

**\* The role of different forms of social contact in the destination-language proficiency of immigrants in the Netherlands \***

*Abstract*

*One of the influences on the destination-language proficiency of immigrants, a form of human capital, is the intensity of exposure to the second-language. The aim of this research is to study the role of different forms of social contact in immigrants' destination-language proficiency in greater detail and to make a comparison between different forms. The hypotheses are tested with a survey of immigrants in the Netherlands (SPVA-98). The results show that contact matters and that the effect of the intensity of exposure depends on the form of social contact. Contact with friends, speaking Dutch with children and having contact with colleagues play the most important roles in immigrants' destination-language proficiency.*

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## Introduction

Nowadays migration is a topical issue in Western countries, especially because the proportion of immigrants has been growing substantially (Van Tubergen & Kalmijn, 2005). This increasing proportion of immigrants has positive and negative effects. On the one hand, migration can lead to cultural enrichment and economic progress. For instance, one could think of immigration as a solution to the aging population in many Western countries (Roodenburg, Euwals & ter Rele, 2003). Another example of economic progress includes the Turkish and Moroccan guest workers in the Netherlands in the 1960s, who provided substantial economic growth to the Dutch economy (Kloosterman, Leun & Rath, 2002). However, migration can also generate many problems. One of the biggest problems concerns the integration of immigrants. In order to benefit the same opportunities as native citizens and to manage in daily life, it is important that migrants integrate in the host society. Unfortunately, it is a fact that many immigrants do not integrate very well (Alba & Nee, 1997). One important aspect in determining the economic, political, cultural and social integration of migrants in a host society is speaking the language of the destination-country. Unfortunately, many immigrants do not have a good destination-language proficiency (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Mettler, 1987). Without speaking the official language of the country of destination, immigrants are usually not qualified for the labour market. Therefore, a good destination-language proficiency increases the immigrants' chances of finding a suitable job and the prospect of their economic integration. Furthermore, language proficiency influences the opportunities of an immigrant to give his/her opinion, to participate in elections, to vote, to make friends with people from the destination country and to participate as a member in autochthonous associations. All these activities are seen as examples of political, cultural and social integration. Research of Gordon (1964) and Espenshade and Calhoun (1993) reveals the importance of immigrants' language proficiency on the quality of social integration. The previous examples show that good integration is very important for immigrants and that language skills are of substantial importance when looking at the different kinds of integration.

In order to be able to design effective public policies regarding immigration and integration, it is essential to search for the indicators of immigrants' language skills (Chiswick & Miller, 2001). Because of the importance of this subject, much research has already been done on the topic of destination-language proficiency. Previous research has focused on the question what the determinants of destination-language proficiency among immigrants are. Most of the research on the topic of language acquisition among immigrants relies on the human capital theory (Becker, 1962), which is based on the idea that people have to invest in individual skills, such as e.g. education in order to improve their social economic position. The research that relies on this theory, views language as one of the central skills that are needed for a successful integration in the host country's society. For

instance, immigrants need this kind of human capital to get better labour market opportunities. In other words, to get more economically integrated (Kossoudji, 1988). However, also to get socially, politically and culturally integrated immigrants need to possess this kind of human capital. More specifically, most researchers are interested in explaining how language skills are accumulated. The main framework in this field is developed by Chiswick and Miller (1997). They developed a model that looks at immigrants' language proficiency and identified three general concepts based on the findings from previous research, namely 'exposure', 'efficiency' and 'incentives'. At first, a migrant has to be exposed to the language, e.g. through interethnic contacts. Secondly, the immigrant then has to experience efficient improvement when he/she has been exposed, for example when a migrant has a high level of education, he is more likely to learn a new language more easily. Thirdly, incentives are important for acquiring the dominant language (Chiswick & Miller, 1997). An immigrant has to be stimulated to get increments in wages for good language proficiency (Chiswick & Miller, 2001).

Exposure, efficiency and incentives have all proved to be important theoretical ideas used in research to establish the determinants of language proficiency. For instance, several authors claim that more contact with people from the host country will have a paramount effect on the extent of exposure (Chiswick & Miller, 1997, Gordon, 1964; Van Tubergen & Kalmijn, 2005). However, these ideas have not been completely exploited and should be studied in more detail. Therefore, it would be interesting to research the effect of different forms of social contact on immigrants' destination-language proficiency. The aspect of exposure is of major importance for integration since only then incentives and efficiency have additional value. Hence, research should focus on this aspect in more detail. The main gap in the existing literature is the lack of comparison between different exposure settings, such as contact with partner, children, colleagues, friends, neighbours and co-members of associations.

Following the previous arguments, this paper will examine the following research question:

*How do different forms of contact between immigrants and natives influence immigrants' destination-language proficiency?*

In this research this question will concern immigrants in the Netherlands, for whom Dutch is the destination-language.

The scientific value of this research is the additional knowledge that will be gained about the different kinds of exposure that are relevant for language acquisition among immigrants. At the same time, by identifying the indicators of language proficiency in more detail, a better policy can be

designed which will hopefully result in an improved integration of immigrants. For instance, if the analyses demonstrate that contact with neighbours plays an important role in the effect of exposure, one could think of e.g. organising communal meetings for the inhabitants of a neighbourhood, natives as well as immigrants, to get to know each other better and thereby provide better destination-language proficiency. In this way, this research can also have high societal value in order to help the integration of immigrants.

### **Previous research**

On the topic of indicators of destination-language proficiency a lot of research has already been done. In this section an overview of ideas and results of former research will be presented.

Research on the topic of immigrants and their integration often refers to capital as a important requirement to integrate in the host society (Nee & Sanders, 2001). There exist different kinds of capital, among the most commonly studied ones are human, cultural and social capital. Human capital refers to the individual skills, acquired by for instance experiences, training or a job. With the increase of human capital, the chances on the labour market also increase (Leeuwen, 2007). Cultural capital can be defined as forms of knowledge, valued by the society, or as “the stock of cultural values”, with which one can achieve something (Thorsby, 1999). When people experience advantages because of their position in a network or via their contacts, one can speak of social capital (Flap, 1999). While looking at these three forms of capital, one can see that language proficiency is a form of human capital (Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Djajic, 2004; Van Tubergen & Kalmijn, 2005). Chiswick and Miller (2001) confirm this in their research on concepts on language proficiency. Their research is based on the assumption that language skills are a form of investment in human capital. They argue that this is the case because language skills satisfy the three requirements for human capital. Firstly, language skills are productive, in the sense that they increase immigrants’ earnings in the labour market. Secondly, language ability can not be separated from the person, it is embodied within the immigrant (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Van Tubergen & Kalmijn, 2005). The final requirement for human capital is a willingness to commit to the time costs associated with learning a new language.

In order to identify the determinants of destination-language proficiency Chiswick and Miller (1997, 2001) designed a model that distinguishes between three general concepts that influence language proficiency, namely exposure, efficiency and incentives. They argue that the costs of acquiring second-language skills is lower when an immigrant is more often exposed to the destination-language. The costs will also be lower, when an immigrant is better capable of converting the

exposure into actual language acquisition, this relates to the effects of efficiency. Thirdly, the economic incentives for destination-language proficiency of immigrants depend on the expansion of wages as a result of the fact that the immigrant became more proficient in the destination-language and on the anticipated duration of stay and employment in the destination country (Chiswick & Miller, 2001).

The three-way model of Chiswick and Miller (1997,2001) was adopted and indirectly extended in other research (e.g. Chiswick, Lee & Miller, 2005; Djajic, 2004; Van Tubergen & Kalmijn, 2005). When looking at other research on destination-language proficiency, it should be made clear that second-language proficiency of immigrants is considered to have micro- as well as macrolevel explanations. Most of the research on this topic looks at determinants of destination-language proficiency on microlevel (Carliner, 2000; Chiswick & Miller, 1995 & 2001; Espenshade & Fu, 1997; Espinosa & Massey, 1997; Solé, 1990; Stevens, 1999). Although these ideas on determinants of language proficiency have mostly been applied to explain individual effects, they can also be useful to understand contextual effects. From a microperspective, the three concepts from the model of Chiswick and Miller, exposure, efficiency and incentives, are relevant indicators when determining destination-language proficiency. Next to the indicators of exposure, efficiency and incentives, age at migration can be an important microlevel determinant for language proficiency. Furthermore, a higher level of schooling generally causes better language proficiency (Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Van Tubergen and Kalmijn, 2005). Another cause on the micro-level may be gender differences (Chiswick, Lee & Miller, 2005; Espenshade & Fu, 1997; Stevens, 1992). While focusing at microlevel explanations, some authors take into account some of the macrolevel effects. In contrast, Van Tubergen and Kalmijn (2005) focused on the causes on the macrolevel, extending the ideas of Chiswick and Miller (on the microlevel). These authors use the theory from the model of Chiswick and Miller as a guideline. They stated that three groups of contextual factors are important when looking at immigrants' destination-language proficiency, namely 'destination'-effects, 'origin'-effects and 'setting'-effects. First of all, a contextual factor that should be considered is the role of the receiving country, the so-called 'destination' effects. Secondly, the economic conditions in the sending country have an important effect. These effects are known as 'origin' effects. Thirdly, in some cases the language proficiency depends on assets of a specific combination of 'destination' as well as 'origin' effects, this is called a 'setting' or 'community' effect. It could be that a specific immigrant group shows more proficiency in a second-language in one destination country, but relatively less proficiency in another country. This may depend on a combination of effects, such as the size of an ethnic group compared to the destination population. Van Tubergen and Kalmijn refer explicitly to Chiswick and Miller. However, there exists a lot of research on language acquisition that

did not involve the model of Chiswick and Miller, but could be included in this model since they indirectly confirm the ideas about exposure, efficiency and incentives.

Because the theoretical ideas of Chiswick and Miller can form a guideline through much of the research on destination-language acquisition, it is important to look at their research in more detail. When looking at the mechanisms from the model of Chiswick and Miller separately, the amount of exposure to the destination-language is firstly asserted as a mechanism that influences language proficiency (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Espenshade & Fu, 1997). Through opportunities to listen to, study and use the destination-language, immigrants learn this second-language (Stevens, 1999). These opportunities depend to a large extent on the use of and proficiency in the destination-language of the people with whom the immigrants interact (Chiswick & Miller, 2001). As Chiswick and Miller (2001) postulate, exposure to the destination-language can occur before or after migration. Pre-immigration exposure can occur e.g. when countries have a colonial past together, when the destination-language is an official language in the country of origin, or when immigrants have had a job in their home country in which they were often exposed to the destination language. After migration, immigrants are logically even more exposed to the destination-language. The proficiency in this language destination language, concerning post-migration exposure, depends on two elements, namely time units of exposure and the intensity of exposure. Time units of exposure indicate the years that the immigrants lived in the destination country since they migrated (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Van Tubergen and Kalmijn, 2005). The results from previous research show that people speak the destination-language better the longer they stay in the destination-country (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Espenshade & Fu, 1997; Jasso & Rosenzweig, 1990). The second element is the intensity of the exposure. Some authors indicate that contacts with family members and the use of the destination-language with these family members play an important role, in exposure to this language (Chiswick, Lee & Miller, 2005; Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Espenshade & Fu, 1997). They assert that the role of the partner is most important (Chiswick & Miller, 2001, Espenshade & Fu, 1997; Stevens, 1985). For instance, when an immigrant marries a person from the same country of birth, it is not likely that those immigrants will speak the destination-language at home and the exposure is less than when an immigrant would marry an inhabitant from the destination country (Chiswick and Miller, 1997; Chiswick and Miller, 2001). Moreover, children are expected to have an important influence on their parents' destination-language proficiency. This is, among other things, due to the intensive exposure to the destination-language that children experience at school and because of their greater ability to learn because of their young age. Since there is an intensive form of contact between parents and their children, the destination-language proficiency of the children can positively influence that of their parents

(Chiswick & Miller, 2001). Besides the effect of contact with family members, also other types of contact play a role in the process of language acquisition. Remennick (2004) found that immigrants who are unemployed are the least proficient in the destination-language. This indicates that contact with colleagues is also important when learning the destination-language. Another example of the impact of exposure is residential segregation of immigrants which can contribute to a lesser degree of integration in the host society. Immigrants living segregated tend to have less contacts with natives and thus will be less exposed to the destination-language (Lievens, 2004; Stevens, 1992).

The degree of efficiency with which a migrant learns a new language is the second important mechanism concerning language proficiency following the model of Chiswick and Miller. Efficiency is seen as the extent of improvement in destination-language skills per unit of exposure. Chiswick and Miller (2001) assumed that people who have less human capital experience more difficulties when learning a new language. Age at migration, linguistic distance, school attainment and the reason for migration are determinants of destination-language proficiency which Chiswick and Miller (2001) mention as efficiency effects. With reference to this effect of efficiency on second-language acquisition, Chiswick and Miller (2001) and Stevens (1999) verified that younger people possess a greater capacity of learning a new language and this is how Stevens (1999) explains that people who migrated at a younger age are more proficient in speaking the destination-language. This also applies to immigrants with a native language that is linguistically very similar to the destination-language. Linguistic distance plays an important role when looking at efficiency. If the two relative languages are very different, it is more difficult for an immigrant to learn the new language than when the language spoken in the country of origin and the destination-language share many similarities. The reason for emigration is another aspect of efficiency (Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Mettler, 1987). Migrants that moved for reason other than economic are less likely to be favourably self-selected for labour market success in the country of destination. This is the case, because this kind of success is less important in their decision to migrate. For these migrants, the importance of learning the destination-language will be lower; in other words they will be less efficient in learning a foreign language (Chiswick & Miller, 2001). People with a higher level of education mostly have a greater ability to learn (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Van Tubergen & Kalmijn, 2005). Concerning education, the results of Gould, McManus and Welch (1983) proved that education outside the United States is significantly less valuable for destination-language proficiency than education within the United States. Still authors conclude that there is an effect of schooling on second-language fluency, depending on if this was achieved in or outside the destination country (Evans, 1986).

Next to the amount of exposure and the efficiency, language proficiency is an outcome of economic incentives. Language skills can increase an immigrants economic status and position, e.g. on the labour market (Van Tubergen and Kalmijn, 2005). Good language proficiency leads to a lower rate of unemployment (Chiswick and Miller, 2001). Chiswick and Miller (1997, 2001) assert that as a result of incentives, immigrants are motivated to learn a new language, because they will get advantages in return. Moreover, previous studies suggests that if an immigrant is single this creates incentives to learn the new language, because immigrants without a partner experience a bigger responsibility for carrying out the actions of daily living (Stevens, 1992). This requires proficiency in the destination-language.

This section can be concluded with the notion that previous research found significant effects for exposure, efficiency and economic incentives on destination-language proficiency. In accordance with the assumptions of Chiswick and Miller, all three mechanism are proven to operate. In the following section we look at the exposure mechanism in more detail. The theoretical model for this present study will be explained along with the hypotheses.

### **Present study**

Exposure is an important mechanism for immigrants when learning a new language, because without exposure to the destination-language, efficiency and incentives can not play their role either. As mentioned in the former section on previous research, post-migration exposure operates at two levels, duration of exposure and intensity of exposure. The importance of the length of stay is a clear example of the duration of exposure, while the intensity of exposure is more divers. Former research showed that social contact forms an important aspect of exposure to the second-language. Moreover researchers focused on different forms of contact and found significant effects. However, there is a lack of research that compares the different forms of contacts (e.g. with partner, children, colleagues, co-members in associations, friends or neighbours) and their importance in learning a new language. To fill this gap in the existing literature on destination-language proficiency, the goal of this research is to look at several kinds of contacts and compare their effect on immigrants' language proficiency. How do different forms of contact between immigrants and natives influence immigrants' destination-language? To get a more complete overview of the influences of different forms of social contact it is important to look at this question in more detail. A comparison should be made between different forms of an immigrants' contacts. One could have a look at the effect of mixed marriages, communicating with resident children, friendships with autochthonous people, membership in associations and interaction with colleagues and neighbours of the immigrants. In

order to analyse what the influence of these different forms of contact is, the following set of hypotheses is formulated.

First of all, one could argue that when an immigrant's often uses a foreign language it will be likely that the immigrant becomes more and more proficient in this second language. Since one usually spends much time with his/her partner, it could be an important determinant for the destination-language proficiency of immigrants what language they speak with their partners. From this perspective the following hypothesis can be derived:

*H1a). Destination-language proficiency is higher among immigrants who speak Dutch with their partner.*

Furthermore, the expectation is that immigrants who speak Dutch with their Dutch partner will be more proficient in their second language, than immigrants who speak Dutch with their partner from the country of origin (Chiswick and Miller, 1997; Chiswick and Miller, 2001). When immigrants speak the destination-language with a Dutch partner, their proficiency is expected to be higher, due to the exposure to the fluent Dutch proficiency of the native partner.

*H1b). Destination-language proficiency is higher among immigrants who speak Dutch with a Dutch partner than among immigrants who speak Dutch with a partner from the country of origin.*

As discussed before, previous research showed that there is an effect of living with children at home in the destination country on the parents destination-language proficiency. The expectation is that when immigrant parents speak Dutch with their children this will increase their proficiency. An explanation for this is the fact that children more easily learn Dutch (school, clubs and friends) and thereby facilitate their parents to learn from them (Chiswick & Miller, 2001).

*H2). The more often immigrants speak Dutch with their children, the better the immigrant's destination-language proficiency.*

As Remennick (2004) showed, unemployed immigrants have the worst destination-language proficiency. This indicates that contact with colleagues has a positive effect on this proficiency. An explanation for this can be that immigrants who have a job, spend much time with their colleagues and are thereby more exposed to the language of their colleagues. Taken together, this expectation leads to the following hypothesis.

*H3). The more immigrants have contact with Dutch colleagues, the better the immigrant's destination-language proficiency.*

Another type of social contact that exposes migrants to the Dutch language and thereby might improve their language proficiency, is contact with members of an association. When immigrants are a member of an association, most of the time this means that they will spend some time with their co-members during the week. If this association consists of mainly Dutch members, this will improve the immigrant's ability to speak Dutch. This is why the following hypothesis is formulated:

*H4). The more immigrants have contact with Dutch co-members in associations, the better the immigrant's destination-language proficiency.*

The fifth hypothesis is based on the contact immigrants have with their friends. Apart from the leisure time that is spent with family members, most people also invest in spending time with their friends. When an immigrant has many Dutch friends, it is more likely that they will speak Dutch with each other, which will improve their proficiency. On the contrary, immigrants with largely friends from their own ethnic group will miss opportunities to this kind of exposure.

*H5). The more immigrants have contact with Dutch friends, the better the immigrant's destination-language proficiency.*

The last form of contact taken into account is the contact immigrants have with their neighbours. When an immigrant has no contact with the neighbours, they are not exposed and this thus causes no improvement of destination-language proficiency. Lievens (2004) and Stevens (1992) showed that poor integration can be caused by residential segregation of immigrants. When immigrants live in segregation, they tend to have less contact with Dutch people, because Dutch people just do not live in the neighbourhood. This is why immigrants who live in segregated neighbourhoods are expected to be less proficient in Dutch than immigrants who are more exposed to the destination-language by living in a neighbourhood with (more) Dutch people.

*H6). When immigrants have contact with Dutch neighbours, their destination-language proficiency will be better.*

While all these forms of contact are expected to effect destination-language proficiency, there might be differences in the strength of the effects. In order to distinguish between the strength of effects, the different forms of contact are divided in contact in the public and private domain. The contact

within the private domain, the family situation at home (speaking Dutch with partner and children), is expected to have a stronger influence on destination-language proficiency than the forms of contact in the public domain, because family members normally are the most important people in a person's life, with regards to making decisions and way of living. The private domain is also the sector in which a person normally has the most interaction with others.

*H7). Contact with people from the private domain of the immigrant has a stronger effect on the immigrant's destination-language proficiency, than contact with people from the public domain.*

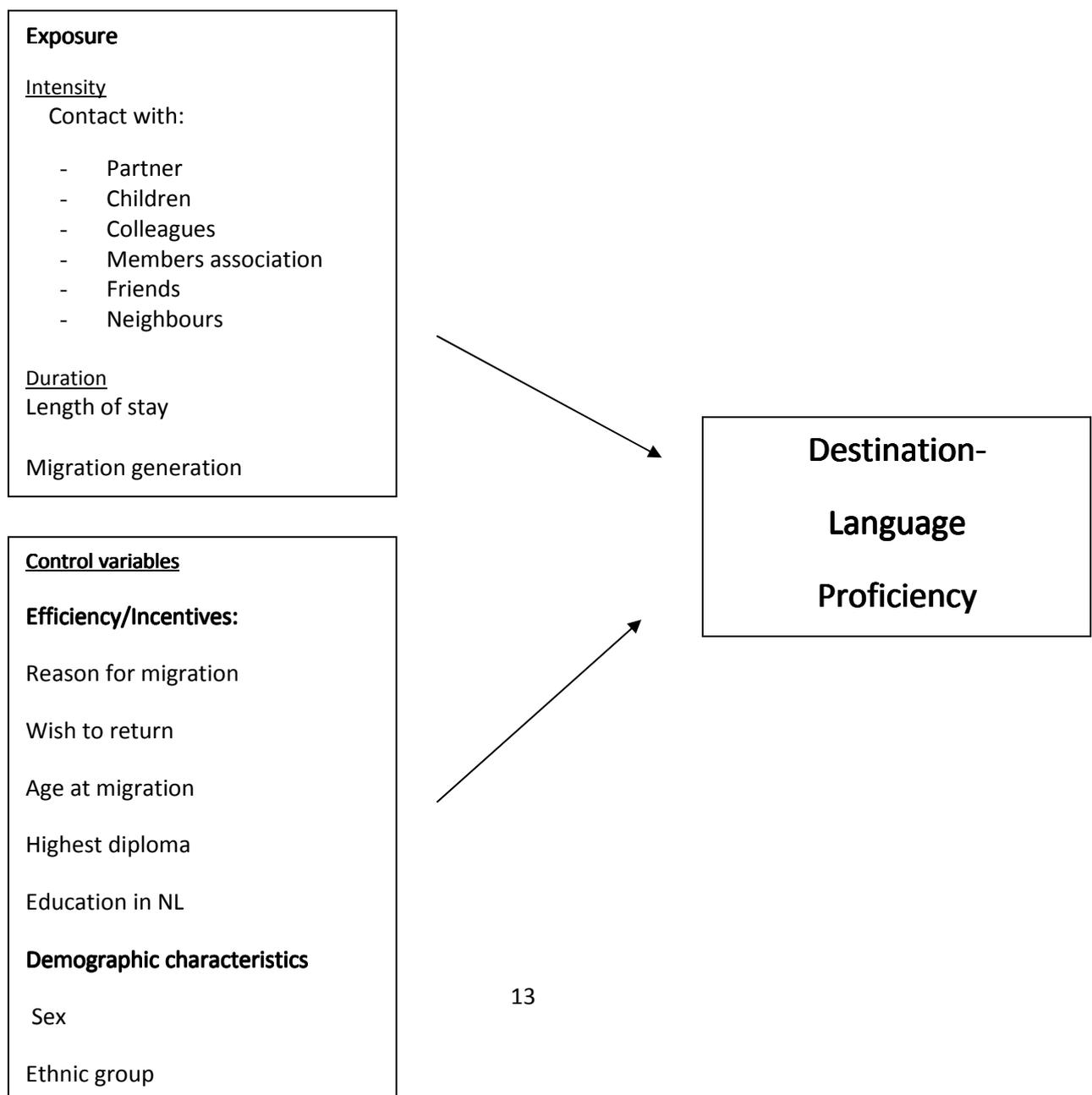
Former research indicates other variables that influence aspects of exposure (e.g. length of stay) as well as indicators related to efficiency and incentives. These will be presented below and will be taken into account as control variables. The length of stay can be of relevance for the influence of exposure. The expectation is that the more years an immigrant has lived in the destination country since immigration, the better the destination-language proficiency will be, because the immigrant has had a longer time span of exposure to the destination-language (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Van Tubergen and Kalmijn, 2005). In line with this, the migration generation can play a role in this process of language acquisition. The second generation immigrants are expected to have better proficiency in Dutch.

Then turning to indicators related to efficiency and incentives, the reason for migration forms one of the effects that will be controlled for in the analysis. As showed in previous research, immigrants that immigrated to the Netherlands for economic reasons are most likely to be favourably self-selected for labour market success in their country of destination (Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Mettler, 1987). This kind of success is less important in their decision to move to another country. Therefore the expectation is that immigrants that moved for an economic reason will be more proficient in the destination-language. Accompanying the reason for migration can be the immigrant's wish to return to the country of origin. When immigrants wish to return to their country of origin it will be less necessary for them to learn the destination-language, this can also increase when the immigrants sees the possibility to return. When immigrants wish to return to their country of origin and they see the possibility, it will be likely that they do not invest very much in learning this new language and thus become less proficient. Furthermore, age has been proven to have a negative effect on destination-language proficiency. Younger people are more proficient, because of their better ability to learn. This also explains why immigrants who migrated at a young age are likely to have a better second-language proficiency (Stevens, 1999). Moreover, achievements in school can influence Dutch language proficiency. Since people with more school achievement may also have a greater ability to learn (Chiswick & Miller, 1997; Chiswick & Miller, 2001; Van Tubergen & Kalmijn, 2005). A year of

education in the country of destination is proven to be more efficient for destination-language proficiency compared to a year of education outside this destination country (Gould, McManus & Welch; 1983). Finally, there are two demographic characteristics that can play an important role in this process, namely the immigrants' sex and the ethnic group they belong to. Based on the prediction that women are more confident in a social environment, Stevens (1992) discovered that female migrants have better destination-language proficiency than men. Following Stevens, gender will be included as a control variable with the expectation that woman will have better second-language proficiency than men. The last control variable is the ethnic background of an immigrant. Surinamese and Antilleans are expected to have a better proficiency in Dutch, because the linguistic distance between Dutch and the language in their home country is smaller than for Turks and Moroccans.

In the figure below, an overview of the indicators of destination-language proficiency is shown.

Figure 1. Indicators of destination-language proficiency.



## Data and Methods

When analysing and testing the hypotheses data from the survey 'Social Position of Facilities by Ethnic Minorities' from the year 1998 will be used. The SPVA has been collected in five consecutive waves in 1988, 1991, 1994, 1998 and 2002. Respondents from the four major non-western immigrant groups in the Netherlands, namely Moroccans, Turks, Antilleans and Surinamese, as well as Dutch people were questioned. The main aim of this survey is to get insight into the social-economical and social-cultural position of the four minority groups, in other words to investigate to what extent immigrants (from one of those minority groups) participate in the labour and educational market and to examine which values are important to them (Martens, 1998). For this survey the respondents were personally interviewed.

In the interviews of SPVA-98 the respondents were asked questions about language proficiency and about different forms of contact, among other things. What makes the dataset from 1998 unique is that in this version of the questionnaire the respondents were also asked to fill in questions about their contact and relationships with people from the neighbourhood. Therefore, this dataset is of great relevance since the aim of this research is to investigate the effect of several forms of social contact on destination-language proficiency and the effect of contact with neighbours can be taken into account.

Respondents from the cities Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Den Haag, Utrecht, Eindhoven, Enschede, Almere, Alphen aan den Rijn, Bergen op Zoom, Hoogezand-Sappemeer, Delft, Dordrecht and Tiel were interviewed personally. A large percentage of the four minority groups lived in these cities in 1998 which provides quite a large sample. However, the sample is still not entirely representative, because only immigrants from the large cities are interviewed. Although the percentage of immigrants living in rural areas is quite low, they were not at all approached to participate in the SPVA-98. Furthermore, this sample is not entirely representative since not all members of selected families had an equal chance of being interviewed. In the selected cities, the heads of the households were approached first. Afterwards also their family members were asked to participate in a smaller version of this interview (Martens, 1998). For this research the other family members are not included, because questions about interethnic contact were only included in the questionnaires for the heads of the households (Martens, 1998).

In 1998 the SPVA counted 6021 successful interviews among Moroccans (24.5%), Turks (26.8%), Surinamese (30.8%) and Antilleans (17.9%). Also Dutch respondents were interviewed (N=1489). However, the Dutch respondents are not included in the analyses because the Dutch people are naturally native Dutch speakers and this is the reason why it is irrelevant to study their proficiency in

the Dutch language. During the preparation of the dataset the data of 1042 respondents can not be entered due to missing values on different variables (from which the major ones are: Contacts with colleagues: 106 , Reason for migration: 102 and Return to country of origin: 51 missing values). Finally, 4979 respondents were entered into the analyses. In the SPVA-98 dataset, the population in the analyses, consists of 64.4% male heads of households and 35.6% females. The immigrants that had the longest duration of stay in the Netherlands had lived here for 71 years at the time of the interview. On the other hand, immigrants who migrated to the Netherlands that same year (1998), are also represented in this dataset. The average length of stay for the immigrants in the SPVA-98 dataset is 18.43 years and the average age at migration was 21.61 years.

In the following section the dependent and independent variables will be described. All the dependent and independent variables with their range and mean or proportions are presented in table 1.

\*\*\* Table 1 about here \*\*\*

### **Dependent Variables**

To measure the dependent variable of this research is 'destination-language proficiency'. In order to measure this dependent variable a scale is constructed from two questions. The first question asked whether the respondent experiences problems when speaking Dutch and the second one asked whether the respondent experiences problems with reading, e.g. newspapers, in Dutch. If respondents did not have any problems with speaking Dutch, they were not asked the second question, but were directly considered as people who never experience problems with reading. From those two variables one new continuous variable is constructed, a 5-point scale ranging from 1 to 3. A higher score stands for better proficiency in the Dutch language. For instance, a percentage of 15.4% of the respondents always, or at least often, has difficulties when speaking or reading in Dutch (which thus is the first category). To the contrary, 54.0% of the respondents never experiences any problems when reading or speaking Dutch. The mean score for this variable in the SPVA-98 dataset is 2.38, which indicates that the average person from the interviewed people experiences very little problems with the Dutch language.

### **Independent Variables**

The independent variables measure the different forms of social contact in order to test the hypotheses. All the independent variables are entered into the analyses as dummies. First of all, to examine the respondents' language proficiency, it is important to see if a respondent has a partner. Unfortunately, this question was not available from the SPVA-98 dataset. As an alternative, the

variable 'cohabitation' was used to see if the respondents were living together with their partner. This variable was used to construct a new variable which measures the extent to which immigrants speak Dutch with their partner. Thus, for distinguishing between having a partner or not, the variable 'cohabitation' is used. For this new variable (*Speaking Dutch with partner*) there exist four categories: Not having a partner, having a partner from the country of origin (or other country) and never speaking Dutch with this partner, having a partner from the country of origin (or other country) and speaking Dutch with this partner and having a Dutch partner. The first category contains the immigrants with no partner, but this also includes the immigrants in a relationship, but who are not living together with their partner. This is the case, because from the SPVA-98 dataset this information was not available. The second independent variable is used to measure another determinant in the private domain, namely the number of children living at home. This varies from having no children at all, having one child or having two or more children. What is more important for the effect of those two variables, is whether the respondents speak Dutch with those family members. For speaking Dutch with the resident children (*Speaking Dutch with children*) four answers are possible. The first category consists of all the respondents who have no children living at home. The respondents in the second category never speak Dutch with their children. The third category represents those who sometimes speak Dutch with the children living at home. The fourth category contains all the immigrants who always or often speak Dutch with their children.

Secondly, the independent variables that represent the more public domain will be presented, more specific the variables that measure interethnic contact with colleagues, co-members in associations, friends, and neighbours. Firstly, *Contact with colleagues* consists of 4 categories: No contact with colleagues, more contact with colleagues from the own ethnic group, same amount of contact with colleagues from both groups and more contact with Dutch colleagues. The immigrants who have no contact with colleagues are unemployed immigrants. These answer categories are similar for the *Contact with members of associations*. The category 'no contact' for the contact with members of associations consists of the non-members of associations. Also for friends (*Contact with friends*) the same division of answering categories applies and the 'no contact' category represents the people who have no contact with friends in their leisure time. In the latter variable, the definition of friends consists of all the people that the respondent had contact with in their leisure time, e.g. friends and acquaintances. Finally, the variable *Contact with neighbours* includes the following answers: No contact, only contact with neighbours from own ethnic group, contact with neighbours from own ethnic group and Dutch neighbours and only contact with Dutch neighbours. Respondents in the category 'no contact' do not necessarily have no contact at all with their neighbours. There is a possibility that these respondents only have contact with neighbours from other population groups,

but this is not of interest for this research. Finally, there is also a category ‘contact with neighbours unknown’ in which the respondents were placed that did not answer this question. Since this category contains rather many respondents, a dummy is entered into the analyses for this category as well.

### **Control variables**

Although the main independent variables concern different forms of interethnic contact, the former sections proposed some other variables that also play an important role in determining language proficiency. Therefore the set of control variables is quite large. All the control variables are entered into the analyses as dummies.

The first variable that will be controlled for, is the prospect of return migration. In other words, whether someone desires to return to the country of origin, and if they do, whether they see a possibility to do so (*Return to country of origin*). Within this variable, the possible answers are: wishes to return and sees a possibility, wishes to return but does not see a possibility, does not know if he/she wishes to return, does not want to return.

*Ethnic group* is a variable that controls for the ethnicity of the respondent with four categories, namely Moroccans, Turks, Antilleans and Surinamese. These four groups are entered in the analyses as dummies. The background of these different ethnicities imply a different approach to the Dutch language. For instance, linguistic distance plays a role when examining ethnic groups.

Looking at the background of the respondents, it is important to make a division between the first or the second generation immigrants (*Migration generation*). The children who migrated at an age lower than 6 years are also included within the group of second generation immigrants. Again this control variable is constructed as a dummy.

Gender has an effect on destination-language proficiency of immigrants. Therefore the variable that measures the respondents’ *Sex* (*0 stands for males and 1 stands for females*) is included. The fact that the respondents are not equally distributed, regarding their gender might be due to the fact that only the heads of the household were interviewed. Within the four major minority groups in the Netherlands many families are traditional and in these families the men functions as head of the household.

To control for the time the respondents has been living in the Netherlands in the year of the interview, the variable *Length of stay* was constructed. The age of the immigrants at the moment of

migration also has an effect on their language proficiency (*Age at migration*). These two variables were constructed as continuous variables.

Another variable that will be controlled for is the *Reason of migration*. From a large set of possible answers three main categories were computed. From the dataset, three major groups of reasons were distinguished, namely respondents that migrated for an economic reason, immigrants who migrated for a family-related reason and the remainder migrated for other reasons.

The final control variables that are included concern educational background. First of all the level of education is included (*Highest diploma*). This categorical variable contains the highest achieved diploma either in the country of origin or in the Netherlands (depending on which is the highest). This variable consists of five categories, namely 'no education', 'primary education', 'secondary education (VBO, Mavo, MBO, Havo and VWO)', 'tertiary education (containing those respondents with a HBO or university educational level)' and lastly a category with the respondents of whom the education is unknown. Beside this it is of interest to see if an immigrant was educated in the Netherlands or not (*Education in the Netherlands*). Approximately 50% of the respondents followed at least a part of their education in the Netherlands.

In order to test the formulated hypotheses, multiple linear regression analyses have been done. The next section presents the results for the analyses to the effect of different forms of social contact on the destination-language proficiency of immigrants in the Netherlands.

## Results

In this section the results of the analyses will be presented in order to formulate an answer to the research question: how do different forms of contact between immigrants and natives influence immigrants' destination-language proficiency? The results are presented in table 2.

\*\*\* Table 2 about here \*\*\*

In this table, two models are showed. The first model presents the results from the regression analysis with all the independent variables included, but without controlling for other possible effects (control variables). The second model includes the results from the regression analysis with all contact variables (the independent variables), while controlling for the effect of other possible important variables. It is important to see how big the proportion of variability is explained by the two models in the analyses. The R-square for model 1 is .338 and model 2 explains 52.1% of the

immigrants' destination-language proficiency. Because of this large proportion of variability, the analyses are quite strong, which makes this research more relevant.

While one can compare the results from model 1 with the expectations from the hypotheses, to test if the hypotheses can be confirmed the control variables need to be taken into account (model 2). In both models the dependent variable is the immigrants' destination-language proficiency. As a reference category for all the independent variables, the 'no contact'-category is chosen. For the variable *Speaking Dutch with partner* an exception is made, because the category that stands for not speaking Dutch with a partner, because of the absence of a partner includes the respondents that are not living together with a partner. Moreover, this variable includes those immigrants who have a partner, but live separately. Therefore, using this category as a reference would be difficult, because then it is not clear what the comparison group is. Consequently, for this variable it is more useful to compare the results with the reference category that contains the immigrants who have a partner from the country of origin and do not speak Dutch with this partner.

From the first model one can see many significant results are found. For instance, *Speaking Dutch with partner* has a significant effect on the destination-language proficiency of immigrants. Having a Dutch partner or a partner from the country of origin and speaking Dutch with this partner has a positive effect on the acquisition of Dutch compared to having a partner from the origin country and not speaking Dutch with him or her. Having no partner has an even stronger positive effect compared to having a partner from the country of origin with whom the respondent does not speak Dutch with. From previous research, it has been shown that when an immigrant is single this creates incentives to learn the destination-language, because these immigrants have a higher need to be able to communicate in Dutch in their daily lives (Stevens, 1992), as supported by the analyses in this research. However, when the control variables are taken into account in the second regression model (model 2), the effect of the independent variable *speaking Dutch with partner* disappears. These results can test the first two hypotheses which stated that destination-language proficiency is higher among immigrants who speak Dutch with their partner and that this will be higher among immigrants with a Dutch partner in comparison to immigrants who speak Dutch with their partner from the country of origin. When one takes a look at the hypotheses again and compares those with the results from the regression analyses, one can see in table 2 that the first hypothesis (*H1a*) is in line with what is found, but only when not controlling for the other influences (model 1). Among immigrants who speak Dutch with their partner, the destination-language proficiency is higher, than among immigrants who do not speak Dutch with their partner. In order to test the second hypothesis on the partner (*H1b*), another model is ran, where the reference category is changed in to the group

of immigrants that have a partner from the country of origin with whom they speak Dutch (results not presented in table 2). Concerning the first model, without the control variables, the results are not in line with the expectation (Model 1,  $B = -.269^{**}$ ). Speaking Dutch with a partner from the country of origin has a more positive effect on the immigrant's destination-language proficiency, than when an immigrant speaks Dutch with a Dutch partner, which is against what was expected. When controlling for other effects (Model 2,  $B = -.166$ ), the results are not significant. With the results found in this analysis, one can not confirm this hypothesis, because the direction is not as expected and the results are not significant and therefore not lead to any final conclusions. To sum up, controlling for other effects on second-language acquisition, one can not confirm either of the two hypotheses on the effect of *Speaking Dutch with partner* on an immigrant's destination-language proficiency.

The second type of social contact hypothesized to influence destination-language proficiency of immigrants is speaking Dutch with the children. Table 2 shows that never *Speaking Dutch with children* has a strong negative effect on destination-language proficiency compared to having no children at all. This result was found for both models, although the effect was stronger in the model without control variables. Thus, when immigrants do not communicate with their children in Dutch, their own Dutch language proficiency will be lower than it would if they would have no children. The effect of sometimes speaking Dutch with the resident children is rather strange. This effect is significant in the first model without control variables, but negative. This means that it is worse for the immigrants' language proficiency to sometimes speak Dutch to their children than when they have no children at all. However, this effect was not longer significant once the control variables were introduced in the second model. Lastly, the effect of often speaking Dutch with children is positive and highly significant ( $p < .001$ ). Thus, when an immigrant speaks Dutch with their children (living at home) often, their Dutch-language proficiency will be better than when an immigrant does not have children. When the effect of speaking Dutch with children is controlled by the control variables, the strength of the effect is smaller, but stays significant and in the same direction. Following the results presented above, we can partly confirm the hypothesis ( $H2$ ), but not completely due to the non-significant negative effect of sometimes speaking Dutch with children. What we can conclude is that when immigrants predominantly speak Dutch with their children, the immigrant's destination-language proficiency will be higher.

The third independent variable, *Contact with colleagues*, seems to have a significant effect on the destination-language proficiency of immigrants. In table 2, one can see that having more contact with colleagues from the own ethnic group has a small, but significant positive effect on the proficiency in Dutch in the first model, however in the second model this effect is no longer

significant. However, having more contact with Dutch colleagues and having the same amount of contact with Dutch colleagues and colleagues from the own ethnic group both have a positive and significant effect on the immigrants' proficiency in the destination-language compared with unemployed immigrants. These results are found in both the first and the second model and thereby confirm the third hypothesis. Having the same amount of contact with colleagues from their own ethnic group and with Dutch colleagues causes better language proficiency for immigrants than when they are unemployed and thus has no contact with colleagues at all. *Having more contact with Dutch colleagues* also has a stronger positive effect on the respondents' proficiency in the Dutch language. Although having more contact with colleagues from the own ethnic group has no significant effect on Dutch language proficiency, the hypothesis is supported by these findings. This result implies that having contact with Dutch colleagues enhances language proficiency, but having less or no contact with Dutch colleagues has no negative effect.

Furthermore, the fourth hypothesis stated that the more immigrants have contact with Dutch co-members in associations, the better the immigrant's destination-language proficiency. In table 2 the results for *Contact with co-members of associations* show a positive influence on the proficiency in the Dutch language compared with the immigrants that are not members of an association, although this effect disappears when controlling for other variables. In the first model, the effect of the immigrants who have contact with Dutch co-members is stronger and have a higher significance level than the effect of having more contact with the members from the own ethnic group. Interesting is that having more contact with members of the own ethnic group, still seem to have a positive influence on language proficiency. Even though there is slightly contact with Dutch members, this still improves language proficiency. However, since the effects are no longer significant in the second model, the hypothesis (*H4*) on the effect of contact with co-members in associations can not be confirmed.

As expected in hypothesis 5, for the variable *Contact with friends*, contact with Dutch friends improves the Dutch language proficiency. All the categories of having more contact with friends from own ethnic group in leisure time, having the same amount of contact with friends from both groups in leisure time as well as having more contact with Dutch friends, showed to have a significant positive effect on language proficiency (table 2). All of the respondent in these three categories have better language proficiency than respondents who do not have any contact with Dutch people in their leisure time. In the first model, the effect becomes stronger as the immigrants have more contact with Dutch friends. In model 2 one can see that where the strength of the effect of having more contact with friends from the own ethnic group is rather small, the other two categories seem to have a much stronger influence. Comparing these results with the hypothesis (*H5*) on the effect of

contact with friends in leisure time on the destination-language proficiency of immigrants, it can be concluded that contact with Dutch friends has a positive influence on language proficiency, though it is not necessarily true that more contact with Dutch friends will lead to a higher level of language proficiency. Thereby the hypothesis is partly supported.

Finally, the results of the independent variable *Contact with neighbours* are presented in table 2. Although the first model finds significant effects for contact with neighbours, these results are no longer significant when the control variables are included in the second model. The results of the first model indicate that having only contact with neighbours from the own ethnic group negatively affects the destination-language proficiency of the immigrants, compared to having no contact with neighbours at all. From the other results in model 1, one can see that it is also more negative for immigrants' proficiency in Dutch if they have contact with neighbours from both groups in comparison to having no contact with neighbours. With these results, the expected positive effect of having contact with Dutch neighbours on immigrants' proficiency in Dutch is not confirmed. After controlling for other relevant determinants, the effect of having contact with neighbours on the immigrants' destination-language proficiency is no longer significant. Thus, these results provide no evidence for the sixth hypotheses ( $H6$ ).

According to the seventh hypothesis ( $H7$ ), it was expected that contact with people from the private domain will have a stronger effect on second-language proficiency of the immigrant than contact with people from the public domain. Although the results for speaking Dutch with children had a significant effect, having contact with colleagues and friends also showed to be of great relevance. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis can not be confirmed, as both domains play an important role in the process of second-language proficiency.

Furthermore, interesting significant effects were found for most of the control variables. First of all, in line with the expectation when an immigrant wishes to return to the country of origin and also sees a possibility to return this has a more negative effect on his or her destination-language proficiency than when he/she does not want to return. On the contrary, immigrants who desire to return to the country of origin, but do not see a possibility to do so, have an even worse language proficiency than immigrants who see a possibility compared to the immigrants who do not want to return.

Secondly, the control variables for ethnic background proved to play a very big and significant role on the immigrant's proficiency in Dutch. All three groups; Moroccans, Surinamese, Antilleans have better language proficiency than the reference category; the Turks. Especially for the immigrants

belonging to the Antillean or Surinamese ethnic group, a strong effect was found (B: .628 & B: .708). Immigrants from these two groups also have better Dutch language proficiency than immigrants from the Turkish ethnic group and this is as expected.

Furthermore, the results show that second migration generation immigrants indeed have less problems with speaking or reading in Dutch than first migration generation immigrants. Remarkable is that the expected effect for gender is not confirmed by the small non-significant differences found in table 2. The fourth significant control variable is the age of the immigrant at the moment of migration. Although this effect is significant (at the .001 level), the effect is rather small. The older an immigrant is at the moment of immigration into the Netherlands, the worse the destination-language proficiency. The following results concern the reason for migration. Immigrants who migrated to the Netherlands for a family-related reason are less proficient in Dutch than immigrants who migrated for an economic reason. Immigrants who migrated for reasons other than an economic or family-related reason have more proficiency in Dutch language than immigrants who immigrated for an economic reason. Finally there were found significant results for the effect of education. First of all, all immigrants who have any kind of education have better destination-language proficiency than the immigrants who have no education at all. The effect is stronger when the educational level is higher and this is in line with the findings from previous research. All the results for this control variable are significant ( $p < .001$ ). Lastly, if an immigrant was educated in the Netherlands this has a quite strong and significant ( $p = .001$ ) positive effect on the immigrants' Dutch proficiency. Immigrants who were educated in the Netherlands have less problems with reading and speaking in Dutch than immigrants who were not educated in the Netherlands. For the control variables the length of stay and the gender of the immigrants no significant results were found.

## **Conclusion and Discussion**

To bring the paper to a close, this section will summarise the main points. The aim of this research was to study the role of different forms of social contact in immigrants' destination-language proficiency. The gap in existing research was that this subject could be studied in greater detail and it would be interesting to make a comparison between different forms of social contact. In order to test the hypotheses on the effect of social contact on destination-language proficiency of immigrants in the Netherlands, multiple linear regression analyses have been done.

What we can conclude from the results of this research is that contact matters. Having contact, independent of if this involves contact with people from the own ethnic group or Dutch people, has an effect on destination-language proficiency compared to having no contact at all. Comparing all the

different forms of social contact, having contact with friends proves to have a relevant effect on an immigrant's destination-language proficiency. Whether immigrants speak Dutch with their children also plays an important role, as well as having contact with colleagues. The conclusion of these findings, is that exposure matters because different kinds of social contact have different relevance for the proficiency in Dutch among immigrants of the four main minority groups in the Netherlands. Thus, this research contributes to knowledge about integration by its improvement to former research, also due to the high proportion of variability. Exposure determinants were studied in more detail and the different effects of different forms of social contact were compared. For the Dutch setting, the ideas of Chiswick and Miller are supported, by the results of this research, however not all types of intensity of exposure are proven to play an important role in the process of second-language acquisition.

When comparing the results from the two models, one can see that the control variables have a big influence. In the model without the control variables, most effects were significant. However, when entering the control variables into the analysis, the effects of the contact variables declined. Sometimes the effect became non-significant when entering the control variables. While the second model was used to test the hypotheses and thus sometimes did not confirm the hypotheses, the first model indicated the expected direction. The disappearance of the significant effect could be due to the indirect effect of another variable, for instance one of the control variables.

Speaking Dutch with resident children has an important effect on destination-language proficiency of immigrants. Often speaking Dutch with children increases an immigrants proficiency in the Dutch language. Thus, for the parents predominantly speaking Dutch with the children positively effects the second-language proficiency, but it is possible that for the children bilingualism is better. Other important effects on immigrants' destination-language proficiency concern contact with colleagues and friends.

An important finding is the fact that having contact with people whom you see often, namely the children, colleagues and friends, is more important to destination-language proficiency among immigrants than having contact with people whom you see less (contact with members of associations and neighbours). However, the SPVA-98 does not provide information about the frequency of contact. Thus, future research should put more emphasize on the effect of frequency of contact with different people in an immigrants social life in order to clear this lack of knowledge.

The additional knowledge gained by identifying important indicators of language proficiency can help when designing policy, for more successful integration of immigrants. For instance, contact with

Dutch colleagues has an important effect on immigrants' destination-language proficiency. Therefore, policy makers should develop a policy that provides immigrants with more contact with Dutch colleagues and that thus contributes to less segregation at the workplace.

Furthermore, no effects were found having contact with co-members of associations and neighbours. In general, not much time is spent with members of associations, what can explain the absence of effect from this form of contact. Moreover, an explanation can be that when an immigrant is present at the association his/her focus is mostly not on communicating with other members. That having contact with Dutch neighbours does not have an impact on the immigrants' proficiency in Dutch can be due to the fact that for most of the inhabitants of the Netherlands the neighbours do not form an important part in the social network, since the Dutch society has become more and more individualistic (Poppenoe, 1993).

Finally, the expected role of speaking Dutch with the partner is not supported by the results from this research on immigrants in the Netherlands. The difference between speaking Dutch with a Dutch partner and speaking Dutch with a partner from the country of origin (in the first model) can be due to the different point of reference. Immigrants with a Dutch partner compare their proficiency in Dutch with a native Dutch speaker, while immigrants who speak Dutch with their partner from the country of origin are likely to compare with their partner's level of Dutch proficiency. When controlling for control variables, no effect is found of speaking Dutch with the partner, which is unexpected. In general, the intensity of contact with the partner is very high, which indicates an important influence, but this was not found by this research. This result is also unpredicted, because previous research found an effect of the partner on immigrants' destination-language proficiency.

A limitation to this research is whether or not causality plays a part in this process. Having contact with other people effects an immigrant's destination-language proficiency, but it might be the case that when immigrants speak Dutch that they more easily find a job, which provides them of contact with colleagues. Another example is that immigrants who are proficient in the Dutch language, probably have more Dutch friends since they find Dutch friends more easily. In conclusion, different forms of social contact play an important role in the destination-language proficiency of immigrants in the Netherlands but further research should take a look at the other way of this process, the possible effect of second-language proficiency on the role of social contact. Another limitation to this research is that while integration of immigrants is such a topical issue, the dataset (SPVA-98) is already more than ten years old. It would be interesting to have more current information. Finally, the measurement of the effect of speaking Dutch with a partner was not ideal, because of the lack of information on 'having a partner' in the dataset.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics of all variables in the analyses (N= 4979)

	Range	Prop./Mean (+ S.D.)
<b>Dependent variables</b>		
Dutch language proficiency	1-3	2.382 (.7631)
<b>Independent variables</b>		
Speaking Dutch with partner		
<i>No, No partner</i>	0/1	.391
<i>No, Partner from country of origin</i>	0/1	.498
<i>Yes, Partner from country of origin</i>	0/1	.021
<i>Yes, Dutch partner</i>	0/1	.089
Speaking Dutch with children		
<i>No, No children living at home</i>	0/1	.389
<i>No, Never</i>	0/1	.150
<i>Yes, Sometimes</i>	0/1	.222
<i>Yes, Often</i>	0/1	.238
Contact with colleagues		
<i>Unemployed</i>	0/1	.464
<i>More contact with colleagues from own ethnic group</i>	0/1	.048
<i>Same amount of contact with colleagues from both groups</i>	0/1	.168
<i>More contact with Dutch colleagues</i>	0/1	.320
Contact with members of associations		
<i>Not a member of an association</i>	0/1	.733
<i>More contact with members of associations from own ethnic group</i>	0/1	.118
<i>Same amount of contact with members of associations from both groups</i>	0/1	.085
<i>More contact with Dutch members of associations</i>	0/1	.064
Contact with friends		
<i>No contact with Dutch people in leisure time</i>	0/1	.312
<i>More contact with friends from own ethnic group in leisure time</i>	0/1	.269
<i>Same amount of contact with friends from both groups in leisure time</i>	0/1	.264
<i>More contact with Dutch friends</i>	0/1	.155
Contact with neighbours		
<i>No contact with neighbours</i>	0/1	.072
<i>Only contact with neighbours from own ethnic group</i>	0/1	.067
<i>Contact with neighbours from own ethnic group and Dutch people</i>	0/1	.574
<i>Only contact with Dutch neighbours</i>	0/1	.123

<i>Contact with neighbours unknown</i>	0/1	.164
<b>Control variables</b>		
Return to country of origin		
<i>Wishes and sees the possibility of return</i>	0/1	.211
<i>Wishes, but does not see the possibility of return</i>	0/1	.178
<i>Does not know if he/she wants to return</i>	0/1	.176
<i>Does not want to return</i>	0/1	.434
Ethnic group		
<i>Turks</i>	0/1	.268
<i>Moroccans</i>	0/1	.245
<i>Surinamese</i>	0/1	.308
<i>Antilleans</i>	0/1	.179
Migration generation		
<i>First generation</i>	0/1	.894
<i>Second generation</i>	0/1	.106
Sex		
<i>Male</i>	0/1	.644
<i>Female</i>	0/1	.356
Length of stay	0-71	18.43 (9.382)
Age at migration	0-75	21.61
Reason for migration		
<i>Economic reason</i>	0/1	.457
<i>Family-related reason</i>	0/1	.267
<i>Other</i>	0/1	.276
Highest diploma		
<i>No education</i>	0/1	.184
<i>Primary education</i>	0/1	.261
<i>Secondary education</i>	0/1	.350
<i>Tertiary education</i>	0/1	.092
<i>Education unknown</i>	0/1	.113
Education in the Netherlands		
<i>Yes</i>	0/1	.466
<i>No</i>	0/1	.534
Total N (valid cases) : 4979		

Table 2. Regression analysis: dependent variable: Destination Language Proficiency.

	Model 1		Model 2	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
<b>Independent variables</b>				
Speaking Dutch with partner (ref. No, Partner from country of origin )				
<i>No, No partner</i>	.245 ***	.022	.032	.023
<i>Yes, Partner from country of origin</i>	.192 **	.066	.025	.057
<i>Yes, Dutch partner</i>	.118 **	.038	-.044	.033
Speaking Dutch with children (ref. no children)				
<i>No, Never</i>	-.415 ***	.031	-.134 ***	.028
<i>Yes, Sometimes</i>	-.207 ***	.027	-.020	.024
<i>Yes, Often</i>	.272 ***	.025	.075 ***	.023
Contact with colleagues (ref. unemployed)				
<i>More contact with colleagues from own ethnic group</i>	.091*	.043	.016	.040
<i>Same amount of contact with colleagues from both groups</i>	.222 ***	.026	.081 ***	.026
<i>More contact with Dutch colleagues</i>	.297 ***	.022	.101 ***	.024
Contact with members of associations (ref. not a member)				
<i>More contact with members of associations from own ethnic group</i>	.058 *	.029	.020	.025
<i>Same amount of contact with members of associations from both groups</i>	.108 **	.035	.005	.030
<i>More contact with Dutch members of associations</i>	.099 *	.040	.007	.035
Contact with friends (ref. no contact with Dutch friends)				
<i>More contact with friends from own ethnic group in leisure time</i>	.147 ***	.025	.084 ***	.021
<i>Same amount of contact with friends from both groups in leisure time</i>	.365 ***	.026	.247 ***	.023
<i>More contact with Dutch friends</i>	.377 ***	.034	.205 ***	.030
Contact with neighbours (ref. no contact with neighbours)				
<i>Only contact with neighbours from own ethnic group</i>	-.157 ***	.049	-.046	.042
<i>Contact with neighbours from own ethnic group and Dutch neighbours</i>	-.074 *	.037	-.002	.031
<i>Only contact with Dutch neighbours</i>	.044	.045	.030	.038
<i>Contact with neighbours unknown</i>	-.087 *	.042	.024	.037

<b>Control variables</b>		
Return to country of origin (ref. Does not want to return)		
<i>Wishes and sees the possibility of return</i>	-.046 *	.021
<i>Wishes, but does not see the possibility of return</i>	-.068 **	.022
<i>Does not know if he/she wants to return</i>	-.038	.022
Ethnic group (ref. Turks)		
<i>Moroccans</i>	.277 ***	.023
<i>Surinamese</i>	.708 ***	.027
<i>Antilleans</i>	.628 ***	.031
Migration generation (ref. first generation)		
<i>Second generation</i>	.097 *	.040
Sex (ref. male)		
<i>Female</i>	.007	.021
Length of stay		
	.001	.001
Age at migration		
	-.008 ***	.001
Reason for migration (ref. economic reason)		
<i>Family-related reason</i>	-.059 **	.021
<i>Other</i>	.130 ***	.020
Highest diploma (ref. no education)		
<i>Primary education</i>	.163 ***	.025
<i>Secondary education</i>	.307 ***	.028
<i>Tertiary education</i>	.326 ***	.038
<i>Education unknown</i>	.250 ***	.037
Education in the Netherlands (ref. no)		
<i>Yes</i>	.223 ***	.023
<b>Total N (valid cases)</b>	<b>4979</b>	<b>4979</b>

\* p<.05; \*\* p<.01; \*\*\* p<.001