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Language and ethnic minorities in the Netherlands

GUUS EXTRA and TON VALLEN

1. Introduction

This is a review of linguistic research on ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. After a brief introduction in this section, section 2 presents some basic socio-demographic data on ethnic minorities and general characteristics of the available research. In section 3, structural and temporal dimensions of language acquisition and loss are briefly discussed. Sections 4 and 5 deal with second-language acquisition by children and adults, respectively. Section 6 focuses on first-language acquisition and loss. The next two sections discuss the relationship between sociocultural orientation and language proficiency (section 7), and between educational achievement and language proficiency (section 8). Section 9 contains some concluding remarks.

It is often erroneously suggested that immigration and multilingualism are recent phenomena in Dutch society. As in other European countries, the number of immigrants in the Netherlands at any given time seems to correspond with the relative economic and cultural prosperity. From historical research (for example Lucassen and Penninx 1985) it can be gathered that between 1600 and 1640 (a period in the famous Dutch 'Golden Century') about 10% of the population of the Netherlands was of foreign origin. By the end of the 17th century, the foreign population had decreased to 6%, and it remained at this level until the end of the 18th century. The number of immigrants declined very rapidly during the 19th century, a period of economic and political crises in Western Europe. The lowest percentage of immigrants (about 1%) was recorded during the periods between 1890 and 1910, and 1947 and 1960. With the economic revival of the 1960s and 1970s the percentage grew again: from 2% in 1971 to 3% in 1978 and 4% in 1986.

These figures taken from governmental reports and various publications of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) in the Netherlands only apply to residents without Dutch citizenship. Thus, the number of immigrants from former Dutch colonies (Surinam, the Dutch Antilles, the Moluccan islands) can only be estimated. This also holds for people from the former Dutch

Indies (the present Republic of Indonesia), virtually all of whom are Dutch nationals. All in all, of the more than 14 million inhabitants of the Netherlands about one million belong to nonindigenous groups, that is, about 7% of the present Dutch population.

In the Netherlands standard Dutch is the variety with the highest social prestige. It has the largest number of speakers and the most public functions. However, for many inhabitants of the Netherlands, Dutch is not the language of primary socialization: they learn and use Dutch as a second language. The Netherlands has always been a multilingual society in which both indigenous and nonindigenous minority languages are spoken.

The former are regional or social language varieties, which are much livelier than is often thought (see Van der Plank in this issue). More than 60% of the indigenous population uses a regional or social variety as a first language. Apart from standard Dutch, only one of these varieties (Frisian) has official status. The relationship between indigenous language varieties and standard Dutch can be described as diglossic in Fishman's (1971: 286-299) sense of the term. They are used side by side in complementary distribution and differ in function and prestige. Occasionally such differences cause problems for nonstandard speakers, particularly in situations in which the high-prestige variety is required (see Vallen et al. 1984).

The nonindigenous minority languages have been introduced from abroad. Most of their speakers are conventionally referred to as 'ethnic minorities', although ethnicity does not necessarily imply a minority position. Language is, of course, a prime factor in the interaction between ethnic minorities and their Dutch-speaking environment. The success of ethnic minorities in education and in society at large depends to a great extent on their command of Dutch. However, there is a large group of pupils who have problems in the Dutch educational system, with its preponderantly monolingual and normative tradition.

2. Sociodemographic data and research on ethnic minorities in the Netherlands

During the past two decades, the Netherlands, like most other western and northern European countries, has been faced with a rapidly growing number of immigrants from different countries. Despite their often weak and disadvantaged socioeconomic position, many of them will stay in the Netherlands permanently. Four groups can be distinguished (figures are for 1985/1986).

1. The first group are some 560,000 immigrants from former Dutch colonies: Surinam (200,000), the Dutch Antilles (50,000), and the former Dutch Indies (275,000). Within the group that hails from the Dutch Indies,

the Moluccans (40,000) take up a special position, not only from an ethnic, cultural, and religious perspective, but also because of their involuntary 'repatriation' to the Netherlands in 1951.

2. The second-largest group of immigrants hails from Mediterranean countries (340,000). Most of them are Turks (160,000) and Moroccans (112,000) who came as foreign workers in the 1960s and 1970s. The other Mediterranean groups are less numerous: Spaniards (20,000), Italians (18,000), Yugoslavs (12,000), Portuguese (9,000), Greeks (4,000), and Tunisians (2,500).

3. The third group are some 30,000 political refugees, most of whom are from Eastern European countries such as Hungary (4,000), Czechoslovakia (2,000), and Poland (2,000), and from Vietnam (7,000), Turkey (4,000), Sri Lanka (3,500), and Chile (2,000). There are about 5,000 political refugees from various other countries.

4. The fourth group is rather heterogeneous, but the picture of the multi-lingual and multiethnic Dutch society is only complete if we also include Chinese immigrants (30,000; from various countries), immigrants from other Western European countries (among others 45,000 from the Federal Republic of Germany, 40,000 from the United Kingdom, 24,000 from Belgium, and 7,000 from France), from the United States (4,000) and other North and South American countries (8,000), and 35,000 immigrants from other Asian and African countries, as well as 30,000 caravan dwellers and 3,500 gypsies.

More detailed information about composition and size of ethnic-minority groups in the Netherlands can be found in Extra and Vallen (1985), Appel (1986), and a number of CBS reports. In 1982, prognoses were made for the growth of some of the above groups, namely the Turks, Moroccans, Surinamers, and Antilleans (Table 1).

Table 1. *Numbers in January 1985 and prognosis of maximum/minimum numbers of Turks, Moroccans, Surinamers, Antilleans in the Netherlands in 1990 (sources: Van Praag and Kool 1982; Kool and Van Praag 1982)*

Ethnic group	1985	Max. 1990	Min. 1990
Turks	160,000	196,000	165,000
Moroccans	112,000	149,000	119,000
Surinamers	200,000	230,000	210,000
Antilleans	47,000	70,000	65,000

Current Dutch research projects on ethnic minorities are being carried out by researchers from many different disciplines and focus on a variety of demographic, legal, medical, economic, social, cultural, linguistic, and educational issues. These research projects are financed in three different ways: (1) research financed directly by the universities; (2) research commissioned by the

National Science Foundations NWO and SVO, which support fundamental and education-oriented research respectively; and (3) 'contract research', commissioned by national, regional, or local (governmental) bodies, especially ministries and large cities.

With respect to the size and the growth of ethnic-minority research, it is clear that contract research commissioned by various ministries is the front runner; almost half of the research in this field is financed in this way. Owing to this large share of (inter)ministerial contract research in the total research effort, the influence of government policy on ethnic-minority research is very obvious: especially short-term, policy-relevant, or even more often policy-supporting research has been stimulated. Fortunately, the NWO has developed a special ethnic-minorities research program, in which linguistic research is one of the main areas of attention. Finally, in recent years university-based research on ethnic minorities has also been increasing gradually, but, owing to the modest share of this research in the total research effort, long-term research programs with more fundamental questions are quite rare in the Netherlands.

Linguistic projects take up a rather modest position within research on ethnic minorities, because the number of linguistic contract-research projects is very limited. Therefore, linguistic research has been less subject to direct government influences than research on ethnic minorities in other scientific areas.

Another characteristic of current research on ethnic minorities in the Netherlands is that most projects are carried out by Dutch researchers. Both for the development of research questions and for data collection and analysis, the expertise of ethnic groups can be valuable and is sometimes indispensable. However, the number of academically schooled researchers belonging to ethnic-minority groups is very small in the Netherlands, and the enrollment of ethnic-minority students at Dutch universities is very low, compared to that in other Western European countries. An improvement of this situation is only to be expected from special measures comparable to 'affirmative action programs' in the USA.

Surveys and bibliographies of current and completed research on ethnic minorities are periodically published by the ACOM, a national advisory board with respect to (inter)ministerial contract research. ACOM (1985a) is a selective bibliography that covers the period from 1980 through 1985 and includes a section on 'education and language' with almost 90 references. ACOM (1985b) is a survey of current research projects in various areas including 'language' and 'education'. These projects concern widely divergent sectors of education and ethnic groups of various age cohorts and origins. Most of them focus on Mediterranean, especially on Turkish and Moroccan

school children and adolescents. Linguistic projects almost invariably concern the acquisition and use of Dutch as a second language.

Migrantenstudies is a quarterly journal of research on ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. Some recent surveys of studies on language and/or education are Appel (1986), Extra and Vallen (1985), Everts et al. (1985). There were also some special issues on the subject by journals such as *Moer* (1986: 1-2), *Tijdschrift voor Taal- en Tekstwetenschap* (1985: 5/3, 1983: 3/2), *Toegepaste Taalwetenschap in Artikelen* (1985: 22/2), and *Pedagogische Studiën* (1985: 62/1, 1984: 61/9).

Three language-related research topics which are not covered in this review are the following: (1) research on ethnic stereotypes and racism; (2) research on access of ethnic-minority groups to Dutch mass media, and (3) research on ethnic minorities in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. Various studies on ethnic stereotypes and racism were published by Van Dijk, focusing on the structure of information in Dutch newspapers (for example, Van Dijk 1983) and on the expression of ethnic prejudice in Dutch story telling (for example Van Dijk 1985). A recent study on the access of ethnic-minority groups to Dutch radio, TV, and printed media was published by NOS (1986). The *Nederlands Bibliotheek- en Lectoriumcentrum* (NBLC) in The Hague has recently paid more attention to the access of ethnic-minority children and adults to Dutch libraries (see the NBLC journal *Info Immigranten*). Given the multilingual status of Belgium, remarkably few research activities have been undertaken on language use of ethnic minorities in Flanders; overviews can be found in Jaspaert and Vallen (1986) and in Gailly and Leman (1982).

3. Structural and temporal characteristics of language acquisition and loss

Although many ethnic-minority groups use two languages all their lives, most research efforts have concentrated rather one-sidedly on the acquisition and use of the second (majority) language. Little attention has been given to first-language changes over time, for example to processes of first-language acquisition, shift, or loss.

The fact that language acquisition and language loss proceed over time allows for research questions about structural dimensions (*how* is a language acquired or lost?) and temporal dimensions (*how fast* is a language acquired or lost?). In spite of these different types of research questions, the distinction is seldom clearly expressed in the literature. This can be illustrated by studies on the factor 'age' in L2 acquisition. These studies focus primarily on the question whether young people learn faster than older people, rather

than on the question of whether and to what extent they learn in different ways.

Until the early 1970s it was generally assumed that the structure and order of L2 acquisition was determined by L1/L2 differences. Empirical studies in the 1970s have, however, produced evidence indicating that the equation of L1/L2 contrast with L2 learning problems is based on false premises and that the influence of L1 on the acquisition of L2 has been greatly overestimated. This overestimation holds especially in the case of widely different languages. All L2 learners are faced with the task of decomposing and building up a hierarchically structured system of target language (sub)skills, and they seem to rely on highly universal principles in carrying out that task. In fact, the structure and order of L2 acquisition processes is determined by a complex and interactive set of cognitive and linguistic factors. Many of these factors will relate to structural properties of the target language (such as the regularity, transparency, perceptual salience, or frequency of given elements in L2), and they are commonly referred to as intralingual factors. Other factors will relate to structural properties of the source language (such as the transferability of L1 elements in L2 use), and they are commonly referred to as interlingual factors.

The pace and achievement of L2 acquisition, on the other hand, varies strongly across individuals and is largely determined by the 'distance' between the person's own (minority) group and the other (majority) group. Numerous 'distance' factors have been observed and studied, including social, economic, legal, linguistic, cultural, religious, and demographic distance between minority and majority groups. In the case of demographic distance, differences in group size (influenced by, for example, birth or migration rates) and group cohesion (influenced by, for example, degree of spread or by the extent of interethnic marriages) are important factors. When comparing studies on L2 acquisition and L1 loss, one meets striking similarities in factors that are taken to account for pace of both L2 acquisition and L1 loss. On the basis of such comparisons, Schumann's hypothesis (1978) with respect to the role of social and psychological distance factors can be extended to mean that as the distance between the majority and minority group decreases, the speed of L2 acquisition *and* L1 loss increases.

In the area of language loss, most studies have focused on nonlinguistic (in fact temporal) factors that cause loss. These studies are often based on national census data of intergenerational language use and language shift. Questions with respect to structural characteristics of language loss (for example, what is lost first or last, and why?) have rarely been addressed. As in the case of second-language acquisition patterns, the earlier-mentioned cognitive and linguistic factors (that is, both intralingual and interlingual factors) can be thought of as determinants of language loss.

Compared to studies on language acquisition, studies on language loss finally have to cope with two specific methodological problems with respect to the point of reference for measuring change. Decreases in language proficiency generally take more time than increases; it is easier to register change with 'zero' proficiency as the point of reference than with 'full' proficiency as the point of reference. Moreover, it is easier to define 'zero' proficiency than to define 'full' proficiency. Jaspaert et al. (1986) focus on this and other methodological problems in operationalizing and measuring the nature and extent of processes of first-language loss.

Most studies on language use of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands have concentrated on the acquisition of Dutch as a second language by Turkish and Moroccan children. Little has been done on adult language use and on other minority groups. However, Verhoeven and Vermeer (1985) is a contrastive study of Dutch proficiency of Turkish, Surinamese, and Dutch children at the ages of four, six, and eight, measured with a variety of linguistic tasks. Kerkhoff and Vallen (1985) report on cultural biases in Dutch language testing of Turkish and Moluccan children in contrast with Dutch children. De Haan (1985) focuses on the interaction of school language and Surinamese and Dutch children's language use. We will report on some major studies on the acquisition of L2 Dutch by Turkish and Moroccan children and adults. In sections 4 and 5 we will focus on structural aspects of L2 acquisition, in section 7 on temporal aspects.

In studying the acquisition of L2 Dutch, various approaches have been chosen with respect to (1) period of observation (longitudinal vs. cross-sectional); (2) number of informants (case studies vs. groups of subjects); and (3) type of data (natural vs. elicited). Most studies focus on the acquisition of oral proficiency by children. Table 2 gives the main parameters of the studies to be discussed in the following sections.

4. Second-language acquisition by children

Extra (1978) conducted a cross-sectional study on the acquisition of grammatical morphemes by Dutch vs. Turkish learners of Dutch. It was found that L1 and L2 learners showed largely similar group orders of accuracy for various morphemes (article/demonstrative/adjective specifications, plural/diminutive formation of nouns, past participle of verbs) and – at the same time – similar deviations from the target norm. Most commonly these deviations were overgeneralizations. Dutch has two gender-related definite articles *de/het*, and corresponding demonstratives *deze/dit* 'this' and *die/dat* 'that'. Learners of Dutch start with an overgeneralized use of most frequent *de/deze/die*, such as *de paard* instead of *het paard* 'the horse', or *deze horloge*

Table 2. Main parameters of studies on L2 Dutch by Turkish and Moroccan learners (D/T/M = Dutch/Turkish/Moroccan, * = at beginning of data collection)

	N of informants	Age range*	Type of data	N of measurements	Interval	Period of residence*
Appel (1984)	26 T	6-12	picture descriptions tests	3	12 months	6-10 months
	31 M					
ESF project	4 T	18-24	adult/adult interaction film commentaries tests	27	1 month	3-15 months
	4 M					
Extra (1978)	15 T	12-16	tests	1	-	2-4 years
	15 D					
Lalleman (1986)	20 T	5-7	picture descriptions child/adult interaction tests	1	-	born in the Netherlands
	20 D					
Van Helvert (1985a)	5 T	7-8	child/adult interaction child/adult interaction tests	36	1 week	1-4 months
	5 D					
Verhoeven (1987a)	60 T	6-7	picture description in L1/L2 child/adult interaction in L1/L2 oral/literacy tests in L1/L2	4	5-5-10 months	3-6 years
	30 D					
Vermeer (1986)	16 T	6-7	child/adult interaction tests	6	5 months	2-7 years
	16 M					

instead of *dit horloge* 'this watch'. Moreover, overgeneralizations were common in plural formation (such as regularized *statten* instead of irregular *steden* 'cities'), diminutive formation (such as regularized *bladje* instead of irregular *blaadje* 'leaflet'), and past participle formation (such as regularized *gebrengt* instead of irregular *gebracht* 'brought') (see scheme below for root forms).

Vermeer (1985, 1986) studied the acquisition of grammatical morphemes by Turkish and Moroccan children in a longitudinal design. On the basis of elicited data he made an implicational analysis of the order of acquisition of various morphological alternants of noun plurals, noun diminutives, and past participles of verbs. When the relevant morphological alternants were grouped into three basic categories (primary rules, secondary rules, irregular forms), the order of acquisition went from high to low correct scores as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. *Order of acquisition*

Morphological alternant	Realization	Example	Root form	Translation
1. Diminutive – primary rules	-(t) je	<i>bootje</i>	boot	boat
2. Plural – primary rule	-en	<i>fietsen</i>	fiets	bike
3. Plural – secondary rule (for example after long vowel in end position)	-s	<i>auto's</i>	auto	car
4. Past participle – primary rule (‘weak’ verb formation)	ge---t	<i>gekookt</i>	kook	cook
5. Diminutive – secondary rules (for example /pje/ after long vowel + /m/)	-pje/-et je	<i>boom pje</i>	boom	tree
6. Past participle – secondary rule (‘strong’ verb formation)	ge---en	<i>geroepen</i>	roep	call
7. Diminutive – irregular (for example lengthened stem vowel)		<i>blaadje</i>	blad	leaf
8. Plural – irregular (for example changed stem vowel)		<i>steden</i>	stad	city
9. Past participle – irregular		<i>gebracht</i>	breng	bring

This order was independent of L1 background, sex, sociocultural orientation, and type or degree of language contact of the children. Implicational ordering of grammatical morphemes in spontaneous speech data was impossible, because of lack of reproducibility and scalability of the data. Vermeer discusses various types of explanation for this lack of implicational

order, such as the occurrence of avoidance phenomena (*hij ging lopen* 'he started to walk', instead of *hij liep* 'he walked'); *ging* is more commonly used in Dutch than *liep*; *ging* is past tense of irregular verb *gaan*, *liep* is past tense of strong verb *lopen*), the 'unanalyzed' early use of irregular past participles (*gebracht* 'brought'; *geweest* 'been'), and the infrequent appearance of certain morpheme characteristics.

The problem with morpheme studies is that they focus primarily on correct scores of rather global categories. By doing so, one loses sight of processes underlying the acquisition of different sets of morphological alternants. Moreover, it is easier to describe morpheme orders of accuracy/acquisition than to give meaningful explanations for these orders. In fact, more attention should be paid to the conceptual coherence of the linguistic categories to be compared in order to make possible meaningful interpretations of order of acquisition.

Appel (1984) studied the effect of two educational conditions on Turkish and Moroccan children who had newly arrived in the Netherlands: an experimental group ($n = 24$) was educated in both L1 and L2, a control group ($n = 33$) (almost) exclusively in L2. After the first and second school year the L2 level of the two groups showed few differences on a whole set of linguistic parameters, such as mean length of utterance, percentage of subordinate and coordinate clauses, word-order regularities, absence of subject and/or main verb, number of different words; however, there was a slight tendency for the experimental group to score higher on oral proficiency tasks. After the third school year the experimental group showed higher scores on both oral and written proficiency tasks, although most differences for oral proficiency were nonsignificant. On the basis of this study it was concluded that L1 instruction has no detrimental effects on L2 acquisition and may even create favorable conditions for L2 acquisition. The design of the study was such that the two groups of children were fairly small and showed a high individual variation with respect to age, school, and initial L2 proficiency level. Nonetheless, the study was innovative, because L1 was given at least a transitional status in the school curriculum (75% in year 1, 40% in year 2, 10% in year 3). With respect to influences of L1 and L2 acquisition, two aspects were studied: the position of the verb and the use of prepositions. The Turkish children in particular used L1-related patterns in L2 utterances, such as verb-final utterances like *zij water pakt* 'she water gets', *die meisje bal spelen* 'that girl ball play', *mijn broer school gaan* 'my brother school go', or prepositionless utterances like *die water liggen mij rug* 'that water lie me back'. Such phenomena occur most frequently in the initial stage of L2 acquisition; in general they are relatively rare, however.

Lalleman (1986) compared the level of Dutch proficiency of Dutch and Turkish children of similar age and sociodemographic background at the beginning of elementary school. Working with both natural and elicited data,

she studied a number of morphological, syntactic, and semantic variables. In general, the group scores of the Turkish children were not only lower than those of Dutch children, there were also much greater individual differences. Many developmental characteristics of the Turkish children's Dutch could also be observed in younger L1 learners of Dutch. The difference between the two groups is thus interpreted primarily as a difference in rate of development. On the basis of her cross-sectional data and by dividing the Turkish group into four different proficiency levels, Lalleman made a pseudolongitudinal study of developmental sequences. However, the status of such sequences should be verified on the basis of longitudinal data.

A longitudinal study with small time intervals is represented in Van Helvert (1985a). Van Helvert studied the initial acquisition of L2 Dutch by Turkish children over a period of nine months. The subjects were observed in interactions with a native peer and with the adult experimenter. The verbal interaction was completely transcribed and computer-stored. The study also includes the results of three tests administered at intervals of several months. Van Helvert found formulaic speech (such as *weet ik niet* = 'I don't know', *tot ziens* = 'so long', *even kijken* = 'let's see') to be strongly dependent on individual speech styles and type of interaction; its main function was to initiate and maintain communication. Length of utterance slowly increased over time; during their first nine months of L2 acquisition two-word utterances remained dominant for all children, whereas the pattern of these utterances diverged from younger L1-learning Dutch children. Verbal and nominal constituents gradually became more complex. Negation was studied too. In standard Dutch, *nee* is a nonembedded utterance negation, whereas *niet* and *geen* are embedded in the structure of an utterance. In L2 acquisition *nee* was initially – but rarely – used within utterances (as in *nee kijken* = 'no look', *nee tekening* = 'no picture', *ikke nee* = 'I no', *dit nee* = 'this no'), whereas *niet* regularly took over the function of *geen* (as in *jij niet jas aan* = 'you not coat on'). Wide variation was found in the pace of building up the lexicon. Nouns were found to be more closely bound to individuals and situations than verbs or function words. Both verbs and nouns were occasionally used with overgeneralized meanings, for example *mus* 'sparrow' for various kinds of birds, or *maken* for both *maken* 'make' and *doen* 'do'. In child/child interaction, input utterances by the native Dutch children were modified in various ways, especially by deleting function words, as in *waar is telefoon?* 'where is telephone?', *nee die voor mij* 'no that for me', *wij dit samen doen?* 'we this do together?'. A study was also made of how Dutch children clarified utterances not understood by their Turkish playmates. Usually, such clarifications consist of complete or partial repetitions; in case of partial repetition, most commonly function words are deleted (see also Van Helvert 1985b).

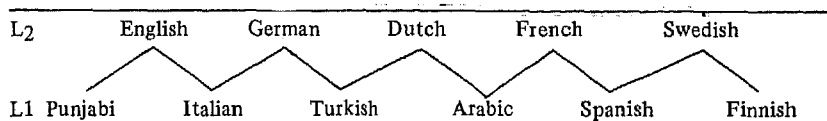
Finally, Verhoeven (1987a; 1985) gives an account of the acquisition of lexical and discourse abilities in L2 Dutch reading and writing by Turkish children, in comparison with Dutch children. In the context of this study, L2 literacy instruction was given at nine schools, starting in grade 1, with a maximum of four hours a week additional L1 literacy instruction starting in grade 2. After 5, 10, and 20 months of L2 literacy instruction, lexical abilities were measured by (oral) word reading and spelling tasks. Discourse abilities were measured by text comprehension and production tasks (for example, comprehending the devices of inference, coherence, and anaphora). Verhoeven's findings illustrate the general idea that there is more temporal than structural variation between L1 and L2 learners. From a temporal point of view, Turkish children had a strikingly lower level of reading proficiency than Dutch children at all moments of measurement. However, from a structural point of view, both groups of learners showed similar developmental patterns. For instance, at the word level, similar misreading and misspelling patterns were observed, which are explained on the basis of graphophonological properties of the target language (for example, reduction of consonant clusters: *tap* for *trap* 'stairs' and *wok* for *wolk* 'cloud'; lax for tense vowels: *rus* for *reus* 'giant'). At the text-comprehension level, both groups found presuppositions easier to understand than implications, and assertions easier than presuppositions. Moreover, similar patterns of grammatical and conceptual self-corrections were found in the oral text reading of both groups. Finally, the patterns of misspellings in their writing were highly comparable; only a small proportion of the misspellings of Turkish children could be interpreted in terms of L1 interference.

Verhoeven also studied the Turkish children's oral proficiency in both L1 and L2 on the basis of sentence imitation and vocabulary tests and spontaneous speech data. He found L2 oral proficiency (especially morphosyntactic knowledge) to be a significant predictor of L2 reading skills. While only a weak interdependency between oral proficiency in L1 and L2 was found, there was no such interdependency for the lexicon.

5. Second-language acquisition by adults

As mentioned earlier, few studies have been done with respect to adult language acquisition (see Extra 1984 for a survey). Here we focus on an international project under the auspices of the European Science Foundation, the ESF project cited in Table 2. This project is concerned with the study of initial L2 acquisition by adult immigrants in Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Sweden. Factors influencing the structure and pace

of L2 acquisition are studied from a cross-linguistic and comparative perspective. Source and target languages are combined in the following way:



The project is set up as a longitudinal multiple case study. On the basis of a variety of techniques, a great amount of data was collected over a period of 2½ years. An extensive description of the goals and design of the project, the linguistic topics of analysis, data collection and storage procedures, and informant-selection criteria is given in Perdue (1984). The project focuses on the following topics:

- reference to people, space and time;
- word-order regularities in L2 use;
- (mis)understanding and feedback in native/non-native interaction;
- processes in the developing lexicon.

With respect to L2 Dutch, pilot studies have been published on the first and last topics. Broeder et al. (1985) studied the acquisition of spatially intended verbs, adverbs, and prepositional phrases. The results show similar developmental patterns for verbs and prepositional phrases, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. *Developmental patterns for verbs and prepositional phrases*

	Spatial verbs	Spatial prepositions
Stage 1: zero-making	<i>hij weg</i> 'he away' <i>zij buiten</i> 'they outside'	<i>hij Turkije</i> 'he Turkey' <i>ktnd school</i> 'child school'
Stage 2: overgeneralized use of small set	<i>K. zitten</i> 'K. sit'; used for living in K. <i>hier staan strand</i> 'here stay beach' <i>komen</i> 'come', used for both coming and going	<i>in</i> 'in', used for in, on, between, to, through <i>met</i> 'with', used for with, in, in front of, to, through
Stage 3: expansion of small set into target-language variety		

Local adverbs are initially used for both local and directional reference, for example *achter* 'behind' for *achter(uit)*, or *binnen* 'inside' for (*naar*) *binnen*.

Broeder et al. (1986a) describe how the devices for pronominal reference to person are acquired. For Dutch, the learning task consists of discovering at least the distinctive properties for the marking of case, person, number,

gender, (in)formal address, and (un)emphatic forms. Language learners do not start with all distinctions at the same time, and the question is with which they begin and why. Broeder et al. observed that subject and object pronouns are initially used in possessive functions (rarely the reverse), singular pronouns refer to both singularity and plurality, and masculine pronouns refer to both female and male persons. Similar strategies have been documented in studies on L1 acquisition by children. Another observation is that high frequency in the standard language does not imply early acquisition. Evidence for this phenomenon was found in the learners' early preference for emphatic pronouns, such as *jij/jou, hij/hem, wij* instead of unemphatic *je, ie, 'm, we*.

Extra and Van Helvert (1987) investigated the acquisition of temporal reference in spontaneous reports of past events. Learners most commonly apply the 'principle of natural order' (order of mention = order of events). Moreover, successive events are temporally connected by implicit (\emptyset , *en*) or explicit temporal connectors, such as (*en*) *dan* or (*en*) *toen*. Although *dan* and *toen* refer to present/future and past events in standard Dutch respectively, learners start with undifferentiated *dan* when referring to past events. Within utterances, verbs are initially used without past-tense marking, and temporal PPs (with or without preposition) appear earlier than temporal adverbs.

Most empirical studies on the lexicon of language learners provide little information about the operationalization of basic notions such as 'token', 'type', 'lemma', or basic counting units. Broeder et al. (1986b) discuss objectives, methods, and various measures in studying the size and variety of the learner's lexicon. They found that function words appear late in adult learners' speech, which again shows that frequency in the standard language does not imply early acquisition. Finally, Broeder and Voionmaa (1986) report on the acquisition of function words vs. content words in adult L2 Swedish and L2 Dutch. They found opposite proportional tendencies for the two data bases with respect to function and content words, on the one hand, and verbs and nouns, on the other.

6. First-language acquisition and loss

Because of the social and scientific emphasis on L2 acquisition and L2 use, questions concerning first-language use have received only scant attention. Some of these questions are as follows:

Which (varieties of) ethnic minority languages are actually spoken in the Netherlands?

How are these varieties acquired in a Dutch-speaking environment?

Which intra/intersentential processes of code mixing and code switching between L1 and L2 occur under what conditions?

Which processes of language maintenance, language shift, and language loss occur over time?

The reduction of issues related to bilingualism and L1/L2 acquisition to second-language acquisition and second-language use is not limited to the Netherlands. Several factors contribute to this tendency. First of all, this asymmetry in attention for L1 and L2 manifests itself to a great extent in the extensive American literature about bilingualism. The number of studies on the development and use of Spanish (the most prominent minority language in the United States) is extremely limited in comparison with the available literature on the acquisition and use of L2 English. The focus on L2 Dutch in the Netherlands can be interpreted as a reflection of this bias. Another factor is the traditional philological orientation of research in the Netherlands on languages such as Turkish, Arabic, Chinese, Malay, Spanish, and Italian. The fact that in the context of present Dutch society these languages are minority languages has not resulted, unfortunately, in any substantial modification of research priorities. The philologists' lack of interest stems most probably from a low esteem for minorities and minority research, on the one hand, and from ignorance of suitable research methods, on the other. However, the collaboration of language specialists in these areas is indispensable for the development of research on ethnic group languages in the Netherlands.

In section 3 we referred to structural and temporal dimensions of (second-) language acquisition and (first-) language loss. An important reason for the lack of research on societal loss of ethnic group languages in the Netherlands is the lack of national census data on language use (as opposed to, for example, Australia, Canada, or the US).

In this section we refer to some recent Dutch studies on L1 loss and on L1 acquisition in an L2 Dutch environment. Jaspert and Kroon (1986) report on an ongoing study of L1 loss by Turkish and Italian adults, living in the Netherlands and Flanders. The primary question in this study is what 'distance' factors (see section 3) cause language shift or loss. Boeschoten and Verhoeven (1985, 1986) investigate the process of L1 acquisition by Turkish children in the Netherlands from various perspectives, by making comparisons with L1 use of Turkish adults in the Netherlands, with L1 use of Turkish children in Turkey, and with L2 use of the subjects.

Boeschoten and Verhoeven (1985) report on the use of Dutch elements in Turkish speech of adults and children. The adult data are taken from TV programs (1979-1983) on Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands; the children's data are from an ongoing study on the acquisition of Turkish by 80 Turkish children in the age range of 4-7 years. In both groups code switching is rare, restricted almost exclusively to isolated words (predominantly nouns, referring to culture-specific entities, and – to a lesser degree – adjectives).

However, the Turkish children show more variation in word-class transfers (verbs and other word classes are transferred), more extended transfers beyond the word level (for example, prepositional phrases), and more variation in the degree of phonetic adaptation. While the adult speakers most commonly adapt transferred words to the phonetic rules of L1, the children maintain Dutch pronunciation, switch to Turkish pronunciation, or mix both. The children's greater variation of L2 insertions in L1 utterances is attributed to their greater L2 proficiency.

In a pseudolongitudinal study, Boeschoten and Verhoeven (1986) and Verhoeven and Boeschoten (1986) compare the processes of L1 acquisition of Turkish children in the Netherlands and Turkey at various age levels between 4 and 8. A variety of linguistic parameters was analyzed on the basis of elicited and spontaneous speech data. The Turkish children in the Netherlands showed a gradual increase in L1 proficiency without any signs of language attrition. Moreover, at the age of 5, no substantial differences were found between the two groups. However, by the age of seven the Turkish children in Turkey had surpassed their peers in the Netherlands in vocabulary growth, in sentence-imitation tasks, and in the spontaneous use of infinite verb forms and causal connectives. These differences are attributed to the small amount of Turkish language input in Dutch society, including schools.

Finally, Verhoeven (1987b) investigated lexical development in Turkish and Dutch of 84 Turkish children at Dutch elementary schools, aged 6 to 8. The analysis was based on L1/L2 word-production/perception tests and on spontaneous L1/L2 speech data at three moments of measurement. At all moments children were dominant in L1. However, with respect to the inter-relatedness of lexical development in Turkish and Dutch, no clear evidence was found in support of Cummins' (1979) interdependency hypothesis.

7. Sociocultural orientation and language proficiency

One of the striking features of L2-acquisition processes is their temporal variation. The pace of acquisition and the level of proficiency reached differ greatly from individual to individual and are determined by a great number of extralinguistic variables (see section 3). During the last few years, much attention has been paid in the Netherlands to the variable of sociocultural orientation. In this section we restrict ourselves to the role of sociocultural orientation in Dutch linguistic and educational research, the operationalization of this variable in some recent research projects, and the main findings of these projects with respect to the relationship between sociocultural orientation and language proficiency.

Most of the studies (see also Table 2 in section 3) focus on L2 Dutch of

Turkish and Moroccan children. Little is known about the relationship between sociocultural orientation and children's L1 proficiency (but see Teunissen 1986; Verhoeven 1987a), about other ethnic groups (but see Koot et al. 1985; Kerkhoff and Vallen 1985), and about adolescents or adults.

Appel (1984) investigated the sociocultural orientation of 22 Turkish and 21 Moroccan children (aged 8 to 13) by means of a semistructured cultural interview in combination with a picture book in which various 'cultural topics' were represented in two versions (Dutch vs. Turkish/Moroccan). The interview focused on topics like school and social contacts, religion, food, market/shops, and clothing. To establish a 'cultural score' for each child, only the reactions to three of the many items represented in the picture book were chosen, because it was assumed that these items could be related unambiguously to either the majority or the minority culture: (a) the consumption of pork, (b) the wearing of traditional clothing by the mother, and (c) the saying of Islamic prayers. For the variables (a) and (b), a one-point score was given if the child followed the minority norm. Variable (c) was weighted as much as (a) + (b) (= 2 points) when the child stated that it regularly said Islamic prayers. In this way, each child could be given a cultural score on a five-point scale. However, no clear correlation between cultural orientation and L2 proficiency was found.

Lalleman (1986) studied the L2 proficiency of 20 Turkish children (aged 6 to 7) born in the Netherlands. Data on sociocultural orientation were gathered by means of interviews (in Turkish) with the children's parents on various subjects, such as work, leisure, religion, and expectations for the future. L2 data were gathered in much the same way as in Appel (1984) (see section 4). Lalleman distinguishes social, cultural, and psychological 'distance' of the parents with respect to the Netherlands and Dutch people. Social distance refers to the intensity of contacts with Dutch people and knowledge of Dutch matters; cultural distance refers to the extent to which Islamic/Turkish culture (such as religion, habits) is actively practiced; and psychological distance refers to feelings of discrimination. A significant relationship was found between the first two variables and L2 proficiency. High L2 proficiency corresponds with little social and cultural distance. No significant relation was found with respect to psychological distance; however, some of the questions used in this respect were too vague or had the quality of leading questions.

Vermeer (1986) studied the sociocultural orientation of Turkish and Moroccan children on the basis of a questionnaire filled out by their teachers. Six sociocultural and contact variables were distinguished: (1) language choice, (2) motivation, and (3) Dutch contacts of the children on the one hand, and (4) L2 proficiency, (5) attitude towards the school, and (6) Dutch contacts of the parents on the other hand (see also Vermeer 1985). A

strong correlation was found between the children's L2 proficiency level and their choice to speak Dutch with brothers and sisters, their contacts with Dutch peers, and their parents' proficiency in Dutch (that is, typical factors of the language input and language environment of the children). The children's motivation to learn Dutch and the motivation of the parents with respect to school played only a minor role in the success of the children's L2 acquisition. Vermeer's results show that it is important for research on the relationship between sociocultural factors and L2 proficiency to distinguish between sociocultural, motivational, and contact factors of children and parents.

As already mentioned, only few Dutch studies deal with the relationship between sociocultural orientation and children's L1/L2 proficiency. Verhoeven (1987a), as part of his research on the acquisition of L2 proficiency by Turkish children, collected data about the children's sociocultural orientation (at the age of 6) from their teachers and parents and from the children themselves. This was done by means of semistructured interviews with parents and children, questionnaires administered to teachers, and a list of 24 pictures selected from a Cultural Attitude Scale, showing 12 Turkish and 12 Dutch cultural stereotypes (see De Bot et al. 1985a). The sociocultural orientation of the children was found to be a causal factor of L2 oral proficiency (Verhoeven 1987c) and L2 reading comprehension (Verhoeven 1987a), whereas only a weak correlation could be found with L1 oral proficiency and L1 reading comprehension.

In the framework of his study on the effects of an experimental bilingual-bicultural program for Moroccan and Turkish children in elementary schools, Teunissen (1986) confronted the experimental group of Turkish children and a control group (from a monolingual-monocultural program) with paired pictures of Dutch and Turkish stereotypes. Three different responses were possible: 'Dutch item preferred', 'Turkish item preferred', and 'no preference'. The experimental group had developed a 'more balanced' attitude toward both cultures than the control group. Unfortunately, Teunissen did not correlate these findings statistically with the results of the L1 (Turkish) and L2 (Dutch) tests performed by the children. However, in most cases the experimental group had better scores on these tests.

Koot et al. (1985) investigated the achievements of Surinamese children in Dutch primary schools. They found a correlation between the children's school results and several variables, such as period of residence in the Netherlands or place of birth. However, no correlation was found between the children's 'self-concept' or 'ethnic identity' and their achievements at school. The former concepts were measured by means of photographs of Dutch, Creole, Javanese, Chinese, and Hindustani children. In response to questions like 'Which child do you like most?' and 'Which child will get the best/worst

marks at school?' the children were asked to point to one of the photographs. Further information was gathered by means of written Dutch questionnaires.

Kerkhoff and Vallen (1985) investigated the effect of the cultural background of tests on Dutch-language performance of 10/11-year-old Dutch, Turkish, and Moluccan children ($n = 92$). The Turkish children and their Dutch classmates were given one test focusing on Turkish culture (TUT) and another focusing on Dutch culture (NET). The Moluccan children and their classmates did one test dealing with aspects of Moluccan culture (MOT) and the NET. All tests were cloze tests and comparable with each other with respect to Dutch language complexity. The main difference between the tests was the topic of the story (typical Dutch, Turkish, or Moluccan festivities). On the NET, significant differences were found between the scores of the three ethnic groups: Dutch children performed significantly better than Turks and Moluccans, and the latter performed significantly better than Turks. On the TUT the difference between Turkish and Dutch children was not as large as on the NET, but still significant (in favor of the Dutch). The results on the MOT showed no difference at all between Dutch and Moluccan children. Unfortunately, most inferences about proficiency in Dutch of ethnic-minority children in the Netherlands are based on culturally biased tests like the NET.

8. Educational achievement and language proficiency

Education plays a major role in the process of emancipation of ethnic-minority groups. Some basic data regarding the participation of ethnic minorities in various Dutch educational settings are presented below. Wherever possible, we indicate the influence of language as a factor of success at school.

According to official statistics (CBS 1986), 134,736 non-Dutch students were enrolled in Dutch obligatory education during the 1984/1985 school year, or about 4% of the school population ($n = 3,370,606$). Basic figures about the different levels and types of education are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 shows that ethnic-minority students are underrepresented at the higher levels of secondary education (AVO/MBO), in higher vocational education (HBO), and in university education (WO). However, there was a significant increase of more than 20% of ethnic-minority students in MBO and HBO in the 1984/1985 school year as compared with 1983/1984.

A nationwide comprehensive secondary school system as in the United States or Sweden does not exist in the Netherlands. Instead, secondary education consists of different types of schools. One of them (LBO: junior secondary vocational education) is a preparation for manual and low commercial professions. Others (AVO level) provide general lower secondary

Table 5. Number of all students (n1), number of ethnic-minority students (n2), and proportion (%) of ethnic-minority students of n1 at various levels and in various types of education during the 1984/85 school year

Educational level/type	n1	n2	%
Nursery school	399,453	26,132	6.4
Primary school	1,094,980	58,197	5.3
Special education	98,358	4,085	4.2
General secondary education (AVO)	823,640	18,501	2.3
Junior secondary vocational education (LBO)	382,855	19,428	5.1
Secondary vocational education (MBO)	257,822	2,757	1.1
Higher vocational education (HBO)	146,620	2,083	1.4
University education (WO)	166,818	3,453	2.1

schooling (MAVO), prepare for 'higher' professions (HAVO), or provide preuniversity schooling (Atheneum/Gymnasium). As can be deduced from Table 5, 69% of the indigenous Dutch students are enrolled at the AVO level and 31% at the LBO level. For ethnic-minority students these percentages are 49% and 51% respectively. However, for Turkish and Moroccan children (59% of the total number of ethnic-minority children in official statistics) the situation is even more unbalanced: Turks 34% (AVO) and 66% (LBO), and Moroccans 28% (AVO) and 72% (LBO). The percentages for immigrant children from other EC countries are the reverse: 74% (AVO) and 26% (LBO).

Prognoses for the numbers of ethnic-minority pupils in 1990 are only available for Turkish and Moroccan children in the age range of 4 to 12. These (maximum and minimum) prognoses were calculated in 1982 (Van Praag and Kool 1982) and are presented in Table 6.

The numbers of the two ethnic-minority groups in 1984/1985 show that

Table 6. Numbers in 1984/1985 and prognosis of maximum/minimum numbers of Turkish and Moroccan 4- to 12-year-old pupils in Dutch schools in 1990

Ethnic group	Number 1984/1985	Max. 1990	Min. 1990
Turks	31,355	40,000	32,800
Moroccans	26,709	36,200	27,600

the numbers in 1990 will probably be nearer to the maximum than to the minimum prognoses of 1982.

A variety of factors contributes to the disadvantaged position of ethnic-minority children at school. Many teachers, linguists, and sociologists state that restricted second-language proficiency has a detrimental influence on the school achievement of ethnic-minority children. Some think that the level of second-language proficiency depends on the educational settings and the approaches to L2 instruction for ethnic-minority children. However, research by De Bot et al. (for example, 1985b) suggests that systematic differences in educational settings and in approaches to language teaching do not lead to significant differences in second-language proficiency of Turkish and Moroccan children. Of course, second-language proficiency alone cannot explain the great differences in educational achievements mentioned above (see for instance the favorable figures for EC-immigrant children who also have to learn L2 Dutch).

The only representative study on the relationship between second-language proficiency and educational success of ethnic-minority groups in the Netherlands was done by Van Esch (1983). He investigated the relationship between oral Dutch language proficiency of ethnic-minority children and the scores of these children on the final primary school tests of the National Institute for Educational Measurements (CITO). 1271 pupils coming from 342 schools took part in the study which was carried out in 1982/1983. Unfortunately, oral language proficiency was not directly measured; teachers were asked to rate every pupil on a five-point scale. Table 7 (taken from Van Esch 1983) presents the average scores on the final primary school tests for five different groups.

Table 7. *Dutch language proficiency of ethnic-minority children and average score for each 'proficiency' group on the final primary school tests of CITO*

Oral Dutch language proficiency	CITO score
1. No proficiency	no participation
2. Elementary understanding	66
3. Elementary speaking	77
4. Advanced speaking	93
5. Near-native speaking	115

Although oral Dutch language proficiency was established in an intersubjective way, on the basis of the figures in Table 7 it can be concluded that this proficiency plays an important role with respect to the scores on the CITO tests. These scores are generally used in the process of referring children to secondary education in the Netherlands.

As mentioned before, ethnic-minority children are underrepresented in higher types of secondary education. However, their numbers in special education rise by more than 10% a year. Ethnic-minority children are especially overrepresented in schools for educably mentally retarded (EMR) children; this holds in particular for Surinamese and Antillean children in the bigger cities (Wijnstra 1985). A similar situation is found in Great Britain and Western Germany. In the USA the overrepresentation of black students in EMR programs has received considerable attention in recent years. So far representative linguistic and educational research on this topic is not available in the Netherlands. Most studies have been done in the city of Rotterdam by Wijnstra (for example, 1985).

9. Concluding remarks

This paper reviews current and past linguistic research on ethnic minorities in the Netherlands. This type of research has emerged only during the past few years, and although an impressive amount of work has been done, many questions remain. Most sociolinguistic or psycholinguistic studies have one-sidedly concentrated on the *initial* acquisition of *oral second-language* proficiency by *recently arrived Turkish or Moroccan children*. Little has been done on the following dimensions:

adult language use;

language use of *other ethnic minority groups* (see section 2 for figures and section 3 for examples of such studies);

second-language use of *long-term residents* (such as children born in the Netherlands or adults who have been in the Netherlands for many years; see also Table 2 in section 3);

written language use (such as the acquisition of alphabetical principles by illiterate adult learners);

first-language use (see section 6 for explanatory factors).

As yet completely unexplored is the use of L2 Dutch as a lingua franca in *non-native/non-native interaction between speakers with different L1 backgrounds*; it is precisely this condition of language use where negotiation of meaning takes place under extreme communicative pressures.

Crosslinguistic and crosscultural perspectives are needed along each of the above-mentioned dimensions, such as, for example, sociolinguistic studies of the influence of differences in 'distance' between majority and minority groups on L1/L2 proficiency and L1/L2 preference; or psycholinguistic studies of the influence of age differences on the course of L2-acquisition processes.

In the first type of study various distance characteristics within various

minority groups can be taken into account (see section 3). Sociocultural 'distance' is often referred to as a prime factor in explaining variation in L1/L2 proficiency (see Van Els et al. 1984: 115–125 for an overview of the literature). The fact that no such correlation was found in a number of L2 Dutch studies may be due to various factors:

insufficient operationalization of the concept of sociocultural orientation; for example, Appel (1984) reduced this concept to a few religious aspects, whereas Koot et al. (1985) made use of photographs and written questionnaires;

indirect informants like parents (Lalleman 1986) or teachers (Vermeer 1986) may not give very reliable information about the sociocultural orientation of children;

finally, it may not be possible as yet to separate in a methodologically convincing way sociocultural factors from the many other factors that affect language proficiency.

In the second type of study, the obvious importance of data from adult language learners is that cognitive development and language development are no longer indissolubly interwoven. Such data form a crucial touchstone for claims about universal principles in language-acquisition processes (see also Broeder et al. 1986a). Of course, universality has not yet been demonstrated by data concerning children's acquisition of English as a first language. Developmental characteristics that are independent of target language, source language, and age should be taken into account. A combination of these requirements obviously provides the strongest indicators for universality. It is the variability of all three factors that makes the study of second-language-acquisition processes most promising.

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