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Gülşen Yılmaz* and Monika S. Schmid

Second language development in a migrant context: Turkish community in the Netherlands

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Abstract: This study explores the extent to which first language (L1) versus second language (L2) use and attachments to native versus majority language and culture influence the proficiency in the L2 Dutch among the Turkish-Dutch bilinguals. The community under investigation is of particular significance because it represents the largest non-Western ethnic group in the Netherlands and it has often been discussed in the context of the group members' ethnic and linguistic attachments as opposed to their perceived unwillingness to adopt the cultural norms of the Dutch society. What makes this immigration setting interesting is that the shift from tolerance to startling levels of restrictiveness in policies of cultural and linguistic integration has nowhere been as fast as in the Netherlands. Data are collected from the first generation Turkish immigrants ($n = 45$) who migrated to the Netherlands after the age of 15 and lived there for 10 years or longer and native Dutch speakers ($n = 39$) via an elicited speech task, a lexical naming/recognition task and a sociolinguistic background questionnaire. The first set of analyses reveals several links between the individual variables (i.e., L1 use in the family and with friends, L2 use at work, level of education, length of residence and cultural preference) and different aspects of L2 proficiency. However, the effect sizes of these correlations are weak to moderate. The second set of analyses applies a discriminant analysis where proficiency in the L2 has been established as one integrated score. In this analysis, only preferred language emerges as the best predictor of language development.

Keywords: second language, migrants, Dutch

1 Introduction

As a consequence of continuous mobility by international migration, integration of the immigrants into the host countries has become a central policy concern. In general, migrants of all origins have been surrounded by economic, social

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and political pressures to integrate both linguistically and culturally (Extra and Yağmur 2004; van Oudenhoven et al. 2006) and successful acquisition of the host country language and integration into the host society have come to be regarded as two sides of the same coin across Europe (Extra et al. 2009). Adult immigrants typically acquire the language through social interactions and not every one of them is fortunate to have the circumstances to become fully proficient in the host society language. The eventual level of proficiency which an individual reaches depends on a complex interaction of several factors as confirmed by decades of research into various language pairings and linguistic structures (e.g., input, native language, motivation, age, education, personality and so on; de Bot et al. 2007; Herdina and Jessner 2002).

The present study investigates the factors that impact Dutch language development of Turkish immigrants who arrived in the Netherlands as adults. Where this population is concerned, linguistic and cultural attachments as opposed to identification with the Dutch language and culture have been a major source of concern, even more so than for other substantial minority groups (i.e., Moroccans, Surinamese and Antilles) (Dagevos and Gijssberts 2007). Public criticisms of this perceived “chauvinism” abound, for example in response to demands by some Turkish groups to reinstate the mother-tongue education programs in primary schools which were summarily abolished in 2004. It is doubtful however, whether the widely-held stereotype of the Turkish population as refusing to engage with Dutch language and culture is accurate and if it hinders their L2 acquisition. Therefore, we look into the role of predictors pertaining to social life, cultural orientation, adherence to the traditional values and ethnic identity, as well as L1 and L2 use in informal and professional settings and demographic factors.

2 L2 acquisition in relation to acculturation

Acculturation implies a two-way process within which groups of individuals with different cultures and languages are influenced by one another and transformed together by mutual intercultural contacts (Berry and Sam 1997). Within the encounter of migrant and host societies, the extent to which the immigrant group wants to preserve its cultural roots, own language and to which the group members want to interact with the majority members is crucial in this process (Berry 1997). L2 acquisition has also been predicted to play a key role in acculturation (Schumann 1986; Ward and Kennedy 1999). Depending on holding favorable or unfavorable attitudes, four outcomes can be identified: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization (Berry et al. 1986). Individuals who

maintain their own cultural identity and also extend relations in the host society and incorporate elements of the host culture are considered to have an integrated acculturation attitude. At the opposite end is marginalization, which involves weak connections with both the host society and the original culture, where individuals are more oriented towards achieving personal goals. Assimilation is the preference to adopt the collective identity of the host society and abandon that of origin. The last strategy, separation, entails rejection of the key features of the host culture, preserving own cultural heritage and limited contact with the host society (Sam and Berry 2010). The host society, too, has a preference for one of the acculturation strategies i.e., integration, assimilation, segregation (which is equivalent to separation) or exclusion (which is equivalent to marginalisation) depending on whether the immigrant group is valued or devalued and whether it is a situation of economic downturn or affluence (Horowitz 1985; Montreuil and Bourhis 2001; Sniderman et al. 2004). Often, immigrants are aware of majority members' perceptions and their own acculturation strategies are influenced by these attitudes towards them (Bourhis et al. 1997; van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2005).

A major factor within the framework of acculturation that is assumed to impact the degree of language acquisition is the perceived socio-cultural distance between the immigrant and the host community (Clyne 1991; Schumann 1986). While shared heritage and culture between migrant and local communities promote linguistic and social integration, differences (e.g., socio-economic background, physical appearance and religion) minimize social interactions and heighten negative sentiments between the communities (Sniderman et al. 2004). Under such circumstances, learners are predicted not to progress much beyond initial stages of language acquisition. Likewise, adherence to own ethnic culture, a perceived threat to ethnic identity, large community size, temporary intended length of stay in the L2 country, lower status in relation to the majority group would also make it more difficult to learn the target language (Schumann 1986). On the other hand, positive attitudes towards a language and a high level of identification with the L2 culture and society would facilitate learning.

Among the acculturation strategies, Schumann (1986) suggests that the assimilationist strategy is the one that yields the highest level of success in L2 proficiency because original culture and language will be replaced by host society culture and language. Integration strategy is the second best because it can be successful to the extent that the individual interacts with the native speakers and adopts their values and way of life (in addition to hers). Indeed, social interactions with the native population and workplace socializations are reported to be of profound importance (Birdsong and Molis 2001; Chiswick et al. 2004; Dustmann 1994; Flege and Liu 2001; Stevens 1999; van Tubergen and

Wierenga 2011) in particular in the acquisition of the target pronunciation (Bongaerts et al. 1997; Flege et al. 2003) supporting Schumann's view on the role of interaction with the native speakers. The role of L1 in L2 acquisition on the other hand, is far from being clear. It is however, widely accepted that L2 learners benefit from their existing language skills and strategies and that it has never been demonstrated that retaining use of the L1 would hinder L2 acquisition (Cummins 1981; Dustmann 1994; Jiang 2004; O'Malley and Chamot 1990).

With regard to the relationship between language development and group identification, it has been frequently suggested that attachment to the native culture negatively correlates with L2 proficiency (Ellinger 2000; Gathbonton and Trofimovich 2008; Noels et al. 1996). However, to what extent becoming competent in the L2 guarantees embracing the host community culture and acceptance by the host society is still unclear (see Collin and Karsenti 2012; Crawford 1995; Espinosa and Massey 1997; Nesdale 2002; Skronabek 2009). For instance, in the U.S., learning English has enabled many white and Protestant Northern European migrant groups with smooth and relatively quick linguistic and cultural assimilation into the Anglo-Protestant American society; however, some other groups from different racial, cultural and religious backgrounds (i.e., Latinos and Asians) have often been less successful in economic and social integration though they left their native language and cultural connections behind and learned English fluently (Boyer 2009; McDonald and Balgopal 1998; Tolsma et al. 2012). There are also examples of immigrant groups that continue to speak their mother tongue over generations and live according to native culture norms but attained high levels of linguistic integration (e.g., Mexicans, see Citrin et al. 2007).

As far as the Dutch context is concerned, since the 1990s, the policy towards immigrants of non-Western origin has become one of the toughest within Europe, and the Turkish community is one of the most strongly affected groups (ECRI 2008; HRW 2008). After 2000 several measures were taken such as stricter requirements for citizenship, obligatory civic and language courses as well as more constraints on marital migration, dual nationality and the Dutch Civic Integration Abroad Act¹ (de Boom et al. 2007; Entzinger 2006; Vink 2007). The change in policy contributed to already existing public discontent and have furthered the creation of a vision of immigrants as outsiders and of Islam as a threat to Dutch democracy (Bijl and

1 The Act requires that foreign nationals from non-Western countries who wish to migrate to the Netherlands for marriage or to join family members must pass a compulsory civic integration test before entering the country. In 2011, the Supreme Court of the Netherlands ruled that Turkish nationals are exempt from these requirements, as the act is considered inconsistent with the Association Agreement of 1963 between Turkey and the European Union.

Verveij 2012). Increasingly tightening regulations and demands for integration, in conjunction with sentiments voiced widely by both the society in general and populist politicians led to a considerable decline in the amount of social contacts with Dutch society and increasing levels of ethnic and religious identification (Dagevos and Gijsbert 2007; Karina et al. 2008).

3 The Turkish community in the Netherlands

The Turkish community has currently become the largest non-Dutch ethnic group in the Netherlands. Around 400,000 Turkish immigrants live in the Netherlands, representing about 2.3% of the Dutch population (CBS 2010).² There is a widespread belief in the Netherlands (and elsewhere in Europe) that immigrants of Turkish origin, in particular the first generation, have a relatively poor command of the majority language. Among the major non-Western migrant communities in the Netherlands, they are reported to have the most language-related problems.

In the early years of mass migration (1960s and early 1970s), Turkish immigrants had neither Dutch language knowledge nor any foreign language education upon their arrival but this did not matter since they were usually employed in low wage jobs (e.g., restaurants and production lines of factories) which required minimum language skills (Akgündüz 2007). They did not have optimal conditions for learning Dutch (e.g., low availability of language training programs, few opportunities for L2 use). The partners of the migrant workers were mostly housewives who had limited or no professional skills and thus had no need to learn more than basic Dutch language skills since they mainly interacted with close relatives and other Turkish friends (Smets and Kreuk 2008).

The members of the Turkish community are known to have stronger familial, ethnic and linguistic affiliations compared to other immigrant groups in the Netherlands (Ersanılı 2010; Yılmaz and Schmid 2012). They tend to maintain close ties with their fellow immigrants and live in close proximity to their relatives and acquaintances (Vervoort et al. 2010; Smets and Kreuk 2008).³ They also preserve relations with their hometowns with the availability of widespread

² The size of the Turkish community is likely to be much bigger because the third generation Turkish population is not included in the government statistics as Turks because of birth country and nationality based statistics (Extra 2005).

³ While it is generally assumed that migrants choose to live close to their countrymen and hence settle in the nearby neighborhoods, they in fact have limited options due to a strictly controlled housing market and their unfavorable socioeconomic conditions (Schaaake et al. 2010).

immigrant organizations, community networks and mass media and the affordability of communication and travel (Backus 2004). Despite recently increasing exogamy, spouses are still predominantly chosen from the same ethnic background (Hooghiemstra 2003). They in general, do not prefer to live according to the norms of the Dutch society in the family domain and in their primary network. Lack of respect for their cultural values and native language and assimilative orientations on the part of the Dutch society further distance them from the mainstream society (Maliepaard and Gijsberts 2012; Verkuyten and Yıldız 2007).⁴

The problem with such stereotypical notions is that they fail to capture within-group variation among the Turkish community with respect to their language skills/use and lifestyle (Backus 2004).⁵ For instance, as members of this community gradually start working in diverse areas of economy and join the middle class, they come into closer contact with the Dutch people and get better adjusted into the Dutch society. They are in general open to closer interethnic relations (Yılmaz and Schmid 2012; Verkuyten and Yıldız 2007). There is an increasing awareness among the community as to the importance of language skills and some families speak mostly Dutch at home (Dagevos et al. 2003). They appreciate the economical benefits, political rights and freedom in the Netherlands and consider themselves as a part of the society and the Netherlands their home (Gijsberts and Schmeets 2008).

Nevertheless, the Turkish community's connectedness to the Dutch culture and language has not grown as strongly as desired by the Dutch society and government and their retention of cultural and linguistic heritage is often interpreted as evidence for their unwillingness to integrate fully into the Dutch society. At the public level, unfavorable attitudes towards migrants and religions in general and the Turkish community and Islam in particular are widespread (ECRI 2008; HRW 2008; Knippenberg 2009; Smets and Kreuk 2008). The prevailing expectation is that migrants should blend into the Dutch society as soon as possible (Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver 2003; Gijsberts and Dagevos 2010; Schalk-Soekar and van de Vijver 2008) and otherwise the widespread orientations towards migrants is separatist (Entzinger 2006; Kunovich 2004; Schaake et al. 2010; Zorlu and Latten 2007).

⁴ An in-depth discussion of the immigrant language policies in the Netherlands is beyond the scope of this article, however it should be noted that the contemporary target is a gradual linguistic assimilation similar to "English only movement" in the USA. Dutch policy makers and even some educators campaign against the use of mother tongue claiming that it hinders successful acquisition of Dutch and poor language skills are a barrier before integration. They are highly concerned that multilingualism and diversity is a threat to the social cohesion and unity (Extra and Yağmur 2004).

⁵ We do not intend to undermine the findings of these studies because this is unavoidable in investigations that look into general tendencies.

Several studies attempted to figure out what influences L2 development of Turkish migrants across Europe. They revealed that in general, amount of L2 exposure, social participation in the L2 community, educational background, formal instruction, proficiency in the L1, length of residence, age at the time of immigration, co-ethnic versus local partner and presence of co-ethnics in the neighborhood (residential segregation) impact their language attainment (in the Netherlands: Ersanılı 2010; van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2009; in Germany: Dustmann 1994; Ersanılı 2010; in Belgium: van Tubergen and Wierenga 2011; in France: Ersanılı 2010). In addition, labor market participation (in Germany and France, Ersanılı 2010) and settlement intentions (in Germany: Dustmann 1994 and in Belgium: van Tubergen and Wierenga 2011) were associated with the degree of linguistic success, too. Orientation of the integration policies in the host countries (i.e., assimilationist or multiculturalist) did not influence their L2 proficiency (in the Netherlands, Germany and France, see Ersanılı 2010).

However, it should be noted that much of the information about their language proficiency is based on evidence from surveys. As far as the Netherlands is concerned, the Institute for Social Research collects data on a large scale basis and language proficiency is based on participants' self-assessments.⁶ Within these researches, no actual linguistic data (written or spoken) are analyzed empirically, nor is there a detailed investigation of nonlinguistic variables that influence L2 development. Some investigations into the L2 development of Turkish immigrants mainly focused on initial stages of acquisition (e.g., Jansen et al. 1981) or isolated aspects of language (e.g., pronominal references, Broeder et al. 1984; word formation, Broeder et al. 1993; spatial reference, Extra and van Hout 1993; word order, Jansen and Lalleman 1980; reading comprehension, Hulstijn and Bossers 1992), and therefore do not reveal much information about their command of L2. The present study reports on actual language production data and extensive autobiographical data.

4 The study

This study investigates how strongly linguistic and non-linguistic factors predict L2 development of first generation Turkish immigrants who spent a considerable lifetime in the Netherlands. The following research questions are addressed:

⁶ Studies in Western Europe, too, mostly relied on interviews or questionnaires usually conducted in the L1 of the participants where they are asked to evaluate their L2 competence (in Germany: Dustmann 1994; Ersanılı 2010; in Belgium: van Tubergen and Wierenga 2011; in France: Yağmur and Akıncı 2003).

1. Are the degree of L1 and L2 use and exposure related to proficiency in the L2?
2. Are motivation and linguistic and cultural attitudes related to proficiency in the L2?
3. Are age of arrival, length of residence and level of education related to proficiency in the L2?

4.1 Participants

Forty-five Turkish-Dutch bilingual informants participated in this study. They consisted of migrants in the Netherlands who had learnt Turkish as their mother tongue.⁷ All participants migrated to the Netherlands from Turkey after the age of 15 and spent at least 10 years there. Recruitment process involved contacting a variety of locations commonly visited by the Turkish people (e.g., community center, mosque, supermarkets and restaurants) and building up a snowball sample through referrals within these people's social networks. This method helped us gain access to several people within a relatively short time period considering the unwillingness of people to take part in such investigations. While perfect representativeness of our sample can not be guaranteed, the variety of initial contacts and their connections still allows us to make good inferences about the larger community. Out of 45 participants 16 had been placed in the primary school level,⁸ 8 in the secondary school level, 14 in the high school or vocational school level and 7 in the university level of education (based on the highest level of education completed). The scale from 1 to 4 represents primary, secondary, high school and university respectively. The Dutch controls matched them on age, gender and education.⁹ Participant information is summarized in Table 1.

Among the participants in the present study, 4 of them continued their education through vocational trainings for 1–2 years and 5 of them completed their university education at the Dutch universities. Almost half of the participants learnt Dutch by self-study and practicing at the workplace through social

⁷ Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands may speak Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic or Azeri (Extra and Verhoeven 1993). For the purposes of this study, only those who learnt Turkish as their mother tongue were included.

⁸ Out of these 16 participants, 3 of them had not completed the 5 year primary school training but they were all literate in Turkish, though their language skills were possibly not developed high enough to assist them in L2 acquisition.

⁹ Since compulsory education in the Netherlands covers the secondary school, it was not possible to find perfect matches for our primary school group; so we had to take in whoever had the least amount of schooling.

Table 1: Personal background variables.

	Mean	Standard deviation	Range
Age	43.20	7.78	28–61
Age of arrival	20.39	5.10	15–42
Length of residence	22.15	7.87	10–35
Education	2.69	1.37	1–4
Number of women	29		
Number of men	16		

contacts with Dutch colleagues and friends. The rest had attended language courses. There was a great deal of variation in the amount of language training they have had, ranging from a couple of months to two years or more. What is common to almost everyone is that they could not attend the courses regularly due to other commitments and that the training was frequently interrupted. While it is certainly relevant to assess the impact of attending language schools, the learners had great difficulty recalling the total amount of course attendance and quantifying the time they spent studying Dutch at language courses. Therefore, this makes it hard to compare the learners who have attended language courses with those who have not.

4.2 Procedure

Our data comprised reaction time measures from a lexical naming and recognition task and elicited free speech (based on Schmid 2011). Sociolinguistic and personal background information was collected through a semi-structured interview.

4.2.1 Sociolinguistic and personal background information

The personal background interview consisted of semi-structured autobiographical interviews conducted in the L1, comprising sixty-seven questions on speakers’ L1 and L2 use patterns, linguistic and cultural preferences and social networks. Among other things the participants were asked to indicate what language they usually speak with their spouses, partners, siblings, (grand) children, parents, relatives, friends and acquaintances and quantify the amount

of use of each language in various contexts (i.e., family, social settings and workplace). They were also asked how important it was for them that their children learnt and maintained their L1, how often they corrected their children's Turkish and whether they sent them to Saturday schools¹⁰ to learn Turkish, how they would feel if their children could not speak Turkish and whether they would regret it if their own Turkish deteriorated. A further set of questions related to their cultural orientations and attitudes toward their home and host countries. For instance, they were asked with which culture and language they felt more at home and comfortable, which language they preferred to speak, whether they felt themselves to be more Turkish or more Dutch, whether they had more Turkish or Dutch friends, whether they regretted coming to the Netherlands and whether they felt homesick and would like to go back to their hometowns if it was possible. For all of these questions, participants were asked to choose a value from a 5-point scale. For instance, for the amount of L1 and L2 use, they were asked to choose among: 0 = never L1 and all the time L2; 0.25 = seldom L1 and mainly L2; 0.50 = half the time L1 and half the time L2; 0.75 = mainly L1 and seldom L2; 1 = only L1 and never L2.

In order to reduce the large number of background variables elicited by the sociolinguistic questionnaire, we created two compound variables consisting of a number of factors that were then averaged for each migrant (following the procedure suggested by Schmid and Dusseldorp 2010). The first pertained to interactive L1 use in all situations. This comprised predictors relating (where applicable) to the use of the L1 (now and previously) with the partner (4 items), with children (4 items), with friends (3 items), with parents and siblings (4 items) and during visits to Turkey (1 item). A reliability analysis established the internal consistency of this scale with a Cronbach Alpha of 0.890. The second variable pertained to cultural affiliation and comprised 4 items relating to the preferred language and culture as well as the importance of maintaining the L1 and passing it on to the next generation. Reliability for this scale was somewhat lower than for the L1 use variable, but still strong at 0.637. Other predictors included in the present study were the frequency of L2 use for professional purposes, age at emigration, length of residence and education. Table 2 shows the distribution of these predictors across our population. To illustrate the interpretation of the table, the participants tend to use L1 79% of their time and L2 21% of their time in their overall social interactions. They tend to value and identify more (70%) with their own culture compared to host society culture (30%).

10 These are also called community or supplementary schools that provide immigrant children with classes to learn their mother-tongue language and about their home country's culture and history.

Table 2: Predictor variables.

	Mean	Standard deviation	Range
Interactive L1 use	0.79	0.14	0.37–0.99
L1 use for professional purposes	0.20	0.27	0.25–1.00
L2 use for professional purposes	0.75	0.29	0.00–1.00
Cultural affiliation	0.70	0.14	0.31–0.88

4.2.2 Lexical naming task

The naming task assessed participants’ speed and accuracy in accessing lexical representations (Glaser 1992; Levelt 2001). Participants were presented with a set of experimental stimuli of 78 pictures of high, medium and low frequency selected from the standardized set originally developed by Snodgrass and Vanderwart (1980). The frequency ratings were based on the familiarity index in Snodgrass and Vanderwart. All items were checked for cultural appropriateness, and culture specific items were excluded (e.g., baseball bat). No cognate items across Turkish and Dutch were included. No semantically or phonologically related items followed one another (i.e., “cow” was not followed by “goat” and *glas* “glass” was not followed by *jas* “coat”). The stimuli were presented in four pseudorandomized orders, which were counterbalanced among the participants. An HP laptop computer with E-Prime software and a serial response box with voice key controlled the presentation of the stimuli and the collection of response times.

The participants’ responses were measured in milliseconds (ms), and the participants had a maximum of 3,000 ms to respond. The moment from the onset of the stimulus till the onset of the word was registered as the “reaction time”. The experimenter (a native speaker of Dutch) noted the responses on a sheet during the experiment (which was recorded to allow later checking). Following Bates et al. (2003), a response was coded as valid if it was the target name and had a valid reaction time. In both analyses, reaction times shorter than 250 ms and those which deviated more than two standard deviations from the mean were excluded. All other responses were categorized as invalid, including incorrect responses or correct responses with invalid reaction times (i.e., due to false starts, hesitations and coughs), responses which were not loud enough to trigger the voice key as well as correct responses which were not within 3,000 ms and trials where there was no response at all.

4.2.3 Lexical recognition task

The recognition task assessed lexical development at the receptive level. This required the recognition of another set of 78 pictures of high, medium and low frequency again from the same list. The pictures were presented simultaneously with a recording of a word and the participants had to decide whether the picture they saw on the screen and the word they heard matched by pressing a yes/no button on the response box as quickly as possible.¹¹ Similar to the naming task, the participants' responses were measured in ms, and the participants had a maximum of 3,000 ms to respond.

The usual interpretation of the reaction time is that slow responses (high ms) reflect difficulty of the task and rapid responses (low ms) indicate simplicity of the task for the participants.

4.2.4 Free speech

Free speech in Dutch was elicited by means of a conversation of 20–30 min around topics of daily life, trips to the home country and experiences as migrants. The interviewer (a native speaker of Dutch with no knowledge of Turkish) tried to ensure a spontaneous informal conversation by encouraging a natural exchange and helping the participants focus on the topic of the conversation. All interviews were transcribed according to CHAT conventions (see MacWhinney 2000). The free speech data were investigated for foreign accent, lexical frequency and overall Dutch proficiency.

Foreign accent: In order to assess the speakers' pronunciation, native raters listened to speech segments lasting approximately 15 s. In order to achieve a wide spread of different kinds and degrees of accentedness, the ratings for this study were collected together with ratings of L2 learners of Dutch from a different L1 background (Moroccan Arabic), of long-term attriters of Dutch in an Anglophone setting (from the study described by Keijzer 2010) and of native Dutch speakers who had lived in the Netherlands all their lives (the latter were drawn from the control group of Keijzer as well as from the control group for the present study). This resulted in a total of 149 speakers (45 L2 speakers of Dutch

¹¹ Participants pressed a green (yes) button if they agreed, and a red (no) button if they disagreed. In order to avoid a potential impact of right- or left-handedness, right-handed individuals had the “yes” button on the right and the “no” button on the left of the response box. For left-handed individuals, the “yes” button was placed on the left and the “no” button on the right.

with Turkish L1, 14 Dutch speakers with Moroccan Arabic L1, 43 Dutch attriters, 47 Dutch controls). The ratings were collected in eight individual sessions, in each of which 24 speakers had to be rated by between 19 and 54 native Dutch raters (all of them students of English at the University of Groningen, the different sizes of the rater populations are due to the fact that the experiment was conducted in different seminar groups).

The raters did not receive any information about the purpose of the study or the background of the participants. For each speech sample they first judged if the speaker could be classified as a native speaker or not and then indicated how confident they were in their judgment on a 3-point scale (certain, semi-certain, uncertain), following the procedure suggested by de Leeuw et al. (2010). This resulted in a six-point Likert scale where 1 represents the judgment “certain of a native speaker status” and 6 means “certain of a non-native status”.

Three Dutch native speakers and one speaker from each of the bilingual populations were included in each individual rating session in order to establish reliability across the rater populations. This proved to be the case: the average ratings for the six speakers in the eight sessions achieved a Cronbach α of 0.996, indicating that the ratings were highly reliable across rater populations.

Overall proficiency: A holistic score was established for each speaker by three native Dutch raters. They judged the recordings on five subscales: fluency, pronunciation, intonation, syntax and lexicon separately for each speaker. They rated each subscale on a 5-point scale from very basic to native-like. All subscale ratings per individual were added up producing a total combined score potentially ranging from 5 (very poor on all subscales) to 35 (native-like across all subscales). Interrater reliability for this combined score was $\alpha = 0.940$. The total scores were then averaged across the three raters to produce an average total rating per individual.

Lexical frequency: A general assumption about lexical diversity is that easy words occur more often while difficult words occur relatively less often and that the use of difficult words signals high lexical proficiency (Read 2000). In our analysis, we focused only on nouns, lexical verbs, and adjectives since highly frequent items such as function words can easily distort the picture of lexical diversity. A complete list of these content words as they occurred in the corpus of interviews collected from both the Dutch native controls and the Turkish L2 speakers was created within Computerized Language Analysis (CLAN) (MacWhinney 2000). Lemmatization of the list, as achieved with the MOR routine offered in CLAN for Dutch, was checked manually by a native speaker of Dutch. The list was also checked for inconsistencies in spelling to prevent an artificial increase in word types. For every word that each speaker used, it was assessed how often this word had occurred in the entire corpus, which allowed

us to calculate the average frequency of all of the lexical items which each speaker had used. In addition, we assessed the proportion of unique lexical items in the repertoire of each speaker (that is, the items which only this person had used) on the assumption that these were indicative of a comparatively sophisticated vocabulary (this procedure was suggested by Paul Meara, pc). The semi-structured nature of the interviews allowed the interviewers to keep the interviews consistent, and the conversations developed into different subjects only very occasionally.

5 Results

5.1 Comparison between L2ers and controls

For all of the proficiency measures introduced above, it was first assessed whether there was a difference in overall performance between our L2 population and the age- and education-matched Dutch native controls. See Table 3.

As these results show, the two populations are consistently different on all tasks, with the natives reliably outperforming the L2ers ($p < 0.001$ for all measures). However, it is also evident that there is considerable variability within the L2 population, and that on each task, there are a number of participants who fall within the native range. We can therefore assume that the population investigated here does indeed cover a wide range of proficiency levels, from individuals who are clearly perceived to be non-native and have rather low levels of lexical diversity and are comparatively slow and inaccurate on the naming task up to and including highly advanced speakers whose proficiency levels at the very least approach near-native levels. This variability makes our population suitable for the subsequent investigations of the impact of external factors on proficiency levels.

5.2 Correlations with external variables

As a next step, we wanted to establish which external factors would assist or hold back linguistic features such as lexical access (as measured by reaction times and accuracy on the naming and recognition task), perceived foreign accent, holistic proficiency and lexical sophistication in free speech. In order to gain a first global picture, we therefore correlated these scores with the predictor variables summarized in Tables 1 and 2. The results from these correlations are presented below.

Table 3: Comparison of Dutch proficiency between our participants and the Dutch native controls (independent T-Tests).

	Turkish-Dutch bilinguals				Dutch controls		
	Mean	Standard deviation	Range	Mean	Standard deviation	Range	t (82)
Picture naming task	1,292	146	1,000–1,600	895	121	620–1,198	14.387
	37.9	14.1	10.3–75.6	4.1	4.2	0.0–19.2	8.408
Picture-word matching task	1,160	237	722–1,873	816	91.5	667–993	5.677
	8.6	7.5	0.0–32.1	1.7	1.7	0.0–6.4	18.177
Free speech	5.4	1.1	1.7–6.0	1.4	0.6	1.0–3.7	18.177
	245	28.9	174–302	215	19.2	171–260	–10.988
	3.2	1.6	1.1–8.3	7.2	1.7	3.8–10.7	13.505
	14.9	4.4	8.7–27.7				

5.2.1 Correlations between extra-linguistic factors and naming and recognition tasks

The first set of correlation analyses investigates the connections between socio-linguistic predictors and the ability to recall and recognize words in the L2 in response to a visual and auditory cue (see Table 4 for details). The analyses revealed that the amount of interactive L1 use is associated with the ability of automatic word recall, recognition and the proportion of accurately recognized items in the L2. Professional use of the L2 at the workplace is related to average reaction time on the naming test. Age of arrival (AoA) was associated with both reaction time and accuracy on the recognition test. On the naming test, it only correlated with accuracy, though. Level of education was found to correlate negatively with average reaction time and proportion of inaccurate responses. If we take a global look at all these analyses, we see that the correlation coefficients are weak to moderate (0.31–0.43), signaling that these effects, while

Table 4: Correlations between extra-linguistic factors and naming/recognition tasks.

		Interactive L1 use	Work L1	Work L2	Preferred culture	AoA	LoR	Education
Picture naming task								
Reaction time	Pearson Cor.	0.315*	0.142	−0.362*	0.132	0.198	−0.115	−0.214
	significant (2-tailed)	0.035	0.394	0.024	0.386	0.192	0.452	0.157
	N	45	45	39	45	45	45	45
Accuracy	Pearson Cor.	0.289	0.189	−0.209	0.235	0.425*	−0.141	−0.116
	significant (2-tailed)	0.055	0.257	0.202	0.120	0.004	0.354	0.450
	N	45	38	39	45	45	45	45
Picture matching task								
Reaction time	Pearson correlation	0.412**	0.001	−0.187	0.290	0.432**	−0.152	−0.324*
	significant (2-tailed)	0.005	0.997	0.253	0.054	0.003	0.320	0.300
	N	45	38	39	45	45	45	45
Accuracy	Pearson correlation	0.409**	0.003	−0.184	0.288	0.432**	−0.154	−0.319*
	significant (2-tailed)	0.005	0.987	0.262	0.055	0.033	0.314	0.033
	N	45	38	39	45	45	45	45

*Shaded light grey: correlation is significant at $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed); **Shaded dark grey: correlation is significant at $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

consistent, are not very strong. Amount of L1 use at work, preferred culture and length of residence (LoR) in the Netherlands turned out to be unrelated to both productive and receptive vocabulary knowledge.

5.2.2 Correlations between extra-linguistic factors and perceived L2 proficiency in free speech

The second set of analyses is concerned with the relations between socio-linguistic variables and the overall performance of the participants in spontaneous speech, as measured by global foreign accent ratings, holistic proficiency ratings and measures of lexical diversity. There was a significant correlation between interactive L1 use and foreign accent, average frequency and overall Dutch proficiency. Professional L2 use correlated with knowledge of advanced lexical items and global mastery of L2 skills. Cultural preference was associated with overall competence in Dutch. Duration of stay was related to the complexity of the vocabulary. Level of education was associated with accent, advanced lexicon and general L2 competence (see Table 5 for a summary). Again, however, the correlation coefficients are in the same range as was found above (consistently below 0.5), indicating a weak to moderate effect.

Overall, our findings so far indicate significant moderate correlations between L2 Dutch proficiency of the Turkish migrant group on the one hand and their L1¹² and L2 use patterns, education and age of exposure on the other. However, cultural and attitudinal orientations do not seem to play a key role in L2 development.

5.3 Discriminant Analysis (DA)

The correlation analyses reported above give a somewhat scattered and inconsistent picture of the impact of external factors on success in L2 acquisition for our population, and for those relationships that we did detect the effect sizes are weak to moderate. It should be acknowledged, however, that correlation analyses are an extremely limited tool in the context of an investigation that has to consider such a large set of both predictor and outcome variables. While they do allow the exploration of the bivariate relationship of interval variables, they are not able to detect any

¹² Turkish is hardly ever used in professional domains in the Netherlands. The only contexts the participants spoke Turkish were interactions with other Turkish colleagues who worked at the same company.

Table 5: Correlations between extra-linguistic factors and perceived L2 proficiency.

		Interactive L1 use		Work L1	Work L2	Preferred culture	AoA	LoR	Education
Foreign accent	Pearson correlation significant (2-tailed) N	0.379*		0.036	-0.278	0.275	0.088	-0.092	-0.324*
		0.011		0.830	0.092	0.071	0.568	0.552	0.033
Average Frequency	Pearson correlation significant (2-tailed) N	0.302*		0.232	-0.317*	0.100	0.096	-0.294*	-0.295*
		0.044		0.162	0.050	0.515	0.531	0.050	0.049
Overall Dutch Proficiency	Pearson correlation significant (2-tailed) N	-0.476**		-0.015	0.363*	-0.379*	-0.248	0.080	0.318*
		0.001		0.928	0.023	0.010	0.101	0.602	0.033
		45		38	39	45	45	45	45

*Shaded light grey: correlation is significant at $p < 0.05$ (2-tailed); **Shaded dark grey: correlation is significant at $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

interactions or combined effects that might be present in the data beyond the one that they test specifically. Furthermore, in order to limit alpha inflation, it was necessary here to combine a complex set of predictors into a very limited number of averaged factors, which again may not do justice to the data at hand.

In order to be able to evaluate the interplay of the predictors and their impact on overall proficiency more thoroughly, we therefore conducted a Discriminant Analysis (DA). As explained by Huberty and Olejnik (2006: Ch.1), this statistical method evolved out of efforts to translate multivariate intergroup distance to “a linear composite of variables derived for the purpose of two-group classification” (2006: 4) and was later extended to multiple groups. It was initially mainly used in the biological and medical sciences, but soon spread to other areas of scientific investigation. DA acknowledges the fact that scientific research typically deals with multivariate data sets which have to be analyzed and treated simultaneously. Predictive DA is applicable in cases where a set of outcome variables take the role of predictors and there is one single grouping variable (Huberty and Olejnik 2006: 5). The DA calculates linear combinations of predictors for each of the groups in order to arrive at the best model assigning each individual case that is entered into the model to the correct category.

In order to be able to divide our sample into a limited number of proficiency groups, a holistic proficiency measure was first calculated, based on the eight outcome variables described above. All eight variables were first standardized so that the participant(s) in the Turkish group who had attained the best score of the cohort (fastest RT, lowest percentage of inaccurate responses, lowest FAR, highest holistic proficiency rating, lowest average word frequency and highest proportion of unique lexical items) received the value 1 and the one(s) with the lowest score received a 0. Subsequently, these standardized variables were averaged together to create a combined holistic proficiency score for each speaker. This new index had a mean of 0.48 (standard deviation 0.16) and was normally distributed across the population. This new proficiency index was then used to divide the entire sample into three equal groups, representing 15 speakers with relatively low, intermediate, and high proficiency, respectively. An overview of the distribution of the proficiency scores across these groups is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Scores on the global proficiency index by proficiency group.

Proficiency group	Mean	Standard deviation	Range
Low (n = 15)	0.31	0.06	0.18–0.40
Intermediate (n = 15)	0.46	0.04	0.40–0.54
High (n = 15)	0.65	0.09	0.55–0.88

With these newly created proficiency levels as our grouping variable, we conducted the DA. We used the following personal background, language use and attitudinal variables, collected by the sociolinguistic questionnaire, as dependent variables.

Personal background variables:

- length of residence (years)
- age at emigration (years)
- educational level (see above)

Language use variables (all of these were collected on a five-point Likert scale, where 1 = (almost) exclusive use of Turkish and 0 = (almost) exclusive use of Dutch):

- use of L1 within the family (average of eight questions)
- use of L1 with friends (average of three questions)
- use of L1 with parents and siblings (average of five questions)
- use of L1 in clubs or churches (average of three questions)
- use of L2 for professional purposes (one question)

Attitudinal variables:

- affiliation with L1 (average of four questions pertaining to the importance of maintaining Turkish and passing it to the next generation)
- preferred culture (one question)
- preferred language (one question)
- enjoyment of learning foreign languages (one question)

After entering all of these predictors into the model, we followed the procedure described by Schmid and Jarvis (2014), setting the DA method to stepwise (only one variable is selected at a time in accordance with the contribution it makes to the strength of the model) and using the default Wilks' Lambda F values of 3.84 for entry and 2.71 for removal, so that only variables that make a significant contribution to the strength of the model would be selected, and that they would subsequently be removed if they no longer made such a contribution. The results were cross-validated.

The findings from the DA showed that the combined predictive power of the model described above is rather low: only 53.7% of all participants were assigned to the correct proficiency level. In particular the intermediate level was apparently difficult to assess, as no speaker was predicted to fall into this category. Thirty-two speakers were predicted to fall into the lowest proficiency level and thirteen into the highest, but a comparison of these two new populations revealed a substantial overlap between these groups on the proficiency index on which the original

Table 7: Cross-validated categorization from discriminant analysis.

		Low	Predicted group	High
			Intermediate	
Original group	Low	14	0	1
	Intermediate	13	0	2
	High	5	0	10

classification was based: the participants assigned to the lower group had a mean proficiency index of 0.42, with a range of 0.18–0.67, and the “high proficiency” group ranged from 0.35 to 0.88, with a mean of 0.61. The results from the cross-validated categorization are presented in Table 7.

What was even more startling, however, was that of all the predictors entered into the model, the only one that was chosen was the question that pertained to the preferred language of the speaker. All other variables regarding personal background, language use or attitudes and affiliation were excluded from the model, as they did not contribute significantly to the results.

6 Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to determine the factors influencing the first generation Turkish immigrants’ overall proficiency in L2 Dutch. The findings appear to suggest an interaction of factors determining the level of success that a speaker has in this process which may be linked more to individual and personal characteristics and less to the factors that are usually invoked by governments and politicians, such as (un)willingness to integrate.

Recall that the first set of analyses reported above, consisting of correlation analyses linking individual predictor and outcome variables, suggested that work-related L2 interactions and professional L2 use seem to be related with enhanced overall proficiency, more sophisticated lexical knowledge and faster recall of words. L1 use with friends and family was negatively correlated with L2 performance in all domains measured (i.e., automatic word recall/recognition, accuracy in responses, accent, sophistication of vocabulary, overall competence). Among the demographic variables, age of arrival in the Netherlands and level of education emerged as influential predictors. However, in the second set of analyses, it turned out that only half the speakers were correctly predicted to fall into the appropriate proficiency band, and that the only significant factor in this context was the language that they preferred using, while none of the

other variables contributed to the variation in learning outcomes. It is possible that significance of the correlations that appear in the first set of analyses subsides in this one due to the uniqueness of the individual circumstances and the interconnectedness of the external variables.

Below, we will attempt to explain how person specific circumstances and interactions between the variables lead to unpredicted outcomes with examples. One concerns a speaker in the lower proficiency group. He was nineteen years old at arrival and is a high school graduate. However, age and education advantage does not seem to have reflected on his L2 proficiency because he is one of the least successful speakers. He started working immediately upon arrival and did not have a chance to attend language courses. Though he has been working since then, his initial inadequate language skills persisted to a large extent and confined him to work positions that did not require high levels of Dutch knowledge. There are some other individuals like him in this group, whose L2 did not seem to have developed in a way one would expect from young and educated arrivals. On the other hand, some individuals who only completed primary education turned out to be among the best learners. For instance, two of such participants are currently housewives who have not worked except temporary employments. One of them migrated to the Netherlands upon marrying and attended language courses, though on and off. Her main motivation was to help her children's homework. The other successful speaker had a brief work experience (less than 2 years) in her late teens and she reported that period as a turning point for her language development. From then onwards, since she enjoyed interacting with people, she gradually became more proficient over the years. Further examples come from the middle proficiency group. Two high school graduates had the poorest performance while two speakers with primary school education outperformed all the rest of the individuals in their category. What is more, our interviews revealed that they spoke Dutch at their workplaces equally frequently; but apparently this did not contribute to their language development in similar ways.¹³ One of the two low-achievers is the oldest among four siblings in her family. Upon coming to the Netherlands to live with their father, she might have assumed the role of a caregiver/housekeeper at home because their mother could join them many years later. Even though she completed high school in the Netherlands, which must have provided a good language foundation for her,

13 It is possible that the type of working environment and profession makes a difference. A construction worker with colleagues who speak a mixture of Groningse and standard Dutch or a garage owner whose customers are mostly non-native speakers of Dutch are not likely to benefit from L2 interactions at work.

she probably could not maintain or build upon it because of the circumstances she was in. One of the high-achievers in this group is another marriage migrant who is a primary school graduate. She stated that she had been lucky to have a buddy, a native Dutch speaking person who volunteered to teach her Dutch and became friends with her.

Therefore, it is no wonder that the picture emerged from the DA with respect to the impact of external variables is quite different from that of correlational analyses. The fact that the DA controls for the combined effects of variables by excluding the weak predictors throws some doubt on the correlational results. Among all demographic, linguistic and attitudinal factors (including the ones which were significant according to the Pearson correlations: language use, education and age), only preferred language emerged as a strong predictor. Arguably, this factor is more a covert measure of proficiency than of any personal or background characteristics, as “preferred language” will usually refer to the language people find easy to speak. For participants who are not very competent in Dutch, it is easier to speak Turkish, while better or advanced speakers probably feel equally comfortable with both languages.

What is even more striking is the fact that neither analysis detected a significant association between attitudinal factors and L2 proficiency, contrary to the widespread opinion held by the Dutch government and society. Our findings suggest that whether the members of the Turkish community feel closer to the Turkish or the Dutch language and whether or not they would like to endorse the values of the Dutch society do not influence their proficiency in Dutch. Recall that L1 use was found to be negatively correlated with Dutch proficiency. This might be interpreted as validating policies imposing Dutch language use on immigrants in all domains, and to imply that banning the mother tongue language in public domains including schools (as has sometimes been called for by some of the more radical politicians) may indeed promote Dutch proficiency. Such an interpretation however, ignores the social reality of Turkish migrants. In the family context, where both partners are of usually Turkish origin, it is quite normal to speak their mother tongue with partners and children. Outside the home, native Dutch people, be it friends, colleagues or neighbors, comprise a relatively small proportion of their contacts and their close friends usually come from the same background. Therefore, interactions outside the family are mostly in Turkish, too. The use of Turkish thus seems like a natural reflection of their life style rather than a deliberate intention to avoid opportunities of daily interactions in Dutch or with the Dutch natives or resistance to integrate into Dutch society because of nationalistic pride (as was, for example, implied by Paul Lieben in his blog on the website of the Dutch news journal *Elsevier* on 25 February 2013; Lieben 2013).

It is also uncertain to what extent the use of Dutch with other native Turkish speakers, such as in the home and in social encounters with friends of Turkish origin, would indeed help to improve their proficiency. First, such daily interactions do not usually call for an advanced level of language. Second, massive exposure to “non-native input” may even reinforce language errors (see Ellis 2005; Muñoz and Singleton 2007; Ross and Newport 1996). Therefore, whether policies that encourage or enforce more (or primary) use of Dutch in the primary network would help to improve their Dutch proficiency is rather questionable.

In sum, while more L2 use, younger age at arrival and more schooling seem to be advantageous for becoming a competent L2 speaker relative to other factors, it is apparent that there is a lot going on in people’s lives in addition to and/or related to these. Besides, there is no evidence for a strong link between (lack of) L2 development and resistance to or integration into the Dutch society. The only factor whose association with language proficiency has been clearly established is the preferred language – which, as was pointed out above, is probably more a covert proficiency measure than an indication of language habits.

7 Conclusion

Stereotypical images of Turkish labor migrants of the 1960s and 1970s with limited command of Dutch language have persisted into the present time among the public and even a number of researchers. However, when we interviewed the first generation speakers about their own conceptions of language learning, life experiences and relations with the host society, it turned out that they resemble many other migrant groups across the globe (see Berry and Sam 1997; Esser 2008; Shohamy 2006). On the whole, they have functional fluency in the host country language and the number of high achievers is relatively small. Regarding their socio-cultural orientation, they in general conform to a bicultural identification pattern. They adopt some aspects of the host country culture to various degrees but not at the cost of losing their own. Some of the participants seemed to hesitate between the two cultures. They were not sure whether or not they fit into the contemporary Turkish culture after having lived abroad for so long. They were also not certain if they belonged to the Dutch society because of growing unfavorable sentiments towards foreigners. What seem to affect them more are restrictive policies about residency rights, naturalization, family reunification and dual nationality (see Strik et al. 2013; Ersanilli and Koopmans 2010).

Our observations revealed that on the whole, first generation immigrants are able to fully function in social and professional domains. Even though they make grammatical mistakes or have a non-native accent, they hardly ever have

communication problems. Because they lack economic, social or personal incentives, they make little efforts at improving their language skills (see Dustmann 1994; van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2005). It appears that successful linguistic integration is a two way process: while immigrants need to improve their language skills to communicate, members of the host society need to be proactive in welcoming them. Unfortunately, immigrants have limited opportunities to talk with people outside their own communities (van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2009). To ensure greater levels of language development, policies should target the whole of society with a focus on inclusive linguistic integration and involve several partners such as employers, local residents, governmental and non-governmental organizations, mainstream institutions and other community organizations.

Since the 1990s, the Dutch government, local authorities, and voluntary organizations have indeed launched a number of initiatives to combat social exclusion of disadvantaged groups and prejudiced attitudes among the society (van Hal et al. 2002). One of them is the Language Internship Instrument for Integration project by the Verwey-Jonker Institute, established in 2002, aimed at providing language support to immigrants and encouraging their social participation. In addition to these, the nationwide language courses have assumed more responsibility in encouraging the involvement of the rest of the Dutch society by linking the courses to real life (i.e., practice work periods in companies and volunteer organizations).¹⁴ There are some positive trends in the realm of daily interethnic contacts at the individual level, too. For instance, increasing numbers of Turks have started to move into multiethnic neighborhoods. They are willing to have closer relations with their Dutch neighbors and do not consider language an obstacle for the development of social relations. While many native people have reservations because of cultural and religious differences and are concerned about the language problem, some others are positively inclined and prepared to make friends with Turks (Hagendoorn and Sniderman 2001; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Smets and Kreuk 2008). It turns out that low levels of interaction between the members of the two communities are mostly due to lack of effort rather than a deliberate strategy to stay apart (Smets and Kreuk 2008). Yet, it is important to mention that several Dutch studies (using different instruments for assessing attitudes toward multiculturalism) have shown that Dutch majority members in general did not support the idea that they should get more involved with immigrants (in particular non-European) and instead they believed that immigrants

14 It was not easy to find academic articles or government publications about the subsequent decisions taken by the government and the apparent scarcity of such publications is hard to explain, given that the phenomenon is so prominent in the public debate.

should adapt as much as possible (Breugelmans and Van de Vijver 2004; Koopmans 2010; Schalk-Soekar and van de Vijver 2008).

The beliefs widely held by the Dutch society about the immigrants in general and the language behavior of the adult migrants in particular is one of the major complications in the process of linguistic integration. Despite lack of empirical basis, using the mother tongue is considered a sign of non-integration and an obstacle to the learning of the Dutch language (Ellis 2000). Migrant languages in the Netherlands (and elsewhere in Europe) are often belittled as “non-territorial” or “non-indigenous” and excluded from educational policies with a two-fold aim: to increase proficiency levels of the parents and to focus children’s attention on L2 only (so that the mother tongue will not interfere with their L2 acquisition). One of the implications of the present study relates to the widespread belief that the rate with which immigrants integrate is closely related to their level of proficiency in the L2 and the use of L1. In the present study, how much the participants identify with their host community and culture and how often they spoke in their L1 were clearly not among the key indicators of their L2 success.

For formulating successful policies of multilingualism and integration, social dynamics of migrant communities must be taken into account and a lot more research is necessary to provide better foundations for designing policies that would facilitate migrants’ L2 development and prevent their social and economic exclusion. This study may be a good reference point for anyone who would like to see a critical analysis of the sociopolitical context in the Netherlands and a portrayal of the first generation Turkish migrants’ language development and life. We hope that the present study will once again draw attention to the importance of migrant community members’ mother tongue as a means of communication, and encourage a reconsideration of perceptions about native languages as obstacles to L2 learning and a sign of disloyalty to the host country.

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