiken. Meertaligheid is al lang geen kwestie meer van simpel wel of niet meertalig zijn en het is een uitdaging om de heterogeniteit en de veranderlijkheid van het gebruik van meerdere talen en de vaardigheid in die talen goed te bepalen in onderzoek. Het onderzoek gerapporteerd in dit hoofdstuk geeft een voorbeeld van hoe deze complexiteit in beeld kan worden gebracht.

Op basis van gegevens over de taalontwikkeling van Turks-Nederlandse kinderen over een periode van twee jaar en het taalgebruik in de gezinnen waarin zij opgroeien, vonden we vier verschillende meertaligheidsprofielen die structureel equivalent waren op vier- en zesjarige leeftijd. We gaven ze volgende namen: 1) dominant L1 gebruik, relatief lage L1 en L2 taalvaardigheid, 2) duaal taalgebruik, gemiddelde L1 en L2 taalvaardigheid, 3) dominant L1 gebruik, relatief hoge L1 en L2 taalvaardigheid, en 4) dominant L2 gebruik, relatief hoge L2 taalvaardigheid. Het eerste, minst gunstige profiel, althans afgaande op de vaardigheid van de kinderen in beide talen, was het grootste profiel op vierjarige leeftijd. Het tweede profiel was het grootste profiel op zesjarige leeftijd. Transitie-analyses lieten zien dat veel kinderen tussen vier- en zesjarige leeftijd van profiel veranderen, bijna altijd naar een gunstiger profiel gekenmerkt door toegenomen vaardigheid in L2, of stabiel hun gunstige profiel behouden (met name profielen 3 en 4). Dit is waarschijnlijk het gevolg van het onderwijs dat kinderen vanaf vierjarige leeftijd volgen.

Een belangrijke bevinding van het onderzoek is dat de twee profielen (1 en 3) die door dominant gebruik van L1 in de thuisomgeving worden gekenmerkt, aanmerkelijk verschillen wat de betreft de vaardigheden van de kinderen met deze profielen, zowel in L1 als L2. Profiel 1 is wat betreft de taalvaardigheid duidelijk minder gunstig dan profiel 3. Dit wijst erop dat een dominant gebruik van L1 als zodanig géén risicofactor is voor de duale taalontwikkeling (zie profiel 3), maar dat waarschijnlijk andere factoren een rol spelen, zoals bijvoorbeeld de kwaliteit van het taalgebruik in L1 (in termen van de rijkheid van de aangeboden woordenschat, de complexiteit van de grammaticale structuren, de kennisinhouden die via taal worden overgedragen) en kenmerken van het kind. Deze veronderstelling wordt ondersteund door de verbanden die we vonden tussen de profielen en niet-talige factoren: kinderen van wie de ouders een lagere sociaaleconomische status (SES) hadden of kinderen met een lagere non-verbale intelligentie werden eerder ingedeeld bij profiel 1 dan bij profiel 3. Kinderen uit gezinnen met een hogere sociaaleconomische status werden het vaakst toebedeeld aan profiel 4, gekenmerkt door dominant gebruik van L2 en een relatief hoge vaardigheid in L2.

Hoofdstuk 5: De relaties van Turkse en Maghreb migrantenouders met pedagogisch medewerkers en hun participatie in de voorscholen van hun kinderen

In Hoofdstuk 5 verleggen we de aandacht van de thuisomgeving naar de relatie tussen immigrantenouders en de centra voor voorschoolse opvang en educatie waar hun kinderen gebruik van maken. In de literatuur worden veel factoren genoemd die ouders met een immigratieachtergrond mogelijk belemmeren om vertrouwensrelaties en samenwerking met pedagogisch medewerkers en leerkrachten aan te gaan, en die ook van invloed zijn op hun participatie in activiteiten van de opvangcentra en scholen. Dit kunnen achtergrondkenmerken zijn zoals het opleidingsniveau of de sociaaleconomische status van de ouders, of meer persoonlijke kenmerken, zoals de acculturatievoorkeuren van ouders en hun vaardigheid in de nationale taal. Ook kunnen factoren die te maken hebben met de bredere sociale context een rol spelen, zoals de aanwezigheid van kinderen en ouders uit de meerderheidsgroep in het kindcentrum of op de school, de mogelijk ervaren discriminatie door professionals en andere ouders, en ook het nationale integratiebeleid zou van invloed kunnen zijn. Om dit samenspel van factoren te verhelderen, hebben we in dit onderzoek verschillende vergelijkingen uitgevoerd en bepaald hoe de verschillende factoren samenhangen met de ervaren kwaliteit van de relaties met de professionals en of die samenhangen verschillen tussen landen. We hebben de patronen van relaties vergeleken voor ouders met een Turkse achtergrond in Nederland en Duitsland, voor ouders met een Maghrebijnse achtergrond in Frankrijk en Nederland, en voor ouders met Turkse en Maghreb achtergrond in Nederland.

De resultaten laten zien dat ouders over het algemeen positief oordelen over hun band met de pedagogisch medewerker of leerkracht van hun kinderen, en dat zij ongeveer 2 keer per half jaar participeren op het kindcentrum of de school, bijvoorbeeld in de vorm van oudergesprekken, helpen bij een uitstapje of feestelijke gebeurtenis, maar dit verschilt sterk tussen ouders, tussen de immigrantengroepen en tussen de landen. Maghrebijnse ouders in Frankrijk zijn het minst positief over hun relatie met de professionals en participeren het minst.

De meeste achtergrondkenmerken van de ouders blijken geen direct verband te hebben met beide uitkomstmaten, maar ze zijn wel gerelateerd aan de persoonlijke kenmerken van de ouders, zoals hun taalvaardigheid, en via deze persoonlijke kenmerken indirect verbonden met de uitkomstmaten. Interessant is dat we verschillen vinden tussen landen in de mate waarin een factor een belemmering of stimulans kan zijn. Zo kunnen we afleiden dat een lagere vaardigheid in de nationale taal voor Maghrebijnse ouders in Frankrijk en voor Turkse ouders in Duitsland een grotere belemmering vormt om positieve relaties te hebben met de professionals dan voor de Maghrebijnse en Turkse ouders in Nederland. Dit zou kunnen samenhangen met de sterkere nadruk op het gebruik van de nationale taal in Frankrijk en Duitsland enerzijds en doelgroepgerichte voorschoolse educatie in Nederland anderzijds, die op partnerschappen met ouders is gericht.

Verder vonden we ook verschillen tussen beide immigrantengroepen. Een voorkeur voor cultuurbehoud had een negatief verband met de ouderparticipatie voor Maghrebijnse ouders, maar niet voor Turkse ouders, ongeacht het land. Ten slotte vonden we complexe resultaten voor de invloed van mate waarin er ouders met een autochtone achtergrond aanwezig zijn in de buurt en het kindcentrum. Voor immigrantenouders, met name voor ouders met een Maghrebijnse achtergrond, werd er een positief verband gevonden met het mentaal welzijn en een hogere participatie in de activiteiten van het kindcentrum als ze in een gemengde buurt woonden, maar tegelijkertijd was er ook een relatie met meer ervaren discriminatie als er in het kindcentrum relatief veel autochtone ouders aanwezig waren, wat weer negatief samenhangt met participatie. Dit complexe patroon van relaties onderstreept het belang van een algeheel inclusief klimaat in kindcentra.

Hoofdstuk 6: Moeders met een Maghrebijnse migratieachtergrond in Noord-Italië en hun ervaringen met het onderwijs

In dit onderzoek is specifiek en meer in de diepte nagegaan welke ervaringen relatief recent geïmmigreerde Maghrebijnse moeders hebben met de voorschoolse opvang en educatie en het kleuteronderwijs in Noord-Italië, hoe zij de relaties ervaren met pedagogisch medewerkers, leerkrachten en andere ouders, en hoe zij zelf participeren op de (voor)scholen. Het onderzoek was opgezet als een *mixed-methods* onderzoek, waarin zowel de kwantitatieve data uit het grootschalige interviewonderzoek van het ISOTIS-project als ook de kwalitatieve data uit het daaropvolgende diepte-interviewonderzoek zijn geanalyseerd.

De kwantitatieve resultaten repliceren de resultaten gerapporteerd in Hoofdstuk 5: taalbarrières, ervaren discriminatie en een sterke voorkeur voor cultuurbehoud gaan samen met minder goede relaties met de pedagogische medewerkers en de leerkrachten en met minder participatie in activiteiten op de (voor)school. Een opvallende bevinding is dat moeders die meer armoede ervaren, een betere relatie hebben met de leerkracht. Uit de kwalitatieve resultaten komt naar voren dat juist deze ouders steun halen uit de relatie met de leerkracht, ook praktische steun, en dat die steun vaak verder gaat dan alleen de gedeelde zorg voor het kind. Moeders zien de (voor)scholen als een belangrijk middel om zelf verder te integreren in de Italiaanse samenleving. Hun nog beperkte taalvaardigheid in het Italiaans, maar ook de bureaucratische rompslomp rondom de verblijfsvergunning en een beperkte kennis van het onderwijssysteem vormen echter belangrijke belemmeringen. De moeders rapporteerden weinig regelrechte discriminatie te ervaren, maar noemden wel andere vormen van exclusie en ongelijke behandeling waardoor ze zich niet altijd welkom voelden op de (voor)school, minder participeerden en ook minder goede relaties hadden met ouders buiten hun eigen etnische groep. Ook in dit onderzoek komt het belang naar voren van een algeheel inclusief klimaat op (voor)scholen, waarin er positieve aandacht is voor diversiteit.

Hoofdstuk 7: Implementatie van een digitale tool in een multiculturele voorschool: het U-VLO project

In dit hoofdstuk worden de resultaten besproken van kleinschalig ontwerpgericht onderzoek waarin een educatieve digitale tool werd ontwikkeld, geïmplementeerd en formatief geëvalueerd in een zeer diverse, multiculturele voorschool in Nederland. Doel van de interventie was te exploreren of een tool kan bijdragen aan het versterken van de educatieve partnerschappen met ouders met een immigratieachtergrond. Een bestaand educatief platform, *Padlet*, werd in nauwe samenwerking met vertegenwoordigers van de ouders en de pedagogisch medewerkers doorontwikkeld tot een digitale leeromgeving voor voorschoolse educatie. De verwachting was dat via de tool ouders meer betrokken zouden kunnen worden bij de vroege educatie van hun kinderen. Ouders werden gezien als gelijkwaardige partners en zij werden gevraagd input vanuit de eigen cultuur en taal aan te leveren voor de digitale leeromgeving. Met deze input konden de pedagogisch medewerkers vervolgens aan de slag en interculturele verdieping aanbrengen in hun educatieve praktijk. Kern van de interventie was de bottom-up aanpak. Tijdens de verschillende implementieronden werd steeds nauw samengewerkt met pedagogisch medewerkers en ouders. Zo ontstond ook een goed beeld van de vele uitdagingen en ook van de essentiële randvoorwaarden die vervuld moeten zijn voor succesvolle implementatie van een interculturele digitale leeromgeving.

Het ontwerponderzoek heeft tot verschillende conclusies en aanbevelingen geleid. Het is belangrijk ouders met immigratieachtergrond ervan bewust te maken dat de voorschool meer is dan alleen opvang waarin kinderen samen spelen en dat ouders ook zelf een belangrijke rol vervullen in de vroege ontwikkeling en educatie van hun kinderen. Ook is het belangrijk de interculturele competenties van de pedagogische professionals te versterken. Ouders waardeerden de aandacht voor andere culturen en talen, maar waren meer ambivalent wat betreft het gebruik van L1 op de voorschool. Het ondersteunen van de kinderen bij het leren van Nederlands als tweede taal vonden zij ook belangrijk. Verder bleek een belemmerende factor dat ouders binnen de voorschool vaak alleen contact hadden met ouders binnen hun eigen etnisch-culturele groep, waardoor ze zich niet op hun gemak voelden om persoonlijke informatie te delen in de algemene digitale omgeving met ouders uit andere etnisch-culturele groepen. Ten slotte dienen de technologische uitdagingen niet onderschat te worden, zowel aan de kant van de ouders als aan de kant van de voorschool.

Conclusies en aanbevelingen

De resultaten uit deze dissertatie kunnen verschillende implicaties hebben voor beleid en praktijk. Hoewel onze resultaten met de nodige voorzichtigheid dienen te worden geïnterpreteerd met het oog op de representativiteit van de steekproeven en de exploratieve vergelijking van landen, zijn er enkele lessen te trekken. Ten eerste, hoewel veel Europese landen een beleid voeren dat gericht is op assimilatie, op grond van de gedachte dat dit de integratie van immigranten ten goede komt, vinden we in onze onderzoeken geen aanwijzingen dat een sterke nadruk op assimilatie het

beoogde effect ressorteert. Het kan de afstand tussen immigrantengroepen en de meerderheidssamenleving eerder vergroten dan verkleinen en zo de belangrijke relaties van immigrantenouders met professionals in de opvang en het onderwijs verstoren. Een voorkeur van ouders voor behoud van de eigen cultuur en taal heeft geen negatieve uitwerking heeft op de educatieve ondersteuning van kinderen in migrantengezinnen en kan zelfs nieuwe educatieve praktijken rond culturele en morele onderwerpen inbrengen. Hoewel behoud van de eigen cultuur negatief geassocieerd kan zijn met ondersteuning van de interculturele socialisatie van kinderen in immigrantengezinnen, is dat waarschijnlijk vooral het geval als er in de context een sterke nadruk is op assimilatie, er vanwege segregatie weinig kansen zijn voor intercultureel contact en er een negatief publiek debat is over immigranten.

De taalkeuze in gezinnen is als zodanig niet gerelateerd aan de motivatie van ouders om hun kinderen educatief te ondersteunen of de interculturele socialisatie van hun kinderen te bevorderen. Het laatste hangt vooral samen met de wens van ouders zelf om intercultureel contact te onderhouden en dit hangt weer samen met de etnisch-culturele samenstelling van de wijk en de (voor)school. De taalkeuze in gezinnen is vooral een pragmatische kwestie en wordt primair bepaald door de vaardigheid van ouders in de talen in kwestie. Gebruik van L1 in de thuisomgeving kan samengaan met een gebalanceerde taalontwikkeling van kinderen in zowel L1 als L2, maar de kwaliteit van het taalaanbod is hierbij wel een belangrijke factor en vraagt om ondersteuning van lager opgeleide immigrantenouders om een rijk taalaanbod te kunnen verzorgen. Onze onderzoeken geven een genuanceerd beeld omtrent taalgebruik in immigrantengezinnen. Het is belangrijk dat ouders, en zeker ook kinderen, de dominante taal van het land leren om volwaardig te kunnen participeren in de samenleving. Immigrantenouders bevestigen dit en streven dit ook na. Maar dit zou niet ten koste moeten gaan van ruimte, en begrip, voor de eigen taal en cultuur van immigranten, indien ouders deze willen behouden en gebruiken in de opvoeding van hun kinderen.

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About the author

Ryanne Josephina Raymond Maria Francot was born on the 20th of September 1992 in Geleen. After completing her secondary education at Graaf Huyn College in Geleen, she moved to Nijmegen for her study Pedagogical and Educational Sciences at Radboud University. She followed the additional Radboud Honours track and spent three months in Vancouver (Canada) for writing her Bachelor thesis at University of British Columbia under the supervision of Prof. Siegel (UBC) and Prof. Verhoeven (RU) in 2013. After obtaining her Bachelor degree and Honours Program certificate, Ryanne started the Research Master Educational Sciences: Learning in Interaction at Utrecht University in 2013, from which she graduated in 2015 (*cum laude*, with honors). Hereafter, she worked as a Junior Researcher at Utrecht University before going on a yearlong travel in 2016.

In 2017, Ryanne started her PhD position at the department of Development and Education in Diverse Societies at Utrecht University, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Paul Leseman and Dr. Martine Broekhuizen. This resulted in her doctoral thesis, entitled 'Immigrant Parents' Acculturation Strategies and Involvement in Children's Education: Experiences of Turkish and Maghreb Immigrant Families in Europe'.

As a PhD candidate, Ryanne organized and participated in several symposia at national and international conferences (EECERA, EARLI, ECESS). Next to conducting research, Ryanne taught several courses and supervised bachelor theses, master theses and internships. In addition, she was PhD representative of her department in the PhD-council of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences (2017-2020). Besides her work, Ryanne was a volunteer at the NGO Taal doet Meer in Utrecht, where she was a Dutch tutor for immigrant mothers at a primary school (2017- 2019).

Since March 2021, Ryanne works as a postdoctoral researcher on the EVENING project and the Toddler INTAKE project at the department of Development and Education of Youth in Diverse Societies at Utrecht University.

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- Francot, R.**, Broekhuizen, M. L. & Leseman, P. P. M. (2019). The Utrecht Virtual Learning Environment project: Improving educational partnerships in multicultural preschools. *Orbis Scholae*, 13(3), 1-26. <https://doi.org/10.14712/23363177.2019.22>
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