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# “YOU DON’T NEED TO KNOW THE TURKISH WORD”

## Immigrant Minority Language Teaching Policies and Practice in the Netherlands

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses recent developments in policies and practices of immigrant minority language teaching in the Netherlands. It focuses on the realisation of this provision as ‘language support’. Within this arrangement, an immigrant minority language is used as a medium of instruction for parts of the regular primary school curriculum. Following Goodlad et al. (1979), we identify different versions of the language support curriculum on the basis of in-depth analyses of policy documents from the national and local government (the formal curriculum), and the National Educational Innovation Centre for Primary Education and the Inspectorate of Education (the ideological curriculum). In addition, we analyse policies and practices with respect to language support at a multicultural primary school on the basis of observations, interviews, and school documents (the perceived, operational and experiential curriculum). The analyses reveal how policy makers, practitioners, and pupils differ in their understanding of the notion of language support. They also show how inaccurate assumptions with respect to the pupils’ relative command in Dutch and the minority language impact on actual practices of language support.

**French** Cet article porte sur les développements récents aux Pays-Bas des politiques et des pratiques d’enseignement de l’écrit aux immigrés. Il se centre sur l’application du dispositif « soutien à l’apprentissage langagier ». Selon cette disposition, une langue étrangère est utilisée pour enseigner certaines parties du programme de l’école primaire. À la suite de Goodlad et al. (1979), nous identifions différentes versions du programme de soutien à l’apprentissage langagier à partir d’analyses détaillées de documents politiques du gouvernement national et local (le programme officiel), du Centre National de

l'Innovation Educative pour l'Education Primaire et de l'Inspection de l'Education (le programme idéologique). De plus, nous analysons les principes et les pratiques qui sous-tendent le soutien à l'apprentissage langagier dans une école primaire multiculturelle, sur la base d'observations, d'entretiens et de documents scolaires (les programmes tels qu'ils sont perçus, opérationnels et effectifs). Les analyses indiquent comment les décideurs, les praticiens, et les élèves diffèrent dans leur compréhension de la notion de soutien à l'apprentissage langagier. Elles soulignent également les imprécisions dans les représentations de la maîtrise du Néerlandais par les élèves et l'impact de la langue étrangère sur les pratiques réelles de soutien linguistique.

**Chinese** 本论文讨论了近年来，荷兰对入境移民的少数族群外语 (immigrant minority language) 的教育政策，及其施行的发展情况。此项政策的推行，旨在体现「对语言的支持」。在这安排下，一种入境移民的少数族群外语 (immigrant minority language)，在部份正规小学课程中作为教学语言。根据 Goodlad 等人 (1979) 的研究，我们就着几个「对语言的支持」课程政策文献，作深入分析：国家及地方政府（正规课程）、国家教育改革中心（小学教育），以及教育督学团（意识形态课程）（Inspectorate of Education [the ideological curriculum]），分辨语文支持课程的不同版本。此外，我们透过观察、访问及学校文件（察觉的、操作的及经验的课程），分析语言支持政策，在一所多元文化小学中的实施情况。分析结果，揭示政策施行者、教育同工及学生，对语言支持这个概念的不同理解。他们同时对学生的荷文应用能力，及少数民族语言所带来的冲击，作出概略的假设。

**Dutch** Deze bijdrage gaat over recente ontwikkelingen in het beleid en de praktijk van het onderwijs in allochtone levende talen in Nederland en dan met name over de invulling van dit onderwijs als 'taalondersteuning'. Taalondersteuning houdt in dat een allochtone levende taal wordt gebruikt als instructietaal in delen van het reguliere basisschoolcurriculum. In navolging van Goodlads (1979) curriculumtheorie onderscheiden we verschillende versies van taalondersteuningscurriculum. Dit doen we op basis van een diepteanalyse van beleidsdocumenten van de nationale en lokale overheid (het formele curriculum) en van het Procesmanagement Primair Onderwijs en de Inspectie van het Onderwijs (het ideologische curriculum). Daarnaast analyseren we het beleid en de praktijk van taalondersteuning op een multiculturele basisschool op basis van observaties, interviews en schooldocumenten (het waargenomen, operationele en ervaren curriculum). De analyses maken duidelijk hoe beleidsmakers, leraren en leerlingen van elkaar verschillen in hun begrip van de notie 'taalondersteuning'. Ze laten ook zien hoe onnauwkeurige aannames met betrekking tot de relatieve beheersing van het Nederlands en de allochtone levende taal door leerlingen van invloed zijn op de praktijk van het taalondersteuningsonderwijs.

**Key words:** bilingual education, classroom interaction, immigrant minority language teaching, language policy, school ethnography.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As a result of politically, economically, and socially motivated migration, the Netherlands has undergone considerable demographic changes since World War II (Lucassen & Penninx, 1994). Decolonisation of the Dutch Indies and Surinam brought about significant inflows of migrants in the early fifties and mid-seventies, respectively, while foreign labour policies led to migrant flows from Mediterranean countries in the sixties and the early seventies. Although it was expected that these migrant workers would return to their countries of origin once their working contracts had expired, the majority of Turkish and Moroccan migrants settled permanently in the Netherlands. Family reunions and marriages with spouses from these countries of origin subsequently led to new migration. In addition, there has been a fluctuating migration flow from the overseas territories of Aruba and the Dutch Antilles, while refugees from across the world have continued to seek asylum in the Netherlands.

The cultural diversity brought about by this migration manifests itself in the pupil populations of Dutch primary schools. In 2002, 15.2 percent of all pupils at primary schools were registered as belonging to 'cultural minorities', which means that their parents are refugees, or that at least one of them was born in Turkey, Surinam, Morocco, the Dutch Antilles and Aruba, or another country from an exhaustive list of non-Western countries drawn up by the government (Ministry of Education, 2002). Language surveys have shown that these pupils speak many different languages at home (Broeder & Extra, 1998). For instance, in a medium-sized city in the Netherlands, in this paper pseudonymously called Stolberg, 20 percent of the primary school pupils indicated that they were exposed to another language at home apart from or instead of Dutch (mostly Turkish, Arabic, and Berber) (Sardes/Babylon, 2001).

The different patterns of home language use among pupils, which lead to different levels of proficiency in both Dutch and other home languages, markedly contrast with the monolingual character of mainstream schools, where Dutch is not only a central subject, but also the official standard language of instruction. Only primary reception of immigrant pupils who cannot speak Dutch at all may take place in another language. In addition to this regulation, special educational arrangements have been funded by the Dutch government for the teaching of immigrant minority languages as subjects in their own right. Between 1998 and 2004, this funding could also be used for 'language support'. This arrangement entailed the teaching of the regular curriculum while using a minority language as a medium of instruction. Little is known about actual practices of teaching and learning in the context of this arrangement (but see Driessen et al. 2003).

This paper reports an ethnographic study on the development of language support in policy and practice in the Netherlands. The study focussed on the period from 1998, when a major policy reform was introduced, until 2004, when state-funded immigrant minority language teaching was abolished. The study was part of an international-comparative research project on dealing with multilingualism in education (Bezemer et al., 2004). Adopting an ethnographic, empirical-interpretive approach (Kroon & Sturm, 2000), we analysed policy documents relating to immigrant minority language teaching issued by the central Dutch government and the city of Stolberg. In addition, we collected data at *de Rietschans* primary school, a multicultural school located in Stolberg. We carried out non-participant observations in the Turkish and Arabic classes for seven-year-olds in the school year 1999/2000 and conducted semi-structured interviews (McCracken, 1988) with the minority language teachers before and after the period of observation. Other teachers involved in educating the fourth graders were interviewed as well, including the form teacher and the head teacher. In this paper, the interview with the Turkish teacher that was taken before the period of observation is referred to as 'Turkish teacher 1', and the retrospective interview with this teacher is referred to as 'Turkish teacher 2', followed by the page number of the interview transcript. The interviews with the head teacher and the form teacher are referred to as 'Head teacher' and 'Form teacher', respectively. We also questioned all pupils about their home language use and collected school documents, including policy documents, teaching materials, report cards, and test results.

Following Goodlad et al. (1979), we reconstructed different curricula of language support on the basis of these data. Section 2 deals with the introduction of the language support model in policy papers from the national government. In Section 3, the focus is on explanations of language support in documents from the *Procesmanagement Primair Onderwijs* (i.e., the national educational innovation centre for primary education; henceforth: PMPO), the Inspectorate of Education, the city of Stolberg, and practitioners of *de Rietschans* primary school. In Section 4, we discuss a teaching episode from a language support lesson in Turkish. Finally, in Sections 5 and 6, we link up the various interpretations and operationalisations of language support and draw conclusions from the policy and practice reviewed.

## 2. IMMIGRANT MINORITY LANGUAGE TEACHING IN NATIONAL POLICIES

In the 1970s, when the number of immigrants in the Netherlands had increased significantly, the Dutch government started facilitating the teaching of immigrant minority languages in primary education. While this provision has been reconsidered and disputed repeatedly (Bezemer, 2003), state-funded immigrant minority language teaching continued to exist until 2004. In 1983, a regulation was issued entitled *Onderwijs in Eigen Taal en Cultuur* (i.e., ‘instruction in one’s own language and culture’), usually abbreviated as OETC (Government, 1983). OETC was targeted at the children of foreign employees, children with a Moluccan background, pupils from within the European Community, and the children of political refugees. It was thought to promote the development of a positive self-image and self-awareness, diminish the gap between the culture of the school and that of the home, and contribute to intercultural education. The purpose of OETC was to teach pupils the culture and the official, national standard language of the country of origin, thus excluding Surinamese and Antillean pupils from learning ‘unofficial’ languages like Sranan, Sarnami Hindi, or Papiamentu, or Moroccan pupils from learning Berber. Moluccan pupils, however, were allowed to be taught Moluccan-Malay, rather than Indonesian.

In 1998, the OETC regulation was reformed. An act came into force in that year which replaced OETC with *Onderwijs in Allochtone Levende Talen* (i.e., ‘instruction in non-indigenous, living languages’), usually abbreviated as OALT. The OALT Act made municipalities responsible for organising minority language teaching at schools either as an extracurricular provision aimed at the teaching of immigrant minority languages, or, in the lower grades only, as a curricular provision supporting the learning of the regular curriculum. When this reform was launched, the teaching of immigrant minority languages was still presented as the primary objective of the policy. The supportive function, whereby an immigrant minority language serves as a means, rather than a target language, was described as an exception (Government, 1997b: 2) The possibility of using OALT resources for language support was said to be created to do justice to the various wishes of the various groups of parents who, according to the OALT Act, were to be involved in the decision making process (Government, 1997a: 3).

However, soon after the act came into force, it turned out that, in practice, the majority of the OALT resources allocated to municipalities were used to organise language support. At the same time, most schools also indicated that they did not know exactly what this provision was supposed to entail (Inspectorate of Education, 2001:72; Turkenburg, 2001; 2002). Indeed, in the Act itself, the concept of language support was not defined. The explanatory memorandum attached to the bill merely indicated that, in the case of language support, the OALT teacher

“supports the form teacher’s teaching via the mother tongue of the immigrant minority pupil. This supportive function can be employed within the regular curriculum and can be regarded as an instrument in the framework of educational compensatory policy.” (Government, 1997a: 3)

Thus, ‘language support’ implied using the mother tongue and was aimed at the teaching of the regular curriculum. What was not made clear was what ‘using the mother tongue’ actually entailed. Did this mean that it could be used as a language of instruction only? Or could schools legitimately teach the mother tongue as a subject in its own right under the heading of ‘language support’? After all, it could have been argued that development of the students’ command in the mother tongue would enhance the teaching of Dutch, i.e., the regular curriculum (cf. Cummins 1982).

While municipalities were implementing the OALT Act, in national policy documents, OALT was explained more and more as a provision that had two aims of equal status. In February 2001, when the parliament was informed about the state of affairs with respect to OALT, the State Secretary explained that

“On the one hand, the Act is aimed at teaching the mother tongue and, therefore, maintaining contact with one’s own culture. Besides, the OALT Act offers city councils the possibility of using OALT resources for language policy in the framework of the local educational compensatory policy.” (Government, 2001a: 1)

In the same year, the State Secretary proposed to amend the 1998 OALT Act in order to define language support as “all activities with the help of a non-indigenous, living language that contribute to the attainment of the core objectives” (Government, 2001b: 2). The explanatory memorandum of the proposal read as follows:

“In the majority of cases, this aid [i.e., language support, JB/SK] aims at immigrant minority children who when they enroll in school, hardly or do not master Dutch, but who in their own languages also have a limited vocabulary and so do not know many concepts/labels which are of importance in order to be able to ‘follow’ education. They first learn these concepts/labels in their own languages before they are confronted with these concepts/labels within the regular educational programme; in that way, Dutch, which is after all the medium of instruction, is made accessible with the aid of their own languages.” (Government, 2001c: 1)

This quotation, in which the original, ambiguous Dutch word *begrip* was translated as ‘concept/label’, suggests that language support meant that concepts from any subject were to be explained in the pupils’ mother tongues and labelled in Dutch, so that pupils would be familiar with these labels (and the concepts they stand for) when the form teacher would use them. Although the definition proposed by the State Secretary made clear that, in the context of OALT, the immigrant minority language was not supposed to be the target language but the language of instruction, to be used for what seems to be ‘pre-teaching’, it was not pointed out why it would have been

beneficial to explain concepts in the mother tongue when, as was postulated, the pupils' vocabulary in their own languages was limited as well.

Members of parliament proposed two amendments to the proposal of the State Secretary. In the first amendment, language support was redefined as

“all teaching activities which with the aid of a non-indigenous, living language contribute to the learning of the Dutch language and thus to the attainment of the core objectives [i.e., the official attainment targets set for the primary school curriculum, JB/SK].” (Government, 2001d)

The amendment was meant to emphasise that language support “concerns first and foremost support for the benefit of learning Dutch” (ibid.). The second amendment (Government, 2001e) implied that schools would be allowed to use OALT resources for language support not only in the lower grades, but in the upper grades of primary school as well. Both amendments were accepted by the House of Representatives. The revised proposal of the amendment of the OALT Act came into force on 1 August 2002. In the same year, the right-wing Dutch government that was formed after the electoral victory of the political party of the assassinated Pim Fortuyn announced its intention to abolish OALT “since priority should be given to Dutch” (Government, 2002: 12). In 2003, the government commenced to prepare its abolition as of 1 August 2004 (Government, 2003).

### 3. INTERPRETATIONS OF IMMIGRANT MINORITY LANGUAGE TEACHING

In the previous section, we discussed the ambiguity of the notion of language support in legislation. In this section, we explore how language support was interpreted in documents produced by various educational institutions and authorities, including the national educational innovation centre, the inspectorate of education, a local government, and a school.

To assist schools in shaping language support in practice, the national educational innovation centre, PMPO suggested a number of instructional models for this provision (PMPO, 2000). The ‘direct support’ or ‘co-teaching’ model implied that the immigrant minority language would be present in the mainstream classroom to teach immigrant minority pupils in their mother tongue in collaboration with the form teacher. The ‘pre-teaching’ model was taken to prepare pupils for the form teacher’s teaching, either in or outside the mainstream classroom, while the ‘remedial teaching’ model was to offer support after the form teacher’s teaching. Another model, whereby the teaching of the immigrant minority language was considered the learning objective, was legitimised with reference to “Cummins’ threshold hypothesis”, according to which “a child first needs to reach a certain level in the first language before the second language can be learned successfully” (PMPO, 2000: 10). As the PMPO pointed out before in its explanation of the OALT Act (PMPO, 1999), it was indicated that, in principle, all subjects of the regular curriculum could be treated during language support.

In their annual report to the Minister of Education, the Inspectorate of Education made a distinction between language support used to offer support in the learning of

Dutch, and language support used to promote the mother tongue of the pupils. The Inspectorate found that 66 percent of the schools put 'language support' into practice as "offering support with the learning of Dutch", 5 to 14 percent "prioritise the learning and maintenance of the mother tongue to learn Dutch from there", and 25 percent combined these practices (Inspectorate of Education, 2001:72-73). Thus, in accordance with what was suggested by the PMPO, some schools interpreted language support as teaching the pupils' mother tongue, presuming that this practice enhances the learning of Dutch. In its report, the Inspectorate did not deem this operationalisation of language support a breach of regulations.

Stolberg was one of the cities in the South of the Netherlands that received OALT funds from the central government, which obliged the city council to draw up an OALT policy plan. In the first OALT plan of this city, covering the school year 1998/1999, language support was conceived of as "support for instruction in Dutch as a second language" (Stolberg, 1998: 1). In the proposal for carrying out a needs survey among parents, which was discussed by the city council in 1999, language support was presented as "support for Dutch education" (Stolberg, 1999b: 1). Furthermore, it was explained that "with the supportive function a language is not taught, but the available knowledge of language of the pupils is utilized" (ibid: 3). In the second OALT plan, covering the years 1999-2002, language support was defined as a provision aimed at "improving the pupils' understanding of Dutch instructions" (Stolberg, 1999c: 1).

Thus, it appears that in Stolberg language support was conceived of as a provision whereby subjects from the regular curriculum were taught in the pupils' mother tongues. However, the second OALT plan continued its amplifications of language support with the remark that "research generally shows that knowledge of one's own language enhances the learning of another language", which suggests that 'language support' actually entailed teaching the pupils' mother tongues. In a meeting of the city council, the city councillor for education adopted this argumentation, claiming that

"the supportive function is necessary for young children to be able to cope in the second language, i.e., in Dutch. A good command of one's own language is a basis for quickly learning a second language." (Stolberg, 1999a: 11)

Reports on the implementation of the local OALT plan (Stolberg, 2001:12) indicate that, at several schools, 'language support' lessons for Turkish and Arabic pupils were based on *Trias*, a textbook aimed at the development of mother tongues.

*De Rietschans* was one of the multicultural primary schools of Stolberg where OALT was organised. In the School Guide, an annual prospectus for parents, language support was presented as "bilingual education for Turkish and Moroccan pupils in the lower grades". The aims of this 'bilingual education' were described as follows:

- The Turkish and Moroccan children become acquainted with and learn to understand the Dutch language with the aid of their own languages.
- Tracing language and/or learning problems among non-native pupils.
- Improvement of the Dutch language by extending vocabulary." (School Guide, 1999: 14)

According to the head teacher, *de Rietschans* started rather early in making immigrant minority language teaching “more or less subordinate to the learning of Dutch” (Head teacher: 3). The Turkish immigrant minority language teacher confirmed that language support was already put into practice before 1998, so that the introduction of the OALT Act “was not such a big deal for us” (Turkish teacher 1: 12). The head teacher therefore welcomed the statutory framework for language support introduced by the OALT Act, and regretted the fact that within this framework language support could -initially- not be implemented in the upper years. At the same time, he believed that “it would not be good if attention were paid only to Dutch and if consequently the pupils are going to lose their whole own identity” (Head teacher: 10). Miss Fatima, the Turkish OALT teacher at *de Rietschans*, justified language support as follows.

“It has been proven that the first language, with the help of one’s own language, learning the second language is much easier. So I don’t say that, that has been investigated. And that’s what we intend to do here. With bilingual education. With the aid of the pupils’ own languages, we want to improve the Dutch language.” (Turkish teacher 1: 4)

Like the head teacher, Fatima considered OALT in the lower grades as a form of bilingual education that is aimed at the learning of Dutch, rather than Turkish: “In my class it is about the Dutch word. Because it is the supportive function of OALT” (Turkish teacher 2:1).

#### 4. IMMIGRANT MINORITY LANGUAGE TEACHING IN PRACTICE

Every Tuesday and Thursday morning, the Turkish fourth graders of *de Rietschans* left the mainstream class and headed for the Turkish OALT classroom. Only during minority language teaching were they allowed to speak a language other than Dutch, for on any other occasion, it was regarded as impolite to exclude those who did not speak that language and a missed opportunity to learn Dutch (Form teacher: 62-63). Their teacher, Miss Fatima, was educated partly in the Netherlands and partly in Turkey. After having attended primary school in Turkey, she moved to the Netherlands to attend secondary school. A few years later, she went to grammar school in Turkey. Back in the Netherlands, she graduated from teacher training college, where she studied Turkish and completed additional courses to qualify as a primary school teacher. Fatima had worked as an OALT teacher at *de Rietschans* since 1994. In addition, she worked at another primary school in Stolberg for two days a week. As can be expected from her biography, she is fluent in both Turkish and Dutch.

One morning, Fatima had planned to repeat vocabulary lessons from the language textbook *Taalmaatje* (Kouwenberg et al., 1997). For every period of three weeks, *Taalmaatje* contains five vocabulary lessons in addition to the vocabulary lessons in the basic textbook, which were dealt with in the mainstream class run by the form teacher. In addition to words occurring in the basic textbook, *Taalmaatje* lessons deal with other words related to the themes of the lessons from the basic textbook. In the long interview, Fatima explained how she treated these lessons.

"I read the words, the sentences in Dutch, but after that I explain it in Turkish. That's what it's about, after all. That it is explained in their own language. And then we do repeat the words in Dutch. Both in Dutch and in Turkish." (Turkish teacher 1: 5)

Thus, Fatima explained that she put language support into practice by glossing Dutch words in Turkish. After all, "if they don't know the meaning of a word, then it's also difficult for them to ask questions. That's way easier in Turkish." (Turkish teacher 1: 2).

When dealing with Lessons 16-18 page by page, Miss Fatima picked out words occurring in the lessons, asking the children to clarify them. Sometimes, she asked them to clarify a Dutch word ("I'll say this one in Dutch, you have to say it in Turkish"), sometimes a Turkish word ("I say it in Turkish, you say it in Dutch"). From Lesson 19, the pupils took turns solving items from the exercises in the book, usually followed by a clarification initiated by the teacher. Until then, the teacher had not referred to these exercises.

Lessons 18 and 19 from *Taalmaatje* constitute a combined lesson about being 'at the fair'. The lesson contains pictures of persons who all have and do something. The illustrations of the objects and actions show numbers which correspond with the numbers of the phrases to choose from in the exercises.

Exercise 2 reads as follows:

"What do they have?"	Choose from:
Lisa has	12. a frying pan.
Frank has	13. an octopus.
The dog has	14. a bag with doughnuts.
Kevin has	15. a hedgehog.
Jasin has	16. a bunch of sausages.
Sara has	17. a silly hat on.
...	....

When Fatima turned to this exercise, she told the children, in Turkish, that the book was asking them what the people depicted in the book had. When Ruhan, Arzu, Feride, Bahar, and Bétul had each completed a sentence, it was Müberra's turn to do so. She had to find out what Sara, a little girl, had. The following excerpt starts from here. In the episode, Turkish was used as a medium of communication. Occasionally, Dutch words or phrases were produced. In the transcript, these are printed in italics.

Teacher: Er, Müberra.  
 Müberra: *Sara has*. Where is Sara? Yes, Sara. *Number thirteen*.  
 Teacher: What has Sara?  
 Müberra: *Octopus*.  
 Teacher: *Octopus*.  
 Is there anyone who knows what that is, children? We talked about it, but you may have forgotten it. Ruhan.  
 Ruhan: Monster.

- Pupils: (Laugh).  
 Teacher: Monster?  
 Pupil: Monster fish.  
 Teacher: Not a monster. Bahar.  
 Bahar: Er, a fish, it swims in the pond.  
 Teacher: A fish, but which fish. That fish has a name. Bétul.  
 Bétul: It is under, it swims under in the sea.  
 Teacher: A fish that swims under in the sea. But fishes generally swim under in the sea because they can't swim on it. Feride.  
 Feride: A shark.  
 Pupils: (Laugh).  
 Teacher: It's not a shark. Müberra.  
 Müberra: Er, one he can't grab one like this, he has to flee like this, the ones who are not fast, he flees like this, he is also afraid at once and he suddenly grabs a fish like this.  
 Teacher: Yes, you describe it nicely, I ask for its name. I will say its name because you have mixed it up a little bit. Octopus, children. Octopus. (very soft:) *Octopus*.  
 Pupils: *Ah yes! Octopus yes.*  
 [...]  
 Teacher: For the last time. I asked, are there any things on pages 22 and 23 you want to ask? Bétul  
 [...]  
 Ruhan: I forgot the name of what Sara has in her hands.  
 Teacher: Octopus, but you don't need to know that. Know it in Dutch, and know what kind of animal it is, but you don't need to know the word, the Turkish word. Okay? When you are only able to describe it to me, that's enough

In the episode, the teacher and her pupils negotiated in Turkish about the meaning of the Dutch word *inktvis* (i.e., octopus), which they encountered in the exercise. Completing the exercise did not necessarily require the pupils knowing the Dutch word for what Sara has in her hands. They could easily find the word by searching for the number of that object. The teacher, however, wanted the pupils to go beyond matching the Dutch target word with a visual representation. Without making this explicit in her initial question, she wanted the pupils to mention the Turkish equivalent of the Dutch target word. Given the fact that the denotation of the Dutch target word had already been shown to them, it is unlikely that the teacher wanted the pupils to demonstrate that they knew what the Dutch word means by giving its Turkish equivalent. In sequences of teacher initiation, pupil response, and teacher feedback, the teacher tried to elicit this Turkish word. When all five pupils engaging in the interaction had had their responses partly or completely turned down, the teacher came up with the Turkish word herself, which Ruhan wanted to hear again shortly after. Contrary to what the teacher had been suggesting until then, and contrary to what Ruhan thought, it then turned out that it was not the Turkish word, but the Dutch word which they were to remember. Throughout the lesson, Turkish remained the sole language of communication. Dutch was used only in dictating textbook instructions or, once, as a filler (cf. "Where is Sara?"). In 7 out of the 10 cases in which an item from this exercise was discussed, the teacher asked the children to

elaborate on the word with which the item was matched. The activity of finding Dutch-Turkish or Turkish-Dutch translations was of a recurrent nature as well, with the former kind of translation occurring most frequently (in 20 out of the 30 cases).

Not knowing or having forgotten the Turkish word for octopus, Ruhan, an unidentified pupil, Bahar, Bétul, Feride, and Müberra came up with several Turkish descriptions of an octopus. In their descriptions, they referred to a monster, a monster fish, a fish that swims in the pond, something that swims in the sea, a shark (which in Turkish literally means 'dog fish'), and something that flees, grabs, and is afraid. In expressing and evaluating these paradigmatic (octopus-fish, octopus-monster) and syntagmatic (octopus-shark) meaning relations with an octopus, the pupils demonstrated their understanding of this word and their ability to express this understanding in Turkish. However, Miss Fatima expected them to know the Turkish equivalents of the words, which she had probably mentioned before when the lesson from *Taalmaatje* was discussed in her classroom for the first time. Whereas the first activity of finding a legitimate Dutch word-picture relationship can be expected to contribute primarily to knowledge of Dutch, this additional activity can only be expected to contribute primarily to knowledge of Turkish, which is not in accordance with her account that in her class "it is about the Dutch word".

Looking back on the episode in detail a year later, Fatima explained that, at the time, she was trying to find the right way to put language support into practice (Turkish teacher 2: 1). She was "surprised" by herself requesting the Turkish synonym, and concluded that "then I should be more attentive. It's also new to us." (Turkish teacher 2: 4). Thus, in retrospect, she considered her practice of teaching a Turkish word in the context of language support to be unintended and illegitimate; she did not interpret language support as teaching Turkish to the pupils to provide a basis for learning Dutch as a second language. She attributed her practice to the fact that she was still in the process of exploring language support as a new instructional model, which is not in agreement with her and the head teacher's assertion that *de Rietschans* had already adopted this model well before the OALT Act came into force.

Although the pupils' reactions to the teacher's request to produce the Turkish word for an octopus showed that it was not self-evident that their lexical knowledge of Turkish exceeded their lexical knowledge of Dutch, Fatima assumed that, in general, her pupils were more proficient in Turkish than in Dutch. In her classroom, "they can also ask questions in Turkish, that's way easier than in Dutch" (Turkish teacher 2: 2). At the same time, she held that

"There are also children who don't even know the meaning in Turkish of a word from a picture. So then you should not only teach the Dutch meaning but also the Turkish meaning, of course." (Turkish teacher 1: 10)

While this belief, which was expressed shortly before the observations in her classroom were carried out, is in accordance with what happened in the key episode, it is not in accordance with what she expressed in retrospect:

"a word like 'octopus' does not occur in daily life, in their world, so to say. [...]. For example, octopus, that was not familiar to the children. So then I could hardly go on with a Turkish translation of octopus. I didn't need that then." (Turkish teacher 2: 2)

According to the data on the pupils' home language use, all pupils except for Bahar claimed that they spoke Turkish the best, which is true of most Turkish pupils growing up in the Netherlands until the fourth grade (cf. Extra et al., 2001). Verhoeven (1987) shows that, at the end of grade four, Turkish/Dutch bilingual pupils have a more extended receptive and productive Turkish vocabulary, regardless of whether literacy instruction is given in Turkish or in Dutch. Verhallen et al. (1999) show, on the basis of word association tasks containing equivalents in Dutch and Turkish, that at the age of nine, i.e., at grade six, Turkish pupils know Dutch words more thoroughly than Turkish words. Thus, inasmuch as the relative vocabulary size in different languages can be compared, it appears that, from the age of eight, Turkish/Dutch pupils are inclined to encounter Dutch words of which they do not know the Turkish counterpart (if there is any). Obviously, a teacher cannot know to what extent a Dutch target word and its Turkish equivalent are known to individual pupils. Hence, she cannot know either if it is of any help to name the Turkish word, or if she complicates the vocabulary teaching/learning process by doing so.

#### 5. DIVERGENT CONCEPTIONS OF IMMIGRANT MINORITY LANGUAGE TEACHING

The policy on and practice of language support discussed in the previous sections show that this provision was interpreted in various ways. All the actors took language support to imply that the mother tongue of the pupils is used as a medium of communication. The aims of the use of the mother tongue, however, was differentially conceived. Figure 1 shows the different lines of argument relating aims and means of language support.

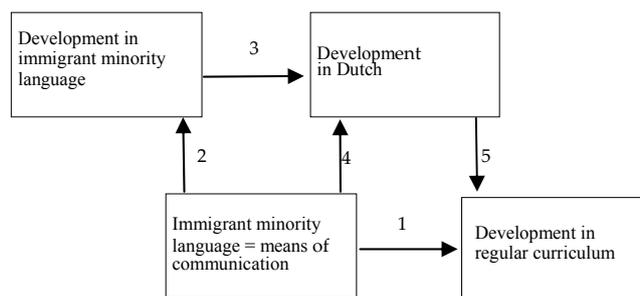


Figure 1: Aims and means of language support in policy and practice

Figure 1 shows that the use of immigrant minority languages as a means of communication was alternately linked to the development of proficiency in those languages, to the development in Dutch language proficiency, and to achievements in the regu-

lar curriculum. When language support was defined in terms of Link 1, a direct relation was assumed between language support and the regular curriculum operationalised in the mainstream classroom by way of pre-teaching, remedial teaching, or co-teaching in the mainstream classroom. When language support was defined in terms of Link 2, it was regarded as a provision intended to enhance the pupils' proficiency in their mother tongues. This practice was sometimes argued for in the light of Link 3. Echoing the interdependence hypothesis, this link starts from the idea that pupils should have reached a certain level of proficiency and knowledge in the mother tongue before a second language can be taught effectively. The hypothesis implies that teaching the first language effectively promotes proficiency in the second language as well, provided there is adequate exposure to the second language and adequate motivation to learn the second language (Cummins, 1982). Although strong empirical evidence supporting this hypothesis is claimed (cf. Cummins & Swain, 1986), the hypothesis has received much criticism (Baker, 2001). When language support was defined in terms of Link 4, it was taken as a provision that does not deal with any subject other than Dutch. In this arrangement, the provision was not directly related to the mainstream class per se. Link 4 implies Link 5 in that Dutch language arts is part of the regular curriculum. In addition to that, Link 5 represents the idea that pupils profit from the general development of their command of Dutch, as this language is used as a medium of communication in the mainstream class.

Given such different conceptions of a curriculum, Goodlad et al. (1979) distinguish between five curriculum layers. The ideological curriculum is the curriculum as realised in textbooks, workbooks, teacher's guides, and the like. Unlike the Dutch language textbook, *Taalmaatje*, which is not targeted at language support lessons, the models of language support described by the educational innovation centre, PMPO, and the Inspectorate of Education may be regarded as representing this curriculum layer. The formal curriculum is the curriculum which is laid down in official documents, i.e., written documents sanctioned by authorities such as the national and local government. The perceived curriculum is "what various interested persons and groups perceive in their minds to be the [formal, JB/SK] curriculum" (ibid.: 62), such as the perceptions of the head teacher of *de Rietschans* and Miss Fatima. The operational curriculum is "what goes on hour after hour, day after day in school and classroom" (ibid.: 63), a fragment of which is captured in the key episode. The experiential curriculum is "what students derive from and think about operational curricula" (ibid.: 64), such as the experiences of Ruhan and the other pupils appearing in the key episode.

In Table 1, these curriculum layers are described in terms of the perceived relations between the aims and the means of language support.

The ideological curriculum of language support was defined by the national educational innovation centre, PMPO, as a dual provision. On the one hand, it could imply pre-, co-, or remedial teaching of parts of the regular curriculum in an immigrant minority language (Link 1). On the other hand, it could imply teaching the immigrant minority language (Link 2) in the light of "Cummins' threshold hypothesis" (Link 3). The ideological curriculum as described by the Inspectorate allowed for the teaching of the pupils' mother tongues (Link 2), and for the teaching of Dutch (Link 4).

In the 1998 OALT Act, the formal curriculum of language support was not defined at all. The 2002 amendment of the Act declared Dutch to be the target language of language support (Link 4), acknowledging that it thus contributes to the attainment of the core objectives, i.e., the regular curriculum (Link 5). At a municipal level, the formal curriculum was initially conceived of in terms of a direct relationship between language support and the regular curriculum (Link 1), while a year later, it was defined in terms of its contribution to the development of the pupils' proficiency in their mother tongues as well (Link 2), assuming that this is a prerequisite for learning Dutch as a second language (Link 3).

Table 1: Conceptions of language support in the various curriculum layers

Curriculum	Actor	Source	Conception of language support
Ideological	PMPO	PMPO (2000)	1, 2-3
	Inspectorate of Education	Inspectorate of Education (2001)	2, 4
Formal	National government	1998 OALT Act	unspecified
	National government	2002 OALT Act	4-5
	Municipality of Stolberg	1998 OALT plan	1
	Municipality of Stolberg	1999 OALT plan	1, 2-3
Perceived	<i>de Rietschans</i>	School Guide (1999), Head teacher	4
	Miss Fatima	Turkish teacher	4
Operational	Turkish classroom	Key episode	2, 4
Experiential	Ruhan	Key episode	2

As regards the perceived curriculum, it was found that the School Guide of *de Rietschans*, the head teacher, and Fatima defined language support as a provision that was aimed at the teaching and learning of Dutch (Link 4), in particular Dutch vocabulary. In addition, the School Guide mentioned the tracing of language or learning problems among non-native pupils as one of the aims of language support. The key episode showed that the operational curriculum implied the teaching and learning of both Dutch (Link 4) and Turkish (Link 2). The latter is in agreement with the use of textbooks for the teaching of Turkish and other immigrant minority languages as reported in a paper by the local School Advisory Service. The occurrence of such an operationalisation was also reported by the Inspectorate of Education (2001) on the basis of a survey carried out among teachers. The key episode further suggested that Ruhan experienced the curriculum as if it were aimed at learning Turkish (Link 2).

## 6. DISCUSSION

The policy papers and practices reviewed reveal that, while in the Netherlands the focus was shifting from teaching immigrant minority languages to language support teaching, it remained unclear what this support actually entailed. Hence, discrepancies emerged between ideological, formal, perceived, operational, and experiential curricula of language support. They were divergent in that they focused on promoting the pupils' proficiency in their mother tongues, their proficiency in Dutch, their achievements in the regular curriculum, or a combination of these practices.

In official governmental explanations of the OALT Act, both before and after it was revised, it was tacitly acknowledged that the medium of communication is the 'mother tongue' or the pupils' 'own' language, and that immigrant minority pupils are more proficient in their putative mother tongue than in Dutch. However, while 'mother tongue' and 'proficiency' often coincide, they are logically independent (cf. Singh, 1997). When pupils who speak another language with their parents enroll in primary school, the knowledge of their home language exceeds their knowledge of Dutch. However, both self-ratings and vocabulary tests suggest that approximately four years later, around the age of eight, the difference in proficiency is less clear-cut. At this stage of bilingual development, it is no longer self-evident that the pupil is more proficient in the home language in all respects, in particular in the formal domains of language use, i.e., the registers used at school.

The model of language support whereby Dutch is taught directly, rather than teaching the 'mother tongue' so as to enhance the learning of Dutch, which was the model officially adopted by *de Rietschans*, also rests on the assumption that the pupils are, in principle, more proficient in their putative mother tongue than in Dutch. As this assumption seems untenable, it cannot be argued either that language support has value in that it contributes to the learning of Dutch more than if the teacher used Dutch as the language of instruction. The key episode revealed how Miss Fatima initiated activities which could be expected to contribute to the learning of Turkish more than to the learning of Dutch once the meaning of the Dutch target word had been clarified through visualisation. This learning outcome was not in accordance with the explicated intention of the teacher and the school to teach Dutch.

The discrepancy between the teacher's account and practice can be explained in terms of her practical professional knowledge (Anderson-Levitt 1987). Although she was also qualified as a Dutch primary school teacher, and actually occasionally stood in for form teachers at *de Rietschans*, she was taught to teach Turkish, not to teach Dutch through Turkish: that's "new to us". In her case, the content knowledge necessary to teach Dutch was not lacking; she was fluent in Dutch. She lacked, however, pedagogical content knowledge to inform her how to go about teaching Dutch through Turkish. It was her professional disposition as a teacher of Turkish to teach Turkish to Turkish pupils, which elicited the realisation of a 'hidden curriculum' leading to "unintended learning outcomes or messages" (Portelli, 1993: 345). It was Ruhan who, by asking again for the Turkish word for an octopus, unveiled this curriculum, which made the teacher emphasise that "you don't need to know the Turkish word".

Thus, in the formal, ideological, and perceived curricula of language support, pupils speaking multiple languages were conceived of as a homogeneous group of second language learners of Dutch, whose command of Dutch does not exceed their command of the language(s) they speak with their parents in any respect. In the everyday practice observed, in which the pupils' relative command of the languages they spoke varied per domain, this conception put the Turkish teacher, whose profession it was to teach Turkish, at a loss as to how to operationalise language support such that it accorded with her intention to contribute directly to the learning of Dutch.

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