

Dynamics in intention to stay and changes in language proficiency of recent migrants in the Netherlands

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on consequences of changes in intention to stay for Dutch language proficiency of recent migrants. It is anticipated that migrants who decide at a later instance to stay longer in the Netherlands have made less language investments and therefore have a lower proficiency than migrants who decided to stay longer or permanently at an earlier stage. Hypotheses are tested using Dutch panel data from the data set ‘Causes and Consequences of Social and Cultural Integration Processes among recent migrants.’ In this survey, migrants have been interviewed twice in the first years after migration to the Netherlands. Results provide that migrants who maintain a temporary intention and migrants who intend to circulate between country of origin and The Netherlands experience the smallest improvement and have the worst command of Dutch at the second wave. Changing a temporary intention to stay into a circular one improves the command of the Dutch language the most, whilst changing a temporary intention into a permanent one also strongly increases second language proficiency. Migrants changing a temporary intention into a permanent one do not differ in their language proficiency at wave 2 and experienced change herein from migrants maintaining a longer or permanent perspective.

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Background

This study investigates to what extent a change in intention to stay of recent migrants influences the Dutch language proficiency of recent migrants. Previous studies state that many migrants lack a good command of the language of the host country (Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2009). Second language proficiency can be seen as essential in migrants’ incorporation in the host society, as previous research shows the positive relationship with economic incorporation as well as interethnic contacts (Shields and Price 2002; Van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2009). Due to the importance of second language proficiency, policy often interferes with migrants’ command of the language. Dagevos recently argued the need for the Dutch state to invest in language courses, suggesting to ask municipalities for help (2015).

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Migrant groups vary in their return rates, some migrants settled in the Netherlands and some only stayed in the Netherlands for a relatively short while. Of the migrants that arrived in the sixties and seventies, a much larger proportion of Turkish and Moroccan immigrants stayed in the Netherlands than of Yugoslav, Italian and Spanish migrants (Schoorl 2011). At least 60% of the second group returned to their country of origin, and for Spanish migrants the percentage was even higher at 75%. This was in accordance with their intentions at arrival. Although most economic migrants intended to stay in the Netherlands temporarily, many of the Turkish and Moroccan did not return. Only 40% of the Turkish and 30% of the Moroccans returned to their country of origin. For economic and social reasons these migrants chose to reunify with their families and settle in the Netherlands. Turkish and Moroccan migrants set out to stay temporarily, but in the end most of them decided on a permanent stay in the Netherlands (Schoorl 2011).

Whereas much of the classic theoretical and empirical literature supposes migration to be a permanent act, more recent research shows that most migrations are temporary (Bijwaard 2010; Dustmann and Weiss 2007). These findings stress the distinction between permanent and temporary migration for understanding many facets of migrants' behaviour (Bijwaard 2010; Dustmann and Weiss 2007). Alberts and Hazen (2005) state that most studies continue to focus on immigrants, people who migrate with the intention to stay in the host country, and disregard migrants who change their minds after migration. The current study will contribute to this research field by answering the question to what extent a change in intention to stay affects Dutch language proficiency and changes herein.

Proficiency in the majority language is considered to be the most important alterable factor which contributes to both migrants' social and structural integration (Anniste and Tammaru 2014; Carliner 2000; Dustmann and Van Soest 2002; Raijman, Semyonov, and Geffen 2015). The integration of Turkish and Moroccans, whose intention to stay changed, into the Netherlands has often been evaluated as unsuccessful. Dagevos and Gijsberts (2007) conclude that cultural and social differences between the Turkish and Moroccan migrants and the Netherlands' indigenous population have hardly been bridged.

Previous research frequently studied the determinants of migrants' second language proficiency (Van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2009). The 'Standard Empirical Model' offers three general mechanisms which affect the second language proficiency of migrants: exposure, economic incentives and efficiency. Within this model, the settlement intention is related to economic gains that depend on investments regarding the second language proficiency. Intention to stay indeed appears to predict success of second language proficiency as well as other aspects of integration. Its dynamic interrelation is, however, less often examined (Van Tubergen 2010). Indeed, Anniste and Tammaru (2014) argue that the integration of a migrant evolves alongside the decision to stay permanently or return. Studies on intention to stay from a dynamic perspective are rare, particularly ones examining the effect of a change in intention to stay on language proficiency in the host country.

Since most research on language proficiency has used a static approach by only studying it in a single point in time (Chiswick and Miller 1995; Van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2005), this study addresses this limitation by questioning whether recent migrants from Poland, Bulgaria, Morocco and Turkey in the Netherlands experience a change of

intention to stay over time, and whether a change in intention to stay is associated with (a change in the) Dutch language proficiency. The research question is therefore as follows: *To what extent does a change in intention to stay in recent migrants influence the command of the Dutch language and changes herein?*

The research question will be answered using the data set called ‘Causes and Consequences of Early Social and Cultural Integration Processes among recent immigrants to Europe’ (SCIP). In this survey recent migrants from Poland, Bulgaria, Morocco and Turkey have been asked questions concerning their migration experiences.

Theoretical framework

Previous studies have found that migration intentions are dynamic. A study by Adda, Dustmann, and Mestres (2010) focuses on a change in (observed) intention to stay in Germany. It shows that migrants revise their plans during their migration history. Reasons for these changes are habituation and unexpected changes in income. Results of Waldorf (1995) suggest that satisfaction with a job and residence substantially lower the return intention chances. Changes in migration policy also appear to affect changes in intentions to stay. The research of Alberts and Hazen (2005) studied foreign students in the USA, who all had an intention to return. In some cases, the temporary intention changed into a permanent one due to professional, societal or personal factors. Amongst the recent migrants in the Netherlands we also anticipate variance in changes in intention to stay over time.

But where previous research focused on explaining changes in intention to stay, we intend to test what consequences these changes in intention to stay could have. As proposed by the Standard Empirical Model, a settlement intention affects one’s language proficiency (Van Tubergen 2010). In this model, second language proficiency is theorised to be determined by economic incentives, supposedly dependent on the intention to stay. Whilst learning a language is costly, it is also a form of human capital with positive economic effects. The economic assets of investing in learning a language are higher in case a migrant expects to stay permanently in a country of residence, since the migrant is able to profit from these investments for a long period (Van Tubergen 2010; Van Tubergen and Kalmijn 2008). Chiswick and Miller (2001) also argue that migrants will consider costs and benefits of their investments. Research of Dustmann (1999) shows that migrants who plan to remain longer in the host country indeed invest more intensively in their human capital. This expectation is supported by Adda, Dustmann, and Mestres (2006), who state that the incentives to assimilate relate strongly to the expected duration of stay in the host region. The study shows that migrants decide whether to stay in the host country simultaneously with consumption and investment choices. Summarising, it is expected that the initial intention to stay influences the economic gains possible due to language learning and thus the efforts a migrant makes to learn the Dutch language.

The present study will test two hypotheses: first, the effect of the change in intention to stay on the level of language proficiency when migrants are longer in the destination country (measured in wave 2) and second, the association between a change in intention to stay and changes in language proficiency. This way, we test whether changes in intention to stay lead to different levels of Dutch language proficiency at the second wave and also obtain insight in whether migrants experience a change in their second language

proficiency at the same pace. A migrant could have a temporary intention to stay in the beginning, but after a couple of years decide to stay for a longer time after all. Supposedly, the longer it takes for a migrant to decide to stay longer or even permanently, the more the investment in building a future in the country of destination is postponed and may cause a delay compared to migrants maintaining a longer or permanent intention. Migrants who decide to stay longer or permanently to begin with, will probably profit from this: having an intention to stay is assumed to lead to behaviour that fits this intention (Ajzen 1991). These migrants probably invest more in their Dutch language proficiency from the beginning, unlike migrants who decide to stay after having had an initial intention to leave. The first hypothesis therefore states:

Recent migrants who came to the Netherlands with an intention to stay temporary but whose intention has changed into one of staying, have a worse command of the Dutch language than migrants who moved to the Netherlands with an initial intention to stay and who have retained this intention.

The second hypothesis tests the effect of a change in intention to stay on the change in the command of Dutch language. It is expected that migrants who first had a temporary intention to stay, but later decided to stay permanently are more likely to experience a stronger improvement in their language proficiency. This change in intention to stay will lead to more investments in Dutch language proficiency, compared to migrants who maintained a permanent intention. It is expected that migrants who kept their longer or permanent intention will experience a positive change in their language proficiency as well, but this change will be smaller due to earlier investments compared to migrants who changed their temporary intention into a longer or permanent one. We therefore pose in the second hypothesis:

Recent migrants who came to the Netherlands with an intention to stay temporary but whose intention has changed into one of staying, are likely to experience a stronger positive change in the command of the Dutch language than migrants who moved to the Netherlands with an initial intention to stay and who have retained this intention.

Data and operationalisation

The formulated hypotheses will be tested using the dataset ‘Causes and Consequences of Early Social and Cultural Integration Processes among recent immigrants to Europe’ (Diehl et al. 2016). In this survey a wide array of items including migration biography, social networks, religious practices, cultural identities, educational backgrounds and socio economic positions is covered. Recent migrants were sampled from the Municipal Basis Administration in September 2010. The migrants were registered at a maximum of 12 months. They were interviewed between November 2010 and June 2011 (first wave – 2010/2011), and again one and a half year later between May 2012 and February 2013 (second wave – 2012/2013). The migrants available and controlled for within this research are Poles, Turks, Bulgarians and Moroccans. All interviews were conducted in the respective respondent’s first language (Gresser and Schacht 2014).

The panel survey entails 1145 respondents who participated in both waves. This is 44.2% of the original number of respondents participated in wave 1. Supposedly, the dropout is selective, as those who indicated to stay temporary in the first wave may not

be included in the second wave. However, present research aims to study migrants who decide to stay in the Netherlands despite temporary intentions, and the importance of a change in intention to stay on their Dutch language proficiency. As a result, we argue this issue of selectivity is not relevant for this research. Of the remaining 1145 individuals, information is collected through face-to-face interviews in the first wave. In the second wave 1093 respondents (95.5%) have taken an identical questionnaire, being face to face as well. Fifty-two respondents (4.5%) filled in the questionnaire via a telephone interview.

Command of the Dutch language

There are four questions related to the command of Dutch language, asked in both waves: (1) How well would you say you understand the Dutch language when someone is speaking to you? (2) How well would you say you speak the Dutch language? (3) How well would you say you read the Dutch language? (4) How well would you say you write the Dutch language? The possible answers are: (1) Very well, (2) Well, (3) Not well and (4) Not at all.

A Likert scale is constructed from these four variables. Only respondents that have a valid score on at least three out of the four questions are incorporated in this scale. The mean of the scores on the four questions is constructed into the new scale. A scale is created for both wave 1 and wave 2, where both scales have a range from 1 to 4, a score of 4 indicating a good command of the Dutch language. The scale of wave 1 had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94 and the scale of wave 2 a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, indicating that both scales have a good reliability (Nunnally 1978). To measure the change in the command of the Dutch language, the command in wave 1 is subtracted from the command in wave 2. This way, a scale is constructed for the change in command of the Dutch language. A higher score on this scale means the respondent has experienced a stronger positive change regarding the command of the Dutch language. One thousand one hundred and thirty-seven respondents had a valid score on the constructed scale, eight respondents (0.7%) had a missing value. Those respondents have been list wise deleted from the analysis.

Intention to stay

The respondents have been asked to describe their current preference regarding duration of stay in the Netherlands, both in wave 1 and wave 2. There are four answer categories: (1) I expect to stay in the Netherlands to live, (2) I expect to travel between the Netherlands and my country of origin on a regular basis, (3) I live here now, but I expect to return to my country of origin to live there in the future and (4) I live here now, but I expect to live in another country in the future. From these four categories, three categories have been constructed. The migrants who expect to stay in the Netherlands to live are categorised as intending to stay longer or permanently, migrants who stated to expect to travel between the Netherlands and their country of origin are categorised as having a circular intention and migrants who expect to return to either their country of origin or another country are categorised as intending to stay temporarily. These categories have been constructed for both wave 1 and wave 2. To measure the change of intention to

stay, nine categories are distinguished: (1) respondents who had a longer/permanent intention to stay in both waves (43.0%), (2) respondents who had a temporary intention to stay in wave 1 and a longer/permanent intention to stay in wave 2 (12.4%), (3) respondents who had a circular intention to stay in wave 1 and a longer/permanent intention to stay in wave 2 (4.6%), (4) respondents who had a circular intention to stay in both waves (2.1%), (5) respondents who had a temporary intention to stay in wave 1 and a circular intention to stay in wave 2 (3.3%), (6) respondents who had a longer/permanent intention to stay in wave 1 and a circular intention to stay in wave 2 (6.4%), (7) respondents who had a temporary intention to stay in both waves (13.5%), (8) respondents who had a circular intention to stay in wave 1 and a temporary intention to stay in wave 2 (2.8%) and (9) respondents who had a longer/permanent intention to stay in the first wave and a temporary intention to stay in the second wave (12.0%). Respondents who stated they did not know their preference were categorised as having a temporary intention to stay, since they did not admit to intending to stay permanently or to travel between the host and home country. Of the respondents in the analysis on the command of the Dutch language, 1137 had a valid answer to the question about intention to stay, eight respondents (0.7%) had a missing value and were therefore list wise deleted from the analysis.

Control variables

The present study included the following control variables: sex, age, level of education, ethnicity, duration of stay, following an integration course and investments in the Dutch language before immigration. The respondents were asked how many years of education they completed in total. Respondents who stated they had no education were categorised as having zero years of education. To improve the skewed distribution of the variable, respondents who had 24 years of education or more, were merged into the category of 23 years. Thirty-five respondents had a missing value regarding education (3.1 per cent). These respondents got the mean value of education in years of their migrant group.

The recent migrants in this dataset belonged to one of the following ethnic groups: (1) Bulgarian, (2) Moroccan, (3) Polish or (4) Turkish. The four nominal categories were constructed into dummies, of which Polish migrants were the reference category.

The duration of stay in the Netherlands was measured via the number of months a respondent has been living in the Netherlands. When only the year of immigration was known, June is taken as the month of immigration, being the sixth month of the year. The item that measured the duration of stay in wave 1 is used in the analysis. In total, 17 respondents (1.5%) had a missing value on this item. These respondents were list wise deleted from the analysis.

We furthermore included control variables on investments made in the Dutch language. The first item asked 'Did you follow an integration course, are you participating in one at the moment or have you never followed an integration course?'. Migrants who stated they finished or were still participating in an integration course were categorised as having followed an integration course, the other category consisted of migrants who never followed an integration course. Twenty-seven respondents (2.4%) stated they did not know whether they have followed an integration course, and 1 respondent (0.1%) refused the question, who therefore were categorised as not having followed an integration course. We furthermore combined two items into one that included whether migrants

Table 1. Descriptive statistics ($N = 1116$).

	Min.	Max.	Mean	Standard deviation	Mean temporary intention wave 1	Mean circular intention wave 1	Mean permanent intention wave 1
Command of Dutch language wave 2	1	4	2.30	0.59	2.25	2.19	2.34
Change in command of Dutch language	-2	3	0.32	0.74	0.45	0.40	0.25
Education in years	0	23	10.66	4.90	12.19	10.39	9.97
Sex (ref. = men)	0	1	0.52	0.50	0.50	0.49	0.54
Ethnicity							
Bulgarians	0	1	0.14	0.34	0.25	0.17	0.07
Moroccans	0	1	0.12	0.33	0.07	0.04	0.16
Poles	0	1	0.33	0.47	0.45	0.18	0.30
Turks	0	1	0.41	0.49	0.23	0.61	0.47
Age	19	66	31.70	8.63	31.54	29.94	32.05
Duration of stay	0	53	15.61	11.50	16.59	12.59	15.61
Followed an integration course (ref. = no)	0	1	0.30	0.46	0.13	0.42	0.36
Investments in Dutch language proficiency before immigration (ref. = no)	0	1	0.19	0.39	0.14	0.18	0.21

Source: SCIP, 2010–2013.

invested in their Dutch language proficiency before immigration. This item had two categories: migrants who did and migrants who did not. Migrants who either stated they learned Dutch in school/college in the country of origin or did something else to improve their Dutch language skills, or did both, were categorised as having made investments before immigration whilst those who did not were categorised as having made no such investments. Respondents who stated they did not speak the Dutch language at all did not answer these questions.

Table 1 contains descriptive statistics on all variables regarding the analysis on the command of the Dutch language, and also includes the mean of migrants with varying intentions to stay at wave 1.

Results

Intention to stay

Figure 1 shows that in wave 1, 29.2% of the recent migrants had a temporary intention to stay, whilst 61.4% of the migrants had a longer or permanent intention to stay. The remaining 9.4% of the migrants had a circular intention in wave 1. In wave 2, the share of migrants who had a temporary intention to stay slightly decreased to 28.2%. In wave 2, 59.9% of the recent migrants had a longer or permanent intention to stay, and the share of migrants with a circular intention increased to 11.7. These results may suggest that the share of recent migrants who maintain the same intention to stay remain fairly stable over a period of three years. The next paragraph will discuss to what extent changes in the intention to stay appear.

Regarding the change in intention to stay in recent migrants, around 13.5 per cent of the migrants maintained a temporary intention to stay, whereas around 43% of the migrants maintained a longer or permanent intention to stay. Only 2.1% of the migrants remained their circular intention to stay over the two waves. Furthermore, around 41.5%

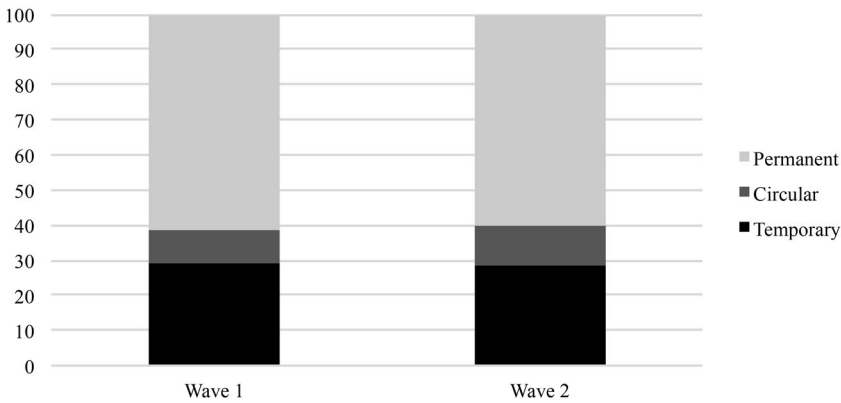


Figure 1. Frequency of intention to stay in recent migrants ($N = 1116$). Source: SCIP, 2010–2013.

of the recent migrants experienced a change in their intention. Of these migrants, the biggest group of 12.4% changed a temporary intention to stay into a longer or permanent intention to stay whilst 12% changed their longer or permanent intention to stay into a temporary one. These results illustrate that amongst migrants who actually stay for a longer time in the Netherlands, there is a considerable level of change in their intention to stay.

Command of the Dutch language

Figure 2 shows the mean score on the scale of command of the Dutch language per category of change in intention to stay on both waves. The figure illustrates that all categories seem to experience an increase in Dutch language proficiency. However, the increase of migrants who maintained a circular intention and migrants who changed their permanent intention into a circular one is not significant in a *t*-test. The remaining positive changes in command of the Dutch language are significant according to bivariate statistics. The figure shows that migrants who maintained their temporary intention to stay, experienced a positive change of 0.31 in their command of the Dutch language. Migrants who

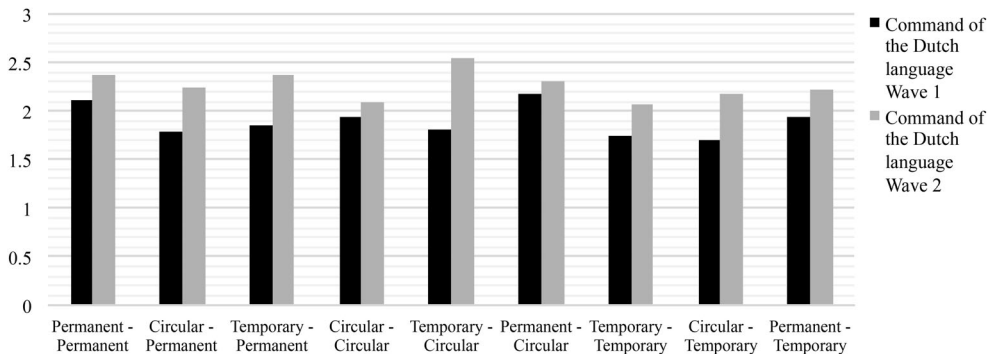


Figure 2. Mean score of the command of Dutch per category of intention to stay ($N = 1116$). Source: SCIP, 2010–2013.

changed their temporary intention to stay into a circular one, experienced the biggest change in their command of the Dutch language. The mean has increased with 0.74. Migrants who changed their temporary intention into a permanent one increased their score of language proficiency with 0.52. Recent migrants who changed their circular intention into either a permanent or temporary intention experienced an increase of, respectively, 0.47 and 0.48. At last, the command of the Dutch language for migrants who maintained their permanent intention to stay increased with 0.26.

To test the hypotheses concerning the command of the Dutch language, ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was used, since the command of the Dutch language and the change herein is a linear variable. The first OLS analysis includes the command of the Dutch language at wave 2 as dependent variable. In this way, we can check whether certain changes in intention led to catching up to the command of the Dutch language compared to other groups. The first model includes the control variables. In the second model we added the intention to stay in wave 1. Change in intention to stay was added in model 3, whilst the intention to stay of wave 1 was removed. The results of this analysis, regarding the command of the Dutch language in wave 2, are shown in Table 2. The first hypothesis stated:

Recent migrants who came to the Netherlands with an intention to stay temporary but whose intention has changed into one of staying, have a worse command of the Dutch language than migrants who moved to the Netherlands with an initial intention to stay and who have retained this intention.

Table 2. Linear regression analysis: command of the Dutch language at wave 2 (*N* = 1116).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.
Intercept	2.217***	0.114	2.150***	0.118	2.275***	0.114
Intention to stay wave 1 (ref. = Temporary)						
Circular			-0.009	0.066		
Permanent			0.108*	0.042		
Change in intention to stay (ref. = Permanent – Permanent)						
Temporary–Permanent					-0.030	0.057
Circular–Permanent					-0.069	0.084
Temporary–Circular					0.195*	0.097
Circular–Circular					-0.255*	0.121
Permanent–Circular					0.038	0.074
Temporary–Temporary					-0.303***	0.057
Circular–Temporary					-0.146	0.105
Permanent–Temporary					-0.087	0.056
Ethnicity (ref. = Poles)						
Bulgarians	0.128*	0.065	0.158*	0.066	0.158*	0.065
Moroccans	0.500***	0.081	0.484***	0.081	0.459***	0.081
Turks	0.065	0.055	0.053	0.055	0.038	0.055
Sex (ref. = men)	0.038	0.035	0.032	0.035	0.033	0.035
Age	-0.007**	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007**	0.002
Education in years	0.010*	0.004	0.012***	0.004	0.014***	0.004
Duration of stay	0.004*	0.002	0.004*	0.002	0.004*	0.002
Followed an integration course (ref. = no)	-0.083	0.046	-0.090*	0.046	-0.086	0.045
Investments in Dutch language proficiency before immigration (ref. = no)	0.145**	0.053	0.148**	0.053	0.133*	0.052
<i>R</i> ²	0.081		0.088		0.117	
Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	0.073		0.079		0.103	

Source: SCIP, 2010–2013, tested both ways.

**p* < .05.

***p* < .01.

****p* < .001.

Recent migrants who came to the Netherlands intending to stay temporarily, but whose intention changed into a permanent one, do not appear to have a significant worse command of the Dutch language at wave 2, than migrants who maintained their permanent intention to stay. Therefore, this hypothesis is rejected.

However, recent migrants who maintained a permanent intention to stay do have a better command of the Dutch language compared to those who have maintained a temporary or circular intention to stay. All categories, except migrants who maintained their circular intention to stay or who changed their circular intention into a temporary one, appear to have a better Dutch language proficiency than migrants who maintained a temporary intention to stay (results not in table). We can also conclude that migrants who changed their temporary intention to stay into a circular one have a better command of the Dutch language compared to migrants in the other categories, except those who changed their permanent intention into a circular one (results not in table). Moreover, migrants who changed their permanent intention into a circular one have a better command than those who maintained their circular intention to stay (results not in table). Results not in the table are provided in [Table A1](#) of the appendix.

Regarding the control variables, we see that age has a negative effect, which means that the older the migrant is, the more likely the migrant is to have a low command of the Dutch language at wave 2. Also, regarding the ethnicity of the recent migrants, Moroccans and Bulgarians have a higher command of the Dutch language compared to Poles. Education in years has a positive effect on the command of the Dutch language. When one has had more years of education, one is more likely to have a higher command of the Dutch language. The duration of stay also has a positive effect, indicating that the longer a migrant is living in the Netherlands, the more likely the migrant is to have a higher command of the Dutch language. At last, migrants who invested in their Dutch language proficiency before immigration appear to have a higher command of the Dutch language than those who did not. Sex and whether or not one followed an integration course does not appear to have significant effects on the command of Dutch language in wave 2.

From [Table 2](#), we cannot conclude whether recent migrants who experienced a change in their intention to stay also experienced a change regarding their command of the Dutch language. Therefore, another linear regression analysis is executed where the dependent variable is the change in command of the Dutch language, whilst controlling for the command of the Dutch language in the first wave. In this way, we can check whether certain changes in intention led to changes in the command of the Dutch language, compared to other groups. The first model includes the control variables and the command of Dutch in wave 1. In the second model we added the intention to stay in wave 1. Change in intention to stay was added in model 3, whilst the intention to stay in wave 1 was removed. The results of this analysis are shown in [Table 3](#).

The second hypothesis stated:

Recent migrants who came to the Netherlands with an intention to stay temporary but whose intention has changed into one of staying, are likely to experience a stronger positive change in the command of the Dutch language than migrants who moved to the Netherlands with an initial intention to stay and who have retained this intention.

Recent migrants who came to the Netherlands intending to stay temporarily, but whose intention changed into a permanent one, do not appear to have experienced a stronger

Table 3. Linear regression analysis: change in the command of the Dutch language (*N* = 1116).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.
Intercept	1.791***	0.109	1.793***	0.112	1.814 ***	0.110
Command of the Dutch language wave 1	-0.679***	0.022	-0.681***	0.023	-0.683***	0.022
Intention to stay wave 1 (ref. = Temporary)						
Circular			-0.031	0.061		
Permanent			0.006	0.039		
Change in intention to stay (ref. = Permanent – Permanent)						
Temporary–Permanent					-0.063	0.053
Circular–Permanent					0.020	0.077
Temporary–Circular					0.309**	0.090
Circular–Circular					-0.188	0.111
Permanent–Circular					0.002	0.068
Temporary–Temporary					-0.188***	0.053
Circular–Temporary					-0.061	0.097
Permanent–Temporary					-0.052	0.052
Ethnicity (ref. = Poles)						
Bulgarians	0.081	0.060	0.084	0.061	0.086	0.060
Moroccans	0.275***	0.076	0.273***	0.076	0.256***	0.076
Turks	-0.079	0.051	-0.077	0.051	-0.087	0.051
Sex (ref. = men)	0.033	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.033	0.032
Age	-0.007**	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002
Education in years	0.002	0.004	0.003	0.004	0.004	0.004
Duration of stay	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.002
Followed an integration course (ref. = no)	0.049	0.043	0.049	0.043	0.051	0.043
Investments in Dutch language proficiency before immigration (ref. = no)	-0.010	0.049	-0.008	0.050	-0.022	0.049
<i>R</i> ²	0.503		0.503		0.520	
Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	0.499		0.498		0.512	

Source: SCIP, 2010–2013, tested both ways.

**p* < .05.

***p* < .01.

****p* < .001.

improvement in their command of the Dutch language than migrants who maintained their permanent intention to stay. The hypothesis is therefore rejected.

We can conclude that migrants who maintained a permanent intention to stay are more likely to experience a positive change in the command of the Dutch language than migrants who maintained a temporary intention to stay. It moreover appears that all categories, except those who maintained a circular intention or those who changed a circular intention into a temporary one, experience a bigger change in their Dutch language proficiency than those who maintained their temporary intention to stay (results not in table). Of all categories, migrants who changed their temporary intention into a circular one experienced the strongest improvement in their Dutch command (results not in table). Furthermore, those who changed their temporary intention into a permanent one experienced a stronger increase in their Dutch language proficiency compared to those who maintained a circular intention to stay. Results not in the table are provided in [Table A2](#) of the appendix. So, whereas bivariate analyses suggested an improvement in language proficiency for almost every possible change in intention to stay, multivariate analyses illustrate differences in this improvement based on the change experienced in the intention to stay.

Regarding the control variables we see that age has a negative effect, which means that the older the migrant is, the less likely the migrant is to experience a positive change in the

command of the Dutch language. Also, Moroccans experience a stronger positive change in their command of the Dutch language compared to Poles. The other control variables do not have significant effects.

Conclusions

We have investigated whether a change in intention to stay leads to a change in the Dutch language proficiency of recent migrants. Migrants who changed their intention to stay from temporarily into longer or permanent did not have a lower proficiency than migrants who already intended to stay in the Netherlands right after migration. Thus, a later decision to stay longer in the host country did not turn out to have a negative effect on learning the language. We furthermore found that those who retained their circular or temporary intention to stay or who changed their circular intention into a temporary one have the worst Dutch language proficiency. These results are in line with theoretical expectations, stating that not having a permanent intention to stay will impact investments regarding language proficiency negatively (Alberts and Hazen 2005; Chiswick and Miller 2001). We can moreover conclude that migrants who either change their temporary or permanent intention into a circular one and migrants who maintain a permanent intention have the highest command of the Dutch language. Apparently, those who change into intending to travel between the Netherlands and their home country experience a stimulus to invest in their Dutch language proficiency. This result suggests that remaining in touch with the home country does not necessarily affect integration processes negatively (Bilgili 2014).

Subsequently, we showed that migrants who maintained their permanent intention to stay, did not experience a smaller change regarding their command of the Dutch language compared to migrants who changed their temporary intention into a permanent one. Again, migrants who maintained a circular or temporary intention or migrants who changed their circular intention into a temporary one were worst off as they experienced the smallest change in the command of the Dutch language. These results are in line with the assumption that an intention to stay leads to behaviour that fits this intention. Changing from a temporary intention to stay into a circular intention improves the Dutch language proficiency substantially and leads to the biggest change in the command of the Dutch language.

Current research supposes that a change in intention to stay affects migrants' second language proficiency. However, one could argue that causality can be the in the opposite direction. When one experiences an improvement in second language proficiency, one can for example decide to stay permanently after all.

Future research may also look at the relation between changing intentions to stay and other indicators of integration, such as economic and political integration. This will lead to insight in whether changes in intention to stay have a different impact on certain domains of integration.

Overall, the present study shows that a change in intention to stay is related to investments in the Dutch language and changes in second language proficiency. Migrants changing from a temporary intention to stay into a circular intention to stay experience substantial improvement of their Dutch. So, initially having a temporary intention to stay does not have many negative consequences, when this intention is eventually

changed. Maintaining a temporary or circular intention to stay, or changing a circular intention into a temporary one does have negative consequences for both the level of command of the Dutch language as well as the chance of experiencing a positive change in the command of the Dutch language. The results of this research thereby highlight that migrants who have an enduring temporal or circular intention to stay but still stay in the host country show relatively low levels of and small improvements in Dutch language proficiency. From a public policy perspective, this means that in order to invest in migrants' second language proficiency, the intention to stay should be acknowledged.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Appendix

Table A1. Linear regression analysis: command of the Dutch language at wave 2 ($N = 1116$).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.
Intercept	2.217***	0.114	2.150***	0.118	2.020***	0.161	1.972***	0.122	2.470***	0.145	2.245***	0.122
Intention to stay wave 1 (ref. = Temporary)												
Circular			-0.009	0.066								
Permanent			0.108*	0.042								
Change in intention to stay												
Permanent-Permanent					0.255*	0.121	0.303***	0.057	-0.195*	0.097	0.030	0.057
Temporary-Permanent					0.225	0.128	0.273***	0.068	-0.225*	0.105	Ref.	Ref.
Circular-Permanent					0.186	0.141	0.234*	0.094	-0.264*	0.122	-0.039	0.094
Temporary-Circular					0.450**	0.149	0.498***	0.103	Ref.	Ref.	0.225*	0.105
Circular-Circular					Ref.	Ref.	0.048	0.127	-0.450**	0.149	-0.225	0.128
Permanent-Circular					0.293*	0.135	0.341***	0.085	-0.157	0.116	0.067	0.086
Temporary-Temporary					-0.048	0.127	Ref.	Ref.	-0.498***	0.103	-0.273***	0.068
Circular-Temporary					0.108	0.155	0.156	0.112	-0.342*	0.137	-0.117	0.113
Permanent-Temporary					0.168	0.127	0.216**	0.069	-0.282**	0.105	-0.057	0.070
Ethnicity (ref. = Poles)												
Bulgarians	0.128*	0.065	0.158*	0.066	0.158*	0.065	0.158*	0.065	0.158*	0.065	0.158*	0.065
Moroccans	0.500***	0.081	0.484***	0.081	0.459***	0.081	0.459***	0.081	0.459***	0.081	0.459***	0.081
Turks	0.065	0.055	0.053	0.055	0.038	0.055	0.038	0.055	0.038	0.055	0.038	0.055
Sex (ref. = men)	0.038	0.035	0.032	0.035	0.033	0.035	0.033	0.035	0.033	0.035	0.033	0.035
Age	-0.007**	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002
Education in years	0.010*	0.004	0.012***	0.004	0.014***	0.004	0.014***	0.004	0.014***	0.004	0.014***	0.004
Duration of stay	0.004*	0.002	0.004*	0.002	0.004*	0.002	0.004*	0.002	0.004*	0.002	0.004*	0.002
Followed an integration course (ref. = no)	-0.083	0.046	-0.090*	0.046	-0.086	0.045	-0.086	0.045	-0.086	0.045	-0.086	0.045
Investments in Dutch language proficiency before immigration (ref. = no)	0.145**	0.053	0.148**	0.053	0.133*	0.052	0.133*	0.052	0.133*	0.052	0.133*	0.052
R^2	0.081		0.088		0.117		0.117		0.117		0.117	
Adjusted R^2	0.073		0.079		0.103		0.103		0.103		0.103	

Source: SCIP, 2010–2013, tested both ways.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

Table A2. Linear regression analysis: change in the command of the Dutch language ($N = 1116$).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.	<i>B</i>	S.E.
Intercept	1.791***	0.109	1.793***	0.112	1.626 ***	0.151	1.626 ***	0.115	2.123 ***	0.136	1.877**	0.115
Command of the Dutch language wave 1	-0.679***	0.022	-0.681***	0.023	-0.683***	0.022	-0.683***	0.022	-0.683***	0.022	-0.683***	0.022
Intention to stay wave 1 (ref. = Temporary)												
Circular			-0.031	0.061								
Permanent			0.006	0.039								
Change in intention to stay												
Permanent–Permanent					0.188	0.111	0.188***	0.053	-0.309***	0.090	-0.063	0.053
Temporary–Permanent					0.252*	0.117	0.251***	0.062	-0.246*	0.096	Ref.	Ref.
Circular–Permanent					0.208	0.130	0.208*	0.086	-0.290*	0.113	-0.044	0.086
Temporary–Circular					0.498***	0.137	0.497***	0.095	Ref.	Ref.	0.246*	0.096
Circular–Circular					Ref.	Ref.	0.000	0.117	-0.498***	0.137	-0.252*	0.117
Permanent–Circular					0.190	0.124	0.190*	0.079	-0.307**	0.107	-0.061	0.079
Temporary–Temporary					0.000	0.117	Ref.	Ref.	-0.497***	0.095	-0.251***	0.062
Circular–Temporary					0.127	0.142	0.127	0.103	-0.371**	0.126	-0.125	0.104
Permanent–Temporary					0.137	0.117	0.136*	0.063	-0.361***	0.096	-0.115	0.065
Ethnicity (ref. = Poles)												
Bulgarians	0.081	0.060	0.084	0.061	0.086	0.060	0.086	0.060	0.086	0.060	0.086	0.060
Moroccans	0.275***	0.076	0.273***	0.076	0.256***	0.076	0.256***	0.076	0.256***	0.076	0.256***	0.076
Turks	-0.079	0.051	-0.077	0.051	-0.087	0.051	-0.087	0.051	-0.087	0.051	-0.087	0.051
Sex (ref. = men)	0.033	0.032	0.032	0.032	0.033	0.032	0.033	0.032	0.033	0.032	0.033	0.032
Age	-0.007**	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002	-0.007***	0.002
Education in years	0.002	0.004	0.003	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004
Duration of stay	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.002	0.001	0.002
Followed an integration course (ref. = no)	0.049	0.043	0.049	0.043	0.051	0.043	0.051	0.043	0.051	0.043	0.051	0.043
Investments in Dutch language proficiency before immigration (ref. = no)	-0.010	0.049	-0.008	0.050	-0.022	0.049	-0.022	0.049	-0.022	0.049	-0.022	0.049
R^2	0.503		0.503		0.520		0.520		0.520		0.520	
Adjusted R^2	0.499		0.498		0.512		0.512		0.512		0.512	

Source: SCIP, 2010–2013, tested both ways.

* $p < .05$.** $p < .01$.*** $p < .001$.