

# Acculturation orientations of French and Turkish speakers in France

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## 1. Introduction

In this study, we explore the possible impact of integration policies of the host society on the adaptation of Turkish immigrants in France. Generally, a strong relationship between language behaviour and acculturation patterns of immigrants is assumed (Berry 1997, Bourhis et al. 1997, Bourhis 2001, Giles et al. 1977). It is generally assumed that the stronger the social integration of minority group members, the higher the linguistic shift of the minority group to the mainstream language. Alternatively, the least social and linguistic integration in the receiving community is associated with high language maintenance (LM) patterns. Minority language use is seen as a form of social behaviour, linked to other forms of social action (Fishman 2003). Unless language use is studied as part of macro-social processes, the overall social mechanisms and dynamics influential on outcomes such as language maintenance and shift can be overlooked. Language use is generally gauged through surveys and ethnographic studies. Conducting only survey studies might not help identifying the whole range of social processes and dynamics involved in language behaviour. Similarly, using ethnographic methods only provides evidence for observable patterns of situated social behaviour of a few informants. To obtain more valid results, complementary types of data are necessary. Maintenance of ancestral languages does not necessarily mean defying social and linguistic integration into the mainstream society. All over the world, people want to gain access to better jobs, better opportunities, and better schooling, all of which require a good command of the mainstream language. In researching the macro and micro-linguistic factors involved in LM and shift, the relative weights of the mainstream language and the ancestral language in expressing socio-cultural identity, in conveying communicative value in different social domains, and in constituting symbolic meaning need to be understood. In general, if a language has managed to create its own linguistic marketplace, it is most likely that speakers will go on using it in certain domains. Nonetheless, not all immigrants make the same linguistic choices. For an effective investigation, there needs to be a distinction between different social sub-groups and generations of immigrants. Furthermore, given the interactive nature of language contact situations, the effects of the receiving societies' attitudes and policies concerning acculturation of immigrants need to be identified as well. In order to explore the relationship between state policies and immigrants' integration patterns, Turkish immigrants' intergenerational language use and attitudes towards multilingualism are examined in this paper.

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## 2. Maintenance or shift

One of the basic premises of this research is that linguistic and cultural integration is not one-dimensional; rather acculturation orientations and language policies of the receiving societies have a considerable degree of effect on language use and integration patterns of minority groups. State integration policies consist of approaches and measures adopted by state agencies to help immigrants integrate within the host society. Integration policies can also include measures to enhance host community acceptance of immigrants. Bourhis (2001) claims that as a result of the interaction between mainstream and minority acculturation orientations, there can be *consensual*, *problematic* or *conflictual* relational outcomes. When the minority group members adopt the linguistic and cultural identity of the dominant majority while retaining their own linguistic and cultural identity, they integrate into the mainstream society successfully. If the host society agrees with the integration of the minority, then there is consensus between the groups. However, if the host asks for full linguistic and cultural assimilation and the minority is against assimilation, then the outcome is problematic in terms of intergroup relations. If the majority group is segregationist against the minority, then, irrespective of the minority group's acculturation orientation, the situation is conflictual.

In the literature, four clusters of state ideologies shaping integration and language policies of immigrant receiving societies are identified (Bauböck et al. 1996, Bourhis 2001, Penninx 1996). These are pluralist, civic, assimilationist, and ethnist ideologies. In *pluralist ideology*, the state provides support for language classes and cultural activities to promote mother tongue maintenance next to second language proficiency. *Civic ideology* expects that immigrants adopt the public values of the mainstream society. The state neither interferes with the private values of its citizens nor provides any provisions for the maintenance or promotion of linguistic or cultural values of minorities. *Assimilation ideology* expects linguistic and cultural assimilation into the mainstream society. In the name of homogenisation of the society, assimilationist language policies aim at accelerating language shift. *Ethnist ideology* shares most aspects of assimilation ideology; yet, it makes it difficult for immigrant minorities to be accepted legally or socially as full members of the mainstream society. Naturalisation laws are helpful for distinguishing ethnist ideologies. The principle of *ius sanguinis* underlies acquisition of citizenship in such countries. On the basis of the state ideologies briefly described here, France broadly fits the assimilationist ideology. In some cases state policies do not find wider support among the public; in that respect this research will enable the assessment of the accuracy of this hypothetical clustering.

The integration strategy reflects a desire to maintain core values of the minority culture while also adopting norms and values of the host society. Assimilation takes place when maintenance of the minority culture is seen as unnecessary while adaptation to the mainstream culture has utmost priority. The separation strategy reflects maintenance of ethnic values and language, while rejecting the culture of the host society. Marginalization refers to a rejection of both the immigrant and the host culture. In order to reflect on the state ideologies and their possible effects on acculturation strategies of minority groups, having the same ethnolinguistic group in four different contexts belonging to dif-



ferent ideological clusters would yield highly relevant results. By using the Interactive Acculturation Model of Bourhis et al. (1997), Turkish immigrant and mainstream group acculturation orientations, as possible determinants of language maintenance and shift can be identified.

### **3. Attitudes towards immigrants**

Increasing social, religious and cultural conflicts between the host and immigrant groups puts integration very high on the agenda of immigrant receiving states. Social processes cannot be divorced from their socio-cultural contexts. Without a thorough understanding of the context of situation, it would not be possible to uncover the dynamics causing these socio-cultural conflicts. In the European context, most of the conflicts reported in the media are related to migrant communities and their cultural practices. Immigrants and asylum seekers are constantly posed as aliens and invaders who threaten the integrity and homogeneity of national identity (Crowley & Hickman 2008). For mainstream people, migration and migrants represent some kind of social and cultural threat and some politicians misuse the fear of outsider to gain popularity and to increase their votes. When such politicians show migrants as threats to social cohesion and harmony in the society, they appeal to the fears of common people to increase their votes. As a result, immigrants' position as outsiders is strengthened in the public psyche and managing migration and promoting social cohesion appear to be a greater challenge for policy makers in most European nation states. In addition, because most European countries have not considered themselves as countries of immigration, coming to terms with social and cultural changes become much harder. Especially in the case of Muslim immigrants, religious differences are seen as barriers before social cohesion and national unity. Both old and new immigrants are seen as the cause of rapid social change and they are seen as the bearers of social and cultural instability in the receiving societies. Blaming immigrants for the instabilities of social life fuels racialization and undermines social integration (Crowley & Hickman 2008). Racialization and marginalization of immigrants lead to increased socio-cultural conflicts. Media coverage appears to contribute to the spreading and intensification of such conflicts (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research 2007: 3). Samers (1998) even claim that in some European countries ideological construction of nationhood continue to be significant in the social construction of social exclusion of immigrants. Before moving to the details of the present investigation, French policies and public attitudes towards immigrants will be briefly presented in section 4 below.

### **4. French policies concerning minorities**

Compared to other West European countries, French policies concerning ethnic minorities are considerably different in many respects. However, like many other West European countries, nation-state ideology and maintenance of nationhood rooted in a commonly shared notion of cultural unity underlies the French language policies (Archibald 2002,

Laroussi 2003). Rather than promoting linguistic and cultural pluralism, French policies explicitly opted for integration and linguistic assimilation of immigrants. For this purpose, to transform immigrants into French nationals, a Commission on Nationality was set up in 1987. The Commission took a number of measures to set up the legal framework for achieving the assimilation of immigrants into the mainstream society (Lapeyronne 1990 cited in Archibald 2002). Along with many other factors, mastery of French was seen to be the most fundamental aspect of the acculturation process because language is considered to be the overarching value to achieve social cohesion and national unity in France. Given the circumstances, one would hardly expect first language maintenance among younger immigrants. However, the linguistic and cultural assimilation of Turkish immigrants is shown to be very low in France (Rollan & Sourou 2006; Tribalat 1995; Yağmur & Akinci 2003).

## 5. Design of the study

On the basis of Berry's (1997) bidimensional model and Bourhis et al.'s (1997) ideological clustering model, we assume a close connection between host society policies and immigrant groups' acculturation orientations. State integration policies can have a decisive impact on the acculturation orientation of both immigrants and members of the host society. In order to see the possible effects of state integration policies on the host and immigrant groups, a cross-sectional design is chosen. Accordingly, the research questions and hypotheses are formulated as follows:

- (1) To what extent are the integration ideologies of Turkish immigrants and French speakers in France compatible?
- (2) What is the extent of relationship between language ideology of the receiving society and immigrants' language use practices?

In order to find answers to the above questions and hypotheses, Bourhis et al.'s (1997) Interactive Acculturation Model (IAM) and its accompanying instrument is employed. The model makes predictions regarding the acculturation combinations most likely to produce consensual, problematic and conflictual relational outcomes between immigrants and members of the host community. In this way, it is a combination of state integration policies and host majority and immigrant group acculturation orientations that contribute to the relational outcomes proposed in the model. By including native speakers of French and Turkish, the relevance of the model will be partially tested. Besides, the relationship between state policies and acculturation orientations at the grassroots level will be documented. It is possible that top down policies do not always find support among general public. On the contrary, public opinion might be much stricter than the state policies. In addition to questionnaires, document analysis, including media, will be employed to further reflect on the social processes.



### 5.1. Instruments

In order to reflect on Turkish immigrants' views and opinions concerning diversity and multilingualism, *Multiculturalism Index* and *Linguistic Integration Scale* have been used. The *Multiculturalism Index* includes ten questions having five-point Likert scales. The index is based on Berry & Kalin's (1995) earlier work and Bourhis et. al's (1997) revision of the original model, which proposes that state integration policies can have a decisive impact on the acculturation orientation of both immigrants and members of the host society. Informants responded to endorsement-format questions asking for views on pluralism, for instance, "French people should recognize that the French society consists of groups with different cultural backgrounds" and on language maintenance e.g., "Ethnic minorities should be helped to preserve their cultural heritage in France" (rated on a 5-point scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5)). The original version of the questionnaire was translated into Turkish and French. The instrument was offered in Turkish and French in France so that the informants could fill in the questionnaire in the language of their own choice. As expected, most of the first-generation informants filled in the Turkish version of the questionnaire.

### 5.2. Informants

In order to see the intergroup differences, informants from French and Turkish backgrounds are included in the study. Snowball sampling technique was the only possible option because of limited access to the informants. Turkish cultural organizations and federations were contacted for collaboration. French data was mostly collected in the city of Rouen and environs. In Table 1, age and gender distribution of the informants are presented for respective groups.

Table 1. Age and gender distribution of informants

	N	Mean	S. D.	Male	Female
French	63	38.60	15.37	29	34
Turkish	267	28.89	11.50	136	132
Total	330	30.74	12.89	165	166

As seen in Table 1, the mean age of French informants is significantly higher than the Turkish informants.

## 6. Results

In line with our research questions, we present the results of our investigation in this section. Our first research question concerns the degree of influence the receiving society's integration policies have on acculturation orientations of the Turkish immigrants in France. In France, proficiency in French has been accepted as the key aspect of the acculturation process because language is considered to be the overarching value to achieve

social cohesion and national unity in the French society. Given the circumstances, one would hardly expect first language maintenance among young Turkish immigrants. On the other hand, the Turkish immigrants are known to be language maintenance oriented people. In order to see the difference between Turkish and French speakers, an analysis of variance between the informants is done. In Table 2, the mean values, standard deviation and the ANOVA results are presented.

Table 2. Differences between French and Turkish informants' views concerning multiculturalism and diversity in France (ANOVA results, N = 329)

Variables	Ethnicity	N	M	S. D.	T	p
The host society must accept diversity	French	63	4,17	,493	.082	.774
	Turkish	269	4,22	1,109		
The host society must support L1 maintenance	French	63	3,43	,928	11.153	.001
	Turkish	269	3,97	1,206		
Immigrants should shift their culture	French	63	2,35	,864	22.651	.000
	Turkish	269	1,64	1,114		
Multicultural countries are easier to deal with difficulties	French	63	3,44	,876	1.301	.255
	Turkish	269	3,25	1,318		
The host society becomes weak as cultural groups maintain their culture	French	63	2,67	,950	4.299	.039
	Turkish	269	2,30	1,306		
Cultural groups should keep maintenance thoughts to themselves	French	63	3,27	1,050	3.075	.080
	Turkish	269	2,93	1,436		
Multicultural countries are difficult to save unity	French	63	2,68	,895	2.598	.108
	Turkish	269	2,96	1,310		
The host society should work harder to learn others' cultures	French	63	3,32	1,029	7.031	.008
	Turkish	269	3,75	1,186		
Immigrant families should be supported to maintain their culture	French	63	3.62	.831	28.444	.000
	Turkish	269	4.38	1.057		
Immigrants should be more like the host society	French	63	2.92	1.036	32.136	.000
	Turkish	269	2.01	1.170		

On the whole, there seem to be average divergence between the French and Turkish informants. Compared to the French informants, Turkish immigrants support the view more that French government should support first language maintenance. In the same vein, the Turkish informants believe in more governmental support for cultural maintenance efforts in the family. Concerning assimilative attitudes, Turkish informants oppose the idea of linguistic assimilation more compared to the French. Accordingly, they believe in socio-cultural differentiation between the groups that Turkish needs to remain as a distinct group in France.

In order to see the underlying dimensions in the opinions of the informants, we decided to carry out factor analysis on French and Turkish separately. As seen in Table 3 three clear-cut factors emerged in the French data.

Table 3. Factor analysis on the French informants' opinions regarding multiculturalism (N=63)

Dimensions in the Multiculturalism Scale	Factor-1 Assimilation	Factor-2 Support	Factor-3 Shift
1. French must support first language maintenance	-.637	.590	
2. Immigrants should shift their culture	.538		.458
3. Multicultural countries are easier to deal with difficulties		.676	
4. France becomes weak if cultural groups maintain their culture	.677		.597
4. Cultural groups should keep maintenance thoughts themselves			.890
5. Multicultural countries are difficult to save unity	.586		
6. French should work harder to learn others' cultures		.889	
7. Immigrant families should be supported to maintain their culture	-.626		
8. Immigrants should be more like the French	.890		

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. (Rotation converged in 5 iterations.)

On the basis of the factor analysis results, it is clear that the majority of French informants are in favour of linguistic assimilation of immigrants. Nevertheless, not all informants are uniform in their opinions regarding first language maintenance and cultural shift as seen items 1 and 4 in Table 3. On the whole, French informants support the idea that immigrants should be more like the French linguistically and culturally. The factor analysis brings out a crucial issue in social science studies: as opposed to politicians and layman's opinions, communities are not homogenous in their opinions and attitudes regarding immigration and cultural maintenance. While there are groups of people who are in favour of linguistic assimilation of immigrants, there are also people who fully oppose such opinions. In the same vein, immigrants are not homogenous either. As seen in Table 4, while some Turkish immigrants support the idea of first language maintenance, a subgroup clearly support linguistic assimilation.



Table 4. Factor analysis on the Turkish informants' opinions regarding multiculturalism (N=269)

Dimensions in the Multiculturalism Scale	Factor-1 Pluralism	Factor-2 Shift	Factor-3 Assimilation
1. French should accept diversity	.776		
2. French must support first language maintenance	.796		
3. Immigrants should shift their culture			
4. Multicultural countries are easier to deal with difficulties	.484		
5. France becomes weak as cultural groups maintain their culture		.699	
6. Cultural groups should keep maintenance thoughts themselves			.854
7. Multicultural countries are difficult to save unity		.781	
8. French should work harder to learn others' cultures	.573		
9. Immigrant families should be supported to maintain their culture	.625		
10. Immigrants should be more like the French			.593

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. (Rotation converged in 4 iterations.)

Upon examining the mean values and loadings on factors, it is clear that there is a very significant loading on the first factor showing support for integration and pluralistic policies by the state, which we call "Pluralistic – Integrationist". The second factor includes three variables: "multicultural countries are difficult to save unity – immigrants should shift their culture – France becomes weak as cultural groups maintain their culture." The variables in the second Factor are very much in line with French national policy of Republican Unitarianism, which is a variant of the assimilation ideology (Bourhis 2001). In this ideology, immigrant and national minority differences must be levelled out as a precondition for the equal treatment of individuals as citizens of the French state (Sabatier & Berry 1994 cited in Bourhis 2001: 14). On the basis of the content of the variables, the second factor is named "Unitarianism". Given the high loadings on the three variables, apparently, some Turkish informants value Unitarian ideology of the French. Two variables loaded on the third factor "Immigrants should be more like the French" and "Cultural groups should keep maintenance thoughts themselves". Both pointing to cultural adaptation and becoming like the French: assimilation in acculturation terms, which is why; we name it "Assimilation".



When we examine self-identification patterns of the Turkish informants (as shown in Table 5), it becomes clear that some immigrants solely identify with the French, while a large group of immigrants identify both with the Turkish and French groups. This again shows that intergroup boundaries are hard to draw on the basis of ethnicity, language and religious identity.

Table 5. Self-identification of Turkish immigrants in France (N=266)

Self-identification	First-generation	Second-generation	Total
Turkish	73	118	191
French	2	10	12
Both French & Turkish	9	52	61
Missing	2	0	2
Total	86	180	266

Regarding language use in public and domestic domains, Turkish and French respondents differ in their opinions. As a matter of fact, both groups agree that immigrants should speak in French in public. As shown in Table 6, the degree of agreement differs slightly among the French and Turkish respondents.

Table 6. Results of ANOVA analysis between French and Turkish speakers with respect to their language use in public domains (N=329)

Variables	Ethnicity	N	M	S. D.	F	p
1. In public, immigrants should always speak French	French	63	3,65	,986	7,140	,008
	Turkish	266	3,21	1,228		
2. In public, immigrants can speak their own language	French	62	3,23	1,062	6,624	,011
	Turkish	265	3,62	1,074		
3. In public, immigrants should give top priority to French custom	French	63	3,35	1,019	24,988	,000
	Turkish	267	2,58	1,116		
4. In public, immigrants can act according to their own culture	French	63	3,32	,964	4,876	,028
	Turkish	267	3,60	,913		
5. In public, immigrants should act according to French culture	French	63	3,54	,895	14,035	,000
	Turkish	266	2,97	1,134		

Regarding the language use in the domestic domain, both groups of respondents agreed that immigrant people can speak in their ancestral languages.

Table 7. Results of ANOVA analysis between French and Turkish speakers with respect to their language use in the domestic domains (N=329)

Variables	Ethnicity	N	M	S. D.	F	p
1. At home, immigrants can speak their own language	French	63	4,16	,410	6,121	,014
	Turkish	266	4,43	,854		
2. At home, immigrants should live in accordance with French customs	French	63	2,44	,838	,806	,370
	Turkish	266	2,30	1,237		
3. At home, immigrants can live on according to their own custom	French	63	3,92	,576	7,896	,005
	Turkish	266	4,25	,881		
4. At home, immigrants should speak French	French	63	2,87	,942	,040	,841
	Turkish	266	2,84	1,294		

## 7. Discussion and conclusions

Turkish immigrants in the French context support first language maintenance and at the same time they value speaking French both in the public and private spheres. They consider home as the sole domain of Turkish language use. Integration ideologies of French speakers are significantly different from Turkish immigrants. While the majority of Turkish informants support pluralistic views, French-speaking informants clearly support assimilation views. French speakers are basically against the maintenance of minority languages and they demand linguistic assimilation from ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, French informants are not homogenous in their opinions. Turkish speakers make a distinction between the public and private domains of language use. While they prefer and support the use of Turkish in the home domain, they fully respect the use of French in the public domain. On the other hand, French speakers fully support French language use in the private domain and they do not oppose Turkish use in the domestic domain.

Neither the Turkish nor the French informants are unanimous in their opinions. While the majority of French informants support linguistic assimilation of immigrants, a subgroup of Turkish informants shares the same view. All of the Turkish informants recognize the high status of French as a national language; yet the majority of them support the maintenance of Turkish in France. Especially, educated Turkish immigrants in France prefer to use French also in the domestic domain with their children and families. On the whole, especially better educated Turkish immigrants seem to be influenced by French language ideology. They believe that speaking in French would enhance French language skills of their children. As opposed to media coverage and political discourse, Turkish immigrants in France turn out to be in favor of socio-cultural integration.



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