María Bruquetas-Callejo

Educational Reception in Rotterdam and Barcelona

Policies, Practices and Gaps

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Acknowledgments

I dedicate my work to my family, in particular to Elisa and to Tom, to my parents, to Carlos, Eva and Violeta, and to my aunts Marisa and Fuencisla Galán. My aunts migrated to Mexico with the Spanish republican exodus after Franco's coup d'état, and their reception in Mexico was not without difficulties, in spite of the support that the president Lázaro Cárdenas offered to Spanish exiles. As they put it: *the government wanted us but the Mexican people didn't.* My aunts were the first ones to inspire me with the idea of a gap between integration policies and their implementation.

1   The puzzle

In the mid-1970s a spectacular process of social change started in Northern Europe. During the 1960s and early 1970s, Northern European countries developed policies to recruit foreign labour from several Southern European and Mediterranean countries. Covenants were signed to bring 'guest workers' from Greece, Portugal, and Spain, but also from Morocco and Turkey. In response to the recession that followed the oil crisis in 1973, most governments abruptly decided to stop recruiting. Diverse incentives were offered to encourage guest workers to return to their home countries. However, most guest workers decided to stay and bring along their families, turning what was meant to be a temporary solution for labour shortages into permanent settlement. Family reunification became one of the main channels of migration to Europe.

The rapid arrival of children and spouses of migrant male workers brought about strong and unexpected societal change with profound implications for public policies. Social policies in different areas were affected, as demand not only grew but also became more culturally diverse: target groups changed and new needs emerged. The pressure that the arrival of immigrants' families put on public services and infrastructure was particularly noticeable in the realm of education. An extraordinary growth in demand led to overcrowding in schools in certain urban areas. Newcomer students were mostly concentrated in schools located in the working-class neighbourhoods of large cities, as a result of immigrants' housing patterns. Schools were overwhelmed with immigrant children who did not speak the host language and had been socialised in very different school traditions. Unlike previous waves of migrants coming from the colonies of Western European countries, the offspring of Mediterranean guest workers were not familiar with the language of the host country. High schools faced the greatest challenge because the educational goals for the 12-16 age group are more demanding.

Throughout the 1990s, Southern European countries experienced a similar migratory phenomenon with comparable pressure on public policies. In the 1980s, Spain, Italy, Greece and Portugal shifted from being countries of emigration to being destinations for immigration. In the aftermath of dictatorships and political instability, this area experienced a large-scale economic growth spurt. The significant labour shortages that accompanied this process, particularly in the oversized informal economies of these countries, attracted growing economic immigration from Africa,

Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America. Foreign migration arrived at a remarkably fast rate. The growth of the foreign population in Spain was particularly remarkable, increasing between 1997 and 2007 from 1.6% to 11.6% of the total population; and in Italy, which during the same period grew from 2.1% to 5.8% (OECD 2007a). Local administrations in large cities were overwhelmed with new challenges in order to accommodate foreign workers. The impact of family reunification affected this group of countries earlier than their Northern counterparts. Given that many immigrants brought their families along, immigrant children put considerable pressure on schools from the very beginning. The concentration of immigrant students in schools located in inner-city areas promptly became a public and political issue.

In response to these challenges, Northern European countries formulated policies of first reception at schools. France developed its *classes d'initiation* and *classes d'adaptation* in the early 1970s to teach French to immigrant children in order to improve their integration in the school system. These remedial classes were in theory open to any child with educational difficulties, but in fact they were primarily present in areas of immigrant concentration – at the initiative of local authorities (Schain 1985). In addition to this, a programme to teach immigrants' native languages was launched in 1975-1976 in order to encourage their future return (Schain 1985). Back in the 1950s, Germany had already put into place special programmes for teaching language and culture of origin to foreign students (Schmahl 2001 in Subirats et al. 2005). Besides this German federal programme, the approach has varied considerably between different *Länder:* for instance, in Bavaria, bilingual classes (*nationalklasse*) are organised by grouping pupils sharing the same native language (Will & Rühl 2002), while in Berlin foreign-born students are immediately included in regular classes alongside German students with support from special assistants (Subirats et al. 2005). The Netherlands launched *internationale schakelklassen* in large cities; this programme, initiated by schools themselves in the mid-1970s, set out to teach Dutch to guest workers' children before they joined regular classes (Fase & De Jong 1983). As in the Netherlands, in the UK, newcomer children were initially received in specialist teaching programmes separate from mainstream education ('EAL programmes,' later called ESL), though since the mid-1980s newcomers have been directly introduced in ordinary classes, regardless of their English language proficiency, with ESL teachers present in classrooms to offer teaching support (Leung 2002).

Some decades later, Southern European countries also organised first reception measures as diverse as the various approaches developed by

their Northern colleagues. In some places, such as Italy, foreign students are directly included in ordinary classes together with the native-born students, with certain special assistance always provided (EURYDICE 2004). A second strategy commonly followed is to provide temporary, full-time reception courses prior to starting ordinary education. Greece, for instance, has completely separate reception schemes (EURYDICE 2004). There, before attending ordinary schools, newly arrived students are enrolled in two-year special courses in which they are separated full-time from their native-born peers. Finally, other places have launched a mixed approach to reception, like the Spanish regions of Catalonia, Andalusia, Madrid or Murcia. In these regions, newly arrived immigrant students must follow temporary reception courses, in which they are partially separated from their native peers and partially mixed. Students either go to a reception school in the morning and attend ordinary classes in the afternoon, or they receive reception training during a limited number of hours per week.

All of this shows that despite the similarities in the issues faced by schools, responses have differed significantly from one country to another. Differences increase at a sub-national level, as only a few countries manifest a clear choice between separated or integrated reception; normally different cities and regions within the same country adopt different reception models (EURYDICE 2004). Thus, the question raised is: why are the ways of incorporating newcomers in the host educational system so different, if the challenges faced by schools are so alike?

One possible explanatory hypothesis could point to the idiosyncratic immigration/integration regimes of different countries. Although all European countries now have restrictive policies to regulate migration, their integration policies differ considerably in terms of their goals, operational schemes and foundational principles. The assumption here is that national integration regimes determine the form and content of first-reception policies in education. However, the empirical cases described above do not allow direct correlations to be established between certain integration policies and certain models of reception (for example, countries with assimilationist policies do not always offer integrated reception, nor do countries with multiculturalist policies always pursue separated reception). Another problem which arises when explaining specific reception policies by national regimes of integration is that the latter change considerably over time. In spite of changes in national policies, the specific policy instruments used for first reception in schools are not always modified accordingly or at the same pace. In fact, schemes for the educational reception of immigrant

students may not change *at all,* regardless of shifts and turns in national frameworks of integration.

The relevance of national regimes is challenged mostly by the practices of policy implementation. Different national regimes do not correspond directly to cross-national empirical variations of policies-in-practice. Comparative studies at local and practical levels show striking similarities between immediate problems and the concrete policy responses adopted (Penninx & Martiniello 2004, Alexander 2003a); studies done at other levels of analysis point in the same direction (Vermeulen 1997, Entzinger 2000, Rath et al. 2001). A closer look into the implementation of policies reveals inconsistencies between policy and practices in a number of policy sectors.

Schools are not an exception. Teachers and other implementers of first-reception programmes very often adapt, bend, and bypass written rules. The UK, for instance, is an interesting case, as it reflects a clash between its multiculturalist philosophy of integration and the measures actually applied for the reception of newcomer students. The initial response provided for the reception of newly arrived immigrant students – separate reception courses – was criticised, as it was considered a form of exclusion from the mainstream curriculum that 'amounted to an indirectly discriminatory practice contrary to the Race Relations Act, 1976' (CRE 1986: 5). In 1986, the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) recommended that foreign students be incorporated into mainstream classes together with English native speakers. Apparently, the CRE report had a far-reaching impact, and since then the policy has been to place newcomers directly in ordinary classes. Reality, however, was very different, as language centres for reception continued to function until at least 1992 and schools continued to use separate classes for new arrivals (Leung 2002).

In my experience at schools in other countries, I also came across many examples of practices that bend the rules and the goals defended by policymakers. The norm often prescribes that only students who comply with certain requisites – in terms of nationality, mother tongue, age or date of arrival – are allowed into reception programmes. Nevertheless, some schools open to newcomer students accept students who do not fall into the policy's official target. In the Netherlands, undocumented students were recently eliminated from the scope of educational reception programmes, following the hardening of national migration policies for admission. Despite these regulations, schools keep their reception classrooms open for undocumented students.

Reception programmes are now meant to be temporary measures designed to smooth immigrant students' transition into the general educa-

tion system. This holds even for those countries and cities that have opted for a separate reception course; reception education is not intended to constitute a permanent institutional provision, parallel to the mainstream system. Hence, rules are set to determine a time limit to the transitional course period. However, schools frequently bend official recommendations regarding the expected length of reception trajectories. Newcomer students often remain in schools' reception programmes longer than regulations prescribe, regardless of the fact that schools stop receiving subsidies after a certain time limit. Schools may also cheat. They can pretend to obey the rule, but instead water it down or neutralise it altogether through additional strategies that contradict its effect. For instance, some mixed reception programmes establish a minimum number of hours for immigrant students to attend ordinary classes. However, some schools cluster pupils in ordinary education so that immigrant students end up separated from their native peers for many more hours than proposed in the policies.

Schools may also apply the same rule in quite different ways. Despite the intentions of policymakers to deal with all newcomer students in a uniform way, schools may in fact apply different treatment to various categories of students. Such differential treatment may be motivated by the intention to create equality, but it may have discriminatory side-effects. In Catalonia (Spain), for example, because Latin American students are expected to learn Catalan in a shorter time than students speaking non-Latin mother tongues, schools often transfer these students to regular classes earlier, often before they have acquired a minimum understanding of Catalan.

School practices that modify official policy do not seem to be incidental. This is suggested by the stubborn attitude of some schools that overlook official regulations, as in the earlier example of Dutch schools keeping students in special classrooms for a longer period than the duration of the subsidy. The most startling aspect of this behaviour is the financial aspect of this extensive, flexible criterion for enrolment, particularly in times dominated by the discourse of market efficiency. Keeping these students for longer periods in reception schemes is costly for schools, since past the established time limit they no longer receive special subsidies. Could this paradoxical behaviour be the result of teachers and administrators endorsing particular professional or personal values and putting these ahead of specific national regulations?

These examples of inconsistencies between formal models and practices of school integration raise a number of questions. How can we make sense of these inconsistencies? Do school practices have more to do with pragmatic considerations or professional ethics than with philosophical standpoints

regarding integration? Is there a gap between national policy models and practices of reception in schools?

These are the central questions addressed in this book. I have investigated these puzzling issues by comparing two very different cases of national integration, Spain and the Netherlands, and two local cases within them, Barcelona and Rotterdam. The Dutch case represents a Northern European country with a post-war recruiting policy; currently, its national integration policy pursues goals of cultural assimilation. Interestingly, in this case, a separated form of school reception persisted throughout both the multiculturalist decade of the 1980s and the assimilationist shift in recent policies, without generating apparent contradictions (as in the British case). The Spanish case represents a Southern European country with recent immigration and a prolonged non-policy on integration. Spain was also the Southern European country with the largest immigrant population growth during the 2000s; it is thus reasonable to expect to see strong inconsistencies between its national policies and practices. A cross-national comparison of school practices in these two countries offers valuable insights into all these puzzles and helps us to distinguish between the common and the specific.

Moreover, to gain a better understanding of these issues, the present research contrasts the abstract models of integration with what really happens in practice in schools that deal with newcomer students. This means not only reconstructing the legal-political and ideological constructions which frame the educational reception of immigrant children, but also following the process of implementation of national policies at lower levels. In contrast with the majority of studies in the field of integration policies, which focus on policy documents and regulations, this study dives into daily practices in schools, and introduces the perspective of teachers and other school actors. Given the relevant role that front-line practitioners play in this story, specific attention has been given to their leeway in executing policies.

1.1   Two bodies of literature: National regimes of citizenship and the migration policy gap

In order to assess the determinants of practices, two reasonable scenarios must be considered. If national regimes of integration influence school practices, then the ways of doing things should vary in Dutch and Spanish schools. This would mean that nation-specific integration schemes matter. On the other hand, if abstract policies do not determine practices, we should then find practices which follow principles dissimilar to national ones. In

other words, school practices should show a gap with respect to national models. This would mean that national models of integration do not really matter, and that other elements of a different nature shape school practices. If there is a gap, we should also be able to find similarities in practice across countries, despite the different national integration ideologies.

The pre-existing literature promoting each of these premises presents some flaws that need to be solved. Conventionally, studies on integration policies have been based upon the first premise, understanding both the policy practices and their results as fundamentally shaped by national regimes of citizenship and integration. This approach emphasises the divergence of integration policies in different countries. According to this literature, the national policy regime accounts for the specific ways different countries address issues of migration, integration and citizenship. However, this assumption is challenged by empirical studies at a local level, which reveal more cross-national convergence than expected. Above all, studies on national regimes of integration policies fail to address explicitly the causal link between regimes, practices of implementation and integration outcomes. They typically tend to underemphasise the practical level and the connection between micro- and macro-processes.

Within the field of migration policies, a tradition of studies dealing with the 'gap hypothesis' argues that in all liberal democratic states a gap can be perceived between migration policy goals and policy outcomes. The restrictive goals of migration policy, which aim at reducing or curbing migration flows, paradoxically lead to expansionist policy outcomes, as migrants keep arriving in large numbers. The ubiquity of this policy gap in all types of citizenship regimes suggests the generalised inability of states to regulate migration, and highlights the non-rational character of policies. Intended goals of curtailing immigration cannot be achieved either, because the policies are flawed by structural factors beyond their reach, or because of inadequate implementation or enforcement.

The literature on citizenship regimes presupposes too much determinism and compliance between policies and outcomes, while the literature on the gap hypothesis, on the contrary, presumes too much inconsistency. However, they share a pervasive trend towards simplistic views of causality. As a consequence, a great deal of theoretical uncertainty prevails regarding the relationship between state institutions and policies on the one hand, and practices and outcomes on the other.

My study challenges the mechanistic conception of the relationship between integration policies and actors' practices at a lower level that appears in prevailing scholarship. This research agenda hopes to redress an

over-emphasis on the nation-state, seeing it as 'one among several potential structuring variables' (Favell 2001). In the quest for other answers we need to focus attention on the practices of actors involved in the process of implementation. Recent contributions to the gap debate point in this direction. Conveying a more sophisticated view on policy outcomes, new studies conceive the gap as the product of struggles between actors in different fields, trade-offs made by elected leaders, and existing structures for implementation (Lahav & Guiraudon 2006). Despite its valuable contribution, this line of research also presents shortcomings. Although the role of specific policy actors is interrogated in this approach, most of the attention is directed to an analysis of the actors involved in the formulation of migration policy, while actors at the level of policy implementation and in the field of integration are ignored.

Institutional actors in charge of implementing integration policies are the crucial link in the chain, but the nature of such a link needs to be critically examined, as it is related to the thorny sociological dilemma of structure and agency. On the one hand, policy practitioners are the practical enforcers of formal rules and institutional principles; it is through their practices that the principles of national integration regimes are enacted and reproduced. On the other hand, practitioners' actions go beyond the neutral application of rules. It is crucial, particularly in welfare states confronted with growing migration, to draw a line between members and non-members, between recipients and non-recipients of welfare benefits. The responsibility for drawing this line is increasingly being shifted down to policy implementers in direct contact with immigrants (Guiraudon & Lahav 2000, Van der Leun 2003). As 'gatekeepers' of the welfare state they must make discretional decisions about the distribution of resources with determinant consequences for the integration of their immigrant clients. Therefore, when investigating practices of implementation, two urgent questions prevail: *to what extent do practitioners function as mere carriers of institutional orientations? To what extent do they interpret, selectively apply, or even contradict institutional norms*? My research intends to address these essential questions.

1.2   Research strategy and case selection

In order to study the influence of the institutional context on practices, I have compared practices of educational reception embedded in very different policy contexts. My assumption is that if national regimes of integration influence school practices, then the way schools receive immigrant children in practice should vary in different countries. Hence, to fulfil my research

objectives I have applied a cross-national comparison juxtaposing the Netherlands and Spain, two cases which are very different in terms of their national policies of integration. During the period of study (2004-2006), the Netherlands presented a *culturally homogeneous* or *assimilationist* policy while Spain initially had a *non-policy* of integration, which was substituted in 2006 by an *equal opportunities* policy. Although Spain modified its policy during the period covered in this research, it still differs very much from the Dutch case. The comparison between the Dutch policy and the integration policy applied in the Spanish region of Catalonia also fulfils requisites of difference. As we will see, Spain is a federal state in which regional governments are responsible for integration policy. In the case of Catalonia, both the second (2001-2004) and the third Catalonian plans of integration (2005-2008) can be classified as *equal opportunity* policies.

The need to compare practices of educational reception within very different policy contexts is also a consequence of the second possible theoretical scenario analysed in this study. It is possible that a gap between school practices and national policies of integration may exist. And, if policies are not determinant of practices, such a policy-practice gap might be present in both countries in spite of their differences. Hence, from this second assumption it is also necessary to make a cross-national comparison in which the countries are selected in accordance with variations in the (possible) elements influencing the policy-practice gap, particularly the discretionary capacity of front-level workers. Comparative studies on implementation styles suggest that the conditions are more favourable for discretion in the Southern European countries than in Northern European ones, as the former would apply more lenient styles of policy implementation and the latter more rigid ones (Jordan et al. 2003a). The cases of Spain and the Netherlands fit adequately with these general categories. Spain, in particular, presents an exceptionally intense growth of foreign population within a relatively short time span, increasing from 2% to 12.17% between 2000 and 2010 (Ministerio del Interior 2006, INE 2010). The consequent growth of demand and overcrowding of social services would seem to make Spain especially susceptible to discretionary practices (Moreno Fuentes & Bruquetas-Callejo 2011). Other considerations regarding the potential differences in discretionary leeway between Southern and Northern European countries have to do with the fact that the process of migration in the former is relatively recent, while the latter has a longer tradition of integration policies. Again, countries with a longer tradition of policymaking in this field would in principle have had more time to develop adequate measures and resources and sufficient means of assessment, while countries with

a young tradition in this area would presumably be less organised and resourced and thus continue to be in an improvisation and trial-and-error phase. A longer tradition may then reduce the chances of discretion, while more recent engagement might, by contrast, increase the chances.

The comparability of these national cases is justified by several features that make them sufficiently homologous to constitute meaningful comparison. Spain and the Netherlands have large percentages of population of migrant origin (in 2010, the figure for Spain was 12.17% and for the Netherlands 20.3%, of which 11.2% came from non-Western countries) (INE 2010, CBS 2010).[1] Both nation-states are liberal democracies with a constitution, separation of powers, and multiple political parties that compete for power. The Netherlands and Spain are also countries with high degrees of economic development and relatively strong welfare states that redistribute wealth through a number of social policies. Both are members of the European Union, and are therefore influenced by the same supranational institutional structures and regulations, and share a heritage of Western cultural values.

Moreover, to grasp real practices of educational reception in schools, the comparison needs to zoom in on the lower levels of the city and the school in each case. To this end, I have selected one local case in each country (Barcelona and Rotterdam) and within each of these contexts, two schools offering reception training. Barcelona and Rotterdam share a great deal in terms of status (both are 'second' cities within their respective countries), migration tradition (both are harbour metropolises with long histories of internal and external migrant workers), economic structure (both have economies traditionally based on the industrial sector), and political colour (both are working-class cities with historically strong left-wing political parties). But most of all, in choosing cities within the selected countries, I tried to pick cases of early policy initiatives in order to have cases with the longest possible tradition in educational reception policies. A policy with a relatively long tradition would ensure the availability of material for study. This was particularly important in the Spanish case, inasmuch as Spain has only recently become a destination for immigration, and its history of policymaking with regard to integration is relatively short. The criterion of ensuring critical mass for the study also guided the decision to focus on

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1   To refer to this non-autochthonous population, the Dutch Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS) uses the concept *allochtoon* in its migration figures, which includes the first and second generation of migrants. According to the definition, an *allochtoon* is a person residing in the Netherlands who was born abroad or at least one of his/her parents was born abroad. The Dutch figure refers to non-Western *allochtonen*, originally from Africa, Latin-America or Asia, including Turkey, Suriname and the Dutch Antilles, but excluding Indonesia and Japan.

major cities in each country, where migrant and ethnic minority students tend to be spatially concentrated and the problems of school reception appear to be more acute. Given this criterion, Barcelona emerged as the ideal candidate for the study, given its long experience in first reception of immigrant students relative to other large cities in Spain, such as Madrid. Madrid only launched the *aulas de enlace* in 2002, while Barcelona had already started its TAE programme in 1996. The experience of Barcelona is much longer; during the 1980s it had already implemented measures for the reception of internal immigrants coming from other Spanish regions.

The city of Rotterdam can also be generally identified as a trendsetter in policymaking, and it was one of the first Dutch cities where schools provided reception courses for newcomer students (mid-1970s). This implies that Barcelona and Rotterdam stand out as extreme cases in their national contexts in terms of *avant garde* policy initiatives, especially in the field of immigrants' integration. In addition, these local cases have greater concentrations of immigrants. Rotterdam is the Dutch city with the highest percentage of population of immigrant origin (36.9% non-Western *allochtonen* in 2010, CBS 2010) and with the highest immigrant student population (more than half of the population younger than fifteen years old is *allochtoon,* CBS 2010). Barcelona also has one of the highest concentrations of immigrants in Spain (12.8% in 2004) and of immigrant students (8.15% in 2003-2004), besides bilingualism as an additional challenge. For these reasons, these cases are not strictly representative of other cities in their national contexts; instead, they must be taken as 'most likely' cases (Eckstein 1975); that is, if a potential explanation does not work in them, it will not work in any other case.

Following the same logic, I selected schools with high percentages of students of immigrant origin. This meant that to ensure a critical mass for my study, in Barcelona I selected only publicly-funded, publicly-run schools. In Spain, segregation by class and ethnicity happens along the private/public axes: second and 1.5-generation students are almost fully concentrated in the public sector (only 2% of immigrant students in Barcelona attended private or semi-private schools during the 2004-2005 academic year). In Rotterdam, choosing reception schools with high percentages of immigrant students goes without saying, as all four reception schools present comparable percentages: *allochtonen* make up over 70% of all students.

The selection of the specific school cases followed a realistic strategy, with flexibility in order to adapt the sample to the characteristics of each local case. Consequently, this process of selection was based upon a systematic mapping of the universe of reception schools in each city, and the advice

of local experts. In Rotterdam the choice was relatively simple, partly due to its small universe (four schools) and its internal homogeneity. In the Netherlands, class stratification and segregation dynamics between schools do not happen along private/public school lines. Though in the early phases of reception policy, public schools enrolled most of the immigrant students (Fase 1983: 23), nowadays schools of different denominations have ethnic minority population and reception units. Therefore, choosing two public schools delivering reception *per se* would not have made a difference in terms of critical mass. The early tracking or streaming in the Dutch system, on the other hand, is one of the most important axes of educational stratification, and this was the main criterion contributing to the selection. Of the four schools delivering reception programmes for newcomers, one offers training to highly skilled students who are expected to continue their education in higher tracks of secondary education, and the other three offer reception to students who will transfer to lower tracks. Choosing one school for higher tracks (Rembrandt school) and one for lower tracks (Vermeer school) allowed me to compare school practices concerning these two categories of students. The choice between the three possible schools for lower educational tracks was made again following criteria of probability, that is, selecting the school with the longest tradition of reception (more than 25 years), as well as the one which stood out for its bad reputation in the past (low achievement, violent incidents). Coincidentally, the other school selected, the only one providing reception to high-achievers in the city, was a 'black school' doing well and with a good reputation, and with a comparable long tradition of newcomers.

The selection in Barcelona was more complicated. The sampling was based on the characteristics of the TAE programme in force at that moment. As the TAE programme had two types of reception classrooms with very different dynamics (area-based vs. school-based), I decided to pick one of each for my sample. Advised by several local experts, I decided to choose the Antoni Tapies school, not only because it has by far the largest concentration of immigrant students in the whole city (85% in 2004-2005), but also because it is the prototype of a school-based unit. Besides this 'blackest' and most well-known school in Barcelona, located in the neighbourhood of El Raval, I chose a regular area-based reception classroom which draws pupils from different secondary schools (the Salvador Dalí school) in the Drassanas district. The Drassanas district, with the second highest proportion of immigrants in the city, has many more Latin American residents than El Raval, which has the highest percentage of immigrants in the city and is home to considerably more residents from Africa and Asia (particularly Moroccans and Pakistanis): a fundamental difference in their immigrant population

profile that may influence school reception practices. The cases represent two of the earliest reception classrooms, created in 1996.

During my fieldwork, reception policy changed in Catalonia, and the TAE programme was replaced with the LIC programme. One of the reception units in my sample disappeared, while the second one was kept under the new framework. I was therefore forced to choose another school within the LIC programme in order to complete my fieldwork. As a consequence, my study in Barcelona includes three school cases instead of two: two reception units belonging to the TAE programme (the Tapies and Dalí schools), and two within the LIC programme (the Tapies and Gaudí schools). Since one of my TAE units was converted into a LIC unit (the Tapies school), I simply kept it.

1.3   Collection of data

For the collection of data I applied three sets of research techniques: discursive, organisational, and ethnographic. My research required that I assess the legal-political and ideological structures that frame the school integration of immigrant children in each location, and to that end I scrutinised policy documents concerning institutional arrangements for integration, education and reception, and I conducted in-depth interviews with policymakers. In order to reconstruct the organisational structure that channels the practices of schools, the analysis of the relevant documentation was also complemented by in-depth interviews with key informants. Here, I have used the strategy of 'backward mapping' (Elmore 1979) in order to reconstruct the effective network of informants and schools in the field of educational reception. Finally, I used systematic observation and in-depth interviews to follow the process by which national policies are implemented at lower levels, in an effort to understand the perspective of practitioners, teachers and other school actors. I carried out in-depth interviews with three different categories of informants: national and local policymakers, school bureaucrats and other stakeholders. The total number of interviews comes to 26 in Barcelona and 23 in Rotterdam. In addition to these, I also spoke with some local experts. I used identical questionnaires in each city, although the sets of questions were different for each category of informants. In Barcelona interviews were conducted in Spanish and in the Netherlands interviews were conducted in Dutch, and a few in English. I tape-recorded all interviews and personally did a literal transcription of them.

I used ethnographic observation of school bureaucrats' routines related to organising and providing specific instruction for newcomer children.

In particular, I used a 'shadowing' technique, following a main informant (coordinator of reception) in her or his daily activities. The coordinator of reception was chosen as the main informant in order to obtain an overview of the organisational tasks involved in reception. Choosing a reception teacher/mentor would have given greater insight into the teaching tasks and daily dilemmas in the classroom, but could also have relegated to the background the organisational decisions regarding the clustering of students in groups, and so forth. I also participated in as many activities as possible in each school setting: lessons with different teachers, internal meetings of the department or school, meetings with other actors, activities with the students, activities with the parents, and so forth. In this way, I observed a wide range of activities involved in reception and accessed the views of actors in diverse positions in the process. In my observation of educators' practices I have used four criteria of selection (Woods 1981): validity, typicality, relevance and clarity.

The majority of my fieldwork took place in the period between 2004 and 2006. In 2004 and 2005 I conducted most of the interviews, in Barcelona (January, April, October, and November 2004) and in Rotterdam (October 2004, June-November 2005). Between August and December 2005 I did full-time observation for approximately the equivalent of one working week (40 hours) in each of the sites, although extended over time. In addition, I remained in contact with each school and its professionals for a much longer period, such that the effective observation-time – including interviews, participation in activities, casual visits, and so forth – was much longer. Meanwhile, I analysed the relevant policy documents and followed the changes in policies and legislation in the period between 2004 and 2006. In 2006-2008 I did some follow-up interviews with key informants in Barcelona (May 2007, May 2008) and in Rotterdam (June-August 2006, March 2007) to check for new policy developments.

In 2007 I conducted a telephone survey of reception schools in Barcelona, to identify distinct ways of interpreting the LIC policy among the 41 schools involved and check the representativeness of the schools of my sample. The subject of the survey was the reception mentor or the school's director of studies. The questionnaire included questions about the year the reception classroom had started, the number of reception students in their school, the pattern of organising reception, subjects taught in the reception training, the number of teachers teaching in the reception classroom, and the number of hours per week that newcomer students were taught Catalan. In addition, I did five in-depth interviews with some of the participants in the survey.

1.4   Outline of the book

This book is not concerned with the study of policies on immigrant integration or educational integration in a broad sense. Nor does it set out to explain outcomes (vis-à-vis the analysis of implementation practices). While an in-depth analysis of actors' practices may provide important insights for explaining dissonant *outcomes,*[2] my efforts concentrate on the explanation of the practices themselves, remaining at the level of the *process* of policymaking. My main interest is thus the implementation of educational reception policy and particularly the working practices carried out by teachers and schools. The goal of this study is two-fold. On the one hand, the study sets out to assess comparatively the extent to which institutional mechanisms shape educational reception practices. On the other hand, the study strives to discover the extent to which practices are inconsistent with institutional arrangements, and to explain this incongruence. In other words, the aim is to compare practices embedded in different national contexts regarding their degree of compliance/discretion with respect to policies.

This book deals with this enterprise in the following way. Chapter two elaborates the theoretical tools to be used in the analysis of the empirical material. The research questions and theoretical framework structuring this study are also presented in that chapter. Chapter three reconstructs the institutional context of the two case studies. It sets the scene for the discussion of findings by outlining the most prominent features of national integration regimes, educational systems and reception programmes. Chapters four and five communicate the empirical evidence drawn from the cases of Rotterdam and Barcelona, respectively. Each of these chapters offers a school-to-school description of the most prominent procedures of reception for newly arrived immigrant children. Chapter six compares the two city cases and highlights the main findings of the research. Finally, the discussion of the findings and conclusions of the research are presented in chapter seven. In that final chapter, the answers to the research questions proposed in chapter two are elaborated.

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2   In line with Lahav & Guiraudon (2006) I consider that the gap in outcomes is a product of several processes through which policy is shaped, elaborated and implemented. Assessing the hypothetical gap between policies and implementation practices would contribute to explaining the dissonance between policies and final outcomes.

2   Studying practices of educational reception

This study sets out to explain schools' practices of 'educational reception' in a comparative way. From a political sociology perspective, the study aims to achieve a better understanding of implementation practices in the field of reception, that is, how schools apply existing policies for the reception of immigrant students. In particular, it tries to discern the extent to which these practices adhere to policies and the extent to which they diverge from them in terms of basic principles.

The present chapter describes the concepts and the *hypotheses*[1] that structure the study. To introduce the theoretical tools that will be used, I will start by reviewing the existing scholarship on the issue. The present study is located at the crossroads of two bodies of literature: on the one hand, the literature on 'citizenship regimes,' and on the other, the 'gap hypothesis' already introduced. This study stands out critically against both traditions of research. A critical review of the scientific literatures allows me to describe my alternative focus and analytical approach. In both cases, the prevailing scholarship axiomatically focuses on abstract state responses at the national level, while concrete policies on the ground remain largely unexplored. By contrast, I focus upon the dimension of policy implementation and the level of action, placing the institutional actors themselves under the magnifying lens.

The two bodies of literature show an explanatory deficit in accounting for the link between institutions (policies) and behaviour (practices). In this book I use an alternative analytical lens that draws on elements from three bodies of theory: the tradition of 'new' historical institutionalism, the school of implementation that analyses institutional practices from the bottom up, and Bourdieu's theory of social practices. The first of these fields of scholarship allows for a top-down approach to the study of practices, while the second and third advocate a 'bottom-up' perspective. I will use both approaches in order to reconstruct the complexity of practices and

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[1]   I use the term *hypothesis* in the sense of an 'informed hunch' (Yanow 2003), or a proposed explanation for my research question 'grounded in the research literature and in some prior knowledge of the study setting'. I do not mean a formal hypothesis to be verified or disproved by quantitative empirical data. My research approach is genuinely qualitative, but it uses theoretically-informed expectations to guide the collection of empirical data.

their institutional connections, such that two rival perspectives structure my empirical pursuit.

From the historical institutionalist literature I will borrow tools to reconstruct the institutional setting relevant to my object of study. Reconstructing the historical struggles that have shaped such institutions allows me to grasp their legacies, in terms of the dominant logic and organisational arrangements. This analysis takes the assumption that *politics structure policies* (Laumann & Knoke 1987) as its point of departure.

The implementation literature centred on street-level bureaucrats will allow me to capture other elements that determine working practices, besides institutional legacies. By focusing on front-level practitioners, street-level research has been celebrated as a useful strategy to attribute outcomes in the causal chain and to approach the structure-agency dilemma (Brodkin 2000, Hargreaves 1984). I will combine elements from this school of street-level research and from Bourdieu's theory of social practice to reconstruct the micro-level determinants of reception practices. By introducing situational and organisational constraints from the perspective of the agents I hope to restitute the complexity of practices according to their own logic. Here the main assumption is that '*policies structure politics*' (Lowi 1965: 689, Pierson 1993).

My theoretical framework goes hand in hand with an epistemological agenda. First, to capture the messiness of policies-in-practice, I will not depart from a nominalist (*a priori*) definition of 'educational reception practices', but rather use a realistic approach which includes under 'reception' any activity that is in fact considered by practitioners as such. This implies that I include as 'reception practices' not only those actions which strictly adhere to the policy goals of reception, but also informal activities which arise from the interpretations of the law made by practitioners themselves, or their improvisation in response to the situation. This way of working implies that the specific topics in the research agenda have been determined not only in accord with scientific concerns, but also significantly by issues introduced by teachers.

Second, the analysis focuses on practices related to a concrete policy measure, i.e. school reception, against the context of its policy field. It sets out to reconstruct the motivations driving practices within the logic of the policy field of reception. This strategy, mimicking Elmore's *backward mapping* approach (Elmore 1979), allows us to use the actions of practitioners as a point of departure and to move upwards in order to assess the actual influence on practices exerted by specific philosophic principles or administrative rules from various relevant institutional arrangements.

In sum, this chapter builds the frame of the study in four ways. It (1) gives a rough definition of the object of study, (2) reviews the existing scientific literature in the two bodies of literature mentioned above, (3) elaborates the analytical framework, and (4) presents the main research questions guiding this study.

2.1   Delimitating practices of educational reception

This study deals with the implementation of integration policies. In particular, the object of my study is the body of working practices of schools and teachers in the area of educational reception. The measures taken to target the first reception of immigrants on arrival are key elements through which the public authorities of receiving countries can facilitate immigrants' settlement. Although they vary by country, first reception measures typically involve temporary services such as housing facilities, counselling, educational services for children of compulsory school age, and civic integration courses for adults. For school-aged children arriving in a new country, first reception measures specifically mean their incorporation into the host educational system, sometimes involving special preparatory courses for a transitional period. This last group of measures is what I refer to as *educational reception*, a 'special policy' that arises from the assumption that foreign students experience specific obstacles in following compulsory education in the receiving country. Synonyms of reception are 'preparatory arrangements', 'preparation', 'adaptation', or 'transition classes' for new arrivals.

Programmes for the educational reception of immigrant students have adopted one of three ideal-types: immersion, parallel or mixed (Penninx & Rath 1990, Hakuta 1999, Ritchers 2002, Stanat & Christensen 2006, 2007).[2] Immigrant children may be required to pass a certain transitional course before they actually enter the regular educational system. This form of reception is called 'parallel' because newcomer students attend separate classes specifically for newcomers during a certain period. In these special courses they study the language used in the educational system of the receiving country and sometimes other subjects, in order reach a level of knowledge on par with that of the regular classrooms. In another scheme,

2   In Europe, pure immersion or bilingual systems are exceptional. In the US and Canada we find a broader range of possibilities: immersion, immersion with systematic language support, immersion with a preparatory phase, transitional bilingual and maintenance bilingual (see Hakuta 1999 and Stanat & Christensen 2007).

children may be received directly into the regular classes ('immersion'), with certain extra support provided (such as accompanying teachers to help them during the regular classes). Combinations of these two models are also possible (mixed reception), such as part-time reception schemes.

Broadly speaking, *practices of educational reception* are *those educational activities specifically geared to improve the insertion of immigrant students into the educational system of the host country.* Putting reception into practice involves not only the teaching of reception courses, but also various organisational tasks. In my study I have generally applied a realistic definition of educational reception practices which includes any activities understood by practitioners as 'reception'. Depending on the particular distribution of responsibilities within each system, reception workers carry out some of the following tasks in the process of school reception: registration of pupils, clustering of students in classes, definition of the curriculum and teaching methodology, schedule-making, teaching reception lessons, and evaluation/transfer of pupils to regular education. Informally, however, other activities can be included here, as long as they arise from adapting ordinary educational activities to the perceived 'special' needs of recently arrived pupils.[3]

Despite the flexibility of the notion of reception practices, my object of inquiry needs to be delimited in three ways in order to allow for comparison. First, I concentrate on actions carried out *by school bureaucrats*. Actions by personnel at higher levels of decision-making fall outside the scope of the study. My focus is on the practices of front-level officers, also called street-level bureaucrats, in their direct contact with the beneficiaries of a policy. The specific practitioners concerned here, while varying by case, are generally teachers and other educators in managerial positions within the school, such as coordinators of reception education or principals.

Second, I refer exclusively to practices taking place *at schools*, although the influence of activities taking place in other settings (such as some municipal departments or committees having to do with the enrolment of newcomer students) must be taken into account as part of the whole process. My choice of the school as the basic unit in which to observe practices[4] relates to my interest in practices as aggregated sets of routines

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3   In the analysis of the practices I have distinguished the following five different tasks, based upon school practitioners' descriptions of their activities: 1) enrolment of students, 2) clustering in classes, 3) curriculum and methodology, 4) schedule-making, and 5) evaluation of pupils and their transfer to regular education. The presentation of empirical material in chapters 4 and 5 will follow this classification.

4   To be more precise, I focus on the section within the school in which the reception itself and the decision-making on reception takes place. This means that the exact unit of observation

and strategies within specific organisations, rather than as the behaviours of individual practitioners. Individual actions are relevant only to the extent that they interact with other agents' actions and aggregate into the specific repertoire of practices that characterise a school. I have dedicated my attention to secondary educational institutions providing compulsory education (ISCED 2).[5] This choice is justified on two grounds: first reception implies more challenges at this age, as the curriculum is more demanding, and consequently, in both case studies reception policies have appeared in this phase of education much sooner than for primary education.

Third, my study focuses on educational practices *targeting* newcomers between twelve and sixteen years of age, designed to promote their incorporation into the host school system, specifically during the transitional period prior to participating in ordinary education. Vermeulen (1997) has rightly signalled that it is not enough to define 'special policy' as any measure taken to tackle a specific problem, as such problems can also be tackled through general policy. He proposes instead that special policies be understood as those which address specific *problems* of specific *target groups*. However, identifying the intended goal behind the activities in which newcomer students are included is problematic; besides, sometimes activities designed to address reception do mix with general activities, as in the case of Barcelona, where students attend regular lessons as part of their integration trajectory. To solve the difficulties which this generates in delimiting the object of study, I include the additional criteria of the *period* (reception vs. post-transfer) as an indication of the general purpose of activities. We will thus assume that all activities attended by the newcomer students during their reception period have a 'special' reception aim, regardless of whether they are general activities for any kind of students or specific activities only for newcomers. Despite this delimitation, the borders often remain blurry. The distinction between reception and general educational activities is a purely analytical distinction; in day-to-day reality these elements are closely intermingled.

will vary in each of my cases, as I am taking a realist approach, delimiting my units in order to make sure that I include the relevant actors within the network of each case.

5   The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) covers two variables: levels and fields of education with the complementary dimensions of general/vocational/pre-vocational orientation and educational/labour-market destination. The current classification distinguishes seven levels of education (from ISCED 0 to ISCED 6). ISCED 2 corresponds to lower secondary education. Usually, the end of this level coincides with the end of compulsory education (EURYDICE 2004).

2.2   Explaining compliance with and deviation from policy practices in the migration field

2.2.1   National regimes of integration and citizenship

The role of political institutions in social life has constantly attracted the attention of social scientists. In recent decades, as a reaction to the dominance of behaviourism in social science (Hall & Taylor 1996), the work of neo-institutionalist scholars has approached the study of social practices in relation to political institutions (Di Maggio & Powell 1983, March & Olsen 1984, Skocpol 1985, 1992, Esping-Andersen 1990, Mitchell 1991, Pierson 1993). Studies of immigrant integration policies have typically taken a neo-institutionalist approach, understanding public measures for accommodation in relation to nation-specific institutional frameworks. According to this tradition of research, issues of migration, integration, ethnic minorities and citizenship tend to be dealt with according to consistent, distinct national models.

There is a broad consensus regarding the existence of ideal-type migration regimes that regulate immigrants' inclusion in or exclusion from society. An 'immigration policy regime' has been defined by Thomas Faist as 'the rules and norms that govern immigrants' possibilities of becoming citizens, acquiring residence and work permits, and participating in economic, cultural and political life' (Faist 1995). This means that the immigration policy regime includes, among other institutional arrangements, the policies established to control migration and the policies designed to facilitate the incorporation of immigrants into their host societies. Such regimes are conceived as the product of specific historical patterns of nation-state formation. The specific features of each national model have been shaped by historical contingencies and organisational issues faced by each nation-state throughout its history (Hammar 1990, Brubaker 1992). Distinct national regimes are rooted in national political cultures, which are seen as highly stable over time. Once established, national models are path-dependant due to self-perpetuating inertias.

There have been many attempts to identify the main abstract types of immigration regimes (Hammar 1985, Brubaker 1992, 2003, Schnapper 1992, Todd 1994, Castles 1995, Wihtol de Wenden & De Tinguy 1995, Kastoryano 1996, Hollifield 1997, Joppke 1999a). Most classifications made in Europe have been inductive, based on a comparative evaluation of two or more countries. Despite the diversity of classifications, scholars agree that the conception of citizenship is the central characteristic of the immigration

regime (Castles & Miller 1993, Baldwin-Edwards & Schain 1994, Castles 1995, Williams 1995, Kofman et al. 2000). The idea is that the basic understanding of citizenship and nationhood of a given nation-state shapes the rules of belonging and admission to that community. Also, the way in which a national community thinks about itself shapes how resident 'others' are treated after settlement.

The classification made by Castles (1995) is the most frequently cited. Castles distinguishes between three regimes according to their models of citizenship: differential exclusion, assimilation and pluralism.[6] In the differential exclusion regime the main criteria for belonging to the nation is ethnic membership, and countries close to this model are therefore unwilling to accept new immigrants. Both the assimilation and pluralist regimes take a political definition of the nation as their point of departure, and see belonging to a political community as sharing a constitution, laws, and political rules. This implies the possibility of admitting new residents as members as long as they adhere to the rules of the polity. The main difference between these two systems concerns their attitude towards ethnic retention, which is tolerated or even promoted in the pluralist model, while in the assimilationist system a certain degree of cultural adaptation to the core culture and language is required. Although Castles explicitly focuses on citizenship (both in terms of rules of access and corresponding rights and entitlements) as the main criteria for classification, indirectly he also pays attention to the extent to which ethnic and cultural diversity is recognised and tolerated.[7]

This classification, known as the 'national models of integration' or 'regime paradigm', has been the target of three fundamental sorts of criticism. The usefulness of the typology for empirical research is questioned because of its failure to explain change, a consequence of its over-reliance on fixed national models (Bousetta 1997, 2001, Joppke 1999b, Favell 2003). Several scholars have reacted against what Joppke (1999b: 186) calls the 'ultrastability' of national regimes once they are established in critical historical moments. The alternative is to view citizenship and integration traditions

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6   The fourth model, total exclusion, is eliminated from the discussion for 'no highly-developed country has actually succeeded in completely preventing immigration in the post 1945 period' (Castles 1995: 294).

7   Koopmans and colleagues (2005) have explicitly combined in their classification the criteria of citizenship (civic vs. ethnic) and accommodation of diversity (monocultural vs. multicultural).

as unstable over time (Bertossi 2011), and as 'malleable and accommodative of cultural pluralism' (Joppke 1999a: 631).[8]

The applicability of this paradigm has also been criticised because of its choice of the nation-state as the basic unit of observation. Many authors have emphasised that regimes focus on the national level while most integration policies are formulated and/or implemented at the city level (Bousetta 1997, Ireland 1998, Money 1999, Alexander 2003b). This focus presupposes an inability to grasp internal variations such as differences between political parties or between territorial tiers (Entzinger 2000), as different regimes in fact compete within one country (Scholten 2011).[9] As a consequence, countries with very different policies are clustered within the same ideal-types (for instance, France, the Netherlands and the UK fall within the 'assimilation model'). This state-centric view also hinders the observation of social dynamics of integration that are independent of public policies (Favell 2003). Moreover, some authors point out that rights once reserved for citizens have been extended to non-nationals, as in the case of guest workers in European host polities, and that this transnational form of citizenship challenges predominant conceptions of citizenship based on national and territorialised notions of cultural belonging (Soysal 1994, Bauböck 1994), and therefore the very notion of national regimes of integration.

The regime approach takes as its point of departure the *a priori* assumption of the difference between countries, thus hindering the identification of similar outcomes or processes across states. However, despite deep ideological differences between countries, manifold empirical studies emphasise similarities in practices and a general tendency of European member states to converge in their policies (Hammar 1985, Soysal 1994, Weil & Crowley 1994, Vermeulen 1997, Entzinger 2000, Rex 2000, Rath 2001, Favell 1998, Jopkke & Morawska 2003, Lavenex 2005, Penninx & Martiniello 2004). In particular, Joppke and Morawska (2003) speak of a convergence towards a 'de facto' multiculturalism – paradoxically at a time of devaluation of multiculturalism as political doctrine – while other authors prefer to speak of 'pragmatic accommodation' (Poppelaars & Scholten 2008, Vermeulen & Stotijn 2010) or 'post-multiculturalist policies' (Uitermark et al. 2005). In any case, they all refer to the fact that local authorities in a number of

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8   Illustrations of this flexible approach to integration regimes are Soysal (1994), Bousetta (1997, 2001), Ireland (1994) and Garbaye (2000, 2002).
9   This polysemic nature of integration regimes is emphasised by scholars applying a framing approach, e.g. Bleich 2002, Boswell et al. 2011, Scholten 2011.

European countries formally reject the multiculturalist doctrine while in practice embrace some of its strategies (e.g., seeking partnerships with migrant organisations) (Vermeulen & Plaggenborg 2009).

The national models paradigm is problematic because it tends to generalise and mix issues at different analytical levels, such as formal rights, philosophies and programmes (Bousetta 1997, 2001). It sees national models as all-encompassing and able to account for the situation of migrants, policy discourse and policy orientations (Bertossi & Duyvendak 2012). However, experience teaches us that within any given polity, these dimensions do not necessarily coincide. A frequently cited example is France, which in practice carries out targeted measures for socio-economic integration in urban areas with high concentrations of immigrants, despite its official assimilationist policy and Republican policy discourse (Weil & Crowley 1994, Favell 1998: 41-91, Soysal 1994, Bleich 2001, Joppke & Morawska 2003). This suggests that the conceptions of citizenship and political rhetoric need to be distinguished from the concrete policy instruments actually in use. In other words, while the regime typology is an effective instrument to identify distinctive ideological discourses at the national level, it cannot satisfactorily discriminate between national and sub-national actors in their practices of admission and incorporation (Bousetta 1997). That is why the literature at the national level highlights fundamental divergence between integration models, while empirical studies at the local level suggest that in practice there are more similarities than differences.

Integration regimes are also criticised because they represent ideology rather than reality (Favell 2001, Finotelli & Michalowski 2012, Bertossi 2011). National models reflect projections of collective identity, produced in the past by nationalist intellectuals and state actors. Research using national models as heuristic tools tends to reproduce a nation-state's own self-image and views about citizenship and the integration of newcomers (Favell 2001, 2003). As national models tell us more about normative visions of society than about empirical realities, they should become an object of research in order to allow us to understand the ideological modes that similar European nation-states use to construct and justify their models (Favell 2003, 1998, Joppke 1999, Bertossi & Duyvendak 2012).

Above all, besides questioning regimes as heuristic tools, these criticisms cast doubts upon the explanatory role of regimes. In the literature regarding integration regimes we find a teleological bias similar to the one that Bousetta (2001) identified in relation to the concept of political opportunity structure. 'Everything happens as if a straightforward causal link could always be established between immigrants' political mobiliza-

tion and institutions' (Bousetta 2001: 17). A comparable argument on the causal link between different regimes and policy outcomes is implicit in the citizenship regime literature, which conceives regimes as drivers of action (Bertossi & Duyvendak 2012). However, closer scrutiny reveals that such direct correspondence is an *a priori* assumption rather than the result of empirical research (Vermeulen 1997, Favell 2003, Alexander 2003). The variation between national regimes in terms of outcomes has been the subject of relatively few empirical studies. Despite the multiplicity of cross-country comparisons of integration policies and studies that compare immigrant integration, relatively few studies have explicitly investigated the connection between integration policies and outcomes (Ireland 1994, Koopmans et al. 2005, Bloemraad 2006, Kastoryano 2002, Dagevos et al. 2006, Doomernik 1998, Muus 2003, Berry et al. 2006, Tucci 2008, Heckmann & Schnapper 2003, Ersanilli 2010).

There is an urgent need for studies on the mechanisms and processes governing the link between actors and institutions. Studies in the migration field have not been very precise in identifying the specific mechanisms by which regimes influence behaviour.[10] The overriding majority of studies of the national regime paradigm have relied on macro-level analysis, leaving the connections with micro-processes unresearched. Moreover, researchers have generally opted to study how integration regimes influence immigrants' behaviour,[11] but not how they influence the actions of state bureaucrats in charge of executing policies. Studies of this type are rare, and the few that exist focus on actors of migration policies. This means that more research is needed on the role of institutional actors as a link between the macro and the micro-levels, particularly in the integration domain. Understanding micro-processes is crucial because ultimately it is through the actions of individuals that we can get an insight in the processes of institutional channelling and reproduction. Comparing micro-dynamics allows us to avoid the pervasive pitfalls of macro-level comparisons that result in tautological explanations in which each regime leads to certain outcomes.

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10   Recent literature on national models acknowledges their performative effects, framing how people think about integration (Anghel 2012, Bertossi & Duyvendak 2012, Van Reekum et al. 2012).

11   For instance, the cross-national literature on how different opportunity structures frame migrants' mobilisations differently (Ireland 1994, Bousetta 1997, Koopmans & Statham 1999, 2000).

2.2.2 The policy gap in the migration field

From quite a different angle, a long tradition of implementation studies has explored the ways in which a particular type of institution – public policies – fails to produce compliant behaviour. Pressman and Wildavsky (1984) postulated the existence of a gap between policy goals and policy outcomes, pointing to implementation as the 'black box' of policies. What happens in implementation modifies the expected progress of policy from legislation to realisation in such a way that policymakers' goals are not achieved through the processes and structures they devise. However, pointing at implementation as the locus of the gap does not identify the causal mechanisms of the breach. Since the process of implementation is a complex one involving a chain of actions and decisions at multiple dimensions and levels, borne out by various actors, the scientific literature has diversified accordingly. In particular, four traditions of implementation research can be identified according to the main aspect that they take into account: a) how action is achieved by various dynamic effects (negotiation, decision-making, communication and conflict), b) how actors' goals and priorities influence outcomes, c) how relations and distribution of power among actors affect the implementation process, and d) how bureaucrats exercise discretion in implementing policies (Schofield 2001).

After the boom of previous decades, implementation studies is currently in an impasse, primarily due to sectarian disputes and poor empirical studies (O'Toole 2000). Nevertheless, in the field of migration, a discussion commenced in the 1990s over the existence of a gap between policy objectives and outcomes (Cornelius et al. 1994, Hollifield 2000, Freeman 1995, Zolberg 1999, Joppke 1998, Lahav & Guiraudon 2006). In 1994 Cornelius and colleagues noticed that despite restrictive migration policies in most Western countries, immigrants continued to arrive in significant numbers. The intended goal of curtailing immigration was not being achieved, either because policies were flawed by structural factors beyond their reach (such as international labour demand or migratory networks), or because of inadequate implementation or enforcement. According to these authors, the presence of a gap ultimately means a failure of policies and therefore places in question the regulatory capacity of the state. 'Embedded liberalism' – human rights incorporated in national constitutions – becomes the decisive element limiting the control capacity of liberal democracies, beyond the influence of other elements such as the structural demand for low-skilled foreign labour or the transnational networks of migrants. Hollifield refined this explanation by characterising this implementation gap as a paradox

intrinsic to liberal societies, since the economic logic of liberalism is one of openness, but the political and legal logic is one of closure (Hollifield 2000). Western states are thus inevitably trapped in this 'liberal paradox': international economic forces push them towards opening up their borders, while the international state system and powerful domestic political forces push them towards closing them further.

More recent contributions to this debate have tried to restitute the rationality of migration policies at least partially by pointing to the constructed character of the breach (Sciortino 2000, Zolberg 1999), and problematising the mechanisms, direction and degree of causality between policies and outcomes (Joppke 1998, Lahav & Guiraudon 2006). Since the implementation gap is socially constructed, its existence depends on the criteria of evaluation used. In particular, *policy goals*, which gauge outcomes and reflect the ideal vision of the state, determine whether or not – and to what extent – we can talk of a 'gap' in each given case. The gap can be understood as a result of the processes of policy formulation and implementation (Freeman 1995, Joppke 1998, Lahav & Guiraudon 2006) that lead to ambiguous, unfeasible or purely rhetorical goals that are difficult to translate into action. Thus policy outcomes are influenced by the struggles between actors, trade-offs between leaders, and practices and structures of implementation. According to this, Lahav and Guiraudon (2006) reformulate the gap hypothesis in three versions: formulation (outputs vs. outcomes), implementation (outputs vs. practices), and policymaking arenas (domestic vs. international).

Studies have tackled the policy gap in the area of formulation more often than that in the area of implementation. In this first orientation, studies have been based upon the idea that immigration policies are captured by powerful pro-migration interest groups and show an intrinsic discontinuity with the restrictionist preferences of the general citizenry. From this perspective, the gap is seen as a result of the policymaking process governed by client dynamics (Freeman 1995). This means that although the capacity of states to control immigration has not decreased but increased, for domestic reasons liberal states are kept from putting this capacity to use (Joppke 1998).

Studies on implementation, for their part, have mostly centred their attention upon governance patterns and power distribution. Integration and migration policies represent a clear case of multilevel/multisector governance, involving multiple social actors in arrays of negotiations, implementation and service delivery. From this perspective, accounts of the implementation gap refer to the extension of dynamics of governance and decentralisation in policymaking. Following principal-agent theory

models (Williamson 1967), studies emphasise the inconsistencies created by the delegation of responsibilities to local and private agents, i.e. *shifting down and shifting out* (Guiraudon & Lahav 2000). A majority of studies has focused on the role of specific actors: the judiciary (Joppke 1998), private companies such as air carriers (Scholten & Minderhoud 2008), municipal administration (Poppelaars & Scholten 2008), and civil servants in direct contact with the public in different sectors (Guiraudon 2001, Van der Leun 2006, Moreno Fuentes 2003, Jordan et al. 2003a).

Besides this emphasis on governance patterns, studies of the implementation gap have abandoned a pluralist approach to policy actors in favour of an institutionalist one. Authors start from the idea that institutions play a role in determining which logic and which actor within each logic will prevail. The character of multilevel governance implies multilayered understandings, in which different levels and policy sectors can present distinct ways of 'framing' the policy. The goals and priorities of principals and agents often collide, leading to inconsistencies. On the one hand, diverging interests and views between actors produce competition over the distribution of resources and responsibilities. The department and level of authority dominating the struggle thus determine which vision of integration prevails (Kamerling 2007, Jordan et al. 2003). On the other, the actor in charge of implementation ultimately re-defines priorities and applies its vision of integration to the policy-in-practice (Kamerling 2007).

The value of this line of research is that it has restituted the role of state institutions and bureaucracies. Even within the state the interests of different sectors and state actors do not coincide, as is illustrated by the divergent visions held by Ministries of the Interior/Justice vs. Ministries of Labour/Social Affairs (Geddes & Guiraudon 2004, Gil Araujo 2002). This means that the location of actors within the state apparatus is crucial, determining distinct dilemmas and responses (Calavita 1992).[12] However, a theoretical dilemma arises as studies embark upon more comprehensive approaches to the policy process and more nuanced analyses of different actors, sectors and levels. Do findings point to sector-specific styles of implementation or to national implementation styles? If the outcomes of migration policies are influenced by the prevailing logic of each policy

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12   For example, Poppelaars & Scholten (2008) emphasise the diverging priorities of national and local authorities in the Netherlands; the former are primarily concerned with symbolic politics and the latter with pragmatic problem-solving. Also, Engbersen et al. (2000) found a remarkable diversity in the application of the Linking Act (*Koppelingswet*, a law banning the delivery of public services to irregular migrants) by bureaucrats in different sectors, from more lenient to more to literal interpretations.

sector (e.g. education, health care, etc.) and by the distinct points of view of the bureaucracies involved, then we might expect to find similarities between policy sectors even across countries (Van Waarden 1999). However, if the institutional make-up of receiving states determines the roles and responses of actors, it would be reasonable to expect cross-national differences and coherent national models (Lahav & Guiraudon 2006, Jordan et al. 2003a, 2003b). More cross-national comparative research is necessary to gauge whether and to what extent cross-sector similarities outweigh cross-national variations.

Despite their valuable insight into the policy gap, the studies that have paid systematic attention to the role of those who implement policy continue to be relatively few (Gilboy 1992, Engbersen & Van der Leun 1999, Engbersen et al. 1999, Jordan et al. 2003a, Van der Leun 2003, Moreno Fuentes 2003, Ellerman 2005, 2006, Martín Pérez 2009). Moreover, research mostly concentrates on migration policies and only to a lesser extent on integration measures (Engbersen et al. 1999, Moreno Fuentes 2003). Finally, most of these studies are case studies, despite the urgent need for comparative inquiries capable of discerning between context-transcending and context-specific mechanisms. The international literature on educational reception also contains a prevalence of case studies (Carrasco et al. 2011, Ricucci 2008, Haworth 2005, Leung 2002, Richers 2002, Vaipae 2001, Gunderson 2002), while only a few studies engage in the research of reception from the perspective of policy implementation, connecting the micro-level of teachers' practices in the classroom with the macro-level of policymaking (Foley et al. 2012, Murtagh & Francis 2012, McLure & CanMann-Taylor 2010, Osborn & Broadfoot 1992, Pawan & Ortloff 2010, Gardner 2006, Arkoudis 2003, McKay & Freedman 1990). In sum, to cover these explanatory deficits, more studies of the implementation gap are necessary in the field of integration, with a cross-national comparative approach and giving special attention to the low-level workers in direct contact with immigrants.

2.3   Analytical framework to study coordination/ discrepancies between policies and practices

To complement the two traditions of research described above, the present study uses an analytical approach that combines elements from three different corpuses of theory: the bottom-up school of implementation, Bourdieu's theory of social practices, and the tradition of 'new' historical institutionalism.

2.3.1 Bottom-up approach to the study of implementation

This research continues a tradition in the study of implementation as the study of 'policy-as-produced' and as an inquiry into the mechanisms shaping this production. Although implementation can be defined as the transformation of policy into action, it is not a purely mechanical question of providing the means to execute the legislative objectives. Policies need structures through which to be put in action, but those structures are themselves political, because the 'very institutions used as "delivery channels" are in themselves result of particular patterns of social policies' (Schofield 2001: 252). In fact, implementation problems represent a prolongation of problems of legislative politics by other means, since successful coalition-building strategies often produce policies full of ambiguities, conflicting objectives and uncertainty (Brodkin 2000). Moreover, implementation issues reflect dynamics of governance and power distribution either in a horizontal (among different sectors) or in a vertical sense (between tiers and between principals and agents).

In my work I adhere to bottom-up explanations of the implementation gap. The literature from this perspective introduces the discretionary power of 'street-level bureaucrats' as an important analytical concept, understanding that workers in direct contact with clients enjoy high levels of discretion and autonomy in their application of laws and policies. We can find a predecessor to this literature in the tradition of studies on 'informal organisation', which showed how the norms and practices developed by workers effectively undermined formal organisation (Merton 1940, Blau 1955).[13] Since its first appearance in the 1930s, the concept of informal organisation has been viewed in diverse ways: either as something that can work in conjunction with formal organisation, something that exists in a condition of relative independence from it, or even something that can take the form of deviant behaviour that resists or defies managerial authority (Watson 2001). These studies offered a fundamental critique of Weber's over-emphasis on the formalisation and rationalisation aspects of bureaucratic organisation (Weber 1978). In a similar vein, the street-level literature argues that the high degree of discretion that policy implementers enjoy modifies policy goals in decisive ways (Lipsky 1980, Van der Leun 2003, Moreno Fuentes 2003). In his path-breaking study of street-

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13   The concept of 'informal organisation' was introduced as a critique to the dominant view of organisations as instruments rationally designed to achieve specific ends. *Informal organisation* covers all those aspects (practices, values, norms, beliefs, unofficial rules, network of social relations) which are not part of the formally designed relations and procedures that constitute the *formal organisation* (Roethlisberger 1968).

level bureaucrats, Michael Lipsky argued that the specific working conditions of low-level workers produce unsolvable dilemmas. It is the under-resourced and over-ambitious nature of their jobs that creates practical dilemmas for motivated employees (Lipsky 1980). Typically, five constraints characterise street-level bureaucrats: inadequate resources, increasing demand, ambiguous goals, difficult evaluation and non-voluntary clients. As a response to these dilemmas, street-level bureaucrats develop so-called 'coping strategies' to salvage service objectives within the limits of the possible. Coping mechanisms are work routines that allow bureaucrats to standardise and simplify their workload by making discretional judgements. Coping strategies help to control clients and the work-situation, to limit services, and to develop psychological dispositions that reduce the dissonance between worker expectations and actual service outcomes. For example, low-level workers develop simple categories or labels ('single mother', 'illegal immigrant') to classify the potential beneficiaries and be able to make fast discretional decisions.

Discretion or 'practical wisdom' is the ability to make situational judgements (in response to present contingencies) in the application of general rules. Situational judgements are a result of a structural caveat of universal rules. Practical choices cannot be fully and adequately captured by universal rules due to three features of practice: the mutability of the particular, its indeterminacy, and its non-repeatability (Aristotle in Nussbaum 1986). As a result, rules have to be applied, which necessarily implies the contextualisation of procedures within the concrete circumstances of the moment. Moreover, discretion is a consubstantial element of the implementation of public policies. Discretion in this context can be defined as the *autonomy of practitioners in direct contact with beneficiaries to make binding decisions concerning the distribution of public services and resources* (Moreno Fuentes 2003: 71). In the educative sector, this can be illustrated by what Jackson calls the 'immediacy of the classroom', or the pressing necessity of teachers with large numbers of students 'to make innumerable instantaneous decisions which allowed little time for reflection or critical thought' (Jackson 1968 in Hargreaves & Woods 1984: 3).

There is fundamental disagreement between scholars over the nature and cause of discretion. For Hargreaves (1984) and Lipsky (1980), discretion is essentially 'coping' in nature. Lipsky (1980) argues that the discretion exerted by low-level public officials is an attempt to cope with the structural constraints on their work. For teachers this means 'to devise and enact ... a set of teaching strategies which will make life bearable, possible and even rewarding as an educational practitioner' (Hargreaves 1984: 66). According to Hargreaves (1984) there are at least three types of institutional constraints that produce

problems which the teacher tries to resolve with coping strategies: material constraints, constraints related to the educational ideology, and constraints resulting from the contradictory goals of the educational system in contemporary capitalist societies. Other authors understand discretion primarily as product of the relative power or autonomy of civil servants (Howe 1991).[14] Autonomy creates room for discretion because it gives practitioners the option of deviating from the rules in certain situations (Van den Brink 1999). In line with this, other authors argue that higher degrees of discretion correlate with high levels of professionalisation (Van der Leun & Kloosterman 2006, Engbersen et al. 1999) or with decentralisation of competences (Feirabend & Rath 1996, Guiraudon & Lahav 2000, Kamerling 2007).[15] Within the ethnographic tradition of education studies, Osborn and Broadfoot (1992) and Woods (1994) came up with a third source of discretion.[16] Teachers sometimes are found to show open 'resistance' to the application of certain policies that are contrary to their ideological values and educational preferences.

All in all, we can find in the literature three main motivations behind discretional practices: *tailoring,* which tries to apply the general rules to the specifics of each concrete situation; *coping,* which seeks to escape structural constraints and improve work conditions; and *ethical,* which aims to adapt policies so that they are congruent with personal or professional values.

Moreover, discretion can also be categorised by the institutional channels by which discretional practices are enacted. There is much dispute as to whether the origin of discretion is formal or informal. In the first case, discretion is 'given' – a capacity that some civil servants are granted – while in the latter, discretion is 'taken' by using the ambiguities and loopholes of the system. Evans & Harris (2004) include all these alternatives in their classification of the main sources of discretion. According to these authors, discretion can be either: 1) the autonomy granted from the top-down to

14   In opposition to Lipsky, Howe (1991) argues that street-level bureaucrats do not have discretional power: 'except in matters of style, all substantive elements of their work are determined by others' (1991: 204). The literature is fundamentally divided between these two positions on discretion.

15   However, autonomy cannot be taken as a given, since political mandates vary both in the specificity of their goals and the provision of resources (Montjoy & O'Toole 1979). Crossing both variables, Montjoy & O'Toole (1979) produced a four-type typology of how new political mandates produce compliance or discretion. Mandates with vague goal definition and with ample resources would create the highest degree of discretion.

16   Osborn & Broadfoot (1992) identified four teachers' reactions vis-à-vis the implementation of new national policies: cooperation, retreat, resistance, and incorporation. Inspired by this study, Woods (1994) outlined five categories of teachers' reactions (resistance, appropriation, resourcing, enrichment, and relocation).

Figure 1   Channels of discretion

allow bureaucrats to do their job, 2) the space created by uncertainty of rules, or 3) the ability of practitioners to subvert rules (Evans & Harris 2004).

Following Evans and Harris (2004), I will conceptualise discretion as a graduated scale of freedom to make decisions, ranging from formal autonomy to the informal use of the interstices between rules. In my study I will assume that the discretion of practitioners can be produced or intensified by any of these three mechanisms: by making use of the autonomy that has been granted, by using loopholes in the system, or by taking bottom-up initiatives to create spaces in which to act discretionally. I will label these three types of discretion *granted, taken,* and *created*.

Evans & Harris (2004) propose that the opposition *discretion-absence of discretion* be reformulated as an empirical question about specific degrees of discretion. From this point of view, it becomes relevant not only to assess different degrees of freedom, but also how that freedom is used and what the products of discretion are. Following in their footsteps, I will use two main indicators of discretion: *variations in practice* (different ways of implementing the same policy, school to school, client to client) or *practical adaptations* of the rule (practices diverging from official policy goals). The presence of generalised discretional practices would indicate the existence of a gap, particularly in the second case, when discretion systematically produces deviation from the intended policy goals and the means formally established to reach these objectives.

In sum, to make sense of the empirical evidence I will use these three tools in my study: the indicators of discretional practice (variations vs. adaptations), the typology of motivations of discretion (tailoring, coping, ethical), and the typology of channels of discretion (granted, taken, and created).

2.3.2   The social embeddedness of political practices

The analytical tools drawn from the bottom-up tradition of implementation research need to be supplemented by another classical approach to the study of practices. Teachers and school bureaucrats are political actors to the extent that they put in place policies created at higher levels. But

Table 1   Types of social action and mechanisms of coordination

Orientation of action	Types of social action	Mechanisms of action coordination
Traditional	Traditional	Custom
Affective	Expressive	Solidarity
Evaluative	Evaluative affirmation	Legitimacy
Strategic	Strategic	Constellation of interest

Source: Bader (2001)

they are also social actors that have specific family, social class or ethnic backgrounds, and belong simultaneously to various social and political institutions (public administrations, schools, etc). The practices of teachers and schools in the reception of immigrant students thus have to be understood as 'social practices'.

The nature of human action has been the subject of fierce debates, setting defenders of structure against defenders of agency, determination against freedom. Different theorists have attempted to reconcile the normative and instrumental aspects of social practices. Here I want to highlight three contributions in particular, as they are especially relevant to my research: Bader's reformulation of Weber's theory of social action, Bourdieu's theory of social practice, and Emirbayer and Mische's multidimensional conception of agency.

Following Weber (1978), Bader (2001) distinguishes between four kinds of social action (traditional, affective, evaluative and strategic), each of which has its characteristic mechanism for coordinating action (custom, solidarity, legitimacy or constellation of interest) (see Table 1). Each mechanism coordinates the actions of different actors by means of *institutionalised expectations*; for example, '"custom" presupposes that ego and alter expect each other to be traditionally orientated towards the rules of custom and will act in accordance' (Bader 2001: 8). Bader does not privilege strategic or evaluative actions with the attribute of rationality, but rather postulates something like a rationality of 'traditions or emotions'. Bader reckons that theories which privilege one of these orientations alone in order to explain social action are unable to explain the degree of stability and social integration of societies. For instance, Durkheimian and Parsonian sociology put too much emphasis on *normative integration* and the role of legitimacy.

Two of the ideal motivations of discretion mentioned above (*coping* and *ethical*) seem to correspond to Weber's strategic and affective orientations of social action respectively. However, in order to achieve a complete understanding of social practices, we need to be open to the possibility

of finding practices that enact both interest-oriented and value-oriented action. According to Weber, each of these mechanisms of coordination is a pure type, thus in day-to-day reality we cannot find purely strategic or purely affective actions.

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of social practice (1984, 1992, 1993) is an attempt to bridge the utilitarian dangers of rational actor theories and the deterministic risks of structuralism and norm-oriented approaches. In this endeavour, social practice becomes the locus of the dialectic between structure and agency. Bourdieu understands social practice as the product of a particular *habitus*, or system of cognitive and motivational structures of agents. Such *habitus* is in turn the result of the external conditionings associated with a particular social position and conditions of existence. Agents interiorise those cognitive dispositions (*habitus*) in a non-conscious way, incorporating them as a motivation, and so they adapt their actions to structural conditioning without consciously following a norm or precept.

Bourdieu's theory of practice is based on three pivotal concepts: habitus, field, and capital. The action of individual/collective agents is a function of their *habitus* or cognitive and motivational schemes. Following this line, I deem the practices of policy implementers to be not a merely mechanical reflex of reception policy goals and organisational rules, nor the product of rational calculus. Rather, the practices of individual teachers have to be understood according to their simultaneous (and successive) belonging to different social spheres. The plurality of teachers' belongings implies that they enact various *habitus*, which can potentially give rise to inconsistencies between them.

Moreover, the practices of schools and teachers take place within a given *field* of educational reception, characterised by struggle over a specific kind of *capital*. As we will see, the different power structures defining reception policies in Barcelona and Rotterdam indicate that there are distinct forms of capital at stake. It is within that specific field of reception that the practices of teachers take on meaning.

These theoretical insights contribute to an understanding of the coordination and stability of societies. Equally important is to see how change takes place and how social action contributes to it. In principle, each of the mechanisms identified by Weber coordinates only those empirical actions that are congruent with its own orientation; for example, solidarity would be empirically constituted only by purely affective actions of *ego* towards purely affective actions of *alter*. Nevertheless, Bader (2001) explains that it is possible to change from a system primarily based on one mechanism of coordination to a system in which another mechanism prevails. Within a

society with institutionalised expectations based on custom, for instance, actors can orient themselves towards a constellation of interests; if this orientation becomes predominant it may undermine the stability provided by one mechanism, leading to its substitution by another type.

A more elaborate approach to change in social action can be found in Emirbayer & Mische's (1998) multidimensional concept of agency. The authors disaggregate agency in three dimensions: *iteration* or *habit*, *projectivity* or *imagination*, and *practical evaluation* or *discretion*. From this perspective, agency is not simply the opposite of 'norm', nor is it the pure synonym of 'freedom' and 'strategic' action guided by self-interest. Agency (i.e. social action) needs to be understood both as a habit, oriented by institutionalised expectations and norms, and as a capacity for 'reflective choice' enjoyed by social actors. This implies that there is a permanent interplay between the reproductive and transformative aspects of social action. Emirbayer and Mische suggest that agency is the seed both for reproducing and for transforming the social order. The change of routines or strategic action is introduced by *reflexivity,* a property characteristic of the practical-evaluative dimension of agency.[17] 'As actors encounter problematic situations requiring the exercise of imagination and judgement, they gain a reflective distance from received patterns that may (in some contexts) allow for greater imagination, choice and conscious purpose' (1998: 973).

Another valuable contribution of Emirbayer and Mische is their description of agency as a historical phenomenon, intrinsically social and relational. According to this description, there are varying degrees of 'agentic possibility' for different moments, places and persons. Not only because imagination and the formation of personal projects are historically and culturally embedded, but also because people in different places and periods understand that they have different degrees of freedom or determination. Agency is thus understood as 'neither radically voluntarist nor narrowly instrumentalist' (1998: 984).

The concept of field: the micro, meso, and macro-context of practices
As the concept of field plays an important role in my analytical repertoire, it deserves a more careful characterisation. We can identify a specific set of individual actors and organisations which play a role in any given area of institutional life (Di Maggio & Powel 1991). These actors are engaged in an

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17   Reflectivity, however, 'can change in either direction through the increasing routinization or problematization of experience' (Emirbayer & Mische 1998: 973). Thus, when actors gain a reflective distance from habits, this does not necessarily lead to a change in those customs.

ongoing struggle for control over a specific kind of capital or authority. At the same time, these actors share a particular way of framing the issues at stake and a common purpose. The relations between these actors constitute a 'field of practice', which is an arena both of conflict and of shared purpose (Di Maggio 1983, Bourdieu 1981, 1992, 1993a). Likewise the relations of a set of actors working in a particular policy area have been conceptualised as a 'policy domain', a sub-system identified by specifying a substantively defined criterion of mutual relevance or common orientation among a set of consequential actors concerned with formulating, advocating and selecting courses of action (policy options) that are intended to resolve the delimited substantive problems in question (Laumann & Knoke 1987). The analogous structure of the concepts of *field of practice* and *policy domain* led Bousetta (1997) to use an interpretation of Bourdieu's concept of 'field' joined with Laumann and Knoke's concept of a 'policy domain'. My use of the notion of field follows Bousetta's application.

An important feature of fields is their dual nature. On the one hand, they are 'structured spaces of positions whose properties depend on their position within these spaces and can be analyzed independently of the characteristics of their occupants (which are partly determined by them)' (Bourdieu 1993: 72). This means that the notion of field refers to a configuration of relationships not between the concrete entities themselves (individual actors and organisations) but rather between the nodes those entities happen to occupy within a given network (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008). A field is a terrain of contestation between occupants of positions differentially endowed with resources, and not so much the particular network of actors occupying those positions. But a field is also a semiotic system, since actors set out to distinguish themselves from others within the field by means of symbolically meaningful position-takings. They 'derive their semiotic significance in relational fashion from their difference vis-à-vis other such position-takings within the space of position-takings' (Emirbayer & Johnson 2008).

The political actors engaged in the school reception of immigrant students in a given local space constitute a field: the policy field of educational reception. This field serves as a context for practices of reception at the 'meso-level', which includes all the organisations (and individuals) that struggle to define what reception education should be. But the concept of field can be used at the micro and macro-levels of analysis as well. Thus in my research I will apply this conceptual tool in all three ways, at the micro, meso and macro-levels. Each school will be considered a micro-field in itself, in which different actors contend in the struggle for certain forms of capital.

The application of the concept of field at the macro-level in the analysis of national regimes of integration and educational systems helps to account for the motivations driving certain practices. The working practices of teachers and schools are embedded in a given institutional and policy context – itself multilayered and multidimensional – formed by the coincidence of a diversity of institutional structures. The typical nested representation of this macro-context of practices, in which institutions at lower levels of authority are embedded within arrangements deriving from higher levels in a hierarchical relation, assumes a high degree of systemic integration and coordination. This assumption should be questioned for several reasons. First, contemporary societies are better depicted as 'loosely integrated patchworks' (Bader 2001: 3) inasmuch as their characteristic structural differentiation – division of labour, social classes, organisations and institutions – goes hand in hand with cultural pluralism: class, ethnic, regional, national, religious, linguistic, ideological and gender differences (Bader & Engelen 2003). Research has established the relative independence of institutions of diverse policy domains, each one tending to develop its own characteristic structure and policy network (Laumann & Knoke 1987, Lowi 1964).

Even if all institutions within a society were to share common principles, these principles would still lead to different interpretations and institutional enactments due to the indeterminacy of moral and legal principles. A straightforward nested representation of the institutional context makes it difficult to distinguish which dynamics pertain to the different dimensions and institutional areas of the context of actors' practices. Implementation practices are often influenced by a variety of institutions and organisations, but not necessarily by all those that might enter into play. Finally, a hierarchical description of the institutional setting provides a top-down view that hinders the identification of bottom-up feedback or inter-sector influences. The study of practices from this perspective favours an emphasis on the reproductive, reiterative aspects of human action that comply with their institutional prescriptions, tending to overlook the more transformative aspects of action.

As an alternative to nested representations, I attempt to imagine the context of practice in terms of a field of struggle among a variety of organisations playing a role in a given area of human activity (Bourdieu 1982, 1992, Bousetta 1997, 2000, Emirbayer & Johnson 2008). This assumes that there are independent processes and power configurations behind the formation of each institutional structure of a society. Given my understanding of institutions as entities which reflect and reproduce power disparities, it

follows that my study should reconstruct the history of power relations which have given shape to the three institutional settings central to this study (i.e. integration regimes, education systems and programmes of educational reception). This requires questioning the assumption that there is an automatic trickle-down through hierarchical levels (i.e. the national regime of integration influencing the programme of educational reception), and asking the empirical question of how different institutions constitute each other's fields, as occurs when common actors participate in their respective fields of practice or when there are differences in timing (an actor being influenced by the previous actor).

2.3.3   Historical institutionalist approach

Notwithstanding the flaws of the neo-institutionalist literature on integration regimes described above, I do use some institutionalist elements in my study. Within the general neo-institutionalist tradition, three distinctive approaches can be identified: historical, rational-choice and sociological. Scholars from these three streams are confronted with a controversy concerning two interrelated matters: how institutions affect the behaviour of individuals[18] and how the actions of individuals aggregate to form and reproduce institutions. Drawing on a historical institutionalist tradition of research, I consider national integration regimes, educational systems, and reception programmes as legacies of concrete historical processes with specific conflicts and configurations. Instead of emphasising the coordinating functions of institutions, my focus relies on their particular characteristics and distributional effects as a result of historical dynamics.

Institutions do not constitute neutral coordinating mechanisms; they facilitate the empowerment of some groups while hindering the access of others to power. Institutions are legacies of political struggles which reflect and reproduce power disparities (Hall 1986, Knight 1992, Riker 1980 in Thelen 1999). Each institution embodies particular patterns of power distribution and has particular feedback mechanisms that reinforce those distributional effects.

This implies that political processes involve crucial founding moments of institutional formation known as 'critical junctures' (Collier & Collier 1991). The idea is that the temporal order of processes (and the interactions be-

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18   'Central to any institutional analysis is the question: how do institutions affect the behavior of individuals? After all, it is through the actions of individuals that institutions have an effect on political outcomes' (Hall & Taylor 1996: 7).

tween them) influences their outcomes. Afterwards institutions continue evolving in response to environmental conditions in path-dependent ways that are constrained by their past trajectories. Two types of mechanisms of reproduction have been identified by the literature: incentive structures (also called coordination effects, North 1990) that stimulate actors to adapt their strategies in ways that reinforce the logic of the system, and redistributive mechanisms that facilitate and reproduce the empowerment of some groups and disarticulate others (Ikenberry 1994, Pierson 1997, Skocpol 1992).

Despite path-dependency and institutional legacies, institutions do evolve and change over time. Institutions are actually in a constant process of change. From this perspective, change is not conceived in terms of a transition between two equilibriums, as rational-choice scholars see it, but rather as a continuous process of interaction (Orren & Skowronek 1994, Thelen 1999). An illustration of this approach is that of Orren and Skowronek, who focus on the incongruities and intersections between different processes and institutional logics as they unfold over time. Not only processes of institutional formation are characterised by incongruities; over time, different processes and diverse institutional logics continue to interact and influence each other (Orren & Skowronek 1994). The plurality of institutional arrangements implies the existence of gaps between different arrangements from various levels and policy areas. These inter-institutional collisions and disjunctures can create avenues for change (Pierson 1996). However, as Thelen (1999) points out, only those gaps that affect the basic foundations and the reproduction mechanisms of institutions lead to institutional change.

In sum, my approach to institutions questions functionalists' assumptions of coherence, complementarity and mechanical path-dependency. The institutional map of a society is incredibly dense and forms a complex interactive network: what North (1990) calls 'the interdependent web of an institutional matrix'. But such an institutional web does not *per se* constitute a consistent whole, because 'institutions, both individually and collectively, juxtapose different logics of political order, each with their own temporal underpinnings' (Orren & Skowronek 1994: 320). On the one hand, each institutional arrangement has arisen out of particular political struggles. On the other, the plurality of institutional arrangements within a polity emerges gradually, over a great deal of time. This means that each institution stems out of a different historical configuration, leading to dissimilar logics and mechanisms of reproduction. The juxtaposition of different logics implies that the 'different pieces do not necessarily fit together into

a coherent, self-reinforcing, let alone functional, whole' (Thelen 1999: 382). Rather, the resulting system is full of incongruities, gaps and unintended consequences.

Coordinating mechanisms: Interpretive and instrumental dynamics
State institutions influence the practices of public bureaucrats through two types of dynamics: *interpretative*, shaping cognitive and evaluative under-standings, and *instrumental*, providing channels and material resources. Thus institutional arrangements do more than merely 'channel' action by offering resources and/or constraints; they also shape goals, perceptions of problems and imagined solutions (Zysman 1994, Garbaye 2002, Bloemraad 2006).

These two types of mechanisms coincide with the major dimensions of public policies which are constructed as much through techniques as through aims (Lascoumes & Le Gales 2007). The patterns of conflict at their origin shape substantive and instrumental dimensions of policy in specific ways, distinct for each institutional arrangement. Therefore, both dimensions need to be considered when describing the main features of policies (see chapter 3) and need to be viewed independently in the analysis.[19] This implies assuming that changes and developments in policy may come through reforms in instruments, goals, or parameters (Hall 1986, 1993, Jobert 1994, Lascoumes & Le Gales 2007). Although the institutional logic of integration regimes and educational systems tends to favour certain techniques, we cannot *a priori* presume unambiguous correspondence between certain goals and certain instruments. For instance, France was one of the first countries to develop *classes d'initiation* and *classes d'adaptation* (Schain 1985), despite its hypothetical reluctance to tolerate special treatment of ethnic groups.

Interpretative mechanisms influence cognitive and evaluative judge-ments of institutional agents either directly or indirectly. The core goals of each policy *directly* – normatively – affect individuals' behaviour by setting collectively sanctioned courses of action. By policy goals I refer to the long-term ideals or objectives as stated in policy documents, such as cultural assimilation or socio-economic parity. Objectives are generally defined in negative terms with reference to the problem targeted or the main obstacles envisaged – such as segregation or discrimination – in the

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19   The intrinsic difficulty in distinguishing policy aims and instruments opens a debate on the possibility of doing so at all. As Lascoumes & Le Gales (2007: 16) point out, we must remember that in practice, what for some actors may be an instrument can be a goal for others.

road towards an ideal end (Fermin 1999). Concrete ideals and presumed obstacles can be seen as elements of broader logical frameworks which convey rationales, rhetorical structures and policy goals.

In addition to this influence, institutions also model individuals' professionalism and their representations of their own work as civil servants. Their ideal conception of their jobs and duties mediates *indirectly* their perception of policy goals and thus the actions they take to implement policy. For instance, in a comparative study between teachers' practices in primary schools in England and France, Broadfoot et al. (1988) found that national contexts deeply influence the work practices of teachers by fundamentally shaping their views on professional responsibility (restricted vs. expanded), their view of teaching (problematic vs. axiomatic), their focus (process vs. product), and the type of goals they set (universalist vs. particularistic). In another study these different educational cultures are explained with reference to the distinct forms of thinking that each national culture favours: the rationalist tradition of Descartes in France, and Locke's empiricist philosophy in England (Planel et al. 2000).[20]

Instrumental mechanisms coordinate the practices of institutional agents by providing specific channels and resources for action, which increase the probabilities of certain courses of action while diminishing others. Specifically, this channelling dimension defines the type of instruments available to pursue given goals. More generally, this dimension reflects primarily a preferred mode of regulation or degree of 'statism' (Jepperson 2002), for example, whether the state institution tends to intervene to pursue policy goals in a more or less direct manner. In this sense, the type of instrumentation applied reflects the extent to which the state intervenes to regulate issues or leaves room for society and/or the market to solve problems by themselves. Policies could be described as closer to liberalism, statism or corporatism (Meyer 1983, Soysal 1994, Van Waarden 1999) as a function of these differences. In the realm of education we can discern three types of regulation: governing by input, governing by curriculum rules, and governing by output (Fase 1994). In the first one, governments only intervene to define target groups and allocate funds; in the second, governments provide rules and guidelines to schools that tend to cover

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20   According to these traditions, in France teachers would consider the teaching method to be crucially important, as rationality is thought to be a universal human ability and learning progresses by successive stages; while in England more room would be given to individual solutions and learning by experimentation, since it is believed that individual children will reach different levels according to their ability.

everything; and in the third case, governments reward or punish the degree to which schools comply with their rules.

Institutional context of reception practices: Integration regimes, education systems, and programmes of reception

Three institutional arrangements are expected to play a role in the study of the practices of educational reception: the national integration regime, the educational system and the specific programme of educational reception. Despite all the criticisms that have been mentioned, national integration regimes can still be valuable heuristic instruments to manage complexity, providing that there is a minimum of internal coherence and continuity of policies (Favell 2001, Bader 2007).[21] In my research I do not consider that these three institutional forms amalgamate in a unique institutional context; instead, I will treat them as independent forces, making their possible interrelations (or even convergence) an empirical question.

First, in my study national regimes of integration are defined, following Yasemin Soysal's notion of incorporation modes, as 'the patterns of policy discourse and organisation around which a system of incorporation is constructed' (Soysal 1994: 32). According to this idea, the national regime of integration is comprised of two basic dimensions. The first includes officially stated policy goals, but also the broader rationales concerning citizenship, nationhood, national identity and ethnic relations. The discursive dimension of policy can be understood as a 'philosophy' (Favell 1997, 2000), a long-term goal or vision of integration of immigrants, or an 'ideology' or 'set of values and beliefs that frames the political thinking and action of agents of the main institutions of a nation-state at a given point in time' (Van Zanten 1997: 352). The second dimension includes the concrete policy instruments and budgets, as well as the organisational and administrative structures for the formulation and implementation of policy. As pointed out before, a given polity's rationale of integration might in theory imply a preference for certain policy instruments, but as the general regime and its various instruments arise from separate entities and pertain to different levels of analysis, their coherence cannot be presupposed.

In addition to integration regimes, other institutional arrangements related to the integration of immigrants in specific sectors have been shown to be influential. Educational systems have been referred to in the literature

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21   However, the actual degree of internal coherence and continuity of national regimes must pass the empirical test.

as sources of cross-national variation in integration outcomes (Crul & Vermeulen 2003b, 2006, Thomson & Crul 2007) and in school practices (Van Zanten 1997, Osborn & Broadfoot 1992). Crul and Vermeulen (2003b, 2006) argue that educational systems rather than integration regimes make the key difference in terms of the socio-economic integration of immigrants. Elements like the degree of selectivity and the age at which pupils are tracked in different streams of the system have a decisive influence. In a different vein, research by Broadfoot, Osborn and colleagues has shown that distinct educational and cultural values underlie different educational systems and that such educational cultures affect teachers' practices (Broadfoot 1981, Broadfoot et al. 1988, 1993, Osborn & Broadfoot 1992, 1993).

An educational system can be defined as *a broad institutional arrangement regulating the incorporation of its members to the labour market through the acquisition of certain qualifications and certificates*. The main function of the system is therefore not only to provide education in terms of a basic body of knowledge, but first and foremost to regulate the mode of access to and reproduction of the social stratification of a given society. For the purposes of our study we must pay attention to three aspects of these regimes: the general degree of stratification (selectivity), compensatory policies, and special measures to accommodate immigrant children. Educational systems often include provisions to compensate for social inequality, following a logic of positive discrimination. The question is whether these compensatory policies designed from a social class perspective (as the basis for redistribution) are also applied to immigrant population (and national cultural minorities) or whether and to what extent distinct arrangements are provided. If specific arrangements are applied, we must ask whether they correspond to an assimilationist or pluralist orientation.

Finally, we need to distinguish the specific influence of the measures designed for the reception of immigrant students in schools. I already defined the programme of educational reception as a special policy scheme *specifically geared to improve the insertion of immigrant students into the educational system of the host country*. In the literature, public policy instruments are generally depicted as neutral tools, but in fact they are bearers of ideological values and necessarily imply an interpretation of the relationship between politics and society as well as relying upon modes of regulation. Following Lascoumes and Le Gales, I understand that a public policy instrument constitutes 'a device that is both technical and social, that organizes specific social relations between the state and those it is addressed to, according to the representations and meanings it carries'

(Lascoumes & Le Gales 2007: 4). By taking this view I distance myself from analyses that present public policy instruments in a merely functionalist way, as purely a matter of technical choices.

Classifying policy goals and policy instruments of educational integration
My understanding that institutions shape practices mainly by means of cognitive and channelling mechanisms requires that such mechanisms be specified in each particular institutional context of educational reception. The prevailing scholarship has classified the institutional arrangements for the integration of migrants in host polities according to two main criteria. As we have seen, policy goals of integration vary according to national conceptions of *citizenship*. Presently most European countries converge towards an *ius soli* model (Joppke 2007, Bauböck 1994), making this criteria less relevant in the comparison of the cases presented here. Institutional arrangements for integration also differ according to the degree and form of *accommodating diversity* that they use (Koopmans et al. 2005). Castles' classification identifies three visions of integration – differential exclusion, assimilation and pluralism (Castles 1995) – which correspond to three distinct modes of dealing with diversity.[22] Empirical evidence shows that in most European nation-states, either assimilationist or pluralist orientations currently predominate. Assimilationist systems imagine a culturally homogeneous society as the final stage of integration, while pluralist ones tolerate or actively encourage high degrees of cultural plurality.

Assimilationist and pluralist objectives ultimately reflect specific conceptions of the relation between state and society. At a deeper analytical level, the modes of accommodating diversity correspond to distinct notions of membership in the social whole (Soysal 1994). Diversity models – assimilationist vs. pluralist – only refer to the socio-cultural dimension of integration. The wider view of models of membership, however, is better suited to the study of the multidimensional phenomena of integration. This is because membership models can be associated with repertoires of strategies available to actors in a wide range of institutions. Institutional provisions for the incorporation of migrants have principally applied such repertoires, hence they are isomorphic with membership models (Soysal 1994: 36). Soysal (1994) distinguishes between three basic modes of membership – statist, corporatist, and liberal – according to their degree

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22   However, Castles' models combine distinct approaches to manage diversity with distinct citizenship conceptions.

of 'corporateness'. This criterion corresponds to the distinction between more 'corporate' or more 'associational' modes of social organisation in classical sociology (Tonnies, Weber, and Durkheim) or the related dichotomy between universalist or particularist configurations of the society and political order in political philosophy (Rawls 1971, 1993, Walzer 1992).[23] In corporate systems the components of society are groupings or orders, with group rights accorded to them, and society as a whole is reified as a communal order. In associational systems with individualist and anti-corporate ideologies, society is imagined as composed by individual actors, and such actors – and not society – are reified and sacralised. Each of the imagined outcomes of integration (homogeneity/ plurality) corresponds to an emphasis on either individual (universalist) or communitarist (particularist) ways of organising society. The universalist approach prefers neutral policies that provide formal equality for all citizens (procedural liberalism), while the particularist approach opts for policies specially geared to certain categories of beneficiaries (politics of difference).

Following this line of thinking, Entzinger (1996, 1999, 2000) proposes a more nuanced typology of integration policies that combines the relative 'corporateness' of a given polity (more individualist or more communitarist) with the way in which the migration phenomenon is primarily defined (either in socio-economic, ethno-cultural or political-juridical terms). The specific policy objectives pursued within different visions of integration can be better understood if we disaggregate them according to these two axes (Entzinger 2000, Fermin 1999). Six ideal-types of integration arise from putting the emphasis either on individual rights or on group rights and on one of the three dimensions of integration (socio-economic, socio-cultural, or political-juridical) (see Table 2). We will apply this classification to the description of the integration policy goals in Spain and the Netherlands in chapter 3.

The analysis of policy instruments requires another heuristic tool. Despite the usefulness of Entzinger's (1996, 1999, 2000) and Fermin's (1999) disaggregated overview of integration goals, their classification too readily suggests that objectives and instruments coincide. Each of the six goals for

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23 Jepperson (2002) recommends distinguishing the dimension of relative 'corporateness' from a related but different dimension of relative 'statism' which differentiates between more centralist and more societal visions of collective agency. The literature on the paths of formation of European polities has tended to conflate elements associated with statism and elements associated with corporate social organisation. Crossing these two axes, Jepperson constructs a classification of four ideal-type polities (liberal, social-corporate, state-corporate and state-nation).

Table 2   Long-term ideals of integration

Emphasis on:	Socio-economic dimension	Socio-cultural dimension	Political-juridical dimension
individual	Equal opportunities (Equality)	Cultural homogeneity or Liberal pluralism	Equal citizenship rights
group	Proportional distribution (Equity)	Corporate or Institutional pluralism	Differential citizenship rights (group rights)

Source: Entzinger (2000:107), Fermin (1999: 197).

integration policy identified by them corresponds to similar instruments suited to achieving these objectives (Entzinger 2000: 110).

However, policies applying equal or unequal treatment for different groups can be used to different ends, for reaching either equal or unequal outcomes. Klauer (1969) crossed equal/unequal treatments and intentions to obtain four potential combinations. Three possible types of aims can justify the unequal treatment of immigrant pupils: egalitarian, elitist, or pluralistic (Klauer 1969, in Fase 1994). The *egalitarian* motivation resorts to special arrangements on the assumption that in order to arrive at equal outcomes pupils must be treated differently. By contrast, differential treatment can also be pursued to achieve unequal outcomes. In this regard there are two possibilities. *Elitist* or anti-egalitarian principles are prompted by a desire to arrive at real differences in the final level of education. *Pluralistic* orientations respond to the belief that parents have different sets of ideological, cultural, religious or pedagogic orientations regarding what constitutes a valuable educational outcome (Fase 1994).

Empirical research on policy-as-implemented also indicates that differential treatment can be applied to different degrees. Consequently, the universalist/particularist dichotomy can be reformulated in terms of a scale of special treatment of immigrants. My analysis of policy instruments for integration will apply Fase's (1994) classification which crosses the intensity of special treatment (high vs. low) and its purposes (see Table 3); however, I will add a potential 'elitist orientation', as in Klauer's model.

This heuristic tool is useful for thinking about educational systems and reception programmes. Research on educational systems typically classifies them by their degree of stratification (Horn 2007, Green et al. 1999), identifying selective and comprehensive models. Selective models reflect an *elitist* logic since the system clusters, sorts, streams or tracks students into differentiated kinds of education at the lower secondary stage according to their abilities, socio-economic characteristics or interests

Table 3   Policy instruments, by purpose and intensity of special treatment

	High categorisation	Low categorisation
Pluralistic orientation	Mother tongue education Religious instruction Islamic-Hindu schools Nationality schools (Germany)	New modern languages Intercultural education Language awareness
Egalitarian orientation	(transitional) Bilingual education Preparatory classes (Reception)	Compensation Anti-racism

Source: Fase (1994: 134).

(Green et al. 1999). Comprehensive models, on the other hand, correspond to an egalitarian or *colour-blind orientation,* as they do not separate young people into specialised or selected tracks at the lower secondary stage.

Educational reception programmes are typically conceived as egalitarian instruments with a high intensity of special treatment (Fase 1994). However, a closer examination of these policy programmes indicates that the degree of special treatment which they apply can vary widely. Empirical research has shown that programmes for first reception of immigrant students have adopted one of three ideal-types: immersion, parallel, or mixed (Penninx & Rath 1990, Hakuta 1999, Ritchers 2002, Stanat & Christensen 2006, 2007). In the international literature on educational reception scholars are divided between advocates of pull-out or parallel classes and proponents of pull-in or immersion. Here the dispute centres on how newcomers can better learn English, either being taught separately in withdrawal classes or remaining within the mainstream class (often with the support of English as a second language teachers). Traditionally, the US used pull-out classes while Europe followed pull-in schemes (McKay & Freedman 1990). In the last decade, though, we have witnessed a reversal of these tendencies, challenging what seemed to be deeply ingrained national educational ideologies (and versions of equality) underpinning policy choices. While in the US scholars document a tendency towards more integrative policies of reception, such as immersion with support or co-teaching (McLure & CanMann-Taylor 2010, Pardini 2006, Platt et al. 2003, Zehr 2006), in Europe the preference is for parallel reception classes that teach newcomers separately from their native peers (EURYDICE 2004, OECD 2010b).

We may ask to what extent distinct programmes of reception reflect different orientations, not only egalitarian ones which attempt to compensate and provide equal opportunities, but also elitist or pluralist ones. Generally speaking, the programmes in the two case studies correspond

to a compensatory-egalitarian orientation. However, we may expect to see cross-national variations in the frequency and intensity of special treatment of students, as well as in the categorisations used. Applying this classification of ideal types to my empirical research allows me to fill in the cells with empirical observations, distinguishing the differences between the reception practices of schools or local cases.

2.4   Questions guiding the study

As I stated at the beginning of the chapter, this study aims to explain school practices of first reception of immigrant students in a comparative way. This endeavour is structured around two major questions: *to what extent do reception practices of schools comply with national integration policies? To what extent is there a gap between policy and practices?* This two-fold inquiry into the nature of reception practices hopes to establish the degree of compliance and/or divergence of practices with respect to formal policies. This question highlights the most fundamental concern of this research, that is, to determine whether practices are consistent with national integration policies or whether there is a gap between policies and the actual practices of schools and teachers. To answer this question my research endeavours to detect on the one hand school practices which reflect the national integration principles and, on the other, school practices which show inconsistencies with such policies.

Responding to these main research questions requires addressing four related issues. The first one involves empirically reconstructing the concrete activities and procedures followed in the schools. *How do schools and teachers implement official reception policies?* This descriptive question entails focusing on two specific issues: 1) the issues introduced by teachers and schools, and 2) the presence of practical divergences with respect to policies. Among others, the following questions arise: which issues constitute a practical challenge? Which ones are problematised by teachers and schools and are addressed with specific strategies? Are there practical adaptations of the rules and principles? Are there variations between schools (within any given case study)? Are there variations in the treatment of pupils?

A second sub-question attempts to explain the degree to which practices deviate from or comply with policy goals, identifying those mechanisms that produce congruence or incongruence. This can be formulated as: *how can we explain practices' compliance or divergence from policy goals?*

Finally, the third and fourth sub-questions concern the (cross-national, cross-local) comparative attempt to establish parallels and identify differences between the cases studied and to explain them. This comparison can be formulated in the following way: *are there similarities and differences in compliance/discretion between Barcelona and Rotterdam? How can we explain similarities and differences?* In accordance with the main goal of the research, it is of pivotal importance to compare the extent to which cases show a gap between policies and practices, as indicated by the presence of diverging practices. Related issues are, therefore, whether practitioners use discretion to a comparable extent, whether they use similar or dissimilar types of discretion, and to what extent the resulting reception styles resemble or differ from each other. Seeking an explanation requires identifying either similar mechanisms at work in the two national cases or national-specific elements which might account for different or similar reception practices.[24]

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24   I am not presupposing here that similar mechanisms, present in both cases, must necessarily lead to similarities, as they may actually unfold in each context producing different results. Likewise, I understand that national-specific or local-specific features may ultimately lead to similarities in the practices.

3 The institutional context of reception practices

3.1 The Netherlands

3.1.1 Integration regime

Despite being conventionally depicted as an example of corporate pluralism, the Netherlands is currently closer to a cultural homogeneity or assimilationist regime (Entzinger 2003, Penninx 2006, Vasta 2007, Duyvendak et al. 2005). The most prominent goals pursued by national policies in the period of this study (2004-2006) were strict migration control, return, and cultural adaptation of immigrants. The three main legislative efforts carried out in that period by Minister Verdonk are a clear illustration of these objectives: the Policy of Return (Terugkeerbeleid 2003), the Policy Proposal on Illegal Migration (Illegalennota 2004), and the modification of the Law of Civic Integration (Wet Inburgering 2006). Policy measures reflect the same priorities. On the external front, additional measures reinforce border surveillance and impose stricter rules of admission, particularly concerning family migration and asylum seekers. New measures seek not only to punish those who stay illegally in the country, but also those who assist them or benefit from them. On the internal front, compulsory civic integration tests have become the principle instrument for preserving national identity. These developments converge with a broader trend found in many European countries in recent years (Joppke & Morawska 2003, Joppke 2007).

National integration policies are currently framed from a conservative-communitarian and nationalist perspective, making use of discourses, causal explanations and normative values quite distinct from those applied in previous decades (Entzinger 2003, Scholten 2007). Throughout the 1990s and 2000s, concerns about a 'clash of civilizations' (Snel & Scholten 2005) and the fragmentation of the national community became pervasive in Dutch social and political discourses. These issues have been capitalised upon by political entrepreneurs with anti-immigration and anti-Islam populist positions, who claim the right of the Dutch people to preserve their cultural traditions. First Fortuyn (2002), and then Wilders (2010), registered electoral breakthroughs and made their way (directly or indirectly) into the national government. This has provoked the realignment of established political parties, which have modified their agendas to co-opt some anti-immigration

rhetoric, and has redefined pre-existing electoral cleavages. This discourse of 'cultural anxiety' (Grillo 2003) calls for a double policy agenda. For these parties, confronting the risks that cultural diversity poses for societal cohesion implies, above all, the need for restrictive measures to halt new migratory flows. In addition, they maintain, it has become indispensable to safeguard national identity. Both (conservative) communitarian and nationalist positions coincide in the demand to reduce ethnic or cultural diversity and to promote a homogeneous national culture. Integration policies after the turn of the millennia require immigrants to adopt Dutch norms and values: 'Whoever wants to settle for good in our country must participate actively in society and make the Dutch language his or her own, be aware of Dutch values, and follow the norms' (Hoofdlijnenakkoord 2003).[1]

The point of departure for this new logic is the supposed failure of multicultural policies. In the 1980s the Netherlands applied a policy of institutional pluralism oriented towards the promotion of equal opportunities among certain ethnic minorities while fostering the preservation of their cultural identity (Minderhedennota 1983). Reports by the Scientific Council for Government Policy recommended a reorientation of this policy, with the argument that it had over-emphasised the emancipation of minority groups and under-promoted the socio-economic participation of immigrants in society at large (WRR 1989). The association of institutional pluralism with the deficits of integration became quite widespread in social and political circles, despite the positive results of the parliamentary commission to investigate three decades of integration policy (Blok Commission 2004, Rijkschroeff et al. 2003). According to this logic, the emphasis on the emancipation of ethnic minorities not only did not serve to promote socio-economic equality, but also had detrimental socio-cultural consequences such as ethnicisation and segregation from mainstream society (Joppke 2007). This diagnosis supposes that a misplaced tolerance for cultural difference has led to a highly disintegrated society, and to some immigrants deliberately refusing to embrace Dutch culture (Vasta 2007). This, it is said, generates an 'ethnic underclass' which does not feel attached to Dutch society or want to integrate into it (Scheffer 2000).

Thus integration policies in the 1990s took the supposed negative socio-economic and socio-cultural effects of institutional pluralism as their point of departure. The corporatist focus on *groups* which previously characterised Dutch pluralist policies (Entzinger 2003, Soysal 1994) was replaced by a *universalist* approach. Policies aimed at facilitating the incorporation of individual immigrants in the mainstream institutions of society, while measures

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1   My translation.

promoting the development of parallel institutions were discontinued. In this universalist strategy of integration, the concept of active 'citizenship' has become central. According to the notion of 'civic integration duty', newcomers willing to join the political community must actively pursue their own process of civic integration. Civic integration programmes were inaugurated in the late 1990s by the Purple Coalition, a political alliance made up of the Liberal Party, Democrats 66 and the Labour Party (Wet Inburgering voor Nieuwkomers 1998). Originally, mandatory language courses coupled with provisions for labour re-integration were introduced as a universalist policy of socio-economic integration ('Kansen krijgen, kansen pakken' 1998).

Despite their continuity, the *old* and the *new* civic integration policies present important differences. The 2006 revision of the law emphasises the acculturation of immigrants, and therefore the same policy measure changes from being *universalist* in nature (socio-economic policy directed to improve social mobility via universal paths) to being *particularistic* (monocultural policy oriented to ensure cultural adaptation). National policies in the 2000s took as their point of departure a concern with the persistence of 'problematic cultural differences' and 'cultural distance' between migrants and natives, bringing about a frame shift from universalism to assimilationism. The pragmatic considerations that informed the accent on immigrants' acculturation in the 1990s – meant to increase chances of social mobility – made way in the 2000s for moral demands requiring integration by new members as proof of their loyalty to the nation (Duyvendak et al. 2005).

Civic integration is currently considered a necessary first step for the socio-economic integration of individual immigrants and for the maintenance of the basic social consensus. The civic integration test has become a requirement in order to be granted temporary or permanent residence permits. Immigrants are required to show their will to belong to and to identify with Dutch society by assimilating the Dutch language and liberal principles. Linking the authorisation of residence permits to the passing of the integration test transforms civic integration into a *de facto* instrument of migration control. This indicates that a strong interrelation has developed between the immigration and integration policy domains, in which integration is subordinated to the priorities of migration control (Groenendijk 2004, Joppke 2007, Scholten 2007, Bruquetas et al. 2011).

In addition, the current policy strategy highlights the socio-cultural dimension of integration, and takes the form of monocultural communitarianism. Socio-cultural differences are seen as obstacles to the socio-economic integration of immigrants. In this strategy, the role of the state is to ensure social cohesion and to preserve national identity/culture,

and civic integration becomes the essential instrument to pursue this aim. Integration into a new society is no longer perceived as a spontaneous process entailing a certain combination of acculturation and ethnic retention. The old liberal view of the state as a neutral arena has been substituted by a coercive state, leading to a much more aggressive view of this socialisation process. The tone of policy rhetoric has also become more authoritarian (Penninx 2005). This is why, in his comparison of civic integration policies in Europe, Joppke describes civic integration as an instance of '"illiberal social policy" in a liberal state' (Joppke 2007: 14), because the state resorts to illiberal means in order to impose basic liberal principles on immigrants.

If in the 1980s, an ideal of liberal and participatory citizenship was the norm, in the 1990s and the 2000s citizenship was more broadly associated with communitarist notions of civic duties and social cohesion (Fermin 1997, 1999). Policy discourses predicate the cultural adaptation of immigrants to Dutch cultural values and norms. As the first line of the Draft for the new Civic Integration Law says: 'Participation in Dutch society starts with the mastery of Dutch language and knowledge of norms and values' (Herziening van het inburgeringsstelsel, 2004). In fact, however, apart from the primordial requisite of learning the Dutch language, immigrants are principally required to embrace the basic stock of liberal principles – democracy, liberty, secularism, respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights, and the rule of law (Joppke & Morawska 2003). The connotation of such principles is not neutral, as the liberal-democratic order is interpreted as being in opposition to the presumed values of a specific group. Therefore liberal values are used here with a discriminatory intent, as 'a device for excluding a specific group, Muslims' (Joppke 2007: 15).[2] This framing of issues takes the cultural codes of the white middle class as universal at the same time as it essentialises immigrants' cultures 'into subjects who cannot be reformed' (Uitermark & Duyvendak 2008: 3).

Socio-economic integration is understood in a similar light, and measured in terms of autonomy and self-sufficiency, or the ability to make a living without public support. This is a sign of how these developments in integration policies form part of the transformation of the Dutch welfare state from a conservative-corporatist model into a neo-liberal one. In the

2   Sunier (2006) says that nowadays public and political debate in the Netherlands deals mainly with whether Muslims can be part of the nation or not. This implies a deeper discussion about the character of the nation and which groups are to be included in it or excluded from it.

Netherlands, integration policies initially developed within the logic of the corporatist welfare regime and thus as a prolongation of the Dutch tradition of *pillarisation* or *institutionalised pluralism*.[3] Typically, the chief aim was immigrants' collective emancipation, not only in the sense of decommodifying immigrants from market forces, but fundamentally in the sense of fostering separate institutional arrangements for the emancipation of cultural or ethnic minorities. The assumption was that ethnic minorities 'should be given a chance to emancipate themselves while preserving and further developing their own cultural identity' (Entzinger 2003: 64). This fits well with the mode of functioning of corporatist welfare regimes, which tend to reify socio-cultural and socio-economic cleavages (Esping-Andersen 1990). From this perspective the goals of socio-economic equality and cultural emancipation were seen as interrelated and are expected to mutually reinforce each other; basically, with this rationale the government assumed that recognising socio-cultural differences would help to achieve socio-economic equality (Rijkschroeff et al. 2003).[4] Even the introduction of a universalist approach by the Purple Coalition of liberals, liberal democrats and the Labour Party (Kok I & II, 1994-2002), which gave priority to socio-economic aspects, still defended the plurality of cultures and opinions.[5] The idea behind this coalition was that mainstream institutions must work in a colour-blind, equal way for all citizens (Fermin 1999).

In the context of a shrinking welfare state, civic integration reflects neo-liberal attempts to minimise the state's tasks and enlarge those of the market and the society. The responsibility of citizens is highlighted, and workfare policies are set up to bind welfare recipients. A crucial difference between the old and new logics of integration is that while the old scheme made courses mandatory and provided them for free, in the

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3   The term pillarisation (in Dutch, *verzuiling*) refers to the Dutch tradition of organising society around four major 'pillars' with specific social, political or religious denominations (Protestants, Catholics, Socialists, Liberals) (Hoppe 1987, Lijphart 1968). Pillars functioned like parallel societies with their own institutions (schools, hospitals, trade unions, etc.), while the coordination of the general society was glued at the 'top' by the elites.

4   In its 1979 report, the Scientific Council for Government Policy recommended that policy focus principally on combating social-economic deprivation, and that this would indirectly lead to social-cultural emancipation. Reversing this advice, the government based minorities policy on the idea that the social-cultural emancipation of minorities would lead to an amelioration of their social-economic position (Rijkschroef et al. 2003: 36).

5   The general motto of the Kok governments was 'work, work, and once again work' (Molleman 2004).

new scheme the courses are the sole responsibility of the immigrant[6] and what becomes compulsory is the test. In the latter, the accent falls on the outcomes, since the main concerns in this neo-liberal welfare state are the efficacy and efficiency of policy measures, and therefore the possibility of measuring the results. Joppke maintains that this new civic integration plays an 'economic instrumentalist' role, because autonomous citizens increase the competitiveness of nation-states in the global economy (Joppke 2007: 17).

Within the 'citizenship' paradigm there is an inherent tension between the universalistic view of the citizen responsible for himself and the communitarist views of Dutch monoculturalism, between a neutral role of the state and a more intrusive one. Entzinger (2003) describes this tension as the pull between neo-republican and communitarian-nationalistic views, and argues that only time will tell which of these forces will win. So far, the balance is tipping towards the communitarian-nationalist end and towards a recentralisation of state control in civic integration matters, as the nationalisation of the integration test demonstrates (Bruquetas et al. 2011). In fact, the current combination of neo-liberal economic views and nationalistic-conservative ideas in integration policies is nothing new. A similar compound is emblematic of the New Right ideology that has gained ground in Western Europe since the 1980s (Fermin 1999).

3.1.2   Educational system

The Netherlands is characterised by a selective educational system, as is typical of conservative-corporatist states (Crul & Vermeulen 2003b, 2006). For conservative-corporatist (welfare) states, status preservation forms a priority (Esping-Andersen 1990, 1999) and the stratification of educational institutions contributes to that aim (Horn 2007, Horn et al. 2006).

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6   The law allows for a refund of up to 70% of the expenses upon successful completion of the integration test. This constitutes a considerable investment, particularly given the financial means of most newly-arrived migrants. The investment has been estimated by Tineke Strik at about €1,440 for the integration test to be taken at the Dutch Consulate in the country of origin and at €5,000 for the civic integration courses and test in the Netherlands. If this last test is passed, the immigrant gets €3,000 back from the public authorities.

Figure 2   Summarised structure of the Dutch educational system
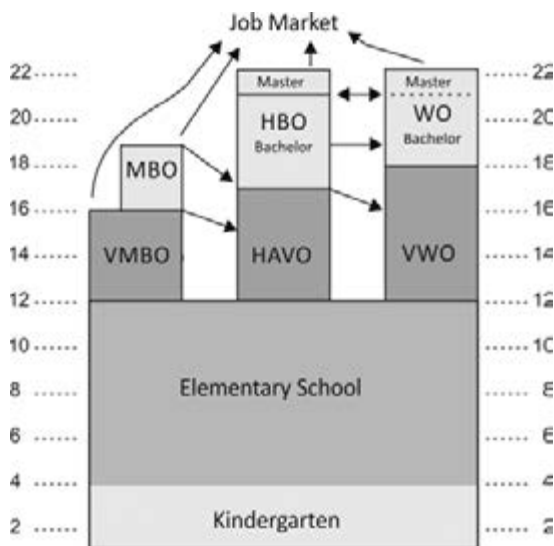
Source: Stam, 2006, with data from the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science[7].

The Dutch educational system applies all the characteristic instruments of stratification: early selection, multiple educational tracks, free school choice, academic selection procedures, and vocational specified training. At the age of twelve students are streamed into differentiated tracks for lower secondary education. Secondary education is divided into four tracks, hierarchically ordered from high to low: university preparatory education (VWO), senior general education (HAVO), junior general education (MAVO) and junior vocational training (VMBO). Depending on the advice of the elementary school and the score of a school achievement test (normally the 'Cito test'), pupils are assigned to one of these tracks. The two programmes of general education that lead to higher education are HAVO and VWO, taking five and six years respectively. While the main difference between the curricula of the three types of secondary school (VWO, HAVO, MAVO) is their difficulty and not the subject matter presented, the difference between VMBO and the other three is the subject matter (while VMBO and MAVO have similar levels of difficulty) (Dronkers 1993). The VWO curriculum prepares pupils for university and the HAVO for universities of professional education (HBO). In the

7   For a more exhaustive diagram go to the publication of the same ministry *Kerncijfers 2005-2009* (Ministerie OCW 2010); Stam's diagram omits some levels of special education for clarity.

last two years of HAVO and the last three years of VWO (known as the 'second phase' or upper secondary education), pupils have to choose a specialisation. Finally, junior preparatory vocational education or VMBO lasts four years (from the age of twelve to sixteen) and comprises MAVO and VBO. The VMBO is divided in four sub-tracks, each with a different mix of practical vocational training and theoretical education: TL, GL, KL, BL and *Praktijkonderwijs*. TL is the more theoretical of these subtracks and prepares for middle management and vocational training at MBO-level; at the other extreme, BL and *Praktijkonderwijs* are the more clearly vocational. Vocational training offers specialised skills that are useful only for specific industries/sectors, providing them with a well-trained workforce.

In the first year of secondary education, students go to the so-called 'bridge class' (*brugklas*) where several levels learn together; during this year, the level of each student must be determined better. Schools make the definitive diagnostic of the educational level of a student at different times: many do this after the first year of secondary education, others after the second year. It is also possible to move upwards from one educational track to another, but this requires extra years of study: pupils with a VMBO diploma need to attend two years of HAVO education and pass the HAVO test in order to go to HBO, and pupils with a HAVO-diploma need to complete two years of VWO studies and pass the VWO exam in order to be admitted to university. In fact, however, the opportunities to switch from junior vocational training to secondary school are fewer than the opportunities to switch between the three types of secondary school (VWO, HAVO, MAVO) (Dronkers 1993: 197). The reason is that although the majority of schools combine two or three different tracks, only few include a broad array from junior vocational education to grammar school. We can thus conclude that the Dutch educational system is strongly stratified into two paths: the vocational one and the general education one (Dronkers 1993).

Secondary schools make selectivity decisions based upon students' academic records, ability or placement tests, and the advice of primary school teachers. Selection procedures are more determinant in the acceptance of a student than the opinion of parents or their place of residence.

Selective education has been typically depicted as a major channel for reproducing social inequalities (Bourdieu & Passeron 1997, Bowles & Gintis 1976, 2002). Empirical research shows that the major tools of stratified education in fact reduce mobility between generations, thus advancing status

reproduction.[8] Even those tools apparently introducing a meritocratic logic into the selection process – such as the student's academic record or ability tests – in fact are shown to correlate largely with the family background and socialisation. The Netherlands also presents a highly stratified labour market firmly anchored in the selective educational system. Empirical studies demonstrate a strong correlation between qualifications and occupation in countries with stratified educational systems. In these countries, educational outcomes determine more clearly the final occupational status of people (Allmendinger 1989, Kerckhoff 2000, Shavit & Müller 1998, 2000).

A second trait of the Dutch educational system is institutional pluralism. Corporatist welfare states not only tend to reproduce their socio-economic cleavages but also their socio-cultural ones. In the Netherlands the introduction of special treatment for certain categories of students obeys not only *elitist* orientations (the upper classes' strategy of distinction) and *egalitarian* ones (governmental strategy of compensation) but also *pluralistic* principles (socio-religious strategy of distinction). Free school choice is a constitutional right, as a legacy of the pillarisation age: the notion that parents have the right to educate their children in schools which correspond to their ideological or religious principles. To ensure that, there is a dual educational system in which the state subsidises public and private schools equally, while privately-owned, privately-run schools are nearly non-existent. There are several distinct school networks offering a broad variety of school choice: public schools, Protestant-Catholic schools, Islamic schools, and specific pedagogical styles (Montessori, Dalton, etc.). Schools of special denomination, for their part, also decide which students may enrol, while public schools are obliged to accept all students.

Parallel school networks of distinct denominations (public, Catholic, Protestant, etc.) reflect the corporatist logic of the Dutch pillar system. In fact, education was the battle-horse in the struggles that led to the consolidation of the pillarised society.[9] As a result, the principle of proportional distribution was agreed upon, according to which all socio-religious denominations receive (financial) support from the state on an equal basis.

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8   On how stratification tools reproduce social status, see, for instance: Dustmann 2004, Shütz *et al.* 2005, Erikson & Jonsson 1996a, on the influence of early tracking of children; Horn et al. 2006, Shavit & Müller 2000, on vocational specifity.

9   In the nineteenth century the so-called 'School War' (1806-1889) took place. As a consequence, in 1917 it was agreed that the state must support the emancipation of the different socio-political-religious pillars, and hence equally finance both public and religious schools: 'The denominational schools that comply with the conditions established by the law are publicly funded to the same extent as the public schools' (article 13 of the Constitution).

This was meant to recognise the freedom of belief of all citizens and the right of parents to choose in which religious/ideological values they want to raise their children.

The correlate of the principle of freedom of education, at the heart of corporate pluralism, is the principle of minimum intervention by the state in education. National law provides minimum standards in terms of teachers' certificates, the curriculum in primary education and central examinations in secondary education (Wet op het Primair Onderwijs 1981, Wet op het Voortgezet Onderwijs 1963, Wet Educatie en Beroepsonderwijs 1996). In fact, 'curricula' in the usual sense do not exist in the Netherlands, but rather minimum pupils attainment levels have been set since 1998 (revised in 2006) for secondary schools (EURYDICE 2004: 21). All remaining issues are left to the discretion of the schools' boards of governors.

Despite the general de-pillarising of the Dutch state, the persistence of the corporatist structure in education is still very strong (Braster 2001, Dijkstra et al. 2002).[10] This suggests that the persistence of the different networks serves a prominent function in the reproduction of social capital, still along the lines of the corporatist pluralism (Dronkers 1995). Esping-Andersen (1999) identified at least two different *incentive structures* at work in conservative-corporatist states: the corporatist establishment and the Christian democratic parties pushing forward conservative policies. In the Netherlands both elements are present, particularly a strong Christian-Protestant lobby and the Christian Democratic Party (CDA) which has been present in almost all governing coalitions since WWII and which holds the education portfolio. The party's strong position as a crucial partner for governing coalitions has permitted it to maintain religious schools in spite of the secularisation of Dutch society. The leading role of the CDA in educational policies for the last 60 years has supported the persistence of a pillarised structure in this sector, based on laws defending the freedom of education and support to the network of Protestant and Catholic schools (Dronkers 1995: 236).

In sum, the extension of universalist principles in the integration regime does not have a correlate in the educational system, which continues to be informed by the logic of corporatist pluralism. Likewise, despite innumerable discussions and modifications in the structure of secondary education, the system continues to be separated into a rigid structure of tracks, functioning basically as a tool for selectivity and for reproducing social class.

10   However, although schools of different denominations do differ in the content they teach, this hardly makes a difference in the religious, social, and political values of their student bodies (with the exception of Orthodox Protestant schools) (Braster 2001).

3.1.3   Policy against educational disadvantage

The Netherlands has had a policy designed to offset educational disadvantages since 1985. The chief objective of the 'educational priority policy' is the promotion of equality of opportunities[11] by facilitating the proportional participation of disadvantaged students in education.[12] It also has two other objectives: the stimulation of social cohesion and the prevention of segregation (*Onderwijsvoorrangsplan 1985-1989*, 1985). The idea is that by removing educational disadvantages, the opportunities of ethnic minority pupils should be comparable to those of native-born pupils from a similar socio-economic position. This way of framing the issue was inaugurated by the 1985 report and further emphasised by the 1992 CALO[13] report ('Ceders in de tuin' 1992).

In order to achieve these goals the policy introduces the principle of positive discrimination for disadvantaged students. Priority is given to schools and to urban areas with a high concentration of disadvantaged students. Differential treatment is, however, seen as a means to enhance socio-economic mobility, and not so much as a strategy for the cultural emancipation of ethnic and other minorities. Although it is particularist in nature, this compensatory policy applies a single standard for all under-privileged children in the Netherlands. The driving idea behind it is that the problems which ethnic minority students experience are essentially similar to those of Dutch working-class students, and thus ultimately associated with their low socio-economic position. Specific ethno-cultural differences are not thought to contribute to disadvantage, with the exception of the language barrier (Jungbluth 2005, Rijkschroeff 2005).

The main strategy proposed by the educational priority policy is the allocation of additional resources for schools in proportion to the number of disadvantaged students attending them. In secondary education, funds go to ethnic minority students (CUMI funds), and in basic education, funds

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11   This policy goal clashes with the general 'logic' of the Dutch educational system. If the general system is informed by a logic of selectivity, the measures put in place for immigrants respond to a logic of equity and positive discrimination. This makes it reasonable to expect that the outcomes of compensation policies would be challenged or modified by the dynamics of the general system (once the students are transferred).

12   Before 1980 the Dutch government had already developed a weighting scheme to improve the chances of non-Dutch speaking pupils (Eldering 1989). In 1980 the scheme was expanded to include pupils from Suriname & Antilles (who had been less than four years in the country and had a low proficiency in Dutch), so schools got extra funds for these children as well.

13   CALO stands for Committee for Students of Foreign Descent in Education.

go both to ethnic minorities and low-income autochthonous students (the first in a proportion of 1.90, while the latter 1.25). A school receives more resources for disadvantaged students belonging to ethnic minorities than for autochthonous ones, or did at least until 2006, as we will see below. These resources are mainly used to make smaller classes in which teachers can give more attention to each pupil, and to reinforce the teaching of Dutch.

A second general strategy is the decentralisation of compensatory education to municipalities (Local Education Policy memorandum 1995), as the municipality (and sub-local units) is considered the appropriate administrative level for combating the problem of educational disadvantage. In practical terms, decentralisation implies that the municipality is given a managing role in education policy: it can design its own *tailor-made* priority policies and distribute funds among schools. This allows cities to add municipal resources to the government grants and to direct part of the supplementary expenditure on public education towards the (semi-)private school network as well (Vermeulen et al. 1997). In the city of Rotterdam, national policy crystallised in the municipal plan for combating disadvantage in education, or ROAP (*Rotterdam Onderwijsachterstandenplan*),[14] which was to be periodically reformulated. In fact, this decentralised model lasted eight years, through the periods of 1998-2002 and 2002-2006. In the first period a total of € 23.4 million was made available for education through the ROAP, of which € 18 million went to primary education and the rest to secondary. During the same period, primary schools in Rotterdam with higher numbers of disadvantaged students received a total of € 63 million from the state (Veld & Van Beek 2002).

Within this general strategy, Dutch compensatory policy has applied four basic instruments: Dutch (as a second language) language training, mother-tongue education, intercultural education, and reception training for newcomer foreign pupils. In the educational policy of Rotterdam (ROAP) national policy translates into concrete programmes such as courses for mother tongue training (OALT), schools with pilot projects (*Kwaliteitsimpuls Onderwijs*), support facilities such as De Meeuw and CED, and reception programmes for newcomers (ISK, PRISMA).

While some aspects of educational integration policy have been consistent throughout the past 30 years, it has also experienced major shifts in its objectives (Rijkschroeff et al. 2005), its policy instruments and the actors involved in its implementation. What has been consistent is principally

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14   The general term for this policy is *onderwijsachterstandbeleid,* later called *onderwijsvoorrangsbeleid* (OVB).

the goal of achieving proportionality in the socio-economic position of minority students. But starting in the late 1990s and especially after 2002, we can distinguish within the same policy framework a gradual shift from liberal-egalitarian views to more neo-liberal policies.[15] This shift implies more emphasis on 'freedom of education', and consequently the transfer of decision-making power and resources to schools. Since 2006 the decentralisation process has been reversed and state funds for education priority policy are directly transferred to schools, *bypassing* municipal governments.

Successive CDA Ministers of Education have devolved more and more powers to the local authorities and to schools. The tendency that started in the 1980s of devolving compensatory policy to local authorities has been substituted by a shift towards a de-regulation (of power) and de-concentration (of resources) that gives schools a maximum degree of decision-making autonomy. This de-regulation is paired with a greater emphasis on cultural assimilation (speaking Dutch) than on pluralist goals (such as mother-tongue training or intercultural education). Basically, we can observe a drastic shift in the conception of how socio-cultural identity and socio-economic integration interrelate (Rijkschroeff et al. 2005). The change is summarised by Rijkschroeff et al. (2005), who describe two major shifts: on the one hand, cultural identity has gone from being considered a factor that facilitates socio-economic integration to being considered an obstacle. On the other hand, minorities' languages were first considered important in their own right, then later were seen only in instrumental terms, in order to help to learn the Dutch language. The new equal opportunities policy places the emphasis on the Dutch language and on early and pre-school education.[16]

In particular, the degree of differential treatment has varied over time. While a single policy was applied for all disadvantaged students, as we saw, greater priority was given to ethnic minority students (in a proportion of 1.90, while autochthonous students 1.25). Since 2006, educational priority policy has definitively abandoned its focus on ethnic background, substituting this with universalist criteria in the distribution of extra resources according to the educational level of parents (*Uitwerking Leerplusarrangament Voortgezet Onderwijs* 2005). At the secondary level, the CUMI regulation has thus been replaced by the *Leerplusarrangament*. In

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15 See reformed laws on primary and secondary education (2005, 2006).
16 An example is the new reception courses for primary education, known as *Nieuwe Schakelklassen.*

line with this, Fase (1994) argues that the Netherlands is moving in the direction of 'univalent' (i.e. comprehensive) systems, since responses by the government have been oriented towards decreasing the special treatment of immigrant students and reaffirming egalitarian objectives. Policies increasingly target all students, without differentiation according to origin or nationality (for instance, the '*schakelklassen* new-style' in elementary education are intended for any student with a language disadvantage). In financial terms, reception education is also moving away from special arrangements for ethnic minorities and towards common arrangements for all. However, despite the apparent reduction of the degree of socio-cultural categorisation, the degree of stratification of the system is still quite high, as reflected in the number of educational tracks and the early age at which students are channelled into these tracks. In general terms, selectivity according to socio-economic status is still the main institutional logic.

The increasing emphasis on migrants' assimilation led to a reduction in the teaching of mother-tongue languages, and eventually their complete suppression in 2002. Positive discrimination funds have been dramatically reduced, and funds for reception have been separated from educational priority policy and linked more closely to integration policies with emphasis on cultural assimilation (*Beleidsnotitie Leerplichtige Nieuwkomers in Rotterdam 1-08-2005 t/m 31-07-2006*: 5). Paradoxically, this has allowed reception education not to be washed away together with the municipal education policy.

3.1.4   Programme of reception for newcomer students in Rotterdam (ISK)

As we have seen, the measures for welcoming newly arrived immigrant adolescents in secondary schools have been among the characteristic instruments of Dutch educational policies for immigrants. Large Dutch cities with a high percentage of immigrants have opted for a parallel system for receiving their newcomer students, separating them from native-born peers during a certain period (Ritchers 2002). This measure has been known as 'Internationale Schakelklassen' (ISK), which can be translated as 'gear shift' classes (because of their function as a transition between the schooling system in the sending country and ordinary education in Holland).

Reception programmes have a longer history and have followed quite a different policymaking route than the policy of educational priority. In Rotterdam, as in other cities, the programme of educational reception was developed in the mid-1970s by schools themselves, in particular by schools in deprived urban areas of large cities, in response to the effects of the

family reunion of migrant guest workers. Secondary schools affected by the rapid concentration of newcomer students created separate classrooms in which foreign students were placed full-time to learn the Dutch language. Earlier post-war migration flows coming from the Dutch colonies did not have such an impact on schools because their children were familiar, to a certain extent, with the Dutch language. But the unprecedented arrival of large numbers of non-Dutch-speaking new pupils led schools in urban transition areas to adopt reception measures.

In a second phase, schools organised themselves and started lobbying to get political support. A national organisation – the LCVOA – was created to coordinate and represent all the schools affected by the issue. It took some time to get the issue on the political agenda, but from 1977 schools with reception classrooms were subsidised by the national administration. In 1980 a more definitive policy note[17] was approved, which politically sanctioned the parallel alternative initiated by schools without making major changes (Fase & De Jong 1983). A general statement of the need for school reception was also added to the Law of Second Education (1963). Annual soft policy documents (circulars) were used to define the conditions for the allocation of funds, e.g. the requisites that newcomer students must fulfil in order for schools to have access to these funds.

Presently, the main goal of first reception programmes is 'to teach migrant students Dutch in order to enable them to transfer into the regular education system as soon as possible'.[18] In order to reach that goal, the government *puts forward the money* and the schools *do the job*. Understanding that newly arrived foreign youngsters face a specific language disadvantage relative to their native peers, the government allocates additional resources for schools which decide to tackle this drawback. In addition to general funds from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to fight educational disadvantage (CUMI funds and later *Leerplusarrangement*), schools receive specific funds for each newcomer's reception over 1.5 years. Entitlement to specific funds for newcomers depends on the schools' compliance with national and municipal regulations, particularly with the definition of the policy target. The national regulation defines a 'newcomer pupil' as one who: 1) does not have the Dutch nationality,[19] 2) has lived in the country

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17   'Plan van inzet voor leerlingen uit minderheidsgroepen in het voortgezet onderwijs' 1980.
18   Gemeente Rotterdam, Dienst Stedelijk Onderwijs, *Uitvoeringsnotitie leerplichtige nieuwkomers in Rotterdam. 1 januari 2004-1 augustus 2005*, 2003: 5.
19   Literally, the regulations establish that the newcomer student would be an '*allochtoon*', as opposed to '*autochthonous*'. The article 9 of the Foreigners Law (Vreemdelingenwet 2000) defines as '*allochtoon*' every person born abroad or with at least one of his/her parents born abroad.

for less than a year, and 3) has legal status. Since 2002, youngsters with irregular status have been left out of the target group as a consequence of the tightening of migration policies.

Schools receive somewhat more than € 4,000 extra per newcomer student in secondary education. Although the details of how this money is spent (curriculum, method, final evaluation) are in principle defined by the schools, the conditions under which schools receive additional funds are very well regulated. As we have seen, the target group is clearly defined, as is the duration of the funds and the moment of the year when the payments are made.

In addition, Rotterdam also has 'informal' regulations for reception teaching in secondary education. In 1993 the School Council of Rotterdam developed the programme STER for first reception, which standardises the educational methodology and curriculum to be used in ISK training for all schools. Schools offering reception and the local Department of Education agreed at that time on the need for a general framework for reception education that would homogenise working procedures. The elaboration of the pedagogical standards was assigned to the centre for educational consulting (CED).

3.2   Spain

3.2.1   Integration regime

Spain has had two different policy regimes regarding immigrant integration: a non-policy (1985-2005) and an equal-opportunities policy (2006 onwards). Until 2006, Spain was closer to a guest-worker integration regime such as those of Northern European states during the 1960s.[20] After the first 'Foreigners Law' appeared in 1985, national policies focused very much on the management of migrant workers, thereby relegating integration to a second place.[21] The revision of the Foreigners Law issued in the year 2000

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20   Some authors (Baldwin-Edwards 1997, Zincone 1998) consider this modified 'gastarbeider' model as a distinctly Southern European pattern. Southern European countries in recent years share a set of characteristics beyond those of traditional guest-worker regimes, such as the recurrent regularisations. Also, they have increasingly tended to restrict the national citizenship requirements in an openly exclusionary manner (Baldwin-Edwards 1997). However, this could be just a step in the development of policies in Southern Europe.

21   In that sense, strictly speaking it is a case of 'non-policy' and does not fit in any of the categories of Entzinger's (2000) classification of integration policies (see chapter 2).

(OL 8/2000) continues to frame the issue in this way, starting off from the premise that Spain 'has become a country of destination for migratory flows.' The law 8/2000 sets out to formulate a coordinated approach to the migration phenomenon with three goals: control of migration flows, social integration of legal immigrants and co-development of sending countries. Despite the stated intention to balance the three objectives, the law 8/2000 focuses primarily on the control of migration flows.

This general orientation is also evident in the national programme for the integration of immigrants GRECO (2000) issued within the framework of the law 8/2000, as reflected in its policy goals and in its actual allocations.[22] The GRECO programme had four main areas of attention: migration policy, integration of immigrants, control of flows and refugees. In accordance with the primary goal of promoting good labour migration management, the main mechanisms are the strict control of flows and of asylum applications, and the promotion of migrants' return to their country of origin. The key argument of the GRECO programme is that Spain needs to manage migration flows well in order to match national labour demand with immigrant labour supply. Integration measures only target (legal) *foreign residents* who 'actively contribute to our country's growth' (GRECO 2000: 18). A soft stance that would make public services accessible for undocumented immigrants was rejected at this time, on the basis of its potential 'pull effect': this would ostensibly make Spain attractive to other migrants. Illegally arriving and staying in Spain would not be tolerated because this would promote a 'vicious circle' leading to poverty, exclusion, and criminality. On the other hand, legal access to the country would lead ultimately to integration in the so-called 'virtuous circle' (legal entry, residence permit, work contract, social rights, family reunion, integration and multicultural co-habitation). The fight against illegal entry into the country is associated in this programme with the fight against human smuggling and exploitation of migrants as 'victims' (GRECO 2000: 7).

The GRECO programme is framed from both a universalist and an assimilationist perspective. GRECO sets up an array of measures aimed to promote socio-economic equality – such as vocational training and compensatory educational measures – and to adapt public services in order to facilitate immigrants' access to entitlements such as health care, religious freedom, family reunion and enfranchisement. In addition, the socio-cultural integration of legal immigrants is defined in terms of adapta-

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22 Just like its predecessor, the Plan for Social Integration of Migrants (1994), which had a similar orientation.

tion and respect for Spanish law and (liberal) principles, as established in the Constitution of 1978.[23] In this context the programme mentions 'specific educative measures for immigrant students' as a 'mechanism for integration' and stimulation of the 'acculturation process' (GRECO 2000: 17).[24]

Nevertheless, all these instruments were merely symbolic, as GRECO was not backed by any specific allocation of financial resources, nor did it establish concrete implementation guidelines for sub-national actors (Pajares 2004). The expenditure for 2002 on border controls, reception centres and first assistance to asylum and newcomer migrants was € 252 million (Delegación de Gobierno para la Extranjería y la Inmigración 2002). In contrast, investment in integration was € 21.6 million, considerably less.[25]

In 2006 GRECO's symbolic policy was replaced by an ambitious national policy known as 'Programme for Citizenship and Integration' (PECI 2006).[26] This policy change was brought about by the new government of the Social-Democratic Party (2004 to the present) and entailed a radical shift of orientation in the terrain of integration, despite continuities with the previous period regarding migration management. The decision to move responsibility for integration from the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of Labour was characteristic of this shift. PECI aims fundamentally at the equality of immigrants in terms of guaranteeing their full exercise of 'civil, social, economic, cultural and political rights' (objective 1), and 'access of immigrants to public services, especially education, labour, social services, health care and housing, in equal conditions to the autochthonous population' (objective 3). The emphasis lies on individual rights and on the socio-economic dimension of integration. This supposes a universalist policy frame according to which migrants' path of socio-economic mobility follows mainstream routes.

23   'The guidelines for living together are the Constitution and Spanish law to which – with greater or lesser effort depending upon their cultural origin – they will have to adapt themselves, respecting and enjoying these laws in a democratic society in which respect, tolerance and equality are values in which we firmly believe, which we teach our children and youth, and for which we struggle so that they may be respected by all' (GRECO 2000: 6).
24   'In order to make education a mechanism for the integration of immigrants in our society, specific educational programmes will be launched for those segments of the immigrant population for whom the process of acculturation is more difficult' (GRECO 2000: 17, my translation).
25   The government reports the following expenses: € 9 million for the covenants with regions; € 12.6 million for subventions to social organisations offering services to migrants; and sundry funds given to refugee and immigrant reception centres (Delegación de Gobierno para la Extranjería y la Inmigración 2002).
26   See Bruquetas et al. (2011) for a discussion of policy-making processes in the fields of immigration and integration.

At the same time, the PECI transmits a rhetoric of citizenship which is communitarian in character, in which immigrants not only have rights but also duties and are asked to 'respect the values of the European Union' and 'adopt a positive attitude towards the knowledge of the languages, laws, and social norms of their new country' (PECI 2006: 117-118). The integration effort is thus bidirectional: public policies have to adapt to the new needs that emerge along with the immigrant population (objective 2), and within this framework immigrants 'for their part' have to 'pursue their own integration'. However, unlike the GRECO programme, the PECI does not directly require immigrants to assimilate societal 'common values and norms'; rather it invites them to join the construction of a new society ('just, inclusive, and cohesive') and to agree to a core of binding values. The idea is that this will allow for the creation of a 'sense of belonging on the part of the immigrants with regard to their new society'. Policymakers have tried to mark a distance from both the excesses of multicultural relativism and of assimilationist particularism by emphasising on the one hand, the respect required for a given set of core values and social norms and, on the other, the respect for the 'diversity of people and social groups' (PECI 2006: 185).

Nevertheless, within the Spanish federal 'State of the *Autonomías'*, the national framework defined by the PECI was to be further developed within regional (and local) integration policies. A general characteristic of the Spanish system is that the actual design and implementation of integration policies occurs on the sub-national territorial levels. This is partially a consequence of the division of tasks between levels as established by the system of Autonomous Communities. While the national government manages immigration, regional and local governments are responsible for the main policy areas addressing immigrants' integration (health care, education, social assistance, employment policy, and housing). Paradoxically, regional policies are strikingly similar in their integration goals, the majority pursuing primarily equal opportunities for immigrants (Martínez de Lizarrondo 2006, Pajares 2004).[27] One important feature that regional and local policies share is that they do not distinguish between regular and irregular migrants, and if they do, this distinction tends to vanish in the implementation.[28] This leads in practice to the registration of irregular

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27   The basic principles framing regional policies are: *equality* of rights and opportunities, *normalisation* (mainstreaming), transversality, gender equality, decentralisation and social participation (Pajares 2004).

28   Madrid is the only region that formally excludes irregular migrants from (specialised) services (Martínez de Lizarrondo 2006). However, Tamayo and Carrillo (2002) affirm that this tends to blur in practice.

migrants in the municipal register, which functions as a sort of partial regularisation (Tamayo & Carrillo 2002).[29] Nevertheless, the legal status of migrants still implies different levels of access to social protection schemes. Also, the decentralisation of integration policies implies considerable inequalities between regions and cities, as the Autonomous Communities with more financial capacity tend to develop more complete policies, while the others do not (Aja 2004, Tamayo & Carrillo 2002). As a consequence, immigrants experience remarkable differences in their access to welfare services depending on their place of residence (Martínez de Lizarrondo 2006). This leads to tensions between administrations concerning who has to pay the bill for integration.

Without modifying this pattern of multilevel governance, the PECI programme established for the first time an allotted budget to back the national guidelines. In particular, it established an annual fund for integration, initially endowed with € 188 million (2007) and later increased to € 200 million since 2008. The funding was to be proportionately distributed among the regions and municipalities according to their percentages of immigrant population. This means that the definition of concrete policy measures and policy goals are still the responsibility of the autonomous communities and municipalities which can each define their own Integration Plan. However, the national integration budget favours those regional policies that comply with national guidelines. With the PECI programme, national policymakers aimed to introduce a federal framework with a clear political vision in order to guide the highly technocratic policies of the regions.[30]

Catalonia was the first Autonomous Community to develop its own institutional structures and programmes for dealing with the needs generated by a foreign immigrant population. In 1993, more than a decade before the national PECI, the government of Catalonia formulated the Interdepartmental Plan of Immigration (1993-2000). Informed by a universalist philosophy, the Plan set out to promote the equality of opportunities for all persons residing in Catalonia. This general objective meant, in particular, combating

29   Solanes Corella (2004) found that local governments, in collaboration with regional ones, tend to use the municipal register as a *mechanism of inclusion* (to extend several rights to undocumented foreigners) – which was sanctioned by the law 4/2000 – and not as an *instrument of control* allowing the access of police to the data – as the law 8/2000 allows. Sub-national governments 'survive' by making irregular migrants visible so that they can develop policies and services for these citizens and protect their rights, which allows them also to negotiate economic compensations with the central government (Tamayo & Carrillo 2002).
30   Interview with Prof. L. Cachón, president of the Forum for the Social Integration of Immigrants. Prof. Cachón led the team of experts drafting the PECI plan.

social, political and economic exclusion, stimulating the participation of foreign migrants in Catalan society, and preventing discrimination. Within this framework, integration was defined as a situation in which 'no foreign citizen is treated differently by virtue of the fact of being foreign, but that he or she has the same rights that any citizen of Catalonia' has (PI 1993: 5). This represents the so-called 'Catalan approach to integration' (by Secretary Angel Miret), which affirms that immigration holds great hope for the social and economic future of Catalonia, but at the same time recognises that it challenges in important ways the cultural uniqueness of Catalonia (Zapata-Barrero 2009 b: 134). However, the plan did not foresee brand new measures specifically designed for migrants. These aims were to be met through a set of 133 coordinated programmes and services targeted to support the personal and social integration of immigrants (PI 1993). According to the Catalan policymakers, the regional plan lacked funding because the central government was responsible for the funding of integration policies and, as we have learned above, the GRECO programme had no budget (Pajares 2004). Also, as the 133 programmes were general measures for all citizens, there was no specific budget provided.

The guiding principle of the Catalan Plan, so-called 'normalisation' or mainstreaming, establishes that every foreign-born person with legal status has access to the same services as any national-born person. NGOs are somehow expected to take care of the needs of foreigners whose status is irregular; public administrations allocate modest budgets for funding social organisations (Maluquer 1997, Moreno Fuentes 2003). From an ideological point of view the Plan assumes a pluralist policy, but one that does not match the kind of activities that are *de facto* carried out. The lack of policies specifically targeting the immigrant population is linked to an assimilation-ist or republican model (Cais 2004). The second Plan (2001-2004) roughly follows the goals and rhetoric of the first, but incorporates the element of self-government into this Catalan integration model. The two main actions introduced by the second Secretary of Immigration (Salvador Obiols), i.e. the provision of Catalan courses for immigrants and the opening of Catalan 'recruitment' agencies in Poland and Morocco (Zapata-Barrero 2009: 134), serve as illustrations of this.

The third (2005-2008) Catalan Plan introduces a shift towards a 'citizen-ship perspective', understanding 'integration' as the transition from *im-migrant* to *citizen* based on equal rights and socio-economic equality. In this sense, the third Plan aspires to represent an 'intercultural' model, which would lie in between 'the French assimilationist and the British multicultural model' (Zapata-Barrero et al. 2009: 53). In fact, the policy

still promotes cultural assimilation into Catalan culture as a priority. Policymakers maintain that immigrants must learn Catalan not only as a condition for achieving equality of opportunities, but also in order to guarantee the social cohesion of society. This supposes a contradiction *in terminis* as assimilation into Catalan language becomes the requisite for the recognition and respect of other cultural identities. The Department of Immigration of Catalonia itself acknowledges that the policies are in fact closer to the French assimilationist model because of the importance given to the Catalan language (Zapata-Barrero et al. 2009: 53). In Autonomous Communities like Catalonia, the Basque Country, Galicia, Valencia or the Baleares, the integration debate is inseparably linked to the issue of cultural identity and nationalism.

Spain can be described as a multinational state with a considerable amount of cultural diversity. In particular, linguistic pluralism in Spain plays a relevant role in the debate over which model of integration should be applied to (foreign) immigrants.[31] Cultural and national (regional) identities in Spain rely primarily on the mother tongue. Besides Castilian (Spanish), three other languages have an official status in Spain: Catalan, Galician, and Basque.[32] Since Castilian predominates, people speaking other languages are considered linguistic minorities, since their languages are in a situation of subordination with respect to the former. Regional policies issued by the bilingual Autonomous Communities – particularly when these are governed by nationalist parties – have traditionally strived to solve this situation by promoting the 'normalisation'[33] of these languages, primarily via education.[34] As language is also an instrument to promote national identity, Catalonian integration policy cannot conceal its driving nationalist interest in defending a language that is 'believed to be in danger' (Zapata-Barrero 2007: 191).

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31   Around 25% of Spaniards have a mother-tongue language other than Castilian (Spanish) (Ruiz Vieytez 2007).

32   The Autonomous Communities have the right to their own language. The Laws of Linguistic Normalisation (1983) gave Catalan, Basque and Galician an official status in their respective Autonomous Communities (Ruiz Vieytez 2007).

33   The concept of *linguistic normalisation* is used in Spain to refer to the processes of recuperation by minority languages of their presence in the public space and the effort to put them on equal footing with Castilian (Ruiz Vieytez 2007: 7).

34   Each of the regions with its own official language besides Spanish has a distinct educational model in place that establishes the different role of that language in the education system. In Catalonia education takes place in Catalan, in the Basque Lands parents may choose between three models of education (in Spanish, in Basque, or Combined), and in Galicia teaching is done partly in Gallego and partly in Spanish (Argelaguet 1998).

In this context, the large inflow of foreign migrants has posed a challenge to the policy of 'linguistic normalisation'. In particular, the arrival of Latin American immigrants in bilingual Autonomous Communities of Spain like Catalonia poses a problem. Since the immigrants already speak the dominant official language, their presence reinforces the weight of Spanish and can be perceived as a threat to the situation of the minority language (Ruiz Vieytez 2007). Also, the need for a *lingua franca* for communication between immigrant communities works to the benefit of Spanish (Ruiz Vieytez 2007). Internal linguistic minorities can perceive immigration as a threat to their claimed uniqueness or legitimacy, and also as a threat to the status of 'minority languages' entitled to protection (Ruiz Vieytez 2007). In Catalonia there is a great deal of concern in this sense, which is clearly reflected in integration policies that strongly endorse the normalisation of Catalan, and at the same time, keeping two balls in the air, speak of equal rights and opportunities for immigrants. These two policy goals are in fact in competition if only because the first applies a logic of *group rights* and the second a logic of *individual rights*. Policies of normalisation foster the positive discrimination of internal minority languages (i.e. Catalan, Galician or Basque) over Spanish, and by extension, over any other language that comes to compete with them. To avoid weakening the status of Catalan, reinforced through more than two decades of normalisation, the new minority languages of immigrants must be treated differently. Bonal (2000) draws attention to the double strategy used to deal with cultural diversity. While internal cultural and linguistic minorities (i.e. Catalan people) should be respected, recognised and even publicly promoted ('internal' multiculturalism), foreign cultural minorities are required to assimilate ('external' multiculturalism). This means that culture in the first case is understood in terms of 'freedom of expression' while the culture of foreign immigrants is associated with negative connotations of 'marginality' (Bonal 2000).

As in the Dutch case, the Spanish arrangements for integration correspond to the state's welfare structures. In accord with the Mediterranean welfare regime (Ferrera 1995, 1996, Moreno 1997), Spain offers social entitlements based on insurance (unemployment benefits) as well as universal entitlements attributed by residence (health care, education) (Moreno & Sarasa 1993, Moreno 2001, Rodríguez Cabrero 2004). The national framework PECI and most of the regional Integration Plans favour a mainstreaming (universalist) approach that extends pre-existing social rights to include immigrants (Martínez de Lizarrondo 2006, Pajares 2004). Despite this general approach, the majority of the regions combine these universal measures

with some specific programmes for certain collectives with specific difficulties. In this system, immigrants get access to the welfare state either via their participation in the labour force (insurance) or via the assistentialist schemes of municipalities and social organisations (Moreno Fuentes & Bruquetas-Callejo 2011).

The institutional inertia of universalist measures is challenged in practice by NGOs' particularised measures targeting specific immigration groups.[35] In Spain, social organisations and NGOs have generally fulfilled functions of policy delivery and policy formulation in the domain of immigrants' integration (Casey 1998, Moreno Fuentes 2003). This role often has been the result of social organisations' own initiatives in a context of public inhibition, sometimes directly stimulated by authorities in order that the latter might keep a distance from direct service provision and protect themselves from accusations of preferential treatment for immigrants (Casey 1998, Colectivo IOE 1987, Gil Araujo 2006). This pervasive particularist trend has been strengthened by the emergence of specialised non-governmental expertise in certain domains of service provision, which, in order to defend their activities, adapt general social service functions to a specific clientele (Dietz 2000, Agrela & Gil Araujo 2005, Gil Araujo 2006).

3.2.2   Educational system

Spain is a clear example of a comprehensive educational system: its main goal is equality and it pursues that goal through a single system for all. Yet, this characterisation is compromised by a fundamental tension. The basic principles of the Spanish educational system, as conveyed in the Constitution of 1978, combine two traditional conceptions of education: the liberal-conservative, which understands education as a freedom, and the social-democratic, which understands education as a social right (Carbonell & Quintana 2003). The constitutional text is intentionally ambiguous in this regard, including both principles in order to achieve a consensus among the distinct political forces. As a consequence, education laws have suffered dramatic shifts of orientation, oscillating between these two ideological approaches to education (Bonal 1998).

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35   We are speaking here of social organisations *for* immigrants or social organisations with a more general target (for example Caritas, Red Cross, etc.), but not of organisations *of* immigrants themselves. In any case, the Spanish authorities have not applied a corporatist approach, which might encourage migrant groups to develop their own institutional structures of accommodation as was the case in the Netherlands in the 1980s.

The legacy of Franco's regime was a profoundly unequal educational system, polarised between private schools that taught the better-off classes and public schools for those who could not afford the former (Calero & Bonal 1999). As part of the democratisation impulse after the Francoist dictatorship, the first educational law, the LODE (1980), set out to break with the traditional dual system of vocational and academic education that existed before the transition to democracy. The LODE was followed by a new law enacted by the government of the Socialist Party, which aimed to promote equal educational opportunities: the LOGSE (1990). The LOGSE was the first Spanish educational law that explicitly mentioned the need to fight ethnic-cultural discrimination (Terrén 2001), but it explicitly intended to build an education system that would compensate for inequalities without parallel structures (Grañeras et al. 1997).

In the period under study (2004-2006) the conservative government of the Popular Party launched a reform of the educational system with the goal of introducing a system of tracks. In secondary education pupils would be channelled according to their skills level (LOCE 2002). LOCE acknowledged for the first time the right of parents to a free choice of school, while it questioned some aspects regarding equality of opportunities, which were explicitly guaranteed by the LOGSE (Carbonell & Quintana 2003). The LOCE met strong opposition from teachers and schools and was ultimately never implemented: in 2006 it was replaced by the LOE, a new law formulated by the Socialist Party.[36] The LOE eliminated the previous reform, which had moved towards selectivity, and re-introduced the comprehensive character of the system, emphasising the inclusive character of education, pursuing 'quality with equity for all' (Website MEC 2010/LOE 2006). Education is seen again as a public service that must be provided under conditions of equality of opportunities.

The Spanish federal system of the *Autonomías*, or partially autonomous regional governments, establishes a gradual devolution of policymaking responsibilities in a number of policy fields to the regions. The devolution is demand-based (Aja 2003). Certain historical regions, with Catalonia as a pioneer, have shown particular interest in the devolution of federal responsibilities and, most of all, in the responsibilities relating to educa-

36   The LOCE was passed in December 2002, but immediately after winning the general elections of March 2004 the Socialist Party stopped the process of implementation of this law. On 29 October 2002 there was a massive strike in education to protest against the LOCE reform; the strike was supported by 50% of the teachers and 70% of the students (*El Pais* 30-10-2002).

tion.[37] The management of education was a top priority for the successive governments of the CIU, the conservative nationalistic party in power in Catalonia between 1975-2003, who used it to protect and promote Catalan language and culture. When responsibility for education was granted to the Autonomous Community of Catalonia in 1981, the regional Department of Education launched an active plan of 'linguistic normalisation' that aimed to solve the situation of disadvantage of the Catalan language with respect to the Castilian one.

The management of educational policies in Catalonia has traditionally faced two fundamental conflicts. The first concerns the already-mentioned tension between freedom and equality. In Catalonia the government of the CIU adopted a liberal-conservative interpretation of the progressive national law LOGSE. In particular, the lenient criteria by which school covenants could be established with private schools led to a clientelist-driven network of semi-public schools (Carbonell and Quintana 2003).[38] The immediate consequence of this system was the acute concentration of lower-income students in public schools, since the semi-public schools tend to introduce conditions for the admission of students, such as additional fees that parents must pay (Bonal 2002, Alegre Canosa 2008).[39] This economic discrimination violates the constitutional principle of free compulsory education that the publicly-funded privately-owned schools (*concertados*) are obliged to follow (Carbonell and Quintana 2003). This means that the conservative reform of the national law (LOCE 2002) simply tried to institutionalise what already existed *de facto* in Catalonia.

Yet a second axis of conflict in the educational sector in Catalonia has to do with equality and diversity. In the construction of the Spanish federal state, the acknowledgment of cultural and linguistic identities was one of the central issues. The challenge for policymakers was to develop policies that could balance equality and cultural differences. The LOGSE (1990) deliberately opted for a concept of diversity that emphasises individual

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37   The Spanish system of *Autonomías* also distinguishes between historical regions and others, the first having strong identities based on their own languages, cultural identities and a tradition of their own institutions with a recognised special status within Spain.

38   The criteria for applying public subsidies to private schools were overlooked. An illustration of this is the assignation of public funds to schools with a notably elitist orientation, such as those of the Catholic movement Opus Dei. The CIU government seemed to respond to the pressure from its clientele: the dominant class, the Catholic Church, and in general a population with more resources (Carbonell & Quintana 2003).

39   Research has also shown that semi-private schools often try to dissuade certain families from registering and propose they consider public schools as a better alternative (Calero y Bonal, 1999: 134).

diversity and conceals socio-cultural differences (Aja 1999), avoiding parallel structures. The tension between equality and cultural diversity makes the distribution of responsibilities between regions and state in the Spanish Federal system[40] the source of much conflict, despite the clear dispositions of the law in this regard (LODE 1985). The responsibility for formulating educational policies is distributed between the regional level (60%) and the federal level (40%).[41] The political conflicts between state and regions have contributed to shape the educational options, as the educational policies of the regions have set out to differentiate themselves from the rest of Spain and to support their regional identities (Bonal 2000). Immigration exacerbates this tension, as we have seen in the unequal treatment that national and foreign linguistic minorities receive.

Decision-making on educational issues is largely *centralised* in the hands of the regional civil servants of the Education Department, according to Fase's (1994) category of 'governing by curriculum rules'. Regarding the treatment of foreign newcomer students, Autonomous Communities intervene strongly regarding the decision and instrumentalisation of compensatory and reception education: programmes, methods, teacher training, evaluations and teaching materials. School curricula and organisation is closely organised in a centralised way by the regional education department.

Within this pattern of governance, schools in Spain have a relatively low degree of autonomy. There are three types of schools: public, private and semi-public ('charter' or *'concertado'* schools). Public schools are publicly-funded and publicly-owned, have staff chosen by the public civil service examination, follow the principle of ideological neutrality, and are managed by the regional administration. Private schools are owned by private persons or associations, hire their staff freely, and may have an ideological, religious or educational orientation. Private schools may sign a 'charter' with the educational authorities to be publicly subsidised, becoming a so-called 'charter school'. Charter schools are publicly-funded but privately owned and privately run. Since they receive public subsidies, they are obliged to offer education at no cost, to respect all religions, and to accept the rules of enrolment of new pupils fundamentally based on residential criteria.

40 Between 1980 and 1993 the Constitutional Court dealt with 39 cases between the central state and various Autonomous Communities (Martí 1993).
41 There are three regional competences established by law: developing the general laws, the regulation, and all the management of the system, while the central state leaves only the approval of the basic laws.

Public schools have direct control of a reduced budget that can only be used for limited purposes: furniture, teaching material, school excursions and celebrations, etc. Important expenses – like teachers' salaries – are directly paid by the Department of Education. Decisions regarding personnel and the curriculum are also made by high-ranking civil servants from the regional Department of Education. In matters of curriculum schools have limited autonomy: the government establishes the reference framework and the schools work out the details in terms of the concrete form that the contents take or in the number of teaching hours per subject established in the teaching schedule. In personnel management public schools have no autonomy whatsoever; teachers are civil servants hired through a system of public exams and assigned to one or another school by the regional Department of Education. Schools are only free to decide certain things concerning teaching methods: the techniques and textbooks to use, the criteria for assessment and how to organise students into groups (EURYDICE 2004). Despite the ongoing tendency towards devolving more autonomy to schools,[42] their actual degree of decision-making is still quite limited.

3.2.3   Programmes against educational disadvantage

Inspired by the French 'Educational Priority Zones', a national programme for compensatory education appeared in 1983 giving preferential attention to geographic areas or population groups with special educational deficiencies (CIDE 1992). This *compensatory* policy was developed to support the incorporation of Roma students into ordinary schools following a period of their *exclusion* from schools during the Francoist dictatorship, in which attending school implied acculturation into the 'payo' society,[43] and a period of *segregation* into the ironically named 'Bridge Schools' (Fernández Enguita 1996).

Following the philosophy of the LOGSE, the programme aimed to 'develop compensatory measures in order to make effective the exercise of the equality principle in the exercise of the right to education' (Ley de Ordenación General del Sistema Educativo (LOGSE) 1990: art. 63). The policy set out to tackle social exclusion understood in a broad sense: 'inequalities

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42   For instance, both the LOGSE and the law for Participation, Assessment, and Government of Educative Centres (LOPEG) already contain articles establishing greater financial and academic autonomy for schools.

43   Spanish Roma people use the word 'payo' to refer to non-Roma people.

derived from social, economic, cultural, geographic, ethnic factors or factors of other nature' (LOGSE 1990: art. 63). However, although the programme was implicitly directed at the Roma minority, in fact it did not refer to ethnic origin or cultural diversity as causes of educational inequality. Rather, it focused mainly on socio-economic deprivation. To reach its goals the programme of compensatory education applied a strategy of positive discrimination: *special* treatment for *special* students performed by *specific* teachers (Arnaiz et al. 2007: 376).

This national programme was applied by the Autonomous Communities, and each of them identified specific goals in the field of compensatory education. Catalonia assumed responsibility for compensatory education in the late 1990s. In this Community the goals of the programme were defined as 'the prevention of any form of social exclusion *and* the promotion of interculturality based in equality, solidarity and respect for diversity' (Decret 320/2000, 27 September). In Barcelona's neighbourhood El Raval, compensatory education classes were first opened in 1986-1987 to students of Moroccan origin (Ubero 1997). After the programme expanded its target population to include Moroccan students, the coverage of the programme and its personnel continued to increase until its disappearance in 2003. This means that immigrant pupils were received in the educational system applying the available tools previously designed for Roma people (Garreta Bochaca 2006).

In 2003-2004 half of the personnel of compensatory education in the area of Barcelona were assigned to teach Catalan to immigrant students in primary and secondary schools (conducting what was known as 'direct intervention').[44] Teachers in the field of compensatory education felt that their sudden change of function would create a vacuum in the public services and leave unattended students in severe situations of exclusion. Besides, these highly-professionalised teachers, who had been trained to detect situations of social exclusion of diverse kinds and to design and co-ordinate broad educational strategies to compensate for this, felt somehow denigrated by their new function as mere language teachers. But, more than anything, this shift in function symbolised the triumph of the views of the department of language normalisation (SEDEC) over the view of

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44 In Catalonia, the functions of the Programme of Compensatory Education (PEC) were defined as: 1) elaboration of projects and criteria and adaptation of teaching materials; 2) counselling for teachers and schools; 3)'direct intervention' in schools engaging in compensatory teaching with disadvantaged students; and 4) measures of social and intercultural cohesion (Interview with I. Almécija, professional at the PEC).

compensatory education (PEC). Despite the strong protests by compensatory education workers, this meant the end of the programme in Catalonia and the victory of efforts to frame the issue of immigrant students in terms of the clash between Catalan and other languages rather than in terms of socio-economic and cultural disadvantages. In the words of a document by compensatory education workers, from the SEDEC perspective the reception of immigrant students 'becomes reduced exclusively to the learning of Catalan' ('Reivindiquem un pla d'actuació del department d'ensenyament: educació per a les relacions intercultural I la cohesion social', May 2003).

3.2.4   Programme of educational reception in Barcelona

In Catalonia, school welcoming measures for recently arrived immigrant children have taken three successive forms. During the 1980s, while Spanish students from other regions were subjected to Immersion Programmes in the so-called Schools for Minimum Catalanisation (1983), foreign students were segregated into classrooms for compensatory education together with students with other sorts of problems (Siguan 2000, Pascual 1998). It is notable that foreign immigrants received different treatment from internal immigrants coming from other regions.

Relevant for my study are the two subsequent reception programmes. Between 1996 and 2003 the reception programme known as TAE. ('Workshops for Educational Adaptation') was applied to initiate foreign children in the Catalan language, following the system of 'immersion' developed by the Schools for Minimum Catalanisation. From 2004 onwards this was substituted by the programme LIC ('Language, Interculturalism, and Social Cohesion').[45] Despite their substantial differences in *modus operandi*, TAE and LIC schemes present an important continuity in their policy goals and rationales. Both programmes are an extension of the 1980s Catalan policy of linguistic immersion. Linguistic immersion policies made schools into part of an effort to compensate for the Catalan language's historical disadvantage vis-à-vis Castilian. Both programmes take as a point of departure the idea that immigration challenges the Catalan language, representing a threat to the educational system and also to Catalan society. Accordingly, Catalan is the language taught in both reception schemes, and Catalan – not Castil-

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45   In 2003 there was an attempt to launch a new reception programme (PAANE), but this was never implemented. The PAANE had 'Catalan normalisation' as its sole objective.

ian – is used as a vehicle to teach other subjects.[46] Both policy instruments respond to the notion that the main barrier for the adaptation of immigrant students to the host educational system is linguistic in character.[47]

This perception of the problem needs to be linked to the dominant role played by the department for 'language normalisation' (SEDEC) in the issue of immigrant pupils in the period between 1996 and 2003. Later on, political shifts brought about a reconfiguration of actors and their relative forces within the Department of Education, allowing the issue to be framed in a different way (LIC programme). The new vision introduces social equality for immigrant students as a goal *in addition to* the goal of defending the Catalan language and culture. That means that the two goals coexist and the second does not substitute the first, so the new version supposes a relative continuity with regard to the old one.

Besides differences in the major objectives, the two programmes present a crucial dissimilarity in their general strategy. The more segregated form of mixed reception that predicated the programme TAE was substituted by the LIC'S more integrated version of mixed reception. In the TAE programme newcomer children from different high schools were grouped in area-based reception units; while only a few students were situated in school-based units. School-based units were exceptional, only allowed by educational authorities as a sort of political compensation in a few schools 'suffering' from outstandingly high proportions of foreign students.[48] Starting in 2004, the area-based system (TAE) was substituted by school-based reception units (LIC), located in every school with a minimum number of newcomer students (ten students). In this way, policymakers tried to respond to criticisms of 'segregating newcomer pupils' and 'making a ghetto apart from ordinary schools.'[49] By incorporating the reception unit within each school

46   The linguistic normalisation law 7/1983 of 18 April, and the linguistic policy law 1/1998 of 7 January, art. 20, and the Catalan Statute of Autonomy, art. 6, all define Catalan as the language of Catalonia and of education at all levels. It is the language generally used as a vehicle and for learning in all teaching contexts.

47   In the Spanish context 'diversity' is conceptualised with regard to regional cultures (Bonal 2000). In particular, the mother tongue becomes the central distinctive trait of cultural diversity. One's own cultural identity is defined in symbolic opposition to other regional languages; Spanish identity and language form the relevant 'Other' for the Catalan one. 'Foreign 'Otherness' (cultural identities coming from beyond the Spanish borders) is perceived beyond the politically relevant conflict of cultural identities.

48   According to several informants, among others T. Serra (coordinator of LIC programme in Barcelona).

49   Interview with J. Valcorba, head of the Department for Language, Interculturality and Cohesion, within the Regional Department of Education.

with newcomer students, policymakers intended to maximise the integration of immigrant children with their native peers and to incorporate more newcomer students into regular classes.

A fundamental difference between the two subsequent programmes of first reception in Barcelona is that the TAE reception programme was more prescriptive in character, while its successor the LIC devolved decisions in reception matters to schools to a considerable extent. The TAE programme set out to regulate tightly every aspect of the reception courses, from the registration of students to their transfer to ordinary education. Only non-Latin-speaking students were beneficiaries of the programme. During one academic year, students attended a special classroom in a separate location in the mornings, and in the afternoons they would go to their normal schools. The curriculum was also centrally established by the regional Department of Education and students received the Catalan language and a basic vocabulary of core subjects. After nine months, officers from the Department of Education would test the students' Catalan and transfer them to regular education.

The LIC programme, on the other hand, is much less prescriptive than its predecessor. Most rules limiting the freedom of schools to the level of organisation are actually mere recommendations. Policymakers have defined very ample and open margins so that schools 'can adapt them to very diverse territorial and school situations.'[50] These margins comprise few norms. First, the assignation of a reception classroom within a school depends on the number of newcomers, as counted in June of the previous school year. Schools are to be assigned one mentor-teacher for the reception of newcomers if they have ten foreign students or more; a second teacher is granted to schools surpassing twenty newcomer students. Second, the maximum duration of the transition period is two years. Third, newcomer students are to attend the reception classroom for no longer than a half-day, meaning three hours per day or a maximum of fifteen hours per week, but this is stated merely 'as a matter of suggestion.'[51] Fourth, although no specific threshold of minimum number of hours of reception teaching has been set up, schools are encouraged to schedule newcomers for between 20 and 24 hours in the reception classroom and six and ten hours in the regular classroom. In addition, schools are held responsible for the coordination

50   Ibid, 4.
51   In Spanish, literally: *De manera orientativa*. Resolution of 18 June 2004, giving instructions for the organisation and functioning of public teaching centres of Compulsory Secondary Education in Catalonia for the academic year 2004-2005.

Table 4   Main characteristics of TAE and LIC reception programmes

	TAE programme	**LIC programme**
Objectives	Teaching of Catalan language (normalisation)	Teaching of Catalan & equality of opportunities
Location of reception classroom	Area-based	School-based
Language taught	Catalan	Catalan
Target group	Non-Latin speakers	All immigrants (non-Catalan speakers)
Decision-making (concerning: curriculum, schedule, methodology, clustering, transfer of pupils)	Centralised at the regional department of Education (more prescriptive)	Decentralised to schools (less prescriptive)
Weekly schedule	Reception training in the morning (5 hours/ day); regular school in the afternoon	Reception spread (max. 3 hours/ day) at school's convenience
Duration of reception trajectory	9 months	2 school years (max)
Students/ teacher ratio	25 students (max)/ 2 teachers (*)	10 students (min)/ 1 teacher 20 students or more/ 2 teachers

(*) Initially, the TAE programme established a maximum of 18 students for the reception classroom with 2 teachers. This ratio was increased through the years.

between reception teachers and regular teachers and for the adaptation of the school curriculum to the specific needs of newcomer students.

Under the LIC scheme, regional authorities still manage the distribution of resources; however, this is not used to enforce certain goals or ways of doing things. In the LIC programme most decisions are directly in the hands of the schools themselves – clustering, curriculum, schedule, teaching methodology, transfer of pupils – but schools do not manage their budgets. The lack of control over budgets and personnel indirectly constrains schools, as their decisions are dependent upon the availability of human resources. However, the allocation of reception teachers depends only on the number of foreign students, and not on the compliance of schools with the basic norms of their reception scheme. Not even extreme deviations from the soft ideals established by policymakers are financially penalised, as we will see.

4   Practices in Rotterdam

Rotterdam can be described as a prototypical industrial city, extended around a port that attracted massive internal migration in the early nineteenth century. As a working-class city characterised by low educational and income levels, Rotterdam has been historically concerned with education (Gemeente Rotterdam 2004, 2006).[1] Consequently, education has traditionally been prioritised in Rotterdam's political agenda, something fitting the philosophy of the local coalitions with the constant presence of the Labour Party.[2]

Rotterdam is also eminently a migrant city. With a 37% non-autochthonous population in 2005, the city scores more than three times higher than the national average (10%) (CBS 2005).[3] Rotterdam is the city with the second highest concentration of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands, a figure aggravated by the so-called 'white flight', the desertion of the city by the white Dutch middle classes between the 1960s and the 1990s. As ethnic minorities score worse in all education and labour market indicators, they have become a specific target for the city's educational policies.[4] For example, unemployment among young ethnic minorities in Rotterdam is double that of their autochthonous Dutch peers.[5]

The main ethnic groups in the city are Surinamese (8.8%), Turkish (7.5%), Moroccan (6%) and Antillean (3.4%) (CBS 2005). Other significant communities are the Cape Verdean (2.5%) and the umbrella category: 'Southern Europeans', which includes Spanish, Greeks and Portuguese (3%; although since 2007, this last category has disappeared from the municipal statistics and has been merged with that of 'EU citizens'). We must keep in mind that a large share of these citizens of migrant origin has Dutch nationality, particularly the Antillean population. This figure reflects the non-native population: persons born abroad and their descendents.

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1   Rotterdam does worse than the Dutch average in overall indicators for education and labour participation. The population with low levels of education is predominant (39% in 2004), although over the years there has been an increase in the overall educational level (see Table 8). The level of unemployment in Rotterdam (9.7% in 2006, CBS) is higher than in the other Dutch large cities.
2   Since 1974 the Labour Party (PvdA) has been present in all local governments, except for the period 2002-2006.
3   In 2010 the non-autochthonous population in Rotterdam reached 48% of total population, while the national average was 11% (CBS 2009).
4   Interviews with civil servants of the City Council of Rotterdam: W. Tuijnman, H. Van Onna, G. Oude Engberink.
5   According to the CBS, 26% of non-Western *allochtonen* between 15 and 24 years are unemployed (CBS 2005), while a study conducted by the SCP suggests 40% (Dagevos 2006).

Table 5   Proportion of population of immigrant origin in Rotterdam (2004-2012)

	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Native Dutch	55.4	54.6	53.8	52.3	51.7
Allochtoon	44.5	45.3	46.2	47.8	48.4
Allochtoon **from Western countries**	9.9	9.9	10.2	10.8	11.4
Allochtoon **from non-Western countries**	34.6	35.4	36	37	37
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: own elaboration with data from COS (Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek, Gemeente Rotterdam).
*Note: population of immigrant origin (allochtoon) includes foreign-born people and descendents (those having at least one foreign-born parent).

Table 6   Ethnic composition of population in Rotterdam, 2004-2012

Ethnicity	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012
Surinamese	8.7	8.8	8.9	8.9	8.6
Antillean	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.6	3.7
Turkish	7.4	7.6	7.8	7.9	7.8
Moroccan	5.8	6.2	6.4	6.6	6.6
Cape Verdean	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5
Other non-Western countries	6.6	6.8	6.9	7.4	7.8
EU countries	5.3	5.3	5.5	6.1	6.7
Other Western countries	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7
Natives	55.4	54.6	53.8	52.3	51.7
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Municipal data (GBA) with elaboration from COS (Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek, Gemeente Rotterdam).

According to educational statistics for the year 2003-2004, in Rotterdam there were 14,112 students of ethnic minority origin in secondary education (Gemeente Rotterdam 2004). That represents 40.5% of the total student population in secondary education. Students who were born abroad and migrated to the Netherlands between the ages of twelve and sixteen are a more limited group. In 2003-2004 Rotterdam registered an inflow of 808 newcomers of secondary school age, out of which around 200 actually attended reception programmes.[6] The success of the programme in reach-

6   Interview with E. Meijers, education department of Rotterdam, Newcomer Students division.

Table 7   Ethnic composition of 12-15 y.o. students in Rotterdam, per 1-10-2012

Ethnicity	1-10-2012	
	absolute	%
Turkish	3,585	10.7
Moroccan	3,216	9.6
Surinamese	345	1
Antillean	437	1.3
EU nationalities	880	2.6
Other non-Western ethnicities	422	1.2
Unknown	432	1.3
Native Dutch	22,985	68.8
Total	33,389	100

Source: Own elaboration with data from Municipality of Rotterdam (Department of Education)/ pronexus.

ing its target group is moderate, as only 61% of potential students in fact attended a reception class (Gemeente Rotterdam 2002).[7]

Based on the available research, we can expect the ethnic composition of reception students roughly to reflect the characteristic ethno-cultural mosaic of Rotterdam. According to a survey of reception students, the 580 students following the reception programme in 2003-2004 were predominantly Moroccan (10%) and Turkish (10%), and the rest originated from different developing countries in Asia and Africa – up to 60 different nationalities (CED 2005).[8] The under-representation of students from Suriname and the Dutch Antilles, who explicitly became the target, could possibly be explained by the high percentage (31%) of non responses in this study.

In order to respond to the challenge of newcomer students in secondary education, Rotterdam has adopted a clear-cut model of parallel reception. Four schools in the city offer full-time reception courses, keeping newcomer students in a separate programme for an average of two years.[9] The four schools have a common curriculum for the reception courses and use common textbooks. Registration and distribution of students among the schools

7   Of the 526 registered by the municipal office, only 320 were inscribed in an ISK centre (61%). Of the 189 pupils of Antillean origin, only 45 were registered (51%). The general reach is improving gradually: 88.4% in 2004 (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2004); 90% in 2006-2007 (CED 2007).
8   This first evaluation of the reception programme's outcomes for secondary education in Rotterdam (CED-Groep 2005) presents a high level of non-response in many issues (around 40%). The method of data collection – letting reception schools distribute the questionnaire themselves – has probably influenced this result.
9   Interview with E. Meijers, education department of Rotterdam, Newcomer Students division.

is managed by the local authority. An office within the municipal education department is in charge of registering all newcomer students arriving in the city and assigning them to a school. A semi-private institution, the CED, provides pedagogical advice to schools, supporting them in the implementation of the priority policy, reception, and teaching of Dutch as a second language.[10]

The distribution of work among the four schools also follows a distinct pattern. The four schools encompass higher (Rembrandt) as well as lower tracks of secondary education (Vermeer, Escher, and Van Gogh). Two of them are located in the southern part of the city and two in the north. Two of them are public schools, under the management of the public board of governors (BOOR), and two of them are semi-private, members of the Protestant group of schools LMC.[11] The main criterion used for the distribution of newcomer pupils into schools is the type of education (lower or higher tracks) to which they are expected to transfer later, and the proximity to the family's residence is considered only when possible. Although newcomer students are not distributed between schools based on their public or Protestant orientation, the local authority has granted reception functions to these two large and powerful school companies (BOOR and LMC) and not to others. This is a clear legacy of the pillarisation era, still persisting in the Dutch education system,[12] and follows the logic of equality in the distribution of public resources among the social-religious pillars.[13]

The goal of the reception programme 'ISK' (*Internationale Schakelklassen*) is established by the municipal regulation as 'to prepare the pupil, as well as possible and as soon as possible, to be transferred to regular education.'[14] Formally, policy regulation at the national level defines a newcomer pupil as one who: 1) does not have Dutch nationality, 2) has lived in the country for less than a year, and 3) has legal status. Informally, the STER programme,

10   The CED was originally a small unit in the Municipal Education Department. Later on it became an external unit, but was still supported by the City Council to a great extent. In 2005 the CED was privatised, becoming a private provider of educational services.

11   Escher school does not have a Protestant orientation but rather a 'specific pedagogic line' (in Dutch: *'speciaal bijzonder'*). Van Gogh school has a Protestant orientation (interview with coordinator of reception of Escher school and sector director of Rembrandt school).

12   No Catholic pillar (RVKO), however, is currently represented. In 2003 the municipality was considering the proposal of the CVO group of schools to establish another reception centre, although this never took place. Interview with E. Meijer, education department of Rotterdam, Newcomer Students division.

13   Interview with member of the City Council and vice-leader of the PvdA, J. Kriens (in Dutch *'lid van gemeenteraad en vice-fractievoorzitter'*). Interview with ex-coordinator of reception at Rembrandt.

14   Gemeente Rotterdam, Dienst Stedelijk Onderwijs, *Uitvoeringsnotitie leerplichtige nieuwkomers in Rotterdam. 1 januari 2004-1 augustus 2005*, 2003: 5.

created from the bottom-up, establishes the content of the reception policy in terms of curriculum and teaching methodology. The STER programme in particular establishes that beginners must start learning the Dutch language alone; once their Dutch has become advanced, they are introduced to the rest of the subjects. Rotterdam's local authority also stipulates its objectives in municipal regulations valid for an academic course.[15]

Local policies for educational reception generally follow the minuscule national policy frame, and the periodic national regulations that stipulate the conditions to allocate funds for reception. However, some aspects of the national scheme are modified, such as the target group, which in Rotterdam includes Antillean and Aruban pupils. Since 2004-2005 Rotterdam's authorities have subsidised Antillean/Aruban newcomers, who are excluded from the target group at a national level because they have a Dutch passport (Gemeente Rotterdam 2006: 63). This served to institutionalise the *de facto* inclusion of these students by schools in Rotterdam in reception programmes. Schools justify this by saying that the Dutch language level of Surinamese and Antilleans is usually very weak. Municipal money plays an essential role in reformulating national policy to local needs, which has often been the result of bottom-up initiatives by schools.

Rotterdam has also modified the 'counting dates' for the allocation of state funds. Since funds are allocated per eligible student, the state establishes specific dates for inspectors to visit schools to count the number of students attending at that time. Initially, the count date was 1 October, but schools complained about having to pay upfront the costs of newcomer students who arrived later during the school year. In 2003, a new national regulation was set which established three counting dates instead of one: 1 October (for students arriving during the August/November period), 1 February (for the previous December/March period), and 1 June (for the April/July period). This gave more flexibility to schools, though they continued to complain because subsidies are granted *a posteriori*. The Municipality of Rotterdam has offered to provide the schools with the money to be received from the Ministry of Education to support them at their own risk. To that end, the local administration funds schools, based on the number of attending students on 1 June, for the period between August and November, on 1 October, for the period between December and March, and on 1 February, for the period between April and July.[16]

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15   Gemeente Rotterdam, *Regeling leerplichtige nieuwkomers Rotterdam 2004-2005*, 2004; Gemeente Rotterdam *Regeling leerplichtige nieuwkomers Rotterdam 2005-2006*, 2005.
16   Gemeente Rotterdam, Dienst Stedelijk Onderwijs, *Uitvoeringsnotitie leerplichtige nieuwkomers in Rotterdam. 1 januari 2004-1 augustus 2005*, 2003: 32.

Table 8   Annual subsidies for reception of newcomer students in Rotterdam (2005-2006)

Type of subsidy	Incomes	Expenses	Objective
National funds:			
	4,212 per year per pupil (=1,404 euros per counting date, paid out three times)		Additional funding for (first) educational reception of newcomers in obligatory education
Municipal funds:			
Urban policy	590,000	590,000	Central in-take, monitoring, etc.
Urban policy	227,000	227,000	Newcomers older than 16
Rotterdam's plan against educational disadvantage (ROAP)*	500,000	500,000	Antillean pupils
Rotterdam's plan against educational disadvantage (ROAP)	506,000	506,000	Counselling from the CED advisory group
General affairs (*Algemene Dienst*)	170,000	170,000	Costs of personnel Municipal Department of Education

Source: Beleidsnotitie leerplichtige nieuwkomers in Rotterdam. 1 augustus 2005 t/m 31 juli 2006.

* This municipal budget comes fundamentally from the national fund to tackle social exclusion among Antilleans: school drop-out rate, criminality, etc. Bestuurlijk arrangement Antilliaanse risicojongeren 2005 – 2008.

In Table 8 we can see the budgets that reception departments have at their disposal, that is, additional funds provided by the public authorities specifically earmarked for educational reception. Newcomer students are entitled to CUMI funds, in a 1.9 proportion, from the national treasury, because they belong to ethnic minorities. Moreover, the Ministry of Education grants specific funds for newcomer students' reception. Annually, schools collect € 4,212, allocated every four months, per each newcomer student who complies with the requirements set by national regulations.[17] The total annual amount depends on the number of students enrolled in the school on the counting dates. The municipal budget also contributes to reception education. Most subsidies come from the Municipal budget for Equal Opportunities Educational Policy (ROAP) – like the budget for Antillean students, estimated at a maximum of € 500,000 – or additional funds for illiterate students (established in 2005-2006), which come from the Urban Policy budget (*Stedelijke*

17   Gemeente Rotterdam, Regeling Leerplichtige Nieuwkomers Rotterdam 2004-2005, 2004.

Visie). Still more overhead expenses are covered by municipal funds: central registration and admission tests of newcomer pupils, pedagogical advising, housing, monitoring and research, and so forth. We can roughly estimate an annual subsidy of € 500,000 received by each reception school in the city for newcomer pupils, excluding extra financial support for the illiterate.[18]

Since the 2006-2007 school year, this budget has been constrained in two ways. On the one hand, CUMI funds have been replaced by the Leerplusarrangement VO, which according to the informants has meant a decrease in funding of about 50%.[19] On the other hand, there has been diminished municipal responsibility for Educational Equal Opportunities (see chapter 4). The elimination of the ROAP budget for fighting educational disadvantage in Rotterdam is reflected in the considerable reduction of funds destined for Antillean newcomers and to CED group consultancy (€ 150,000 and € 200,000 respectively, whereas the former year, each received around € 500,000). Funding for urban policy was also greatly reduced. All in all, the budget for educational reception in Rotterdam is facing a considerable decrease.

The decline in the inflow of newcomers has also aggravated this situation, although the national subsidy for the reception of newcomer students has remained untouched. Figures indicate that the number of newcomer children arriving in the municipality has decreased dramatically since 2000. Arrivals dropped from 1,000 to around half that number in a five-year period. Hence, the local authority of Rotterdam is considering the possibility of limiting the number of schools that provide reception. Other large cities concentrate newcomer students in two schools (Amsterdam, The Hague) or even in one (Utrecht). In the 2006-2007 school year, the CED group conducted a study on the future of reception in Rotterdam. Three scenarios were foreseen: a transformation towards a mixed model of reception, a reduction in the number of schools providing reception, and the suppression of the centralised model of reception leaving each school in charge of reception of its own newcomers. So far no change has been made in any of these directions, probably because since 2008, schools have been receiving growing numbers of Eastern European students, which is reversing this tendency.

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18   As to the schools selected in this research in 2004, that would mean around € 463,320 for Vermeer school (110 pupils), and € 568,620 for Rembrandt school (135 pupils). These figures are purely an estimate and most likely overestimate the actual budget since not all these students were eligible for the subsidies.

19   Interview with sector director of Vermeer school.

Table 9   Students between 12-18 years old settled in Rotterdam coming from abroad[20]

School year	Absolute numbers
2000-2001	1030
2001-2002	1000
2002-2003	875
2003-2004	808
2004-2005	546
2005-2006	462

Source: Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS), Voorburg/Heerlen 2007-05-25.

Up to this point, we have been describing the background to educational reception in the city of Rotterdam. In my study I selected two high schools, one providing reception training for students with low skill levels (Vermeer) and another providing reception for highly-skilled students (Rembrandt). Let us now see how each of the schools selected puts in practice reception for foreign youngsters. As I mentioned before, I will organise the description of the data in five reception phases, each entailing different tasks (according to the definition of reception used by practitioners): 1) enrolment of students, 2) clustering in classes, 3) curriculum and methodology, 4) schedule-making, and 5) evaluation of pupils and their transfer to regular education.

4.1   Johannes Vermeer school[21]

Vermeer is a public secondary school covering a wide range of educational tracks, from Preparatory Vocational Education (VMBO) to Senior General Education (HAVO) and University Preparatory Education (VWO). Vermeer is the result of a fusion between two schools, Olympus college and OSG Hugo de Groot, the first a school with a bad reputation that offered vocational education and the latter a school with a solid name that offered higher-level education.[22] In August 2000, the two schools decided to join forces, becoming the largest school on the southern side of town, with roughly

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20   These figures include children from Suriname and the Dutch Antilles.
21   The names of schools and informants have been replaced with pseudonyms to preserve their anonymity.
22   Olympus used to be graded in annual reports as one of the worst schools in the country. See for instance, 'De beste en de slechtste middelbare scholen van Nederland', *Trouw*, 25 October 1996.

1,800 students.[23] In fact, the resulting school still maintains a sharp divide between the two partners, as the spatial distribution of students – lower tracks of education in the old Olympus school buildings, higher tracks in the Hugo de Groot – perpetuates the specific characteristics of the old schools.

Being a public school, Vermeer is fully subsidised with public funds. Since 1998, it has been managed by the BOOR board of directors, like other public schools in Rotterdam.[24] The Vermeer school is located in the district of Charlois, a working-class area on the southern side of the Maas River. Charlois is one of the districts with higher concentrations of ethnic minorities (45.1% in 2005, COS 2006) in Rotterdam. In 2004-2005 the school had an estimated 1,700 students, of which 120 attended ISK reception training. Over 90% of the total student body are first or second-generation migrants, representing an archetypal 'black school'.[25]

The former Olympus college already had a reception department supported by the local authorities. Informants report that 25 years ago, early foreign students 'who couldn't speak any Dutch' arrived at Olympus school. There were only five or six students and they were simply placed in a regular class. Teachers complained ('S.O.S. This doesn't work!', Interview with coordinator of reception), and in response, the school hired two teachers to teach Dutch to the newcomers. This improvised reception applied a *mixed model* in which newcomer students received some hours of Dutch training in the day while attending regular classes for subjects such as sports or drawing.[26]

Currently, Vermeer offers *parallel* reception training (ISK) for newcomer pupils who scored poorly on the municipal intake test. These pupils are expected to transfer later on to low or medium-low tracks in secondary education. The school offers medium-high tracks as well, but normally newcomer students do not transfer to this type of education.[27] Reception teaching stands alone as an independent department with about twenty

23   Interview with the sector director of Vermeer school.
24   In this year, the Municipality of Rotterdam decided to create a professional management body to run all public schools in the city. Since 1 January 2008, the board of directors 'BOOR' has been an independent foundation.
25   In Dutch, '*zwarte school*'. Generally, the term refers to schools with a majority of non-Western '*allochtoon*' students, i.e. either first or second-generation migrants from developing countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America; the Central Bureau for Statistics considers black schools to be those with 60% or more students from ethnic minorities (CBS 2003: 72). (For other authors, this is considered to be 50%.)
26   Interview with coordinator of reception department of Vermeer school.
27   As an exception, in the present course a group of students is expected by the teachers to score high enough in the final tests to transfer to higher tracks (MAVO-HAVO).

Table 10   Number and nationality of newcomer students in Vermeer school (2002-2009)

Study year	Number of newcomer students	Major ethnic groups
2002-2003	115	Antillean (29), Chinese (12), Moroccan (10), Turkish (10)
2003-2004	78	Antillean (13), Moroccan (12), Turkish (11)
2004-2005	120	Moroccan (23), Antillean (11), Turkish (9), Surinamese (8), Chinese (8), Cape Verdean (8)
2005-2006	91	Antillean (9), Surinamese (9), Pakistani (9), Turkish (8), Moroccan (7), Chinese (5)
2006-2007	97	Moroccan (11), Turkish (10), Pakistani (9), Antillean (8), Surinamese (6), Iraki (6)
2007-2008	86	Turkish (8), Polish (6), Chinese (6), Moroccan (5), Bulgarian (5)
2008-2009	123	Antillean (17), Bulgarian (14), Polish (13), Portuguese (9), Moroccan (8), Turkish (8)

Source: administration of the reception department, Vermeer school.

teachers located in a separate section of the building. In addition, the school has a separate reception department for students aged over fifteen, with a different team of teachers and different leadership. Youngsters aged fifteen and older attend this 15+ department, where they follow a different teaching method from that of their younger counterparts (see below). The 15+ reception department is situated in a different building, in the former Hugo de Groot school.

In the 2004-2005 academic year, 120 newcomer students attending ISK training at Vermeer, distributed over six groups. The ISK department shares the building with lower tracks of education in the general programme, which the majority of ethnic minority students within the school attend. Classrooms belonging to the reception department are situated in the right wing of the building, and are spread along the corridor in three floors. Despite this symbolic boundary, newcomer students can meet their native peers in the shared yard and canteen during their free time. The atmosphere in the ISK department is friendlier and safer than the other side of the building, which is described by teachers as 'tough'. This seems to perpetuate Olympus school's old style, the reputation of which was not exactly 'heavenly', but rather marked by insecurity and violence. The building housing the higher education tracks, which used to be Hugo de Groot school, has a slightly lower average of minority students and seems to be quieter.

In 2005-2006, the number of students in the reception department at Vermeer decreased to 91 students. This development is congruent with the declining trend observed in the arrivals of young migrants to the city (since the early 2000s), also observed in other ISK schools. In the case of the Vermeer school's reception department, a falling trend was observed until 2006, when it reversed. The figures in Table 13 show the number of students in the department by the end of the school year. Before 2005 there was a 10-15 student variation between the beginning and the end of the year. In recent years, the number of students arriving throughout the school year has increased remarkably. In 2006-2007, the department had 60 students at the beginning of the year, while by the end the number had grown to 97, a difference of 37 students.

The student body of Vermeer has traditionally included large groups of Moroccan, Turkish, Antillean, and Surinamese students, roughly reflecting the dominant ethnic groups in the city of Rotterdam.[28] Other significant groups are the Chinese, Portuguese and Cape Verdean, although these represent smaller proportions. The rest of the student body is made up of a broad array of ethnic origins, 28 in total. Among these, there is a small but constant presence of students from Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Pakistan and Thailand. As a result of the inclusion of Eastern European countries in the European Union, the number of Eastern European students has grown remarkably in recent years, particularly Bulgarians and Polish. In the 2008-2009 school year, Bulgarians and Polish represented 14% and 13% respectively, and represented the second and third largest national groups in the ISK department.

It is also worth mentioning that the reception department in Vermeer has a significant group of students with illegal status: an average of ten students in the 2002-2009 period, with around seventeen illegal students in some years (2008-2009).[29] The number of illegal students is higher at the beginning of the year; some of them manage to regulate their residence status after some time. The illiterate also comprise a large share of reception students in the school.

28   This table shows the ethnic origins of students, thus not necessarily their nationality or place of birth, but rather the ethnic origins of their parents.
29   'Of the total of 86 pupils in October, 30 were not registered by the municipality. Now, ten of them have a regular status' (In Dutch: *zijn wel in orde gekomen*). Interview with reception coordinator, 7 November 2008.

Table 11   Number of students with illegal residence status and illiterate students at Vermeer school reception department

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Number of pupils	115	78	120	91	97	86	123
Students with irregular status	2	6	10	14	14	12	17
Illiterate	12	9	26	11	19	9	22

Source: administration of the reception department, Vermeer school.

The motto of the school, 'Rich in colours, rich in opportunities' (in Dutch *kleurrijk, kansrijk*),[30] truly reflects the intentions of the teachers working in the Vermeer reception department, who are involved in seizing genuine opportunities for pupils. In the opinion of the vice-principal, the objective to be pursued for this sort of student is that they obtain a basic diploma (certificate) so that 'nobody is left outside the door.'[31] This *crusade* means facing disadvantages 'both in terms of ethnicity and social conditions' in order to help students reach their real capacity. The general treatment of newcomer students could be described as *maternal*, as it intends 'to give them a lot of attention and care.'[32] Teachers deliberately try not to be tough, and give several opportunities 'if they think that there is more *in there*.'[33] The underlying belief is that each person is born with specific talents and potential that emerge under favourable conditions.

The reception team at Vermeer is composed of young, motivated and committed teachers. The head of the reception department, Irene, is the necessary starting point in this story. This white, middle-class Dutch woman in her forties leads the department firmly and with indefatigable enthusiasm. Always energetic and full of ideas in the meetings, Irene is doggedly searching for funds and policy resources to ground new initiatives and solutions. The core team comprises twenty teachers, ten of them permanently working for the ISK department, while eight of them also teach in other school departments. Yet the majority of them teach most of their

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30   Bernardette Naelissen, 'Dat negatieve beeld van onderwijs, daar krijg ik vlekken van', *Rotterdams Dagblad*, 28 October 2000.
31   Interview with sector director of Vermeer. Several departments fall within his section, including the ISK and ISK for 15+. He is thus the direct supervisor of Irene and above him there is only the principal.
32   Ibid.
33   Ibid.

hours in the reception section, and there are only two or three teachers who teach a specific subject in the reception section, such as Physical Education. The composition of the team is relatively diverse, although the teachers are predominantly white, middle-class, and Dutch; only three of the ten teachers have a different ethno-cultural background. Women also outweigh men in a ratio of ten to seven.

Almost all the teachers in the team have a Dutch as a Second Language (NT2) specialisation in addition to their major.[34] However, when selecting new personnel, the manager considers that having an open and flexible attitude is more important than the objective qualifications. 'All of us have explicitly chosen to work in the ISK department' explains the coordinator, suggesting that the team of the ISK department is highly motivated.[35] Teachers are expected to be 'oriented to the individual' and to have the ability 'to differentiate between different levels of skills' (CED 2008: 11).

4.1.1 Registration of pupils

In Rotterdam, as in other Dutch cities, the municipal Department of Education is in charge of distributing all incoming students between the schools that deliver reception. The regulation of the enrolment of immigrant children by local authorities contrasts sharply with the free-market system that operates for autochthonous children. Generally, parents are entitled to choose a school for their children freely, according to the constitutional principle of freedom of education. However, when a foreign student arrives in the city, he or she is assigned to one of the four schools in the city providing reception education according to his or her ability and level of schooling.

The procedure for enrolling a newcomer student is the following: the potential student is sent to the municipal enrolment office, where he or she is given a non-verbal RAVEN test of intelligence and a mathematics test in order to measure his or her skills. Based on the outcomes of these tests, the student is assigned to one of the reception schools. The main criterion of distribution is the student's skill level. The assumption is that students with different IQ levels correspond to different educational tracks, as holds for the rest of the Dutch educational system.

34　In the Netherlands there is not an official qualification such as Dutch as a Second Language teacher at the level of secondary education, nor a specific reception (ISK) teacher certification (interview with the reception coordinator).

35　Interview with the reception coordinator.

The distribution of students among the four schools which offer reception in the city is done by the Newcomers Working Group (BWN), a committee comprised of municipal officers, school boards of reception schools, and the educational consulting group CED. As I explained before, only one school provides reception for newcomers expected to transfer to higher tracks of secondary education, while the other three provide education for students directed to lower tracks (Vermeer among them). Within this system, parents have limited decision power:

> Sometimes parents say very emphatically 'I would like my son or daughter to go to one of the four schools'; in that case their preference prevails, in principle. Unless the school of their choice is Rembrandt, which is only for HAVO-VWO levels. And if based on the results from the admission test ... they see that the student is not capable of doing much, in terms of intelligence or educational background, then he or she is too weak for the HAVO-VWO scope. Then he doesn't go to [that school]. Even if the parents say 'I want my child to go to Rembrandt'. Because the [Max] Rembrandt can say, 'No, it is not possible because he is too weak' (Interview with coordinator, Vermeer school).

In principle, schools simply admit those youngsters assigned to them by the BWN committee. In practice, schools further refine the previous selection process in two ways: *within each school*, by applying their own internal selection procedures, or *between schools*, by correcting the external distribution of pupils within the city. The core idea behind these practices is that the reception education *aims* to transfer newcomer pupils to the educational track that best suits their skills level. This means that the goal of the programme is further interpreted by practitioners in light of the selective principles of the Dutch educational system.

Vermeer gives an admission test to incoming pupils to evaluate their level of education. The school's intake test determines more precisely the students' level of Dutch whether or not they are illiterate, in order to place them in the right class within the reception department. The school bureaucrats at Vermeer justify this additional filtering of new students by affirming an educational philosophy similar to that fostered by the local authorities. Yet they question the accuracy of the intake test given by the municipal office. For instance, informants from Vermeer claim that the municipal Department of Education tends to underestimate the skill level of potential students, mostly in cases of illiteracy. Having undetected semi-illiterate or illiterate students within ordinary groups hinders the learning process

of that student and of the whole group. According to reception workers' opinion, an adequate selection of students is not only 'fair' – corresponding with social standards of merit – but also facilitates the work of reception workers. As the reception department at Vermeer school says:

> [For the municipal office] 'If they [students] can write down their name they are not illiterate'. To illustrate her words, the coordinator shows me the intake exam of one girl who the municipal office has classified as non-illiterate. It seems that she has attended primary education in her country of origin, but 'she has learnt Arabic, therefore she does not write the Latin alphabet acceptably. She writes from right to left, she cannot write some sounds,' says the informant. In addition to this very poor Dutch test, she has failed the mathematics one (Vermeer school field diary, p. 11).

The intake test at Vermeer also serves to compensate the distribution of pupils among schools when necessary. If it is found that the skill level of a potential student does not correspond to the type of education provided by Vermeer school, the pupil will be directly transferred to another reception school that better fits his/her abilities. For this procedure schools do not rely on the formal channel (via the municipal office of reception), but rather deal with the issue directly amongst themselves. All reception schools claim to cooperate actively in redirecting students to the 'right place'.

> And if a student who has been sent to Escher [school], a 12-13 year old student who wanted to study in Escher … and it happens that he or she cannot read and write well enough, then the colleague from Escher would call [me]: 'Listen, this does not work. Can this student go back to your school?' So we are in contact with each other. … At least, if we see that somebody is not placed adequately at this school then we send him or her to another one (Interview with Vermeer school's coordinator).

The reception team at Vermeer filters incoming students with informal practices of *gate-keeping*. Such practices become particularly evident in those categories of students excluded from the official policy's target, such as students coming from the Dutch Antilles or undocumented students. Antilleans are not eligible for national financial means for reception; however, since 2005, the local authority of Rotterdam has provided funds for the reception of these students. Even before this local subsidy was granted, Antilleans were being systematically included in reception classes at Vermeer.

The department coordinator reports that being a public school, they are not free to reject any student who knocks at their door. In fact, the practices observed confirm this rule. Illegal students are present in Vermeer school in a slightly higher proportion than in Rembrandt school, although this probably has to do with the educational profile of migrants. Annually, Vermeer has an average of ten students with irregular legal status (for the period 2002-2009), although, as the coordinator suggests, 'this does not coincide with what we experience [because] at the moment of enrolment there are many more and this number falls throughout the year.'[36] The department coordinator must do her best to reduce the number of students who are not covered by public funds. The normal procedure is to address the parents of those students with irregular status, who are not registered in the municipal system, and urge them to regularise their legal situation. This procedure sometimes works when it is just a mere bureaucratic matter. Some files, for instance, lack a document that confirms the child's date of arrival in the Netherlands, and the school sends a reminder to the parents to complete this.[37] However, the solution in the case of students residing illegally in the country without a residence permit is difficult. Irene handles these cases with the resignation of acknowledging an undeniable fact, and does not bother the undocumented families too much by demanding that they fulfil impossible requirements. An example of this attitude is observed in the following excerpt from my field notes, in which the department's coordinator and the secretary are checking to see if the new students have provided all the required documents in order to apply for funds:

> Secretary: Student X has no passport.
> Coordinator: We must call her parents.
> Secretary: That is not going to work.
> Coordinator [exchanging an understanding glance with her colleague]: Yes, because they are illegal. Then we will not get anything from them (Field notes Vermeer, p. 12).

Vermeer school also admits illiterate students in its reception department, while the other ISK schools do not. Unlike illegal students, illiterate students have been entitled to funds provided by the local authority since 2005, and thus are considered part of the policy's official target group. However, these

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36 Email from the reception coordinator, Vermeer school.
37 The school needs to prove that the student has lived in the country for a period of less than a year in order to be entitled to the subsidies. Field notes Vermeer school, p. 12.

students are not welcome in other schools because their teaching requires additional expenses. As we will see below, the schools feel that ordinary reception procedures are not sufficient. Children with psychological problems and children with sight or hearing impairments are also considered more problematic by schools because they stay in reception classes for much longer. These children would otherwise be sent to a special education school, but because they do not speak Dutch they are redirected to reception schools. As a consequence, Vermeer's reception department is full of these 'unwanted' students, as a teacher of the illiterate group remarked to two civil servants from the Ministry who visited the school:

> Coordinator: We also have here [in the illiterate group] children with psychological problems.
> Visitor: Aren't they in special education?
> Coordinator: No, they don't want them because they don't speak any Dutch. There's a little bit of everything here [in Dutch, *van alles en nog wat*] ... students who cannot see, who cannot hear, ... But if we try to send a pupil to a special institution, the procedure takes so long ... It takes at least a year, and in the meanwhile he or she stays here.
> Teacher: It is sad to say it but all the 'debris' of the education [system] is here. We are the filter and all the 'trash' stays here (Field notes Vermeer, p. 16).

4.1.2 Clustering in classes

Besides cooperating in the re-distribution of pupils among schools, Vermeer also applies filters within its own walls. In particular, clustering pupils in classes implies a selection process that responds to various patterns.[38] Vermeer's reception department has grouping strategies that strive to create homogeneous groups of students primarily according to their Dutch language skills. Other criteria considered are the group size, age, ethnicity, gender and so forth. The essential objective is to form teaching units that gather pupils with a Dutch level that is as similar as possible, but with the greatest diversity possible in terms of ethnicity and gender in order to obtain balanced groups.

In 2005-2006 the Vermeer school's reception department had seven classes: three for beginners (1SK, 1SE, 1SG), one for illiterate students (1SL),

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38 Research has shown that tracking policies can actually integrate a school population or, on the contrary, they can re-segregate a desegregated school (Hallinan & Williams 1989).

and three for advanced students (1SA, 1SC, 2SA).[39] The maximum number of students per class was fifteen for beginners and twenty for advanced groups, as established by the school. On average, classes usually have between ten and fifteen students.[40]

Vermeer school openly admits to tracking students according to their level in the Dutch language. As for the rest of the subjects, students are put together in two big multi-level groups to do autonomous learning. Practitioners try to maximise homogeneity in their distribution decisions, as it is supposed to facilitate the teachers' work. This is reflected in the following conversation between teachers in their team meeting:

> A: Can we pass pupil X to another group? I have a group with a difference between four and nine points.
> B: And I [have] one [group with a difference] between four and six.
> C: [Ironically] And I have one with a difference between one and a hundred! (Field notes of Vermeer school, p. 9).

The procedure for arranging student groups unfolds in the following way. All students, whether they are newcomers or pupils who were enrolled in the previous academic year in reception education, are given an intake test on the first day of school. Immediately afterwards, teachers hold a meeting to distribute students into classes. Homogeneous groups of students are established according to their scores. Irene, the reception department coordinator, opens the meeting announcing the general rules: the total number of students (so far) and available teachers, hence, number of classes that can be created. As she stands by the blackboard she reminds the teachers that there has been a reduction in the number of groups, from eight to six this year, due to cutbacks: 'We start off with 78 students, thus an average of thirteen per class.' Irene then divides the blackboard into six columns, headed by the group's name and its mentor. A teacher reads out the scores attained by students in the intake test, and Irene copies them on to the blackboard, assigning students to one or another column-group according to their test grade.

> Z: What is the norm? I have a lot of difficulty with that.

Irene: In the intake test a maximum of 71%, 60 points. If you score 71% then you have to go directly to HAVO (Field notes, Vermeer school, p. 6).

Once the classes are organised by language level, teachers discuss the resulting distribution according to other criteria such as the size of the classes, the age of pupils, the proportion of students with bad behaviour in the group, and the gender composition.

C: I have three girls and five boys.
Z: In my group there are a couple of young men [in Dutch *mannetjes*] who are really 'macho'.
X: In my opinion, ISC all together doesn't make for a nice group: chaotic, naughty boys (Field notes, Vermeer school, p. 6).

Regarding the groups' size, they try to distribute work among teachers in a balanced way. Teachers make an effort to send some students from the larger groups to the smaller ones. In doing so, criteria are assessed in a more flexible way:

X: Is it reasonable for two students to continue with Zebra who have already done it three times?
Z: How old are they?
Irene: They are thirteen years old. In principle, they could go to the first course [in Dutch *eerste klas*].
J: But they have stagnated [not made any progress].
Z: They are children with special needs [in Dutch *zorg-kinderen*], in their own way (Field notes, Vermeer school, p. 6).

The distribution of groups resulting from this process is not fixed for the rest of the year, nor is the teachers' judgement of the skill level of the students. Vermeer school also follows variations in pupils' performance by applying constant evaluation and by constantly reconsidering 'if the first prognosis that we have done is correct.'[41] In addition, evaluation meetings are held monthly to analyse how each individual student is progressing and to reorganise groups accordingly. They also speak about it constantly at the staffroom ('He is too weak [for my class]', 'Pass him to me'[42]) and if necessary

41   Interview with the reception coordinator, Vermeer school.
42   Ibid.

they arrange something between evaluations. Groups are reorganised so as to keep students constantly at an adequate level of Dutch learning.

> [At the end of the meeting] all the teachers write down the final distribution of classes and pupils. The coordinator explains that these groups are not fixed, and that they are subject to modifications as new pupils continue arriving throughout the academic year. 'There are two groups that will very likely remain like this, X and Y, because they are quite homogeneous and also because they have many pupils' [thirteen and fifteen pupils respectively] (Field notes, Vermeer school, p.7).

The clustering strategy at Vermeer results from a stronger emphasis on the teaching of the Dutch language than on other subjects. Consequently a Dutch textbook is used as a measuring stick for pupils. The topics in the book, called Zebra, are organised in an increasing gradation of difficulty, and the book is therefore used at Vermeer school to determine periodically which chapters a student has fully mastered and which not. The following excerpt from the field diary deals with the teachers' meeting at the beginning of the year; after clustering pupils according to their levels, teachers assign the teaching material to be used with each group.

> Coordinator: This group starts [the book] at chapter 16. This [group] at chapter 25 …
> Teacher 1: But pupil 1 has only done up to chapter 14.
> Coordinator: Look, even if she had only done up to chapter 11, she has got a good grade, and therefore she *can* start at chapter 16 (Field notes, Vermeer, p. 6).

4.1.3   Curriculum, methodology and teaching

In theory, the principle of freedom of education within the Dutch educational system leaves schools autonomy to define their curriculum. According to informants at Vermeer, this relative autonomy is broader for reception education, since there are no specific educational requirements established for ISK education.

> Thus, there are exam requirements for the whole of Dutch education, or requirements which the schools must fulfil, but in principle every school chooses how to do it: which book you choose, which subject you set up, or when you do it. … There are schools that give more hours of Dutch,

but also because there are no legal requirements for the ISK reception programme (Interview with the reception coordinator, Vermeer school).

However, despite what informants believe, reception education in Rotterdam is considerably regulated, certainly more so than other forms of Dutch education. Regulation follows the mode of *governing by curriculum* (Fase 1994) via the STER programme (1993). The STER programme standardised the curriculum and methodology of first reception classes in Rotterdam. The CED consulting group set up the main pedagogical lines, which follow a three-step process of teaching Dutch as a second language. In the first stage, pupils learn the basics of the Dutch language in order to communicate. In the second stage, they acquire an extension of the basic linguistic skills and begin to learn school-specific language. The third stage emphasises mastering school language and achieving the necessary level in all the subjects in order to transfer to regular education (Ritchers 2003). The CED group also designed the basic teaching materials for reception teaching (Zebra, Nieuwe Buren and Hyppo). In 2000, the 'Zebra' teaching method was introduced for children aged twelve to sixteen years old. 'Hyppo' was then introduced in 2003 for pupils who found the 'Zebra' book too difficult. Finally, the 'Nieuwe Buren' book was introduced for the group of fifteen-year-olds and over.

The Vermeer School essentially follows the STER guidelines. The STER agreement[43] established a different methodological approach for the first and second years of the reception trajectory. Teaching during the first year of reception focuses on Dutch as a second language and applying the Delft Method, which tries to emulate how mother tongues are naturally learned: intensively, inductively, in context, without translation, by association, and by use and repetition (Montens & Sciarone 1984). The idea is that after a short introductory phase of exclusive language teaching the student is introduced to other subjects as much as possible. Thus second-year education involves more attention to content subjects other than Dutch.

In the Vermeer school, in accordance with STER's semi-official goals, students receive more hours of Dutch in the first year than in the second year (fourteen vs. twelve hours per week). First-year teachers very often back up their explanations with visual aids such as drawings and pictures and use mimicking and dramatisation (theatre) in their lessons. Teachers may translate some words to other languages (English, Chinese, and French) for beginners. First-year teaching responds more to the classical concept of

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43   See chapter 3.

teaching, in the sense that the teacher provides an explanation to all of the students. However, the lessons' interactive aspect and the way of teaching in situation and context differ greatly from classical methods in which students are expected to listen passively and repeat.

Lessons in this first year are intensive not only because of the number of hours spent; they also follow a scheme of language *submersion* (Vila 1999) and use a small frame of reference. Vermeer's teachers take as their point of departure the notion that the pupils' mother tongues are an obstacle to the development of a second language, and therefore they try to minimise the interferences which the mother tongues may cause. They consider it a drawback that students speak their first tongue at home or with other students of the same origin. Teachers also share the view that summer vacations mean a backward step for newcomer pupils, especially if they travel back to their countries of origin. Also, relationships among peers of the same origin and language are considered detrimental to the aims of the policy. These assumptions have to do with the perspective of *linguistic submersion* as the necessary and sufficient condition to learn a second language, which implies keeping the first language unused or used very little during the learning period.[44] As we see in this conversation between the coordinator and a teacher at Vermeer's reception department:

> Coordinator [to Pupil X]: Good morning, X, how is it going? [The coordinator and another teacher are standing by the door of the High School greeting each and every student coming in. It is the first day after the summer holidays].
> Pupil X: … [He gives a short answer in Chinese and turns around, annoyed].
> Teacher [to the coordinator lowering the voice]: Pfff, he is doing badly! He has lost ground over the summer vacation.
> Coordinator [to the teacher]: Yes, we have to separate him from the other two Chinese pupils who he hangs around with (Field diary of Vermeer school, p. 1).

As a result, pupils are constantly bombarded with the message of using Dutch outside the school. 'You have to watch Dutch TV!' was a chant repeated by

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44   The alternative to this system would be linguistic immersion, based on the hypothesis of linguistic interdependence (Cummins 1989). Linguistic immersion starts off from the appreciation of the mother tongue and the idea that any process of learning a new language would be done on the basis of the primary language experience.

teachers during my fieldwork. As a rule, Vermeer school does not allow any languages other than Dutch at school. Pupils are also clustered strategically in order to avoid large concentrations of pupils with the same mother tongue, particularly among those who show more difficulties in learning Dutch. Also, the team tries to break down the tendency of some ethnic groups to stick together, isolating themselves from the rest, such as Antilleans, who 'are a big group [in the school] who simply look for each other' (Field notes, p. 16). On the other hand, friendship between pupils with different mother tongues is encouraged because it ostensibly obliges them to use Dutch. The strategy is 'to spread them out as much as possible' because 'if there are only two [of the same background] in a group they make more friends with other nationalities, and speak more Dutch' (Field notes, p. 16). All of these practices imply pressure on the pupils to substitute the first language with the second, instead of letting them coexist and reinforce each other.

In the first year the reference framework of pupils is very much centred on their mentor teacher and the spatial context of the classroom. In the Netherlands teachers habitually have their own classrooms where they keep their books and equipment; this space is also personalised with photos, posters or pupils' assignments on the walls. Teaching practices in Vermeer school tend to support this overprotected and small, confined environment. Some practitioners defend the positive effects of small-scale learning environments for recently-arrived migrant children. The small scale and the continuities of the first year of reception also favour stronger emotional links with the teacher as well as students' self-confidence. Many informants consider it crucial for pupils' development and integration in the new country of residence.

In the second year of reception, on the other hand, pupils normally have many more subjects and teachers, and they even have to move from one classroom to another almost every hour. Within this more diversified frame of reference students are less protected: they do not have fixed places within one classroom and are expected to find their way more autonomously in the large building that the reception and the VMBO departments share.

In the Vermeer school the emphasis lies on teaching the Dutch language during the second year as well. Besides Dutch, the schedule only includes autonomous study time, sports, technology and mentor lessons (guidance counselling).[45] The tendency to prioritise the Dutch language is becoming stronger, as other subjects have been gradually relegated to a more residual

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45 Autonomous study time includes three subjects: current affairs, a theoretical assignment and a practical.

place since 2002. Such practices collide with the prevailing discourse in Vermeer school, which interprets newcomers' problems as broader than a mere issue of language disadvantage. The coordinator of the reception department in this school emphasises that newcomer pupils have to face multiple and multifaceted problems, such as illiteracy, illegal status, war traumas, economic difficulties and discrimination.

In line with this growing emphasis on teaching Dutch, the reception team of Vermeer has launched a new initiative, the so-called LINC or 'Learning in New Contexts', to teach other subjects besides Dutch language with self-learning methodologies. The idea is to gather two groups of students (26 to 30 students) in a big classroom to do assignments of their own choice under the supervision of two teachers.[46] This means all the other subjects are limited to this free-choice working time twice a week. Pupils have a whole folder of exercises for all the subjects (from mathematics to natural sciences), which they have to fulfil every trimester. Students work autonomously and have to decide when to do what. In theory, students get assignments that fit their own individual level according to child-centred pedagogy. In the LINC method, the strategy shifts from homogeneous groups that follow a single curriculum to heterogeneous groups with an individualised curriculum.[47]

Irene, the coordinator of the department, is very proud of the LINC project, which has been initiated and promoted by the team with a great deal of voluntary work. Irene explains that the teachers collected the necessary furniture and computers for the classroom in a way made 'the rest of teachers in the school [in other departments] think that we are crazy.'[48] According to Irene they had to help themselves because 'the school manager and the board of governors have little interest in the ISK department.'[49]

The motivating idea was that the ISK teaching scheme was too 'structured', and modern teaching methodologies could promote the development of students' creativity, autonomy and critical thinking.[50] Besides, this child-oriented activity is supposed to be very favourable for newcomer pupils, spurring their motivation, concentration, and progress. According to Irene, most students 'love' this way of working.[51]

46 Since 2006-2007 the LINC has brought together three groups of pupils (CED 2008), which suggests that there is increased pressure to reduce personnel.
47 Interview with the reception coordinator, Vermeer school.
48 Field notes of Vermeer school, p. 15.
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.
51 Ibid.

> Coordinator: 'These students do not read newspapers, do not watch the [TV] news, do not read books, they are not up to current affairs.' 'Therefore, we invented the LINC class.' Irene says that in it students *have to* express their own opinions and interests, decide what they will be doing at each moment, and use their own creativity. They must watch the news; connect mathematics to everyday life and to the things that happen everyday. This motivates them much more: to work two hours a day like this. ... Also, students who disturb the class a lot in conventional lessons, moving and distracting others all the time ... suddenly disappear here, they concentrate on their task and do not bother anybody (Field notes from Vermeer school, p. 17).

Despite the enthusiasm and high expectations of teachers, putting the LINC scheme into practice entailed difficulties. Teachers help pupils with their questions about assignments, but the high teacher/student ratio in the LINC class does not allow teachers to give extra attention to those with more learning difficulties. Indeed, the teachers' function there is more of a surveillance task; i.e., keeping order in the large group of students and trying to keep them silent and disciplined.[52]

> Teacher: Where are you going? [To pupil 1, who is walking around in the classroom.]
> Pupil 1: I was going to ask A for a pen.
> Teacher: Get your pen and go and stay in your place. You keep running around and bothering other people.
> Pupil 2: Sir!
> Pupil 1: But I need a pen, Sir!
> Teacher: What did you do with your pen? Where is your stuff?
> Pupil 2: Sir! I have a question.
> Teacher [to pupil 2]: 2, would you like to wait, I'm talking to 1.
> Teacher [To the coordinator, who just entered the room and approached]: I have sent X, Y, and Z away. They are impossible! On top of not working in their team, they bother those who are doing the job. They will have to work individually instead of in teams for two weeks (Field diary of Vermeer school, p. 11).

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52   This practice apparently resembles that of *busyness* (Sharp and Green 1973), but in fact serves quite different functions.

Another problem with the implementation of the LINC scheme is that teachers lack the expertise to help students with all of their assignments. For example, the English teacher cannot always help students who are doing mathematics. This shortcoming was recognised by some practitioners. During a team meeting a teacher expressed her concerns about the difficulties of putting the LINC ideal into practice:

> [During the team meeting] Teacher J. poses a question outside the agenda. According to her, in '*the big class*', some teachers correct exercises with lax criteria, not sticking to the aptitude standards previously agreed.
> C: It is a matter of how you interpret things.
> J: No. Some colleagues leave these pupils 'guessing'. This is not well implemented. It is not well finished. Together we have defined some criteria and now … If the question is a difference of interpretation then it is something else (Field diary, Vermeer school, p. 16).

4.1.4   Schedule-making and personnel

In principle, staff policies are the responsibility of the schools' boards of governors. Both Vermeer school and Rembrandt school are run by the same board, BOOR, a professional management external to the municipal administration, that runs all the publicly-owned schools in the city of Rotterdam. Coordinators of the reception departments are not in charge of hiring or dismissing teachers, but nevertheless they are asked (by the sector-director) to provide an informed opinion and this, according to the informants, proves to be influential in the final decision. Coordinators hold similar advisory roles at both Vermeer and Rembrandt schools, and also at the other two reception schools under the LMC board management:

> Coordinator: Then the board says 'We have so many [e.g. ten] people. OK, who should we place there [on that subject]? What do you think about it?' Yes, the final decision is made by the board, but they ask you who you want to keep in your team. It is not always easy, it is not always nice. But it happens (Interview with the coordinator of Escher school).

Moreover, the distribution of tasks among hired teachers is defined to a great extent by the department's coordinator. The distribution of work is largely set according to the schedule of lessons. The general procedure for distributing work and designing a schedule is well depicted in the

following excerpt from an interview. The coordinator of Vermeer school demonstrates that it primarily involves an exercise of curriculum-making: which subjects to include must be determined according to the criteria of the reception department's general objectives. Then, the available personnel are distributed between the classes and subjects. The final step is to fit this work distribution into a feasible schedule, which implies distributing time among participants.

> Coordinator: Is there enough of a relationship between Dutch and other subjects? … And afterwards I am going to look at which people want which groups, although that has to be done by the board. And then I can distribute the persons among the classes, the lessons. Thus, the distribution of hours per teacher and per class (Interview with reception coordinator of Vermeer school).

The reception department coordinator is therefore entitled to introduce changes in the curriculum. Modifications that imply adjusting the number of teachers (or the number of students) need to be confirmed by the board. In Vermeer school, curriculum modifications are normally discussed in teachers' meetings and decision-making is quite participatory. Even when the decision depends on the coordinator, teachers also participate by providing feedback.

Vermeer school has been strongly affected by the cutbacks in recent years. Under these circumstances, the coordinator has been asked by the board to make the department more efficient. The management of the school has decided to reduce the team by 5-6 teachers and 'still more will follow.'[53] Irene, the coordinator, has to figure out how to reorganise the work in order to accomplish the same with less staff. Common measures for achieving this are reducing the number of subjects, cutting down the number of groups, increasing the ratio of students to teachers, or limiting the overall number of students. The coordinator has decided to reduce the number of groups from eight in 2004-2005 to six in 2005-2006, but also to curb the number of available places for newcomer students in her department.

> Coordinator: … because we must cut back, we must reduce the number of classes to six …

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53   Interview with the reception coordinator, Vermeer school.

Researcher: Thus, two fewer classes. Does this mean that the groups have to become larger?

Coordinator: No, not necessarily. We might admit fewer pupils during the school year. If we begin in October with 90 pupils and end up having 110, that means twenty began school after October. Then we will have to say to the municipality: 'Sorry, we are full'. ... I have made a proposal for the team to do that. And then we will try to look at how we can adapt the schedule (Interview with Vermeer's reception coordinator).

The LINC initiative described in the previous section, which gathers two groups of students to do assignments in a number of subjects on their own, can be understood as a strategy to reduce personnel. Such teaching methodology allows the number of teachers and teaching hours to be reduced without affecting the variety of subjects that students receive. This is presumably applauded by the school's board. In the words of the school's coordinator: 'from now on we won't have separate mathematics and English lessons any more' (Field notes, Vermeer school, p. 17). Students at Vermeer still get some mathematics and English.

Another point of friction concerns maintaining a separate class for illiterate students. As mentioned above, Vermeer school had been offering reception to illiterate students for several years, but did not receive additional financial support from the local government until the school year prior to the research (2004-2005) (ROM 2006: 93). Teaching illiterate students is time- and personnel-intensive. The reception coordinator and teachers understand that keeping illiterate students together with other newcomers hinders the progress of both the illiterate and their peers. Teachers were not able to offer enough attention to the illiterate within an ordinary reception class, so the team decided to set them apart. The illiterate class requires a lower teacher-to-student ratio, and students are expected to stay there for a longer period. In former years, the illiterate comprised a group of fourteen students on average, taught by two teachers. In the last two school years, the number of illiterate students decreased to around four, under the minimum required level to be entitled to subsidies (ROM 2006: 93). The coordinator was caught between the pragmatic logic of keeping the special class for illiterates and the pressure from the managers and board of governors to raise sufficient funds to make the initiative if not self-supporting, then at least reasonably efficient.

The coordinator searched for opportunities in national regulations and in informal negotiations with the local authorities. In a team meeting, the coordinator and teachers of the reception department discussed the

possibility of including an illiteracy-level class for the coming academic year (2005-2006). Apparently, they did not have enough illiterate students to be entitled to municipal subsidies, which set a minimum of ten. Based on Vermeer's school admission test results, only eight students happened to be fully or semi-illiterate. It could be reasonably expected that the group would eventually reach or even surpass the minimum threshold, as more new students generally arrive throughout the school year. Yet likely as it seemed, as one teacher remarked, it could still take a while: 'Until there are ten [illiterate students], they will be sitting at home and waiting' (Fieldwork diary, Vermeer school, p. 4). Teachers were in favour of starting the year with the illiterate class, in spite of the insufficient number of pupils. The coordinator, on the other hand, preferred first to study carefully the constantly changing regulations in order to fully understand the conditions for the subsidy. She wanted to avoid confrontations with the board.[54]

> The coordinator speaks about the 'Nota Nieuwkomers' regarding the illiterate.
> Coordinator: The 'Nota' has been approved, but what are its consequences? I want to start a group of illiterate students, but I want to have the guarantee of getting funds.
> Teacher: Didn't the municipal Department of Education grant them already?
> Coordinator: Before the vacation, the municipality subsidised an illiterate class with a minimum of two pupils. Now, I don't know. Therefore, I am not speaking with G. [the sector director] (Field notes, Vermeer school, p. 8).

4.1.5   Evaluation and transfer

Another task for which reception practitioners are responsible is evaluation and the transfer of pupils to regular education. School bureaucrats play two interrelated roles at this point: the transfer function, which is *strictu sensu* the goal of the ISK reception training, and the selection function. Teachers and coordinators not only have to determine whether students have achieved a sufficient knowledge of Dutch (and eventually other content

54   Throughout the 2005-2006 school year, illiterate students continued arriving, and thus it was feasible for the school to obtain municipal subsidies for a special class for illiterates. In 2006-2007, there was no problem reaching the figures, as in November illiterates already comprised seventeen, actually surpassing the ideal teacher/student ratio. In 2007-2008, on the contrary, the inflow of illiterate students dropped again to three students at the beginning of the year, and gradually increased to nine.

subjects) in order to be transferred to mainstream secondary education; they also have to filter pupils towards further education, determining the type of secondary education they will go to afterwards. This additional task has to be implemented by the ISK department because newcomer pupils are introduced in the education system directly via the ISK and have therefore missed the standard selection mechanisms applied by schools at the end of primary education. As a result, the transitional ISK training has to provide newcomer students not only with proficiency in Dutch in order to be able to continue with regular classes, but also an individualised 'recommendation' or placement in a secondary education track.

Neither of the two functions is centralised or clearly specified. There is no central standardised exam for admitting newcomer students into regular education, nor is there a curriculum that establishes the content to be learnt by pupils in order to be transferred. In addition, newcomer pupils transfer to secondary education in a rather unusual way, as they do not take a Cito-test or get a 'recommendation' from a primary school. This poses problems, as schools enrolling the newcomer students after completion of their ISK trajectory require standard documents, which newcomers lack. That is why quite often newcomer students simply continue in the schools where they have done their reception training.

Reception schools develop their own mechanisms for assessment which are based mostly on written or oral tests, evaluation meetings held by the reception team, and daily observation of pupils in the classroom (CED 2009). In Vermeer school students do not get graded reports. Written tests are periodically done, but serve as an element of information for teachers. At the end of each chapter in the Zebra book, students take the Zebra test. Besides this, they periodically take some standardised tests: the 'Cito NT2' to measure improvement in the Dutch language and the 'Tempo Test Rekenen' for mathematics.

The team holds periodic assessment and evaluation meetings to discuss the progress of students and possibly to rearrange them to ensure internally uniform groups. Constant adaptations are necessary because students do not progress at a comparable pace. After being placed in approximate levels, by the end of the first year pupils are assigned to a definite track. This final selection of students is done after approximately a year of reception training, sometimes somewhat earlier, because by then 'each student's capabilities'[55] have become clearer.

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55   Interview with the reception coordinator, Vermeer school.

Transfer of pupils to ordinary secondary education is normally done after two school years of reception education in the department. Students are assigned to years[56] that correspond to their age, but also to their skills as assessed by the reception team. Although there is an average stay in the reception department, the reception period does not have a time limit. Students remain at the department 'as long as it is meaningful or until a connection is found with ordinary secondary education' (CED 2007: 12). In fact, the reception trajectory is usually not prolonged beyond two years, unless students manifest specific problems. Practitioners believe that the longer the stay in reception training, the less time the student will have to attend secondary education and obtain a certificate.

Applying the same line of argumentation, the team of teachers at Vermeer school understands that students who are fifteen years old and older do not have enough time to do both a reception trajectory and continue in regular secondary education. That is the reason why there is a separate reception department for 15+ in Vermeer school, which teaches Dutch to older students while orienting them towards ROC vocational education.[57] Other transfer alternatives are discarded on the grounds that these students are 'too old' and will have 'no desire' (in Dutch, *geen zin in*) to pursue other forms of education. Giving an HAVO or VWO intelligence level assessment to fifteen-year-olds and over is 'meaningless', since after the reception trajectory the student will be too old to be admitted to ordinary secondary education.

Older students are therefore offered fewer opportunities, a fact that practitioners from all the reception schools in Rotterdam acknowledged. In Escher school, for instance, the coordinator explained to incoming students that:

'If you are sixteen and you still have to study for an additional four or five years to obtain a VMBO diploma, then you will be 21, and you don't belong here [at the ISK department, with peers between twelve and fifteen years

56   As different school systems use different terms to refer to the annual progression of students through the successive levels of education, I should clarify that in this study I follow the British usage, using the term 'year' (i.e. 1st year, 2nd year) to refer to what in other systems may be referred to as 'grades', 'forms', 'promotions', etc.

57   Reception schools in Rotterdam have signed a contract with the independent educational centres known as ROCs (regional education centres) in order to allow immigrant students who are fifteen years old and over to obtain an educational certificate. ROCs provide basic vocational education (MBO) and adult education.

old]'. I explain it and they understand it immediately (Interview with the Escher school coordinator).

In the case of illiterate students, by contrast, the duration of the reception is much longer. In this case, the reception team at Vermeer is quite flexible.

Similarly, there is another category of pupils that deserves a special preferential treatment. Last year, the reception department started an initiative to create a special class in order to extend the reception period of a group of highly talented pupils assessed as being eligible for the HAVO level.[58]

> And if we think that we have a group of good students who are not ready to go to general [education] yet and who could have more Dutch [training] in order to improve their chances of being placed in HAVO or VWO, then we still keep them for Dutch ... And then they also get [Dutch] grammar because they have not had it before. And we are going to prepare that group a little for a HAVO class ... We have made a HAVO-3 class [third year HAVO], in which there are pupils who we think could pass the HAVO exam, but who still have not had everything [all required subjects] yet ... And eventually they will go afterwards to a HAVO 4 or HAVO 5 class, if possible (Interview with the Vermeer coordinator).

According to the coordinator's records, most of the students continue their education in the lower tracks of secondary education. In 2004-2005, six students transferred to higher education tracks (two to University Preparatory Education and four to Senior General Education), fourteen to Vocational Education (MBO), four to the third course of Junior Vocational Training (VMBO), and eight to the lowest form of vocational education, PRO (*praktijkschool*). The remaining 21 students transferred to the school's 15+ department to continue their reception trajectory and subsequently move to ROC vocational education. The evaluation of the reception outcomes in twenty schools in the Netherlands carried out by the CED group in 2007 came to comparable conclusions, as 45% of the total number of reception students were transferred to Medium Vocational Education (MBO), 20% to Junior General Education (MAVO, presently called VMBO TL), and 21% to Senior General Education (HAVO) (CED 2007).

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58   This pilot initiative apparently continued in subsequent years (interview with the coordinator of reception, November 2008).

Figure 3   Transfer from ISK reception at Vermeer school to ordinary education
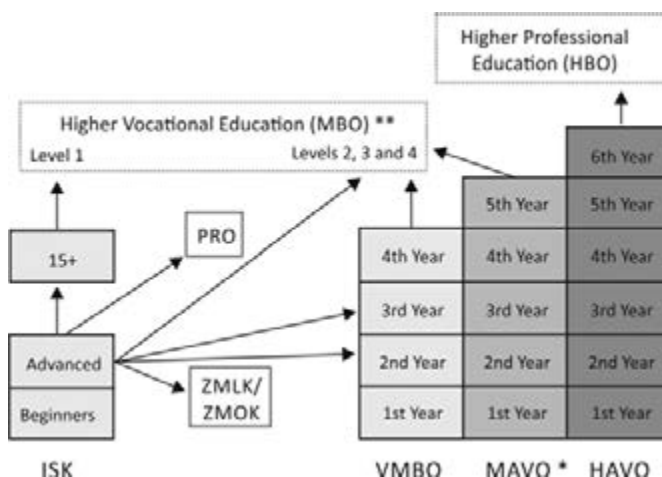
Legend: ISK= Programme of reception for newcomer students. VMBO= Junior vocational training. MAVO= Junior general education. (* MAVO is now part of the VMBO, higher subdivision called VMBO-TL). HAVO= Senior general education. ZMLK = very difficult to teach, with learning disorders (= *zeer moeilijk lerend*), ZMOK = very difficult to teach, with behavior disorders (=*Zeer moeilijk opvoedbaar*). PRO= Special education (vocational training). (** MBO is divided between four levels with different access requirements).

4.2   Rembrandt school

Rembrandt high school is located in inner-city Rotterdam, between the neighbourhoods of Oude Westen (Centrum district) and Middelland (Delfshaven district). Specialised in the higher tracks of secondary education, Rembrandt offers Junior General Education (MAVO), Senior General Education (HAVO) and University Preparatory Education (VWO). The school also belongs to the public network managed by the BOOR board of governors.

Rembrandt school was one of the first schools to deliver special training for recently arrived immigrant youngsters in the city of Rotterdam. The history of reception in this school dates from 1973, with the entrance of a number of foreign students who hardly spoke Dutch. The school decided to establish a transition class oriented to higher tracks. The year before that, the Ministry of Education and Science allocated funds for reception classes, but only for lower tracks of education (LBO). Rembrandt requested the extension of that funding for higher forms of education. The Ministry honoured the application and in August 1973 the reception department of the school opened its doors with 58 students with nine different nationalities (Philipsen 1982).

Rembrandt school has around 1,900 pupils, 150 of them in the ISK department (2004-2005). The school is divided into three different sections: a regular one, a bilingual English-Dutch one, and an international one.[59] The student body attending each section differs in their socio-economic and ethnic composition. That is why the vice-principal defines the school as a 'mixed school' that ranges from 'super-white' to 'tar black'.[60]

Chinese and Turkish students made up the two largest communities of the ISK department during the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 school years, followed by Cape Verdeans and Portuguese. To a lesser extent, Moroccans and Pakistanis are also significant groups. This coincides with the traditional profile of the Rembrandt ISK, which in the 1973-1982 period already had a majority of Chinese and Turkish students, as well as large groups of Spanish and Portuguese (Phillipsen 1982: 56). In that period there was also a large group coming from the former Yugoslavia (Phillipsen 1982: 56). The student body of the ISK department reflects in broad lines the ethnic composition of the area, as Oude Westen and Middelland have traditionally had a concentration of immigrants from the Mediterranean area (Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish and Moroccan) (Phillipsen 1982: 2). In recent years, the school has also received a considerable number of Eastern European students (eleven in 2008, 26 in 2009), predominantly Polish.[61]

According to the vice-principal of the school, the school has a reputation for 'quality' and 'strictness', as students must work hard.[62] He emphasises a second aspect as well: the 'quietness, order, and regularity' in the school, as he intends to disassociate his school from the bad reputation usually linked to 'black schools'.[63] This, however, goes beyond mere rhetoric. Rembrandt has been able to make a strength out of its concentration of newcomer pupils (a *weakness*), which it emphasises in its public image.[64] The settlement of pupils arriving through family reunion has allowed the school to specialise in the teaching of Dutch as a second language. Thanks to that expertise, the

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59   International schools are meant for the children of expatriates who will stay in the country only for a couple of years. To facilitate the continuation of their studies when they move, students can follow either a curriculum specially designed for international schools (such as the International Baccalaureate) or a national curriculum from the country of origin (British International School, Lycée Français, etc.).

60   Interview with sector director at the Rembrandt school.

61   Interview with coordinator of reception at Rembrandt.

62   Interview with sector director at Rembrandt school. ISK education falls under his responsibility, among other departments. Above him there is only one person, the principal (manager of the whole school group).

63   Ibid.

64   Interview with J. Kriens, PvdA member of the City Council.

Table 12   Number and nationality of newcomer students in Rembrandt School

School year	Number of newcomer students	Prevalent nationalities
2004-2005	135	Chinese, Turkish, Cape Verdean/ Portuguese
2005-2006	115	Chinese, Turkish, Pakistani
2006-2007	112 (*)	Not available
2007-2008	96 (*)	Not available
2008-2009	104	Chinese: 29, Cape Verdean: 17, Turkish: 7 Portuguese: 6, Moroccan: 4
2009-2010	142	Polish: 19, Chinese: 17, Turkish: 13 Moroccan: 12
2010-2011	95 (*)	Polish: 12 Chinese: 11 Turkish: 6

Source: School register and CED, 2007 (Toekomstverkenning ISK). Number of students for 2006-07 and 2007-08 comes from the CED report, as the school records were lost due to a computer virus. Figures with (*) correspond to October/ November, thus may grow throughout the school year.

school opened a new department – Bilingual Training – in which education is given in Dutch and English, and is oriented to high-income pupils. In this way, the initial 'bad' image of a black school was transformed into a reputation of quality and expertise in language training.

In 1982, the school decided to change its approach regarding students and educational quality.[65] Before, its guiding idea had been that 'everybody must have a chance', so the school was lenient with the selection conditions of students in the admission process. The downside was that 35% of the students could not continue after the first year because the level was too high for them. The school decided that this 'was not fair', so they tried to 'find another formula to create opportunities'.[66] The alternative was to have stricter admission criteria, but to make an effort to ensure those admitted could stay. The determinant requisite for admission was an evaluation by the primary school indicating that the student was fit for the higher streams of education. According to the vice-principal, this decision was strategic, as initially the school became smaller, but subsequently, 'the quality of education in the school has improved very much', and its prestige has led to a considerable student population growth in the last ten years, from 1,000 pupils to 1,900.

The vice-principal of Rembrandt seems to have made a strong imprint on the general character of the school. He combines efficient management

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65   Interview with sector director, Rembrandt school.
66   Ibid.

with strong advocacy of equal opportunities among underprivileged students. Despite the demanding entrance criteria, the vice-principal proudly declares that his school is open to *any* student, providing that he or she is highly-skilled. 'All pupils who come with a good recommendation from the primary school are accepted. Regardless of colour, regardless of their culture.'[67] In particular, he makes a strong case for illegal students who are admitted to the school thanks to his explicit personal choice:

> Researcher: Mr. X has told me that there are no subsidies for illegal students, but that you have to admit them anyhow.
> Principal: No, we do not have to. But *I* want that to happen. There are schools in Rotterdam who say 'no, we don't do it'.
> Researcher: But can public schools do that?
> Principal: Yes. ... Yes. It's just that we say 'we do it' [admit them]. 'We want that'. How I do it [how I solve it] is my secret (Interview with vice-principal at Rembrandt).

The meritocratic vision of equality conveyed by the principal is also shared by teachers at Rembrandt. However, in this version of meritocracy a person's social position corresponds to his or her innate capacity, while the merit component plays a minor role.[68] Everybody deserves to occupy a position in society that corresponds to his or her intelligence and talents. In the Dutch model of meritocracy enacted by the highly selective education system, the social order becomes naturalised. Since the ability of each student is taken as a given, the social structure and social inequalities tend to be reproduced. A child can only 'perform' if he or she is placed in the 'right place' and if he or she gets an adequate education for his or her abilities. Everything functions to fulfil this self-fulfilling prophecy: highly talented students must get more 'stimulus' (in Dutch, *prikkels*).[69] Less skilled students 'can achieve less' so teachers demand less from them.[70] Being in the right place ensures that students can 'learn well' but also that the teachers can 'teach well'.

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67 Interview with sector director, Rembrandt school.

68 Young's definition of meritocracy conceives it as a sum of talent (intelligence) and merit (effort) (1958). The Dutch version of meritocracy comes closer to what Marris (2006) calls 'meritocracy obsessed with intelligence testing' which he distinguishes from 'capitalist meritocracy', which does not pretend to evaluate people's intrinsic worth, only the market value of their skills.

69 Interview with ex-coordinator of reception at Rembrandt.

70 The role of teachers' expectations of students' achievements has been much studied in the literature. For a review see Good (1987) or Jussim & Eccles (1992).

Within this framework, teachers promote equality of opportunities for newcomer students by helping them to compensate for specific disadvantages that prevent them from reaching the position that corresponds to their talents. In the opinion of the teachers at Rembrandt, the fundamental obstacle that newcomer students encounter is their lack of Dutch. Teachers believe that newcomer children have to be treated with care and patience, and must be supported in order to reach their potential. Yet as part of the Dutch education system, students are confronted with an intrinsic tension: they are oriented towards competitiveness, the need to prove their potential and show what they 'are able to do'; at the same time, they are impelled to a certain passivity as the bottom-line is the external determinacy of their lives and the immutability of the system. As one of the informants puts it, 'honestly, sir/madam, not everybody can score high', therefore students can best reach their optimum level by accepting their limitations.[71]

The teachers in the reception department at Rembrandt also need to be mentioned. The department has a diverse team of teachers with a high rate of permanence and thus a great number of them have many years of experience in the department. A remarkable number of men work in the department, almost 40% of the total staff, although women still represent the majority. Dutch natives are also predominant, though around 30% of the team has a different ethnic origin. Only one of the teachers has a background in Dutch as a Second Language, while the rest are specialists in various disciplines.

Willem, the head of the reception department, leads the team with the indispensable assistance of the department's secretary, Azize, the real touchstone of the whole administration. This white middle-class Dutch man with a dry sense of humour took on this role recently, although he had been teaching Chemistry in Rembrandt school for eight years. Willem is a man of action, but somehow absent-minded, so he makes a better teacher than manager. He accepted the job of running the department because he 'wanted to be a team-leader and in the past he had just been a teacher.'[72] Next year he turns 65 and he will enjoy his 'well-deserved retirement' after 36 years of teaching. Coordinating the reception department is a beautiful job but 'is very tiring', he says. 'When it's 7 a.m. and the alarm clock goes off, I don't feel up to it'.[73]

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71   Interview with reception coordinator at Escher.
72   Interview with reception coordinator at Rembrandt.
73   Ibid.

Before Willem, Kees, a younger Dutchman, was in charge of the department's coordination. Kees was and still is extremely committed to the education of newcomer children, and decided to resign from his coordinator position due to differences of opinion with the school management. The rest of the teachers are also quite committed to their work and contribute with voluntary work when necessary. At the moment, an ex-teacher works as a volunteer at the department. The department has many trainees (5-10 a year) who are students of Dutch as a Second Language (NT2). New teachers are often ex-trainees who have already worked in the department.

4.2.1   Registration of pupils

In practice, newcomer pupils' registration at Rembrandt does not contradict the official philosophy followed by the city department, but it does take it further. In this selection process the reception department acts as a gate-keeper by giving access to certain categories of students and not to others. We already described above how at Rembrandt school the main admission criterion is the students' perceived potential for higher forms of education. The reception department at Rembrandt enrols students who score between 1 and 3+ on the RAVEN test. Rembrandt school, just like Vermeer, applies additional filters to determine the skill level of the incoming student as accurately as possible. Rembrandt takes the evaluation done by city officials as an adequate reference, so new students do not have to take another intake test in order to be admitted to the school.[74] They must, however, undergo an intake meeting.

The intake meeting has at least three different functions. The ex-coordinator and the department's secretary meet together with the parents and the potential student. They start by asking a set of routine questions to acquire basic data about the child and family. At the same time, the school bureaucrats provide the parents with information about the educational system in the Netherlands, its basic rules and conditions. Finally, the meeting works as an informal test for the students, to corroborate the assessment done by the municipal registration office. The reception coordinator bases his assessment largely on 'his experience and ability to judge.'[75] Since this experience-based knowledge is difficult to transmit, Kees, the former

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74   According to the ex-coordinator of reception, they do not give an intake exam to all incoming students because they 'don't have the money or the time'.

75   Interview with ex-coordinator of reception at Rembrandt.

coordinator at Rembrandt, continues to be in charge of this task and assists the new coordinator.

> Kees: In what grade were the children in Lithuania?
> Mother: In the third and fourth years.
> Kees: Do they speak English?
> Mother: Yes, they do.
> Then Kees asks the girls some questions in English (Field notes of Rembrandt school, p. 3).

In the example above, we see how Kees, the ex-coordinator of reception, uses the intake meeting to confirm the girls' scores on the municipal test. He determined that in view of the girls' country of origin, their previous schooling and their English skills, their level was probably high enough to place them in second year of reception in a HAVO-VWO class. In this sense, the intake interview plays a selective function analogous to that of the intake test at Vermeer.

If, at any point, they detect that a student does not have the necessary skills level for MAVO, HAVO or VWO, the school redirects them to other reception schools teaching MAVO levels or below. Willem, the department's coordinator, actively cooperates in redirecting students to their 'right place', whenever the skill level of pupils does not correspond to the type of education provided by Rembrandt.

Besides those students who are deemed to belong in lower tracks of education, other categories of students are filtered at the school's gates. Older students, the so-called 16+, with a high score on the RAVEN intake test (3+) are not accepted by the school and are redirected to a vocational education centre (ROC). The reason is that 'older students who enter ISK must fulfil stricter requirements in order to be able to transfer to ordinary secondary education' (CED 2010: 5).

Undocumented students make up another awkward category. In principle, we saw that the school policy as defined by the vice-principal promotes unrestricted admission of illegal students into the reception trajectory. The reception department registered some 5-7 children with irregular legal situations in the country during the 2005-2006 school year. Yet it seems the current coordinator at Rembrandt makes it less easy for these students to access the school. He claims to be annoyed by the complications that these students pose for him, and complains about the fact that the municipal Department of Education 'sends them [illegal students] to us. And then we

have the problem'. In the following excerpt taken from the field diary, we can see how the coordinator deals with this in practice:

> The coordinator is in his office doing paperwork for new students' registrations. He makes a phone call to a father of one of the pupils. It seems that the father does not want to register his child in the municipality 'because a paper is required from the housing company'. 'Then I cannot register your child, sir', replies the coordinator (Field notes Rembrandt, p. 8).

The coordinator explains that he needs to put some pressure on these parents, because it represents 'a lot of money' and thus hassle with his bosses: 'if out of 130 students you have five illegal ones, that is a lot of money. It is almost a 4% shortage.'[76] After urging them to comply with the requisites, some cases get regularised because their status is not illegal but simply irregular ('a problem with documents').[77] However, at the end of the day these tactics of administrative attrition do not work to deter access because these illegal children are, in fact, already attending Rembrandt school. The reception department is not going to expel a student who is present in the classrooms because he or she lacks a residence permit or other documents, because his right to education prevails and therefore, 'you cannot reject him'.[78]

4.2.2   Clustering in classes

The procedure for clustering students in classes is similar to that seen at Vermeer. The coordinator sorts students into classes following two rules. Rembrandt establishes a maximum of sixteen students in beginner classes and 22 for advanced classes. National regulations establish that students must receive 32 hours of lessons per week. 'For instance,' coordinator Willem explains, 'if I have 80 pupils, then I can create five classrooms.' After setting up the number of classrooms, the next step is to appoint teachers to each group and, if necessary, hire new ones:

> Coordinator: This year in IST, a beginner class, there are eighteen pupils; I consider that too many. So I discussed it with the financial director and I may start a new class, because there is money for that. Last year we did quite well and that is why there is money. But now I need a new Dutch

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76   Interview with coordinator of reception
77   Ibid.
78   Interview with ex-coordinator of reception.

teacher, so I'm busy with applications. And I don't have a classroom yet. I also need other teachers, for English, history, geography and biology (Interview with the coordinator of reception at Rembrandt).

In Rembrandt school students are grouped by age and expected educational level. In the 2005-2006 school year, students were clustered in ten groups, seven for beginners and three for advanced.[79] Separate beginner classes are set up for twelve, fourteen, and sixteen-year-old students. Within the same age group different classes are created for those who have just arrived to the Netherlands and those who have lived there for some time. In the beginner classes, Rembrandt strives to build groups of students that are as homogeneous as possible.

For advanced groups, however, creating homogeneous groups is an impossible mission. This task would require combining student groups according to their age or grade and their skills level. Rembrandt's approach is to form advanced groups based on students' age, on the expectation that they will join their same-age peers when they are transferred to general education.[80] The school has three different advanced classes for students who transfer into the first, second and third years of ordinary education, but these classes adopt a *brugklas* model and therefore combine students channelled towards different levels of education (MAVO/HAVO/VWO).

Advanced classes with mixed levels pose additional challenges for teaching. Normally, beginner classes are made up of students of one – similar – level, which allows teachers to aim their explanations, assignments and expectations in a single direction. Because advanced classes in Rembrandt house students of two or three different levels, the teaching method needs to be adapted. Teachers cannot teach their lessons in a 'classical' way, that is, lecturing while the students listen. Rembrandt has solved this by reducing classical teaching to short moments of general explanation; the rest of the time students work autonomously – the so-called 'Free Choice Work Time' or KWT (see next section).[81]

The intrinsic contradictions of this differentiated reception model, which strives to place students in their corresponding tracks for secondary education, have increased with the changes in the inflow of newcomers in the past years.[82] As we have seen, the trend towards falling numbers of arrivals

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79   In Dutch, *doorstromers*.
80   CED 2007, interview with Rembrandt's reception coordinator.
81   In Dutch, *keuzewerktijd*.
82   Internal document from a team meeting, Rembrandt.

Table 13   Evolution of the number of classes in Rembrandt school

School year	Number of classes	Number of students
2004-2005	9	135
2005-2006	8	115
2006-2007	8	112 (*)
2007-2008	6 (*)	96 (*)
2008-2009	8 (*)	130 (*)

Sources: school administration, and CED (2007). Figures with a (*) were computed early in the school year, normally in November.

has been reversed, and now inflow has again reached the levels seen in the early and mid-2000s. Moreover, students enrol throughout the school year, which poses a problem for the school because it begins the year with quite a different number of students from that at the end of the school year. This variation 'has always been like that, but now it is very extreme'.[83] The coordinator Willem concedes that 'at this point I don't know how to handle it anymore'.[84] In fact, the team took several steps to explore possible solutions for the most consistent pitfalls within their model of reception: several meetings and working days were organised, as well as a research assignment in the hands of the CED group to explore the issue (CED 2007).

Although this table reflects a steady number of classes, with a modal value of eight classes, we must keep in mind that the figure varies from the beginning to the end of the year. In 2006 there were seven classes at the beginning, and later an extra class was created (CED 2007: 5). Data for 2007 and 2008 refer to the beginning of the year, hence it is reasonable to expect an increase in the number of pupils and classes by the end of the year.

4.2.3   Curriculum, methodology and teaching

Rembrandt's reception curriculum has a distinctive feature. Unlike the other three reception schools in Rotterdam, which are mainly focused on teaching the Dutch language, Rembrandt puts as much emphasis on content subjects as on language training. In the second year of reception, students are taught the same curriculum as their peers in ordinary education – i.e., the same subjects, with the same exams and requirements – but

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83   Interview with reception coordinator at Rembrandt, November 2008. (In Dutch '... weet ik niet meer hoe het moet.')
84   Ibid.

with additional Dutch lessons. In this school, the goal of the reception training is to provide students with *all* the necessary tools to follow the sort of education that corresponds to their level of intelligence. The Dutch language is a necessary tool, but it is not sufficient; the students must also be prepared in all the areas taught in regular education in order to facilitate their future transfer.[85] This is reflected in the curriculum. In Rembrandt beginners follow eight subjects besides Dutch and self-study hours (sport, drama, music, art, geography, mathematics, and 'health care and welfare'). Advanced students have between ten – in the case of younger students transferring to the first year of regular education – to fourteen subjects (in the second and third years), besides the Dutch language and self-study hours (the so-called 'autonomous working time').

The importance granted to subjects requires a methodology suited to the school's clustering arrangement. We just explained that in Rembrandt the teaching method needs to be adapted to multilevel advanced classes. The main strategy is to apply child-centred methodologies by which students are stimulated to work independently. This means keeping the teacher's explanations to the whole class short and suitable for the lowest level of the pupils. Also, students within the same classroom have different textbooks and assignments according to their level. In fact, this methodology of self-learning or KWT coincides with the goals pursued by the 'Second Phase' policy,[86] which explicitly says that 'an independent way of learning is more suitable to the way of working in higher [tracks] of education' (*Regeling nadere vooropleidingeisen hoger onderwijs 1998*, 1998).

However, the emphasis on content other than Dutch clashes with tendencies to make reception education more efficient. The cutbacks in public resources in recent years and the reduction in the inflow of newcomers have had a serious impact on the budgets of ISK departments. Coordinators are under a lot of pressure to reduce costs. Keeping a broad range of subjects and maintaining a large team both face increasing resistance from the school board, which claims that the real goal of the ISK programme is *just* teaching Dutch.[87] This is reflected in several ways in the Rembrandt's reception curriculum and teaching methodology. In line with general trends in Dutch education, Willem says he is considering new solutions to organise things

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85   Interview with the ex-coordinator of reception.
86   The 'Second Phase' refers to the last years of secondary education in the higher tracks, HAVO and VWO. Specifically it runs from the fourth year until the final exam. Since 1998 the law has established that teaching in this Second Phase must promote autonomous ways of working among students and that different subjects must be interconnected.
87   Internal document of a team meeting, Rembrandt.

'independently from the system of content lessons' (in Dutch *Leerstof klas systeem*). The enactment of the Second Phase policy also involves subjects under broader overarching categories, like General Natural Sciences (ANW) or Cultural and Artistic Forms (CKV).

> Geography or history, that doesn't matter, we give them social sciences or natural sciences. But that is a development that you see not only here but also in ordinary education (Interview with the reception coordinator at Rembrandt).

At the same time, to avoid playing down the importance of subjects, the coordinator tries to give more room to Dutch *within* content subjects. If Dutch is introduced as an indirect goal within content subjects then there is no justification for substituting hours of geography, for example, with more hours of Dutch. The department has organised several seminars for the teachers on so-called Subject Oriented Language Teaching (from now on SOLT), known in Dutch as *Vakgericht taalonderwijs*. The bottom-line of this methodology is that 'every lesson is a language lesson', and teachers can work on the pupils' Dutch skills at the same time as teaching the subject's contents. SOLT starts off with students with a general basic knowledge of Dutch, who are able to follow lessons in Dutch. The main goal of this method is to focus explicitly on the extension of students' vocabulary in Dutch within each specific academic subject. For instance, during a lesson observed in the fieldwork, the Chemistry teacher devoted some time to explain the new terms introduced, such as 'solution' (*oplossing*), 'suspension' (*suspensie*) or 'test tube' (*reageerbuis*).

SOLT mainly responds to the relevance given at Rembrandt to the acquisition of specific vocabulary to facilitate the transition to ordinary education. Providing specific vocabulary for different subject areas implies improving the specific language for the school context, what Cummins calls 'cognitive academic language proficiency' (CALP), which needs to be distinguished from the 'basic interpersonal communicative skills' (BICS) (Cummins 1979, Cummins & Swain 1986). In addition, the application of SOLT can be used to justify the reduction of hours of Dutch teaching and the maintenance of hours of other subjects. Some teachers, however, are reluctant to use this methodology in their lessons.[88]

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88   Field notes, Rembrandt, team meeting.

4.2.4   Schedule-making and personnel

Just as in the Vermeer school, staffing policies at Rembrandt are the re-
sponsibility of the board of governors, BOOR. For personnel reductions or
extensions in the reception department, the coordinator is asked to provide
an informed opinion. Formally, the reception department coordinator is
part of the school's management and thus takes part in the decision-making
to a certain extent.[89] The final decision, however, is made by his superiors,
the sector director and the principal. Interviews with the present coordina-
tor, Willem, and his predecessor, Kees, reveal the limited influence that they
exert on the final result. Within the school as a whole, the ISK department
has a modest place, probably because of its size but also because reception
education is not a top priority.[90] Reception education is by definition costly
and personnel-intensive, and the cutbacks of recent years have exacerbated
this. For the board of governors, BOOR, which was created precisely to
introduce a managerial approach to the administration of public schools,
the search for efficiency is fundamental. Reception departments are con-
stantly caught between the need to comply with efficiency goals and the
educational goal of helping disadvantaged students.

As seen above, how groups are made is determined by the resources
available. The resources determine the number of clusters that can be
created, and therefore the ratio of pupils per teacher. However, schools
tend to have agreements regarding the maximum acceptable number of
students per class/teacher. At Rembrandt, cutbacks have not been translated
into larger classes. According to the informants, the board is not explicitly
pushing to expand classes beyond their limit; however, indirectly *it does*
by not approving the creation of new classes with fewer than a certain
number of students. As teachers do not want to keep students at home on a
waiting list, oversized classes are not so rare. If students continue arriving
throughout the school year they are placed in the existing classes, as defined
in August. Eventually, when classes surpass the established limits of sixteen
and 22, the reception coordinator solicits the creation of a new class. After
the beginning of the school year it is always a hassle to form a new class,
as seen in the following exchange:

> The coordinator had to negotiate with the financial department. 'I told
> them, "I need a new class", and they said "It's not possible; there is no

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89   CED, *Doorstroom ISK-VO. Inspirerende voorbeelden uit de praktijk*, 2009: 39.
90   Ibid.

money". "Well", I said, "then look for it better. Because I *need* a new class. I have twenty new pupils". And I added, "You spend too much money [on other things]. Try to arrange it."'

'You know, if they need [to hire] a new teacher they will have to find it [the money]. Last year it worked fine because classes X, Y, Z had few pupils, 12 pupils more or less'.

'What if your request is left unheard?,' asks the researcher. 'Then we have a problem,' replies the coordinator (Field notes at Rembrandt, p. 7).

Furthermore, several ways of working at Rembrandt are in fact strategies to curtail expenses. For instance, combining several subjects can be interpreted as a strategy to reduce staff. Likewise, the introduction of the SOLT scheme, which tries to make a language lesson out of every lesson, can be seen in the same light. Finally, the department only has six teachers of Dutch, but these are sufficient, since self-study hours (KWT) 'can be used for [teaching Dutch to] a large number of pupils with just three teachers'.[91]

In fact, the coordinator is trapped between the manager's and the educator's perspective. As coordinator, 'your goal is to keep your children for only two years in the ISK', otherwise costs increase greatly. But at the same time, the reception coordinator is moved to achieve the educational goals of reception, therefore 'you keep offering chances' to students.[92]

As long as teachers are making an effort, [the coordinator expects] the management to understand the fact that sometimes it may last longer. And also [the coordinator] expects teachers to accept that sometimes the coordinator or team-leader must say, 'it is taking too long with this pupil. Is his level perhaps not good enough? Is it too difficult for him or her? Would [sending him/her] to another school be a solution?' (Interview with reception ex-coordinator at Rembrandt).

4.2.5 Evaluation and transfer

When asked about the goals of educational reception, the ex-coordinator of reception at Rembrandt rephrased the general goal of the programme as, 'to transfer the students [to ordinary education] as fast as possible, as well as possible, to the level at which they belong'.[93] In fact, as we have seen,

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91   Field diary at Rembrandt, p. 10.
92   Interview with ex-coordinator of reception at Rembrandt.
93   Interview with ex-coordinator of reception at Rembrandt, p. 4.

educators in the reception department at Rembrandt consider transfer to the correct level a priority, although this sometimes clashes with the managerial goal of limiting the reception trajectory to no longer than two school years.

According to the STER pedagogical model, the length of the reception process may vary depending on pupils' level of intelligence. While lower-track pupils are expected to stay in the process of reception for at least two years, the most skilled ones are expected to finish their trajectory in just a year. These estimations are based on fifteen hours of intensive language training per week. The experience of Rembrandt is exactly the opposite: higher tracks need longer reception periods (Philipsen 1982: 52). There is a broad consensus now with regard to this direct relationship between time and level (i.e. higher level, longer reception time).[94] Practitioners consider that students with high potential need more time to reveal all their potential. This means that highly talented students learn the 'basic interpersonal communicative skills' (BICS) relatively quickly, but in order to acquire the required level of 'cognitive academic language proficiency' (CALP) (Cummins 1989) for higher tracks of education, they need more time than their peers in Junior Vocational Education.[95] The duration of the reception trajectory constitutes a permanent source of tension between the coordinator and the school managers:

> That is the discussion with the financial director: he wants to have students at the ISK for 1.5 years and I want [to keep them in] for three years (Interview with the coordinator of reception at Rembrandt).

At Rembrandt's department of general education the final selection of students is done relatively late, in their third year, while in the first two years they are mixed in a 'bridge class' (MAVO-HAVO-VWO).[96] In the reception department at Rembrandt, teachers also establish the level of students relatively late, as they consider it quite difficult to determine the level of newcomer students with accuracy. After two years of reception trajectory, students are transferred to the grade corresponding to their age. Nevertheless, informants report that the transfer to regular education is problematic because pupils still fall behind in the Dutch language. These contradictions have been aggravated by the Second Phase policy

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94   Interview with M. Zweekhorst, from the CED-group.
95   One could also argue, however, that VMBO students simply need more time to learn the CALPs for higher tracks. They are transferred too soon to regular education, having learnt the BICS, which does not give them enough time to learn the CALPs. See page 96.
96   Interview with sector director in Rembrandt.

in combination with the model of reception at Rembrandt. The reception team has noticed that:

> Since the 'Second Phase' was implemented [in our school] the transition from ISK to ordinary [education] has become more complicated. The 'Second Phase' requires students [to know] more Dutch ... There are enough students in the ISK [department] with HAVO/VWO potential. The transition works really with lots of difficulties; pupils need more time (Internal document, team meeting, reception department at Rembrandt, p. 1).

The required level of Dutch poses a big problem, as exams and textbooks in subjects like mathematics now include a lot of text. Willem and his colleagues think that this development is particularly detrimental for students of Junior General Education (MAVO), since HAVO and VWO students manage themselves better.

> The problem is the MAVO students who transfer [from ISK] to Rembrandt's ordinary education. We have a dilemma because we have to transfer them prematurely because there is no money to keep them in ISK, but their level of Dutch is still too low. In terms of intelligence they have no problem. Mr. J. [a MAVO teacher at the regular education department] complains because they are not doing well. They cannot finish MAVO [education]. It is a problem with MAVO pupils only; HAVO pupils don't have any problems (Interview with coordinator at Rembrandt).

Consequently, the reception team is studying ways to improve MAVO pupils' opportunities, by 'giving them more Dutch'. Kees, the ex-coordinator of reception, came up with a proposal that seems to offer a win-win situation. Comparable to the Masterclass initiative at Vermeer school, Rembrandt proposed an extension of a third year of reception to a group of students with high potential (MAVO level, young age, already in the country for a longer period). However, students in this class would receive nine hours of Dutch instead of eleven, which is the amount they receive in reception education; this way the class would comply with the required number of hours of subjects for a regular MAVO course. It would also be the size of a regular class, thus 22 pupils instead of sixteen. 'It would be an ordinary second-year MAVO class', says the coordinator Willem, only it would be taught by the reception team with special attention to improving the students' future chances. Thus, it would imply teaching under the much cheaper parameters of regular education.

Unfortunately, the proposal was refused by the board. Rembrandt's reception team has been trying for over two years to get the management to accept the plan. They are annoyed because '[we] have attempted to implement this proposal for the past two years. We have been talking about it for too much time, we've been considering and weighing for too long and no decision has been made'. In a renewed attempt, the reception team discussed in a meeting the proposal and the strategy to follow. In the document preparing the meeting the objections of the management and the counterarguments of the ISK coordinator were put like this:

> The objections of the management were double-sided, pedagogical and financial. Pedagogically, the direction defends the ISK-character of the education. Dutch is what students must learn. … Financially, the ISK is too expensive and this step makes it even more expensive. The former funds for ISK were based on a reception trajectory of 1.5 years … The transformation of the class ISZ [second-year reception for MAVO level] into I2Z [post-reception MAVO-level] extends the duration of ISK from the present two years to yet another year (Internal document, team meeting, reception department of Rembrandt).

However, later on, the document defends the counterarguments of the ISK coordinator: 'This proposal attempts to solve, in a "financially neutral" way, the present objections that make us stick to the present schedule/curriculum'. According to the coordinator of ISK, the management board does not realise that the proposal does not simply mean prolonging one year of reception for the ISZ class under another name (I2Z); it also means launching an ordinary MAVO class within the reception department:

> The implementation of I2Z is a budget cut. ISZ is a beginner class and has a maximum of sixteen students. I2Z is a second-year class, so there are openings for 22 students (Internal document, team meeting, reception department of Rembrandt).

4.3   Other schools that provide reception in Rotterdam

Besides the Vermeer and Rembrandt schools, two other secondary schools provide reception for newcomer students in Rotterdam: the Escher and Van Gogh schools. This section offers a general overview of their reception style as context for the school cases under study. As the Escher and Van Gogh

Figure 4   Transfer from ISK reception at Rembrandt school to tracks of ordinary education
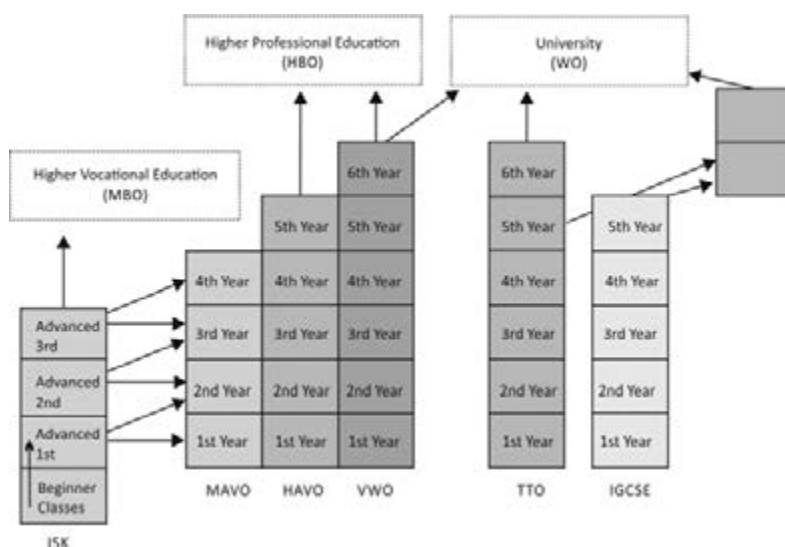
Source: school administration. **Legend:** ISK= Programme of reception for newcomer students. MAVO= Junior general education. HAVO= Senior general education. VWO= University preparatory education. TTO= Bilingual education. IGCSE= International General Certificate of Secondary Education. IB=International Baccalaureate.

schools were not selected as main observation units in the present research and no ethnographic observation was carried out there, information in this section is based on interviews and secondary reports.

As mentioned earlier, all four reception schools in Rotterdam present in broad lines a similar interpretation of the ISK programme. This is clear in the development of *parallel* courses for reception, i.e. full-time reception courses that keep newcomer students separated from their native peers. Moreover, all schools follow a similar teaching methodology (the STER method) and teaching material.

Despite this general agreement, schools present significant differences in three aspects. First, the duration of the reception trajectory varies per school. In three of the schools (Vermeer, Rembrandt and Escher), the reception trajectory of newcomer students takes two years on average, while the Van Gogh school strictly limits the trajectory to one year, in accordance with the subsidised period for reception.[97]

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97   Interviews with M. Zweekhorst, advisory institute CED-group, with E. Meijer, Education department, Municipality of Rotterdam, and with schools' coordinators of reception.

Second, the subjects taught in the reception courses differ among schools. Currently, schools are increasingly reducing their reception curricula to teaching language; only the Rembrandt school appears to be resisting this trend, or doing so more vehemently than the others. In line with this trend, reception training at the Escher school focuses primarily on the teaching of Dutch as a second language, although some other subjects are still introduced besides Dutch (English, biology, chemistry, physics, etc.), particularly in the second year of reception.[98] Van Gogh's choice of pure language training, on the other hand, constitutes an *a priori* choice, which predates recent cutbacks and developments at higher political levels.

Finally, a last element of divergence among schools is the transfer of pupils to regular education. Again, a distinctive transfer style is most evident in the Van Gogh school, where all students are automatically transferred after their year of reception training into a 'bridge class' (*brugklas*).[99] From there, they have to follow Junior Vocational Education (VMBO) fully from the very beginning. On the contrary, the other three schools transfer newcomer students according to their age and skills level, into the first, second or third year of the various tracks of ordinary education (e.g. MBO 2 or VMBO 3).[100] This all indicates that Van Gogh presents the most divergent reception style of all Rotterdam's schools, while Escher's reception style occupies a more intermediate position in the criteria of differentiation.

School variations in these three aspects are the result of discretional practices. According to a differentiated reception model, schools have adopted different types of reception training (language-only vs. other subjects) to match the characteristics of their student bodies (low-skilled vs. high-skilled). Informants from all schools agree that highly talented students, such as those attending Rembrandt school, should receive broader reception training with more content subjects in order to transfer to higher educational tracks, while less talented students do not need to be so well prepared for their transfer to lower tracks. Differences thus relate to the assumptions that teachers make about the 'educability' of low-skilled vs. high-skilled newcomer students. Besides this, evidence indicates that the current tendency to limit reception training to pure language teaching is a result of the pressure from boards of governors to make reception more efficient.

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98   Interview with reception coordinator, Escher school.
99   For a definition of a 'bridge class,' see chapter 3.
100 Interview with M. Zweekhorst, advisory institute CED-group.

Table 14   Reception style of Rotterdam schools

a. Duration of parallel reception	
Two school years average	Escher, Vermeer & Rembrandt schools
One school year average	Van Gogh school
b. Reception goals	
Language as a tool for socio-economic integration (other subjects besides language)	Rembrandt school
Language as a goal in itself (mainly language teaching)	Van Gogh school, and to a lesser extent Vermeer & Escher schools
c. Transfer	
To the year of secondary education corresponding to his/ her age (& to the track according to student's level)	Escher, Vermeer, Rembrandt schools
To the 'bridge class' (*brugklas*)	Van Gogh school

Flexibility in the duration of reception trajectory also indicates a discretional way of applying the ISK programme's rules. While Escher school leniently applies the procedures related to the duration of reception trajectories of newcomer students, Van Gogh school tends instead to follow the policy to the letter so as to avoid financial penalisations. Moreover, informants from the Escher school say they are also flexible in their admission criteria for categories of students not complying with the conditions for receiving subsidies (students with an irregular status, students living outside the municipality, etc.).[101] This discretional adaptation of norms has to do primarily with *professional ethics*: informants from Escher justify these practices by their understanding of what the reception of newcomers *should* be like.[102] Van Gogh also applies discretional practices, but these are rather intended to adapt reception goals to available resources or other organisational constraints. Paradoxically, although both schools are run by the same board of governors (LMC), they present different degrees of leniency or compliance with ISK requirements.

The interviews also show a remarkable similarity in the concerns that reception staff from different schools voice about their jobs, the implementation of policies, and the reception of newcomer students. The concerns from Escher and Van Gogh informants coincide to a great extent with what was described in detail by professionals from the Vermeer and Rembrandt schools.

101 Interview with reception coordinator, Escher school.
102 Ibid.

5   Practices in Barcelona

As an old harbour city, Barcelona shares with Rotterdam a past linked to the industrial revolution and a long tradition of labour migration. Together with the Basque Country, Catalonia was one of the main industrial areas that led the economic development of Spain from the nineteenth century onwards. During the 1960s the growth of the industrial sector drew many unskilled workers to Barcelona from other regions of the country, particularly Andalusia and Extremadura. Nowadays the region of Catalonia has the highest percentage of foreigners in the whole country: 21.3% of the total population. Most of them live in the city of Barcelona (Secretaría de Migraciones 2006). According to data from the 2006 municipal register, 16.5% of the 1.6 million inhabitants of Barcelona were foreign-born, notably above the national average of 9.3% (INE 2006, INE 2007). The major immigrant groups in the city come from Asia (mostly from the Philippines, China and Pakistan), North Africa (especially Morocco) and Latin America (Ecuador, Colombia and the Dominican Republic).

Barcelona also shares with Rotterdam a great concern about the education of its inhabitants. Despite the relative wealth of the city, the educational levels of the population reflect a marked polarisation. The last available data from the 2001 population census show that 20.17% of the city's inhabitants have a university degree, 45.28% have secondary studies (ISCED 2-3-4), and 34.6% have primary studies (IDESCAT). General indicators of education in Catalonia also show a negative trend. The PISA studies (2000, 2006) reveal that the number of students with reading deficits has increased in Catalonia, from 19.2% in 2000 to 21.6% in 2006. Also, Catalonia has one of the highest student drop-out figures of the whole European Union (UE-27), as 31.5% of youngsters between 18 and 24 years old abandon their studies

Table 15   Immigrant population in Barcelona, 1996-2011

	1996	2001	2006	2011
Total population	1.508.805	1.503.884	1.629.537	1.615.985
Total immigrants	29.038	95.348	269.574	89.492
Percentage of foreign nationals	1.9	6.3	16.5	17.3
Percentage foreing-born	3.9	8.3	19.7	21.5

Source: *Guía Estadística. Barcelona en cifras 2011.* Ayuntamiento de Barcelona.

Figure 5   Percentage of 3-16 y.o. foreign students in Barcelona over total students
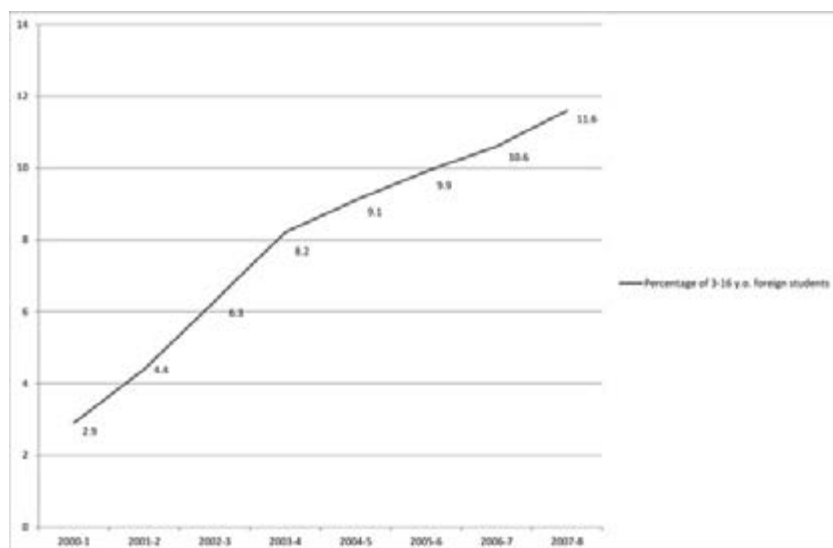
before obtaining a degree (in comparison to the European average of 14.8%) (Ferrer Julià et al. 2009).[1]

The increase of foreign migration to the city has brought to light the deficits of the educational system. Since 1992-1993 the presence of foreign students has grown dramatically in Catalan schools. In compulsory secondary education (ESO) this growth is particularly remarkable, increasing from 3.4% in the year 2000, to 13.5% in 2006 (Departament d'Educació 2007). Of the foreign students who have arrived between twelve and sixteen years of age, the two major nationalities are Moroccan (23.6%) and Ecuadorian (21.7%), which together add up to almost 50% of the total newcomers. This growth is also evident in Barcelona schools, as seen in Figure 5. In 2009-2010 immigrant students made 19.4% of the total number of students in compulsory secondary education in Barcelona (Table 16).

In the late 1990s, the issue of education gained importance on Barcelona's political agenda. Despite having few responsibilities in the area, in 1999 the

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[1]   Several studies have associated these problems with the funding of the educational system in Catalonia, since the regional level of public expenditure in education (2.52%) is way below the Spanish average (3.18%) and the European one (3.92%) (Bonal et al. 2005, 2006, Ferrer Julià et al. 2009).

Table 16   Foreign students in Barcelona by level of studies (2009-2010)

	Percentage of immigrant students over total students	Total students
Nursery school (0-3 y.o.)	19.6%	16,476
Pre-primary education (3-6 y.o.)	17.4%	40,751
Primary education (6-12 y.o.)	18.5%	77,596
Obligatory secondary education (12-16 y.o.)	19.4%	52,821
Baccalaureate	26.9%	22,161
Lower vocational training	26.2%	10,780
Upper vocational training	40.5%	16,039
Special education	28.2%	1,934
Total Barcelona	**20.2%**	**238,558**

Source: L'escolarización a la ciutat de Barcelona. Curso 2009-2010. Recurs stadistico Abril 2010. Consorci d'Educació de Barcelona.

local government produced the 'Educative Plan for the City' (PEC 1999), a citizen pact between 43 organisations – political parties, trade unions, employers, the municipal administration and social organisations – aimed to improve education.[2] In 2006 the municipality of Barcelona and the regional government of Catalonia created a common system of educative services, the *Consorci d'Educació*, which unified the service delivery while both policy tiers retained shared responsibilities.[3]

One of the great topics of concern is school segregation. In Catalonia the school system is extremely segregated, with a clear division between the socio-economic profile of students who attend public or semi-private schools. Immigrant students, in particular, are extremely segregated in schools. Ferrer Julià et al. (2009) showed that in the year 2006-2007, public schools in Catalonia had 19.1% of immigrant students (compared to 5.3% in private schools), while the average for public schools in Spain was 12.2% immigrant students. Over time, the rate of concentration of foreign students in public schools in Catalonia has increased, reaching 23.4% in 2009 (Ferrer Julià et al. 2009). Data for 2009-2010 concerning the city of Barcelona indicate that in compulsory secondary education, public schools have 32.4% immigrant students while charter schools have only 6.8%.

2   Interview with P. Soto.

3   Similar tendencies emerged in the whole region of Catalonia; for instance, in 2006, the 'National Pact for Education' specifically aimed to increase public expenditure on education in the region in order to meet the European average (6% of GDP) (Ferrer Julià et al. 2009: 20).

Table 17   Concentration of 3-16 y.o. foreign students in Barcelona, by level of education and type of school (2009-2010). Percentage over total students

	Public schools	Charted schools	Total
Pre-primary education	13.1	2.3	6.9
Primary education	24.6	3.9	12.3
Obligatory secondary education (ESO)	32.4	6.8	15.9

Source: L'escolarització a la ciutat de Barcelona. Curso 2009-2010. Recurs stadistico Abril 2010. Consorci d'Educació de Barcelona.

Table 18   Concentration of 3-16 y.o. foreign students in Barcelona by type of school (2009-2010)

	Foreign students	Total students between 3 and 16 y.o.
Public schools	77.7%	39.1%
Charted schools	22.3%	60.9%

Source: L'escolarització a la ciutat de Barcelona. Curso 2009-2010. Recurs stadistico Abril 2010. Consorci d'Educació de Barcelona.

This means that the majority of immigrant students study in public schools (84.6% in 2003) and that in some areas, as in the case of the Ciutat Vella district, over 30% of pupils in most public schools are of immigrant descent (LIC 2003: 9). For the school year 2009-2010, 77.7% of all foreign students aged three to sixteen studied in the public schools of Barcelona, while only 39.1% of the total students assist in that type of school (Table 18).[4]

Another topic of concern is that of recently arrived immigrant students. The so-called *nouvinguts* (newcomers) are estimated to form 4.9% of the total student body in Catalonia and 19.5% of all foreign students for the year 2010(Serra & Palaudàrias 2010).[5] According to official data, in Barcelona and at compulsory secondary education level, a total of 1,368 newcomer students were enrolled in 2011-2012 for reception education. This represents 2.5% of the total number of students in compulsory secondary education (53,122), and 16% of the foreign students at the same level (8,388).

[4]   The official figures are challenged by some studies. Soto & Carrasco (2003) found in a study based on a sample from the city of Barcelona that immigrant students actually represented 13% of the student body in public schools. This figure reaches 42% if we include pupils who have least one parent born abroad, while the official sources for the same year only recognised a total of 4.8%.

[5]   According the study by Serra and Palaudarias (2010) based on a sample of eighteen secondary schools in Catalonia, 3.2% of the students with non-Spanish nationality were born in Spain. Also, 8.5% of foreign-born students have obtained Spanish nationality.

Table 19   Area of origin of foreign students (in obligatory secondary education) in
           Barcelona city, 2011-2012

Areas of origin	Absolutes	Percentages
Latin-America	4,811	57.3%
Asia and Oceania	2,058	24.5
UE	539	6.4
Africa and Magreb	513	6.1
Rest of Europe	427	5
North-America	40	0.4
Total	8,388	

Source: own elaboration with data from Department of Education, Generalitat de Catalunya.

Newcomer students bring specific challenges for education. A first issue of concern is newcomer students' persistence. A recent study on a sample of schools providing compulsory secondary education (ESO) found that 42.5% of newcomer students did not finish compulsory secondary education, and only 14.6% of them did complete ESO and continued studying (Serra & Palaudàrias 2010). At the same time, the large inflow of foreign migrants has posed a challenge to the policy of 'linguistic normalisation' in schools. Newcomer students constitute a threat for the consolidation of the Catalan language vis-à-vis Spanish, not only because of the presence of a great number of Latin Americans who already speak Spanish, but also because Spanish has become the 'lingua franca' among immigrant students of diverse origins. Spanish is spoken among them in the schoolyard and in the corridors, following an inertia established in relationships between Catalan-speaking and Castilian-speaking students. Spanish was the language of the previous wave of migration – the Andalusians and Extremenians who arrived in the 1960s to work in Barcelona – and thus it is the common language in the working-class areas where (foreign) newcomer students live. Parents of Pakistani or Chinese students who have a shop in the Raval neighbourhood speak Castilian to their customers instead of Catalan.

In Catalonia, two major public policies offered educational reception to newly arrived foreign students in the period under study (2004-2006): the TAE programme (1996-2003), and the LIC programme (from 2004 onwards). Since 2009, the Department of Education has introduced a new procedure to concentrate all newcomer students arriving in the entire city after 20 April in a single reception centre.

Unfortunately, data on the resources allocated for the TAE programme are not available to the general public. Resources seem to have been meagre, basically intended for paying TAE mentors' salaries. Overhead resources

**Table 20   Annual budget for reception of newcomers in Catalonia (LIC programme)
(2004-2005)**

Objective	Annual income
LIC agents	4,458,206.86
Mentor teachers in LIC reception classrooms	14,437,994.18
Teachers in TAE classrooms	3,964,818.92
Training of teachers & reception mentors	35,880
Teachers' training & counselling of schools	12,000
Subsidies for reception in semi-private schools	720,000
Teachers for semi-private schools	1,038,543.19
Grants for books	3,000,000
Grants for lunch	9,218,160
Elaboration of teaching materials	93,500
Computer material (only year 2005)	1,021,160
TOTAL	**35,300,263.15**

Source: *Pla per a la Llengua i la Cohesio social*, Departament d'Educació (Generalitat de Catalunya)
2004: 24.

were nearly non-existent, according to informants' reports on the lack of
computers or the limited support for designing teaching materials, among
other things. In comparison with this under-resourced TAE policy, the LIC
programme represented a significant improvement in terms of material
resources. Expenditure for the 2004-2005 school year was estimated at
€ 35.3 million for the execution of the programme in the whole region of
Catalonia, for both elementary and secondary education (Table 20). The
largest section of the budget covers the salaries of the mentors of reception
classrooms (€ 14.4 million) for 565 teachers in total (in public schools). The
expenses for paying LIC agents (€ 4.4 million) and TAE mentors in the
remaining TAE classrooms (€ 3.9 million) are also considerable.

Moreover, regional and municipal educational authorities apply several
instruments to encourage a more balanced distribution of immigrant stu-
dents among schools. One of these mechanisms is to reserve two spaces
per class for pupils with 'special educational needs' (NEE); such NEE spaces
must be kept free during the pre-registration period so that immigrant
students who arrive later have a chance to enrol at the school. In addition,
cities apply different zoning policies in order to distribute students among
schools on the basis of the delimitation of catchment areas.[6] Since 1985

6   Zoning policies regulate students' access to schools supported with public funds (public or
charter schools). Such access depends first and foremost upon the availability of spaces.

Table 21   Sample of reception units in Barcelona (by policy programme)

Programmes	School-based unit	Area-based unit
TAE	Antoni Tapies	Salvador Dalí
LIC	Antoni Tapies, Gaudí	(Empirically inexistent)

parents' freedom to choose a school for their children has been regulated by law (LODE 1985). According to this law, three conditions increase a child's likelihood of securing placement in a desired school: proximity of residence, having brothers or sisters at the school, and income level. Residing within a given catchment area improves the likelihood of being placed in that area. Barcelona has a zoning model in which small catchment areas include several public schools (normally 2-4 of them) while charter schools have broader catchment areas (the district).[7]

In this context, those public schools offering compulsory secondary education (ESO) that provide reception education for newcomers have been confronted with very complex challenges (concentration, bilingual context, speed of changes). These challenges are increased by the sub-optimal situation of the Catalan educational system in general, already loaded with its own contradictions and deficits. The rest of this chapter will study the practical responses of three schools in Barcelona in terms of educative reception. The selected schools are located in those areas where the concentration of foreign students was first noticed, due to the residential patterns of immigrants. Interestingly, many foreign migrants have chosen as gateway to the city the same areas which internal migrants chose back in the 1960s, particularly the neighbourhoods of El Raval and Poble Sec. Tapies school is located in the neighbourhood of El Raval, and the Dalí and Gaudí schools are in the adjacent areas of Montjuic and Poble Sec.

The first school that we will discuss, Dalí, works under the TAE programme, and thus provides part-time reception teaching for pupils coming from different schools in the vicinity. The second, Tapies, started delivering reception education within the TAE programme and later continued within the LIC programme. We will see that the TAE classroom in Tapies was made up of students exclusively from the school itself, and this created a quite different mode of operation from that in TAE Dalí. As we will see, schools providing reception under the LIC policy coincided in time with

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7   Since 2008 Barcelona has designed a zoning model based on the parents' residence. Bureaucrats establish for each student which public and charter schools (three of each) are closer to his/her home address.

some TAE reception classrooms still operating under the previous policy, as the idea was to substitute the latter by the former in a gradual process. Finally, Gaudí school started to receive newcomers within the present LIC policy framework, so the school offered reception to its own newcomer students only.

5.1   Salvador Dalí school

Salvador Dalí school is a secondary school teaching compulsory and post-compulsory secondary education. Post-compulsory education at Dalí covers only its academic variant (Bachillerato). Dalí school is located in the district of Sants-Montjuic, a working-class inner-city area where immigrants started settling at the end of the 1990s. By the year 2006, immigrants made up 18.5% of the district's population, confirming this area as the second preferred area of settlement after the district of Ciutat Vella (45.6%) (Ajunctament d' Barcelona, 2008).[8] Within the district of Sants, the school is located in the Fuente la Guaña neighbourhood.

In the 2003-2004 school year, Dalí school had 343 students between the ages of twelve and sixteen, distributed among the four years of compulsory secondary education (ESO).[9] If we include those enrolled in post-compulsory education, the students add up to 504. Among these, students of migrant origin represent 17.6% of the total. That figure is slightly below the average percentage in the public centres of the district (18.6%) for the same year, but way above the mean of semi-private centres (4.2%).

The characteristics of Dalí school as a whole, however, merely provide context for our story. My observation unit must be referred to, strictly speaking, as the 'Dalí reception classroom', as the whole school was not studied, but rather one single reception classroom. This Dalí classroom offered reception education within the framework of the TAE programme (1996-2003). In the TAE programme newcomer children were gathered in area-based reception classrooms. Students attended special lessons in the area-classroom in the mornings, Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. In the afternoon, students attended their schools and followed regular lessons in the class that corresponded to them by age.

8   For a thorough discussion of the residential segregation of immigrant communities in the city of Barcelona, see Fullaondo 2008.
9   The fieldwork in the Dalí reception classroom took place in 2004-2005, but I only had access to data in the Dalí school as a whole for 2003-2004.

The Dalí reception classroom was first established in 1997 with eighteen pupils and two teachers. It was one of the first two units of reception in the city. The reception classroom was housed within the Dalí school, but it received pupils from several schools in the vicinity. Paradoxically, the reception classroom did not have an operational interrelation with the school in which it was located. Rather, the reception unit operated almost independently from the school. Resources and guidelines for the Dalí reception classroom and the school itself came from separate sections within the Department of Education. Teachers working in reception were not part of the school personnel; rather, they were directly allocated to the classroom by the Department of Education and therefore did not fulfil any additional functions in the school. Teachers working in reception and in the school as a whole did not cooperate or interact much with each other in carrying out their tasks. Personal interaction between the two faculties was also reported to be limited, since reception teachers were not considered part of the school but rather 'temporary tenants'. This singularity of the relationship between reception unit and school was typical of area-based units within the TAE programme.

Likewise, newcomer students attending reception lessons in the Dalí classroom were not encouraged to mingle with their peers in the regular education tracks of the same school. They could not interact with other Dalí students since breaks for the two student bodies were scheduled at different times. In this sense, the Dalí reception classroom represented a small world in itself. It represented a school context of 100% migrant students. All of the students in the classroom were in a comparable 'newcomer' situation, that is, they had recently arrived in Barcelona and were learning the Catalan language for the first time. Moreover, no Romance-language-speaking[10] students were admitted to the unit, since they were not part of the TAE policy's target group. The reception classroom had a wide range of nationalities and ethnic backgrounds that did not fully match the ethnic composition of students in Barcelona. All in all, these conditions created a parallel school context in which students enjoyed dynamics of mutual support and an illusion of equality. Within the reception classroom, nobody was different, because all were different vis-à-vis the society outside.

10   Romance languages are those derived from Latin, i.e. Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, French and Romanian. See Gleason 1969: 458-459.

Table 22   Number and ethnic distribution of pupils in the Dalí reception classroom

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006
Number of pupils	35	34	36	33
Main nationalities	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese
	Moroccan	Pakistani	Pakistani	Pakistani
	Pakistani	Moroccan	Moroccan	Moroccan
			Russian	Romanian

Source: Mentor teachers in the Dalí reception classroom. Number of pupils by the end of the school year.

The teachers of the Dalí classroom also need to be introduced in our story. The two mentor/teachers[11] working in the Dalí reception classroom, Merce and Pau, are native Catalan-speaking women. Both are middle-class, middle-aged women with progressive ideological values reflected in their pedagogical approach and their private political views.[12] Both of them qualified as teachers of secondary education and specialised in the teaching of the Catalan language. Unlike many teachers in the initial reception programmes in schools, who were young and inexperienced, reception teachers at Dalí had many years of teaching experience. They had a fixed status as civil servants with permanent jobs.[13] Yet, for them, working in the reception classroom was a personal choice motivated by their desire to teach migrant children, although their seniority and rank entitled them to much 'better' functions in the hierarchy of educational jobs.[14] These very same teachers remained in their posts until the closure of the classroom in 2006.

Mentors at Dalí take a broad view of the issues at stake in reception. According to them, newcomer students confront not only a language disadvantage, but also very important socio-economic disadvantages and emotional-psychological difficulties. The mentors think that the official TAE reception policy lacks this multidimensional perception of the problem. Still, they consider the teaching of Catalan to be crucial, particularly

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11   Reception mentors have both *moral* and teaching tasks. In the rest of the text I will refer to them simply as 'mentors' or 'reception mentors' to distinguish them from ordinary teachers; this is particularly necessary in the schools in which other teachers also teach in the reception classroom to provide a specific subject (but do not participate in reception decisions).

12   One of them was a member of the left-wing Catalan nationalist party Esquerra Republicana (fieldwork Dalí).

13   In Spanish, *plaza fija de funcionario*.

14   As an indication of this, one of them became a school principal (in another school) after the unit closed.

in secondary education, where the academic content taught to students is quite demanding.

Merce and Pau complained about the scarcity of resources allocated to reception policy. They held the opinion that it is 'socially unjust' for the system to try to 'spare itself' an extra year of reception for those students who need it. They also complained about their superiors, often in an ironic way, and about the way they and other reception mentors were treated. In their view, high-level civil servants from the regional Department of Education are not interested in newcomer students. Rather, these students are perceived as a burden that 'they want to get rid of' (interview with the mentors at Dalí).

Merce and Pau feel *abandoned* by their superiors, who simply gave them basic instructions about the reception programme when they first started, and then disappeared.[15] According to them, the problem is that 'we have too much flexibility' and 'room to manoeuvre'. Their feelings resemble those of low-level bureaucrats in other policy sectors in the face of the treatment received from their superiors, which has been described as 'delegation by abandonment' (Manço 2001). In response to this situation, Merce and Pau undertake their job with a very idealistic attitude, working themselves to the bone, even working overtime – 25 hours per week instead of the eighteen established in their contracts – devoting some of their free time to doing volunteer work or to collecting resources to help students pay for their textbooks ('Our friends say that we have an NGO!').

In 2006 the Dalí classroom disappeared as a result of the TAE programme being replaced by the LIC programme. Reception classrooms functioning under the TAE programme were gradually closed to facilitate a smooth transition from one policy to the other. The Dalí reception classroom was one of the last three classrooms to be closed in the city of Barcelona.

5.1.1   Registration of pupils

In Barcelona, an enrolment commission is in charge of distributing foreign pupils among secondary schools, as described above. Under the TAE policy and following this procedure, pupils were assigned to reception classrooms according to their place of residence and order of arrival. The enrolment commission bureaucrats were in charge of making the decisions and placing newcomer students in a given secondary school and in the correspond-

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15   When the policy changed in 2004, practitioners expressed a marked scepticism about 'what, in the end, will happen in practice'.

ing TAE unit of the area. Placement decisions were based on the place of residence and in the availability of space in the schools.

Mentors of the TAE reception classrooms were obliged to admit all the students that the enrolment commission of the city sent them, even if this meant overbooking classes beyond their formal limits. The number of students often surpassed the maximum officially established. In fact, the limit was constantly extended; from eighteen in 1996, it continued to increase until it reached 26 in 2004. At the beginning of the school year, the class normally started off with 25 pupils, and as we have seen (Table 19), by the end of the year it had reached 33 to 36 students. Reception mentors can exert little effective opposition to the assignation of pupils by civil servants higher up in the hierarchy.

> We phoned them [our coordinators at the Education Department] because, well, we have 26 pupils, what's this?, and the regulation says maximum 22 students. And then they answered saying, 'No, [now] the regulation says 25' (mentor in the Dalí classroom).

The mentors in the Dalí TAE classroom felt powerless because they could not modulate the size of their class:

> In each TAE there are 25 pupils. Well, we now have 26 … They do not realise what this is. We are not able to cope with it (Mentor in the Dalí classroom).

The TAE regulation established that reception teachers were required only to accept new students arriving with a decision from the educational inspector. This document established that the pupil had been assigned both a place in a high school in the vicinity of the student's residence and a place in the TAE unit in the neighbourhood. However, in practice, assignation of pupils seems to have sometimes followed irregular channels. Informants at Dalí report cases of students sent to their reception unit without any formal document of assignation.

Protesting against irregularities in the procedures yielded little if any result. Mentors in the Dali classroom were not able to 'send back' students who formally did not correspond to them. Their complaints were normally answered with pressure from the educational inspectors, obliging them to accept the decision made by their superiors:

> The inspector came to scold us, directly and indirectly, to make us accept some students that we don't yet know whether they were *ours* or not.

And she 'jammed' them into our classroom.[16] And then we called this telephone number to protest (Mentor in the Dalí classroom).

Moreover, reception mentors at Dalí school did not have any influence over which categories of pupils could enter their reception classroom. Their power as gatekeepers was thus quite reduced. They explicitly criticised the policy target of TAE because it left out students who spoke Romance languages other than Catalan. Nevertheless, it was beyond their reach to facilitate the access of Romance-language speaking students to their reception classroom. Officially these students were not included in the TAE target and the city's enrolment commission would send them straight to a regular school.

5.1.2   Clustering in classes

Officially, pupils in TAE units were not to be tracked. Students were assigned a TAE classroom based more or less on residence. As a result, TAE groups were extremely heterogeneous in terms of their cultural backgrounds, ages, levels and previous schooling. Normally each TAE classroom formed in this top-down manner worked with all the students together, without distinctions between them.

However, the Dalí mentors felt the need to further differentiate their teaching strategies for different categories of pupils. In the school year of 2005-2006, their group included a little bit of everything: from Polish students with a good schooling in their country, to Senegalese and Chinese who were just learning to read and write. Often they also had illiterate students: in 2005, there were only five, but in other years there were ten or fifteen.[17]

> Mentor 1: We have people from China, Morocco, Pakistan, Ukraine, etc. ... This year they have given us one from Romania, because they have decided that that is not a Romance language. That student is doing fantastically. ... He has a very advanced level; he catches everything very fast. Mentor 2: As you can see, we have pupils with very diverse levels. It is a very heterogeneous group. This makes working very difficult (Interview with mentor teachers at Dalí).

Mentors in the Dalí classroom applied different approaches to students with dissimilar levels of knowledge and different types of prior schooling.

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16   In Spanish, *Nos los metió en el aula*.
17   Field diary from Dalí, p. 1.

To carry out different teaching strategies, Dalí mentors clustered their students in two subgroups most of the time. This method was used for doing individual work with each pupil, one by one, but it was also used for doing group activities. The group was normally divided according to the students' level of Catalan (more advanced/less advanced), and each of the mentors dealt with one subgroup:

> In the second period we divide them into two groups. She takes one group and I take the other. Today we are all together due to space limitations. Normally, one of us stays here and the other takes half of the pupils to another classroom.... In these groups we do a little bit of everything: maths, language, social sciences... (Interview with mentor teachers at Dalí).[18]

Clustering by level of language acquisition allowed the teachers to develop activities with different degrees of difficulty for the two groups. Still, the resulting groups were very heterogeneous with manifold differences between students, thus the degree of differentiation was very rudimentary ('You would almost have to make as many subgroups as there are students!').

5.1.3   Curriculum, methodology and teaching

In broad terms, the Dalí reception classroom followed the standard *modus operandi* of TAE units. Most organisational aspects of TAE classrooms were centrally decided by high-level civil servants from the regional Department of Education (issues regarding registration, clustering, staffing and transfer of pupils). Yet in other aspects, practitioners had more autonomy and room for their own interpretation of the rules. In particular, the content of the lessons and the teaching methods were much less constrained.

In principle, the curriculum for the TAE programme was standardised in the book *Vincles*, designed and published by the regional Department of Education. The handbook follows the methodology for learning Catalan developed by the SEDEC department, which is in charge of the normalisation of the Catalan language (Departament d'Educació 1995). However, reception mentors at Dalí used a combination of books and teaching materials. They did not consider the official textbook *Vincles* the best tool for newcomer students because 'sometimes it goes too fast and sometimes too slow'.[19]

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18   Mentors had informally arranged with the school to use an extra room for one or two hours per day for this clustering strategy, but this was not always possible.
19   Field diary of Dalí classroom, p. 5.

Besides this book, informants reported that the regulation of content and methodology was rather loose. In fact, the lesson content was very open to teachers' own initiatives:

> The problem is that we have too much freedom. These gentlemen at the CIU started the programme off thanks to the paternalism of 'how are we going to take care of migrants?' … They gave us three pages that said: Catalan curriculum, natural sciences curriculum and social sciences curriculum. And … there you are! Since then they haven't given it another thought (Interview with mentor in the Dalí classroom).

In theory, under the TAE programme, students were to have twenty hours of reception teaching per week: Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Time was to be distributed between three subjects: Catalan language, natural sciences and social sciences. In practice, teachers in the Dalí TAE unit adapted the original content of the natural science and social science curriculum to students' capabilities. Recently-arrived students or slow learners were simply taught Catalan and some vocabulary related to natural sciences and social sciences. When students accepted 'more challenges', teachers began to introduce subject content into their lessons, besides the Catalan language. This implies that teachers somehow assessed the *learning drive* of each student. One of the Dalí mentors described it in terms of responding to the students' needs/efforts on a demand-supply basis. According to this child-oriented view of learning, a child learns when he or she is receptive to it. The educator has to follow the child's initiative and take advantage of windows of opportunity.

> Then you would say, 'No problem, I know what to do'. If the children *pull*, I *pull* more. If they don't pull, I don't pull either. In that case, I simply teach *words* [vocabulary of the area] and that's it (Interview with mentor at Dalí).

This ability to adapt to students' needs and capabilities required that contents be diversified. For pupils with strong Catalan, Dalí teachers used the curricula and textbooks from regular classes. Instead of having strictly Catalan language lessons, these students received extra support for Catalan while simultaneously studying regular subjects:

> For instance, to a fourth-grade Filipino girl who is doing very well, we have told her to bring her regular class textbooks and we work on them here (Interview with mentor at Dalí).

This child-oriented curriculum indicates that modern teaching techniques were used in the Dalí TAE classroom. The teachers explained that they only gave classical lessons (lectures) during the first days. In this phase of the reception trajectory, the teachers based their work very much on visual aids:

> In the beginning it has to be all based on video, theatre and images. At the beginning of the school year we do not teach [other] subjects, just language, language and language. With many visual resources (Interview with teachers in the Dalí classroom).

After the initial months, teachers gave up classical teaching and required students to work autonomously, handing them individual assignments and sometimes doing group work. Most class-time was spent on individual learning activities. The two teachers walked around, spending time with each pupil individually. Pupils were subject to a personalised work plan, adjusting teaching content and methodologies to their particular needs. Recently arrived students spent more time reading, learning new vocabulary, and answering basic comprehension questions; more advanced students had to do analytical comprehension and synthesis by writing summaries of what they read and answering questions about the content. The two teachers worked as a closely coordinated team, which indicates that they shared fundamental views about how to carry out their work.

Group exercises were also used for expressive purposes, to encourage group identity and interaction between students. Activities were designed in the form of games, and teachers tried to motivate pupils to learn by letting them have fun as well. The teachers added a considerable dose of humour to their lessons. The atmosphere in the class was cordial and relaxed and students were usually in a good mood. When pupils went back to individual work after a group activity, most were very concentrated and the atmosphere was orderly but friendly. It was remarkable that students kept a steady work pace. The class period lasted four hours with a break to go out to the yard. During the period, unlike regular students who had a five-minute break every 50 minutes, newcomer students worked non-stop despite the bell ringing for every class change. Apparently, the efforts of teachers to motivate students were quite fruitful, as the high attendance and participation registered in this reception unit indicate.[20]

A constant source of tension for the mentors in the Dalí classroom was the liaison with their pupils' ordinary schools. Merce and Pau complained

20   Field diary from Dalí, p. 4.

about how regular schools dealt with newcomers, saying it 'counteracts [our] work', so that 'we cannot progress'. In particular, during the TAE period, teachers at regular schools tended to break the norm of teaching in Catalan.

> Teachers are giving the lessons in Castilian, because that way they avoid hassles and all their pupils can understand. ... And sure, in the afternoon you send the students to their regular school, and in the morning they come back speaking Castilian!
> Above all [it is a problem] because it discourages them [from learning Catalan]. Because you tell them: 'Why learn Catalan? Because the school language is Catalan'. You tell them so. And then they respond: 'No. The mathematics teacher teaches in Castilian, the social sciences teacher teaches in Castilian, the science teacher ...'. And then, what can you say? (Interview with mentors at Dalí).

5.1.4   Schedule-making

As mentioned above, teachers in the TAE reception units had considerable discretion in organising the students' timetable. Not only did they have very broadly-defined, loosely-regulated guidelines and little supervision,[21] but also the fact that they had the same group of students for so many hours gave them a lot of flexibility. Teachers could follow the Department of Educations' very broad guidelines for the curriculum and yet distribute subjects at their convenience throughout the week. Teachers were able to come up with an idea, keeping in mind the limitations of space and personnel, and readapt the schedule accordingly on the spot.

Dalí mentor teachers actually opted for a less clear-cut distinction between subjects because of their preference for child-centred, tailor-made, personalised teaching methods. Given that Merce and Pau hardly taught classical lessons, it really made no difference whether they established specific times for each subject or not (field notes, p. 3). Work was organised in individual assignments so that each child would distribute time according to his/her own choice and needs. One child might need to spend more time on mathematics and the other on Catalan.

Quite another thing was the afternoon schedule that TAE pupils had when they went back to their home high schools. Schools were very reluctant to adapt their schedules to the needs of newcomers. According to inform-

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21   There were no further evaluation procedures, other than students' final exams, to evaluate TAE teachers' performance.

ants, schools had a widespread lack of interest in newcomers, who were seen as adding an extra burden:

> It is possible that schools are very overwhelmed, but … damn it! They are not interested. They only want to get rid of these youngsters (Interview with Dalí mentor).

According to the Dalí classroom's teachers, most schools did not devise any special initiatives; rather, schedules for newcomer pupils were the result of coincidence or convenience. Schools and regular teachers shared the opinion that it should be reception teachers' responsibility to take care of newcomers' education. Instead of adapting the general school's schedule to newcomer students, schools were content to let newcomer students use ordinary class-time to complete the homework they brought from the reception course in the mornings. Informants from the Dali reception unit reported that schools asked them to provide their pupils with extra homework and/or adapted teaching material to be used in the afternoons. Teachers from the Dali unit refused to do so, as they considered it not to be their task.

5.1.5   Evaluation and transfer

Within the TAE programme, the evaluation and transfer of pupils to regular education was centrally organised by the regional Department of Education. As a result, TAE units in the Dalí and Tapies schools (see next section) followed similar procedures for evaluation and transfer. There were centralised Catalan language exams administered directly by civil servants from the regional Department, divided into four dimensions: comprehension, writing, reading and speaking. These exams were taken at the end of the school year and the grades achieved were kept confidential even from reception teachers. Students were automatically transferred by the end of one full school year of reception (nine months), regardless of their exam score.

Reception teachers often requested an extension of reception time (an additional trimester) for students who had great difficulties learning the new language. Normally, Chinese, Pakistani and Moroccan students got an extension of three months, staying a total average of twelve months (four trimesters) in the reception classroom.[22] Yet informants reported that applying for extensions implied confronting their bosses at the Education

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22   Informal conversation with mentor at Dalí.

Department. Administrators saw extensions as extraordinary procedures, or even more, as an *excess* on the part of the mentors:

> If you ask for one trimester extension for somebody that is doing quite badly it seems that it is '*Wow!*' (Interview with reception mentor at Dalí).

Some students remained longer in the reception trajectory simply as a result of administrative mistakes. Merce and Pau refer to the case of a Chinese student who is in his third year of reception, but 'he didn't lie, they [the bureaucrats of the Department of Education] simply saw that he was Chinese and enrolled him here'.[23] Such an administrative mistake is informed by a specific representation of what a 'newcomer' student is. Here we observe an essentialisation of the category of 'newcomer' (*nouvingut*), particularly for students with visible markers of ethnic or cultural difference: somebody is a newcomer and as far as the collective imagination is concerned, he or she continues to be so, which implies that he or she *belongs* in reception education (and not in ordinary education). In this sense, Sayad (2004) reminds us that according to the categories of state thought, immigration is an 'original sin' which 'can never be totally bracketed or neutralised, even when we try to do so in all objectivity' (2004: 170).

Finally, deviations from the rules of transfer were the result of discretional practices of regular teachers and schools. During the TAE programme, regular teachers and the school acted as gatekeepers that limited the actual participation of newcomer pupils in educational activities. Pupils in the TAE programme were expected to attend their regular schools for ordinary lessons in the afternoon. The description that Dalí informants provide in this respect is very discouraging. Newcomers attended to whatever subjects their peers had in the afternoon and were not given special assignments or extra support from the teacher. Peers hardly communicated with newcomer students, although they were not necessarily unfriendly. Teachers were very reluctant to have these students in their classes. They felt that it was senseless for newcomers to be there; at the same time they saw newcomers as an obstacle to the development of the lessons and for the rest of pupils. According to the Dalí reception mentors, ordinary school teachers refer to newcomer students sitting in their class like 'pieces of furniture', because they simply sit there and neither understand nor are able to participate in the normal class. This account is supported by informants from other schools.

23   Field notes from Dalí reception classroom, p. 1.

It would be reasonable to expect that this attitude on the part of regular teachers would be reflected in their interactions with pupils and that the latter would be aware of them. Merce and Pau held that newcomer students self-excluded themselves within regular schools because the schools' structures were not usually adapted to them. The informants reported that they had frequently seen students reluctant to be transferred to ordinary education, who at the smallest opportunity returned to the *safe haven* of the reception classroom:

> 11.00 In the third period, some Chinese girls enter the classroom. The mentors tell me about one of them, S., who has been a frequent visitor since she left the reception classroom three years ago. 'S. is an ex-TAE student and in her breaks she comes to visit. These are her "mentor hours"', says Pau ironically to me. And Merce adds 'If you propose that she integrate [with her native peers] and tell her that she is not allowed to come, then she goes [in her breaks] to the library to do homework' (Field diary from the Dalí classroom, p. 4).

Newcomer students reacted to schools' and teachers' attitudes in another way as well. Absenteeism among newcomers was reported to be very high in the afternoons, in contrast to the systematic participation in the morning reception classes.[24] Apparently, high schools did not do much to enforce attendance, either because they were simply overwhelmed by other responsibilities or because they considered that this was not their task. A more cynical interpretation would point to the convenience of this absenteeism for teachers in regular education. Teachers at Dalí thought that when many pupils skipped afternoon courses in regular education, 'the schools did not mind: they had fewer complications in their life!'.[25] According to informants, teachers and principals sometimes explicitly discouraged students from attending ordinary instruction:

> We have a [student] whose school principal told him: Look, do not come back until we call you. And they have *just* called him. We are at the end of the [academic] year! (Interview with mentor from the Dalí classroom).

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24   Interviews with I. Almecija, Pepi Soto, and Celia (Casal del Raval).
25   Mentor in the Dalí classroom.

Table 23   Foreign-born students in Tapies school

Study year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Percentage of foreign students	80%	85%	92%	95%	96 %	95%
Majority groups	Moroccan Philippine	Moroccan Pakistani	Pakistani Ecuadorian Moroccan	Pakistani Ecuadorian Moroccan	Ecuadorian Pakistani	Ecuadorian Pakistani

Source: School's administration.

5.2   Antoni Tapies school

Tapies school is a medium-sized school located in the working-class inner-city neighbourhood of El Raval. It has a student population of 420 pupils and a faculty of nearly 50 teachers. Technically speaking, Tapies school is a secondary school (IES)[26] teaching compulsory secondary education (ESO) and also post-compulsory secondary education in both academic (*Bachillerato*) and vocational training tracks (*Ciclos Formativos*). Historically, Tapies school's student body has been socio-economically and socio-culturally disadvantaged. Presently, 95% of the school population is of migrant origin, and the three largest minorities are Pakistanis, Ecuadorians and Moroccans. Historically, Pakistani, Moroccan and Filipino students have had a strong presence in the school, corresponding to the main ethnic communities in the El Raval neighbourhood.

As an historical gateway to the city for immigrants, El Raval is not only the neighbourhood with the highest percentage of non-EU foreigners in the central district of Ciutat Vella, but also the district with the highest percentage of migrants in the entire city (40.9% in 2006). As a 'transition area',[27] El Raval also scores badly in indicators of socio-economic deprivation.

Tapies school is a relatively young secondary school located in a beautiful building from the Republican era. This building housed a primary school from 1931. In 1996 it was split into two sections and Tapies high school was founded in the right wing of the building. The origins of the high school were

26   IES is the acronym for a school of secondary education (*Instituto de Educación Secundaria*).
27   According to Burgess' (1924) concentric model of the city, immediately after the inner-city district there was a second ring of run-down dwellings inhabited by the poor and ethnic minorities. This ring was understood as a *zone of transition,* as its inhabitants would move out as soon as their social position improved, leaving room for the next newcomers settling in the city.

somewhat turbulent, and the first board lasted just three months. Tapies school started off as one of the few high schools in Barcelona running the pilot programme for the new educational system, ESO, which is currently the prevailing scheme for compulsory secondary education.[28] After the first board, a professional manager was hired as principal and he tried to get a grip on the situation by introducing new working methods. One year later, he was succeeded by his director of studies, Adriá, who continued as principal until the 2008-2009 school year. For ten years, Adriá led his administration with a clear, progressive approach, focused on increasing students' equality of opportunities and improving the school's external image. Nowadays the school is well-known for combining one of the highest proportions of ethnic minority students with good quality education.

The progressive orientation of Tapies school and teachers' predisposition to work with a disadvantaged student population can be traced back to the origins of the school. Founded as an ESO school, Tapies teachers are probably more open to teaching a more diverse student body than schools that started off as BUP centres and only taught students oriented towards university. Without the burden of institutional inertia from the past, Tapies teachers have been more receptive to the idiosyncrasy of the neighbour-hood, willing to adapt the education they offer to the characteristics and needs of their public.

The school defines itself explicitly as a 'public, secular, pluralist' school 'embedded in the line of progressive education, understood as the defence of freedom and equality of all, leading to a more just world'.[29] In the public presentation of the school, it also identifies its goal as 'actively supporting a population that previously did not have access to secondary education'. The main values guiding Tapies' pedagogical approach are: solidarity, respect for 'Others', inter-culturality and dialogue between cultures, and co-education. Also, 'constructivism' is acknowledged as the main pedagogical approach of the school, according to which 'the student is not a blank page but rather someone who already knows many things'.[30]

28   The reform of secondary education was highly controversial and stirred up a great deal of opposition among teachers. In the new system, students' selection is postponed until age sixteen, for post-compulsory secondary education. Compulsory secondary education (ESO) forms a comprehensive, common line for all students between twelve and sixteen years old. Th previous BUP schools of pre-university education were transformed into ESO schools that also had to teach pupils without academic skills.
29   Website of Antoni Tapies school, 'About the IES', p. 3.
30   Website of Antoni Tapies school, 'About the IES', p. 4.

Table 24   Number and nationality of newcomer students in the Tapies reception classroom, per year

Study year	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Number of newcomer students	46	54	55	54	42	33 (*)
Majority groups	Moroccan, Philippines	Pakistani, Moroccan	Pakistani, Bangla-deshi, Ecuadorian	Philippine, Pakistani, Ecua-dorian, Bolivian	Pakistani, Colombian	--

(*) Provisional figure (number of newcomers who had arrived before January 2009 -it may have grown).

Due to the characteristics of its student body, Tapies is one of the secondary schools in the city with the longest tradition of dealing with foreign newcomer students, and since 1999 it has had a reception unit functioning within its walls. Newcomer students present slight differences in ethnic composition relative to the overall student body of the school (see Table 21). Newcomer students originate from a broad variety of countries, with the largest ethnic minorities being Moroccan, Pakistani or Filipino (see Table 24), and arrive with very diverse levels of schooling.

The origin of newcomers' reception in Tapies school dates from the mid-1990s, when large numbers of foreign students began to arrive 'and none of us knew what to do'.[31] In the absence of an official policy of reception, Tapies school improvised solutions relying upon its own resources. Immigrant children were incorporated into regular classes, but the school also organised additional Catalan lessons for them using the free time of some teachers. When the regional government inaugurated the first two reception classrooms of the TAE programme in 1996, Tapies' newcomer students were sent there. Tapies teachers noticed soon that there were so many Tapies' students that they filled up the classroom area.[32] At the end of the school year, Tapies school made a proposal to the Department of Education offering to launch their own reception unit exclusively for students from their own centre. As a matter of fact, newcomer students at the school were so numerous that they had to create two reception classrooms.

31   Interview with coordinator of integration at Tapies.
32   Ibid.

Since 2004-2005, the Tapies reception classrooms have continued to exist under the LIC system. Tapies school developed its 'own model' of mixed reception in which newcomer students attended separate classes or regular ones discontinuously throughout the day. Inaugurated within the TAE system, this model survived the LIC reform. Tapies' informants reveal a high level of satisfaction with 'their model'. Informants from the school consider that their way of doing things increases the integration of newcomer students with native peers. They proudly claim that their way of doing things was in fact an inspiration for regional policymakers when formulating the LIC programme.[33] In fact, the similarities are undeniable. For instance, the main change introduced by the LIC programme – having the reception unit within each school – aims to improve the integration of newcomer pupils in the school.

Notably, the team teaching in the reception classrooms in Tapies school has been unusually stable over time. The school has three reception professionals with backgrounds in psychology and pedagogy. Two of them are mentor-teachers in the reception classes, specifically assigned to the school by the Department of Education for providing reception education to newcomers. The reception mentors teach most of the newcomer students' classroom hours. The third person in the team, Montserrat, was not assigned as reception personnel, but is part of the school's ordinary staff. She is a Catalan teacher and member of the management team, with the function of 'coordinator of integration' within the school. For some years she also worked as a newcomer mentor, but presently she is mainly in charge of coordinating other teachers and only teaches a few hours in the reception classroom. The three professionals all have many years of experience in education, between 17 and 35 years. Two of them have worked in the school's reception classroom since its origins and the third started in 2002.

Besides the mentors and the integration coordinator, another 10-12 different teachers teach lessons to newcomers in reception classrooms. They are fairly representative of the profile of the average school worker in the public schools of Barcelona, with an overwhelming majority of white, native Catalonian, middle-class, middle-aged women. Male or ethnically different teachers are exceptional.

A last actor in the reception process needs to be introduced in our story. After the LIC programme was launched, so-called 'LIC agents' appeared in the school scene, representing the regional administration in everything relating to newcomers' reception and integration. These civil servants from

33   Several interviews with teachers, the coordinator and the principal at Tapies school.

the Educational Department give permanent advice to schools and reception mentors. A legion of these agents is spread across Barcelona, each of them covering between five and seven schools, to ensure a constant physical presence and close follow-up. They also function as a liaison between the Department and the schools and are expected to participate directly in some decisions at the school level, such as in transferring pupils to ordinary education. The LIC liaison in the case of Tapies school was not very active, and Tapies' practitioners complained about it. The reception coordinator says that 'some LIC [agents] work and some don't. Ours doesn't. She doesn't step in the classroom. She doesn't know our pupils … But then she gives her opinion in the meetings!'. [34] Practitioners in Tapies school considered that the LIC liaison performed evaluative tasks rather than assisting with practical problems. In the words of the mentor at Dalí, 'They [the LIC agents] are inspectors in the shadows; they get ideological-political training'.[35] The LIC agents, for their part, complained about the lack of cooperation from teachers in secondary education and described their work as LIC liaison 'as a sort of Chinese water torture', because they had to be constantly repeating things to 'change [teachers'] mentalities', but also as 'missionary' work, bringing in 'new ways of doing things'.[36] 'We need to be very diplomatic', they said, because 'high school teachers are very reluctant to take on this type of student. They cannot incorporate them into their classes, so they "park" them [like a car]'.[37]

5.2.1 Registration of pupils

As mentioned above, immigrant students' admission to schools is publicly regulated in Barcelona. A municipal commission comprised of civil servants of different levels and agencies distributes immigrant students among schools based on their place of residence, order of arrival and availability of places.[38] In principle, this public distribution should ensure a relatively even allocation of students to schools. Yet, Tapies informants claim that their school has a much higher percentage of immigrant students than the area's

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34 Interview with coordinator of integration at Tapies.
35 Field diary of Dalí, p. 4.
36 Interview with Tino Serra, coordinator of LIC agents in Barcelona, Department of Education.
37 Ibid.
38 As different school systems use different terms to refer to vacancies available for admitting new students, I should clarify that in this study I again follow the British usage, referring to each vacancy as a 'school place' or 'place'.

average, because 'other schools do not admit them.'[39] This is supported by the striking differences in the percentage of immigrant students at public and semi-private schools.[40]

In the TAE system, school bureaucrats providing reception for newcomers have little decision-making power to influence the assignation of students to their classrooms, as we have seen in the case of Dalí school. However, school-based units, like that of Tapies, have more leeway than area-based units. As one of Dalí's teachers said, 'Those Tapies people, yeah, they just do whatever they want' (interview with mentor at Dalí, 28 May 2004).[41] Indeed, Tapies opened its TAE reception unit to a category of students that was formally excluded from the policy's target. The TAE programme was targeted at non-Romance-language-speaking students aged between twelve and sixteen, leaving aside Spanish-speaking students and others with Romance mother tongues. Tapies school decided to create a second reception classroom for Romance-language-speaking students taught by volunteer teachers from the school's regular staff:

> Then there is Group 2, which fundamentally works with Latin American students who have just arrived. Why? Because they are pupils who have just been incorporated into the system, they don't go to the TAE because they speak Spanish, but they have no idea of Catalan. Which is the vehicular language, in principle (Interview with the principal of Tapies school).

Besides allowing access to the reception classroom to certain student categories, practitioners at Tapies were able to influence the number of newcomers assigned to their classrooms more than the teachers at Dalí. As a school-based TAE unit, students can only be assigned to Tapies if they have a place in both the reception classroom and the ordinary classrooms. The school can reject new regstrations when the TAE reception classroom reaches the maximum number of places, although as seen in the case of Dalí, this is not very effective. But the great difference with Dalí school is that Tapies can always reject new reception students when there is not an available place for them in ordinary education at the school. This allows

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39   Interview with principal of Tapies school.
40   As we saw in chapter 3, although semi-private schools must be free, like any other publicly subsidised school, research has shown that semi-private schools use deterrence mechanisms to discourage immigrant parents, such as imposing unofficial additional costs (Carbonell & Quintana 2003).
41   Interview with reception mentor at Dalí.

the school to control the size of their reception unit more than in the Dalí TAE unit. As the principal of Tapies school says:

> The first thing that we do when a new pupil comes is to check his or her age, and see if it corresponds with that of secondary education … And the first thing that we do is to check if we have a place. If we have a vacant place that corresponds to the pupil's age, he or she gets it. If we don't have it, we automatically send him or her back to the Territorial Service of Education, and that's it!

In 2004 the TAE programme was replaced with the LIC programme, and Tapies' reception classroom continued to exist under the new policy. Under the LIC programme, Tapies school continued acting in a similar way to keep the size of the reception classrooms within feasible limits. Like in the TAE system, if there is no vacant place in the school's ordinary classes, new incoming pupils can be sent back to the commission to be placed elsewhere. This solution could be labelled *external*, in the sense that it redirects surplus students to another agency.

This external strategy for keeping the size of the reception unit under a certain limit is mainly dependent on the availability of places in ordinary classes. Thus, as long as the school has places in regular education it has no grounds to reject incoming students, even if the size of the reception classroom grows beyond reasonable limits.

Under the LIC programme, things get more complicated. Unlike the TAE scheme, the LIC does not establish a maximum number of students per reception classroom. Therefore, having an overcrowded reception classroom is not sufficient argument for a school to reject a newcomer student assigned to it by higher tiers. Furthermore, the Education Department foresees no procedures to assign additional reception teachers during the school year in order to meet growing demand. If the reception classroom becomes overcrowded due to continuous arrivals, Tapies school applies an *internal* distributive strategy. The school decides to transfer some newcomer students to regular classes sooner in order to make some room in the congested reception classroom.

5.2.2   Clustering in classes

Tapies school has always had its reception unit within its own walls, which allows it more flexibility when it comes to clustering the newcomers conveniently. In the TAE period the reception classroom was physically

inside the building, which allowed newcomer students to spend the whole school day in the same location. Based on that, Tapies reinterpreted the TAE policy in its own way, and now has newcomer students attending separate reception classes or regular classes discontinuously; in this way, they mingle with other students. Newcomers can attend reception lessons 'in the morning or in the afternoon, depending on what [better] suits the lesson schedule'.[42]

Reception students in Tapies' TAE classroom were always tracked according to their Catalan language and mathematics levels. Many regular teachers at the school participated in the reception classroom, which meant the groups could be split for certain subject periods. For instance, there were advanced and beginner levels of mathematics. These two levels roughly corresponded to the division between Romance-language speakers and non-Romance language speakers. Non-Romance language speakers are generally put together in the lower-level (beginners') cluster. For the rest of the subjects, both streams of students are together.

Having the TAE unit in the school where students attend regular classes also allows for better internal arrangements and reorganisation of the pupils. Tapies school applies a general system of 'flexible tracking' (not only for newcomers), which streams students into groups according to their level only for some subjects. Tapies school covers two groups per year (i.e. for first year there is 1A and 1B), which are reorganised following flexible tracking for four subjects: Spanish, Catalan, English and mathematics. Students are grouped into four different performance levels for these subjects. In addition, the school divides children into two clusters for lessons in social sciences and natural sciences, so that slower learners can receive so-called 'reinforcement lessons'. After their transfer to ordinary education, newcomer students also participate in this tracking system. The school's flexible tracking policy allows teachers to incorporate newcomer pupils earlier into regular classes, because if they need support they can get it in the lower tracks of each subject:

> We have flexible tracks in Catalan, Spanish and mathematics. This allows us, for example, to make sure that a Chinese student transferred to regular classes who has a high maths level but is weak in Catalan or Spanish can be placed in an intermediate level of mathematics, although in Catalan or Spanish he is in a lower track (Interview with director of studies of a school outside the sample).

42   Conversation with the principal, field diary from Tapies, p. 1.

As the former director of studies says, tracked lessons in regular subjects make it possible to transfer newcomer pupils before they have completed the nine-month reception period. In this way, the Catalan and Spanish lower tracks (and to a lesser extent, other subjects) become a prolongation of the reception classroom. Newcomers make up the majority of pupils in the 'D' groups. Also those who are transferring gradually, who little by little attend the reception classroom for fewer hours and participate in more regular subjects, are incorporated into this system. According to informants, flexible tracking is very convenient for dealing with newcomer students with diverse situations, as it differentiates students according to their dissimilar needs:

> [Flexible tracking] has the advantage that, because everything is done in the same day, that is, three days per week at the same time [all students of classes A, B, and C have maths, for example], we can promote students, as it is more convenient (Interview with principal of Tapies school).

After the LIC programme was launched, not much changed: the arrangements for clustering newcomer pupils in the LIC period resemble those of the TAE period. In a path-dependent way, Tapies school continued the same pattern of clustering after the LIC reform of 2003. Tapies continues to separate Romance-language-speaking and non-Romance-language-speaking newcomer pupils. Also, once newcomer students transfer to regular education, the school's flexible tracking structure for regular classes is also applied. Students get different treatment according to their skill level.

In 2007-2008 the school had to replace its two reception classrooms with one in response to cutbacks. The school lost one reception teacher and one Catalan teacher from the regular team. As a consequence, the way of working in reception had to be 'dramatically reorganised'.[43]

5.2.3   Curriculum and methodology

Another distinctive trait of the Tapies TAE classroom was the diversified curriculum that newcomer students received. Since its early years as a TAE unit, Tapies' students took more subjects, all in all, than the students in

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43   Interview with the coordinator of reception at Tapies, May 2008.

Dali's TAE unit.[44] The newcomers' weekly schedule was distributed between nine hours of Catalan, four of mathematics, two of natural sciences, three of social sciences, two of English, one of music and two of sports. They also get three hours of guidance counselling from the reception mentors. In addition, students can also attend after-school workshops taught by volunteers from the social organisation Casal del Raval, aimed to support language training through leisure activities.

While constituting a clear example of parallel reception, Tapies school made its own interpretation of the TAE regulation. Each week newcomers completed twenty hours of reception training out a total of 26 hours per week, and during these hours they followed a very intensive language programme. In the remaining 6-7 hours, newcomers attended regular classes. The school introduced newcomers into those mainstream curriculum lessons in which they would be able to keep up with the pace, but without extending the hours of regular lessons beyond those prescribed by the regulation. With this working method, Tapies' practitioners attempted to improve the area-based TAE system in two ways: by better integrating newcomers with their peers in regular education and by adapting the curriculum better to the educational needs of recently arrived students.[45] Tapies' reception style is in line with the school's goal and discourse of equal opportunities for students with disadvantages. Both regular and reception teachers in the school believe that the intensity and the linguistic immersion offered by semi-parallel reception is the best way to enhance the opportunities of newcomer students in the host educational system.

Despite the apparent emphasis on teaching other subjects besides Catalan, lessons were in fact oriented to teaching the terminology of specific disciplines. 'Basically what they do is learn the language. Other things too, but essentially the Catalan language.' [46]

Teaching two different clusters for beginners and more advanced learners puts the emphasis on language training. In the lower level classes, teachers set out to transmit basic vocabulary, while at the higher level they try to introduce some additional subject content. Nevertheless, teachers emphasise language acquisition over the comprehension of content. This can be observed in a social sciences lesson, for example. The teachers wrote a short piece on the blackboard about the neighbourhood and its human geography.

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44   We have to keep in mind, however, that this schedule includes a whole school day, and not only the morning (from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.), as in the case of Dalí unit.

45   Interview with the coordinator of reception.

46   Interview with the principal of Tapies school.

Pupils were asked to copy the text and teachers walked around correcting misspellings, but there was no further discussion about the content.[47]

Strikingly, newcomer students got two hours of English per week while Spanish was postponed until they were transferred to regular education. According to one of the English teachers, the reason why English is taught to immigrant students is to give them the feeling of being integrated with the rest of the pupils in the school:

> The objective of the [reception] classroom is to produce integration. Why do we give them English? To create a feeling of integration with the rest of their peers. Pupils in regular classes have different subjects; different teachers come through [their classroom to teach a lesson], etc. (Field diary from Tapies, p. 2).

Nevertheless, learning Spanish was also seen as a priority at Tapies. As explained before, Tapies school expanded the policy's target by introducing Romance-language-speaking newcomer students in its TAE lessons. Teachers at Tapies saw the necessity of teaching Catalan to students who already spoke Romance languages so that they could follow ordinary classes better. Likewise, and contrary to the philosophy of the TAE policy, Tapies school offered extra Castilian lessons to non-Spanish-speaking newcomer students. These Castilian lessons were given after the pupils finished their nine months of reception trajectory. The TAE regulation only made provisions for teaching Catalan to immigrant students. Practitioners of this high school justify their initiative, which clearly deviates from the official policy, by saying that 'the policy does not take into consideration that TAE pupils have to learn two languages, Catalan and Castilian, in order to get around in [Catalonian] society'.[48] In this way, they acknowledge the bilingual character of the social context in which newcomers have to integrate.

After the shift from the TAE to the LIC programme, little changed in the curriculum of the Tapies reception unit. The newcomer students' schedule remained the same, made up of the same subjects as before. However, a pivotal change was introduced in the 2008-2009 school year, and almost all subjects began to be taught to the newcomer children alone, separate from their native peers. The 6-7 hours a week of sports, music, etc., in which they had been mixed with the ordinary groups, became newcomer-exclusive. Informants explained that the reduction of the number of subjects that

47   Field notes from Tapies school, pp. 5-6.
48   Interview with the principal of Tapies school.

newcomers take in regular classes was a result of external constraints on resources, especially personnel cutbacks implemented by the Department of Education in recent years. In any case, this suggests that in Tapies, after the introduction of the LIC (from 2008-09 onwards), the emphasis lies on teaching specific vocabulary linked to the main content subjects, such as mathematics, etc. It is still too early to say whether this signifies a shift in the school's reception style (pressed by the need to cope with organisational constraints).[49]

Table 25   Regular subjects newcomers attend in Tapies school, 2003-2004 until 2008-2009

School year	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Subjects	Sports Music Visual Ed. English	Sports Music Technology English	Sports Music Technology English	Sports Music Visual Ed. English	Sports Music Technology	Sports
Nr. of subjects	4	4	4	4	3	1

Tapies' curriculum reveals hardly any changes, despite the autonomy granted to schools by the new policy. The school has not taken advantage of this autonomy to modify the old TAE reception arrangements. Tapies' reception style remains quite similar to the TAE system. In fact, this means choosing a more segregated version of mixed reception than the one proposed by the LIC policy, since the distribution of hours in or out of the reception classroom that was determined by TAE has been maintained. Presently Tapies school keeps newcomer students separate from the rest for about 25 hours.[50] Informants explained the choice of this semi-parallel schedule by citing the wide language gap experienced by non-Romance-language-speaking students. Receiving these pupils in a more integrated fashion is 'impossible' according to informants:

> Researcher: So your philosophy is to incorporate pupils into regular classes as much as possible?

49   Since June 2008 the principal of the school, who had a very pro-active, pro-newcomers attitude, has moved to another job. New changes may be the result of a weaker coalition within the school in favour of newcomers' interests. Without the principal's leadership, the regular teachers' interest in keeping newcomers away from their classes may be prevailing.
50   But its tendency over the years has been to integrate them for fewer and fewer hours. A fully parallel schedule would clearly contradict the spirit of the LIC programme.

Principal: Absolutely. What happens is that when Pakistani, Chinese etc. students arrive, it is impossible to do so. They are placed in the TAE [classroom], where they are for approximately twenty hours per week. *Within* the school but in a special classroom. ... And for the rest, six or seven hours, they are in natural groups where we try to make sure they have the minimum of language content that is possible. Sometimes we achieve that [objective], sometimes not (Interview with principal of Tapies school).

As for teaching methods, reception teachers at Tapies generally apply classical teaching methodology. Throughout the observation period, first in the TAE period (2004-2005) and then in the LIC phase (2006-2007), a fairly uniform teaching style prevailed. Classes followed classical dynamics: teachers explained and pupils listened; teachers asked questions and pupils answered. Although modern methodologies such as work in small groups or individual work are also practised,[51] the authority of the teacher prevailed and the students' actual degree of autonomy was quite limited. The classrooms' physical arrangement favoured a traditional dynamic: students sat with their desks facing the teacher and blackboard in the front. This seemed counterintuitive to the school's general discourse and pedagogical approach, which emphasises 'constructivism' and child-oriented methodologies. Also, the pro-active and progressive attitude towards newcomers' education in Tapies seemed contradictory to this way of teaching.

Tapies mentors put great emphasis on discipline in the classroom. The three mentors have a hard, authoritarian style when dealing with the students. For example, in one of the lessons observed, some pupils had not done their homework and a mentor got overtly angry and threatened to 'punish' students:

Mentor [speaking to the class, aloud]: I tell you something: those who don't come will not have a break, because we have a lot of work to finish. By Friday I want to have all reports finished. Well, we can wait until Monday to punish [those who haven't done it yet] (Mentor 3, field notes, Tapies school, p. 6).

51 Other scholars have pointed out that this combination of classical and modern teaching techniques is quite common (Woods 1985).

Informants justified their harshness, citing the pupils' lack of discipline and laziness. After the incident described, one of the mentor teachers asked my opinion about the lesson:

> Mentor: What do you think about it? Tough, isn't it? But you just have to repeat everything to them all the time. This is a very weak group: they don't study. You get tired of repeating the same things (Mentor 2, field notes, Tapies school, p. 4).

Whether it is a cause or a consequence, the atmosphere in Tapies' reception classrooms is flat. Students work with little concentration and some of them explicitly show a lack of interest.[52] Moreover, there are high levels of absenteeism, particularly for the first morning period or among particular categories of student (older pupils, males).[53] In the following excerpt, one of the mentor teachers scolds a boy for skipping the first two periods of the day:

> Mentor: So! Where were you? Did you oversleep? Or were you perhaps playing on the basketball field?
> Student: I was at the basketball field [answers the pupil, very relaxed] (Field notes diary, Tapies school, p. 6).

Perhaps another reason for the lack of enthusiasm expressed by the class may be associated with learning Catalan. The informants report that students have little motivation to do so, and that they often question or even oppose the logic of learning Catalan.

> They [the students] don't understand why, if everybody speaks Castilian, we are so insistent on teaching them Catalan. Well, here [in the reception classroom] everything is in Catalan, but then students go to regular classes and teachers there see that they don't understand and talk to them in Spanish (Interview with the principal).

Other teachers take a softer approach than the mentors and even use amusing strategies to make students happier. This can be interpreted as

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52   This could be read as an adolescent performance to build their identity against the world of teachers and adults; but it also reminds us of Willis' (1977) resistance theory and Suarez Orozco's concept of 'strategic non-learning' (1987).

53   Several informants report absenteeism: Tapies coordinator, LIC agents and social workers in the area.

an attempt to increase the motivation of students, but also as a way of compensating them for the difficult process that they are going through. For example, a mathematics teacher explained the following:

> I can't tell them off when I see that they are surfing for music or things about their country. Perhaps they don't have access to the Internet at other times. At the end of the day they are going through a very tough time. Other teachers tell them not to do it – in principle they are not supposed to during class hours – but I don't tell them anything. Well, I want them to have fun in the lessons. I think they do, after all (Interview with mathematics teacher, Tapies school).

5.2.4   Schedule-making

Tapies school is characterised by active advocacy of educational opportunities for immigrant students. This was already the case when in 1999 the school applied to the Department of Education for its own reception classroom. This initiative was backed up by a coalition of Tapies' teachers in favour of a pro-active school policy of reception. This pro-immigrant coalition, led by the principal Adriá and supported by a majority of teachers, gained enough strength to dominate decision-making in the school. As a result, advocacy of newcomer students was conveyed in many of their reception practices, and most particularly, in the delicate decisions pertaining to the timetables for classes.

After the reception classroom was established in February 1999, the coalition pushed to adapt the newcomers' timetable as much as possible to students' real educational needs. In doing so, Tapies school bureaucrats explicitly attempted to reach three goals: to teach newcomers as much Catalan as possible, to introduce newcomers to other school subjects and to the content of ordinary secondary education, and to foster the contact between newcomers and regular students. According to the TAE's requirements, newcomers had to get twenty hours of education in the reception classroom. Tapies school observed this norm strictly while including students in regular classes for 6-7 hours per week. The Tapies team carefully agreed upon a 'specific timetable for newcomers'. Reception lessons were adapted to students' needs and skills by providing them with customised training according to their level of achievement. In addition, newcomers also attended regular lessons, especially in subjects with scarce use of language. Such 'instrumental' or 'manipulative' subjects, as they are called in the teachers' jargon, are basically sports, art, music and information technology.

Setting up a feasible schedule in which immigrant students get suitable regular lessons is a complicated task, as it requires matching all timetables in the school and involves the collaboration of several teachers. Since the reception classroom educates students aged twelve to sixteen, the schedules of most regular classes are involved in this bargaining exercise. At the beginning of the year, once the school knows the number of students enrolled and the number of teachers on the staff for that year, Tapies' management team prepares the timetables for all the classes. This process involves a set of bilateral or multilateral meetings in which teachers negotiate the subjects and the number of teaching hours that they get by department. After this, the management team creates a draft schedule which needs to be sanctioned by the team of teachers. The newcomers' schedule is made within this general procedure. Initially, an attempt is made to incorporate newcomer students only in *instrumental* subjects. Then, whenever that is not possible, the management team looks for possible alternatives. In this search the teacher's attitude prevails over the nature of the subject. Regular teachers that are more open to having newcomers in their classes are selected, regardless of the subject that they teach:

> For instance, there is a group in the fourth [year] doing social sciences. We try to look for 'manipulative' subjects, but if it cannot be, well then... social sciences! It is not manipulative but there was no other way of making the schedule coincide. You have to accept it (Interview with reception coordinator at Tapies).

The resulting annual schedule is a compromise between the ideal goals and the actual possibilities. Informants insisted that, in practice, making a totally adapted schedule for newcomers has proven to be very difficult, even when the majority of the teachers agree on giving priority to newcomers' learning needs. This compromise means that newcomers get some regular subjects that exceed their level of Catalan. This is reflected in the former excerpt, as newcomer students in Tapies have had a social sciences class for several school years.

The continuity in the school's reception style can be explained by the stability of the school's micro-politics. For ten years, the pro-immigrant coalition dominated the micro-politics of the school, and supported framing the issues in terms of equality of opportunities for newcomers.[54] Over the

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54   As we will discuss in the next chapter, pragmatic considerations and institutional inertia can be alternative interpretations, but these are not sufficient. School micro-politics appear to

years, this coalition has been able to negotiate with and persuade the team of teachers to comply with a newcomers' timetable acceptable for all. The stability of this agreement in Tapies school is indicated by the schedule, which remained practically unchanged between 1999 and 2009.

5.2.5   Evaluation and transfer

Under the TAE scheme, students could stay one whole school year in the reception classroom, which meant a maximum of nine months from their arrival to the classroom. The standard procedure was to transfer students to ordinary education after completing exactly nine months. As observed in the Dalí classroom, a customary exam was done to evaluate the students' level of Catalan. However, the scores achieved by the students were not taken into account in deciding whether students needed further reception training. Since students arrived at different moments throughout the school year, the timing for evaluation and for the transfer of each pupil was different; nonetheless, the majority attended strictly nine months of reception training.

In the TAE classroom at the Tapies school, however, students could be judged ready to transfer earlier. In principle, the Education Department and the school shared the responsibility for deciding when a student was ready to pass the final exam and eventually transfer. In practice, and as a result of having their own TAE unit, Tapies reception bureaucrats actually decided to transfer some students sooner to regular education whenever the reception classrooms grew beyond their desired limits. This was explicitly reported by informants at Tapies:

> After the children have been [in the reception unit] for nine months they take the test. But what happens? Well, since there have been new intakes for the TAE [unit], sometimes students are examined after only five or six months and they pass and get incorporated in the ordinary classroom and so other children can enter in their place (Interview with the coordinator of reception at Tapies).

This strategy continued after the shift of policy. Since 2004 – enjoying more freedom with the LIC scheme – teachers responsible for reception at Tapies school have decided when and to what extent students should be transferred. The coordinator of integration together with reception mentors determine when a student is prepared for transfer. The test is in principle

be determinant.

administered by the LIC liaison from the Department of Education. 'But it doesn't need to be administered by me; the teachers can also do it', says the LIC liaison from the area. With the test results, Tapies mentors and the coordinator of integration hold a meeting together with the LIC liaison and decide whether or not each student is ready to be transferred. Evaluation meetings are held once per trimester.

Unlike the TAE scheme, the LIC programme does not establish a maximum number of students per reception classroom. In addition, the allocation of one reception teacher – two at the most – is done once per year without any revision. This rigid allocation of resources produces great mismatches between demand and supply which have to be solved by the school itself. If during the year the number of pupils in the reception classroom becomes too large, reception mentors can decide to move some of them to regular classes earlier. Transfer decisions at Tapies function as an *internal* distributive strategy to reduce the size of the reception unit. In this sense, Tapies uses its broader autonomy in transfer functions as a *coping strategy*. In the face of growing demand, within the mentioned organisational constraints, reception practitioners make discretional decisions regarding students' transfer, and in particular: who, when, and to which group they are to be moved.

First, discretional judgements are made regarding which students are better suited to transfer. Tapies' reception practitioners treat different categories of pupils differently. The mentors and the school coordinator identify two categories of pupils – the Romance-language-speaking and the Non-Romance-language-speaking – from the moment of enrolment. Specific expectations are associated with each category: each is expected to respond differently to educational stimuli. For example, Latin Americans are expected to more or less follow lessons in Catalan, and to actually learn the language in a short time. Consequently, Tapies mentors use these categories and related assumptions as a predictor or diagnosis that justify certain decisions; for example, moving Latin American students earlier than their non-Romance-language-speaking peers.

Decisions also have to do with the timing and degree of transfer. Transfer can be gradual, simply meaning that some students attend fewer reception hours and more regular lessons. Since the reception unit is *within* the school, Tapies practitioners can easily decide in favour of partial or total transfers to regular education at any point.

Besides the timing of transfer, another crucial decision at the transfer stage is to which class newcomer students should be transferred. We have

already mentioned that Tapies school has two groups per year (e.g. 1A, 1B).[55] School bureaucrats decide in which of these classes newcomers should be placed. In the first years of reception education, all newcomer students were transferred together to the same group, so as to keep them 'concentrated':

> Before, we put them all into group A when they passed to regular educa-tion. In order to have them concentrated. Because the principal that we had then wanted it so. Then, the inspector visited the school and said 'How come that one class has 40 students and the other 20?' And he told us 'No, no, you must distribute them [the newcomers] (Interview with coordinator of integration at Tapies school).

After the negative response of the educational inspector, Tapies school stopped its practice of concentrated transfer. From that moment onwards, school bureaucrats have distributed newcomer students evenly between the two classes. Students are assigned to a group from the moment they enrol in the school. Assignment to a class is based on order of arrival: the first to arrive go to group A, the second to group B, the third to group C, and so on. In addition, the procedure for transfer has become more standardised for pragmatic reasons (to save time). Informants state that other considerations were taken into account in the past, such as respecting natural groupings and friendships among students, but these practices were too time-consuming:

> Before, we tried to put them in a group with the peers whom they get along the best with. Now we don't do it anymore because in the meetings we used to spend one hour for each pupil (Coordinator of integration, Tapies school).

Internal reallocation of pupils is a strategy for coping with the large number of newcomer students that the school receives. Yet it can also be used as a pressure strategy to obtain more resources from the Department of Education (in order to open another reception classroom). For example, the coordinator of integration explained that in 2008 they received six students, although they had no vacant places in the reception unit, and these students were simply placed in regular classes and received some additional hours of Catalan. Tapies' reception practitioners are supported

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55　Tapies school used to have three groups per year. Since 2004-2005 it has only had two groups, due to cutbacks.

Table 26　Number and nationality of newcomer students in Gaudi's reception programme

School year	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Nr. of newcomer students	10	Nc	12	20	27	24
Majority nationalities	Pakistani Bangladeshi Philippine	Nc	Pakistani Bangladeshi	Bangladeshi Pakistani Ecuadorian	Ecuadorian Philippine Pakistani	Pakistani Philippine Ecuadorian

Source: School's administration.

by a pro-newcomer coalition and therefore have a stronger capacity to negotiate with the administration.

5.3　Gaudí school

Gaudí school is a small-sized high school located in the working-class inner-city neighbourhood of Poble Sec. Traditionally, newcomers to the city first settled in El Raval area and then moved to Poble Sec, at the other side of the *ramblas*, where they rose socially. When Barcelona's immigrant population began to spread into parts of the city beyond the Raval area, this was one of the preferred destinations. Gaudí school has 400 pupils divided among compulsory (ESO) and post-compulsory secondary education (*Bachillerato/Ciclos Formativos*), and has a faculty of 50 teachers. The school uses a system of flexible tracking in four subjects: Catalan, Spanish, English and mathematics.

The arrival of immigrant students was somewhat more recent at Gaudí school than Tapies school. The reception classroom at Gaudí only opened in 2003, with the LIC programme. In 2003-2004, around one fourth of the 205 students in compulsory education (ESO) at Gaudí were foreign-born (24.8%), most of them Latin American students. By 2007-2008, this ratio had slightly increased to 26.7%. Besides working-class native and immigrant students, Gaudí school has an important presence of pupils with hearing impairments, as it is specialised in hearing disability education.

The newcomer students at the school have a similar profile to those in the neighbouring El Raval area, with large groups from Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines. Latin American students, however, make up a much

larger group, as they amount to the three largest national groups put to-gether. Ecuadorians are the largest nationality of Spanish-speaking students at the school, and since 2006 have become one of the largest national groups in the school.

The teaching faculty at Gaudí does not particularly advocate for immi-grant students. Jordi, the principal, does not manage reception issues in the school. Joan, the director of studies and second in command, is responsible for that. There is also a teacher appointed as 'coordinator of integration', but apparently she is not very active. Joan takes on her role, to a large extent. The director of studies is a mindful and pragmatic man who believes that his school can play a relevant role in promoting the social mobility of its mostly working-class student body. The school has one official reception mentor, Roser, who is an extremely committed teacher who works her fingers to the bone. She was temporarily replaced by Neus, a young interim teacher with a background in special education[56] and speech therapy, a novice in the field of reception. From 2006 onwards, the school appointed a teacher from the regular staff, Laia, to support Roser in the reception classroom. Laia, who normally teaches social sciences, volunteered for the reception classroom, where she works giving extra hours from her free time (unpaid).[57]

Equity can be identified as the main value guiding Gaudí school's pedagogical approach. This means understanding that pupils with special educational disadvantages deserve positive discrimination. However, before immigrant students started arriving, the school had already other forms of 'diversity' that required special treatment, such as deaf students and working-class students. Promoting particularly talented working-class students is an explicit objective for the school (what they call 'diversity from above'), and special treatment is required to encourage their upward social mobility. Informants from Gaudí school understood that a group of students with these characteristics 'needs to be protected', that is, they must not be mixed with less-talented students, but kept in a homogeneous class, in order to encourage these students to reach the *Bachillerato* (preparation for university admission). Tracking is defended as a suitable instrument for this purpose. Schools must find a balance in how they support the various categories of pupils requiring special treatment in order to avoid some

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56   Special education refers to education for children with physical or psychological disadvan-tages.

57   This situation appeared several times in the fieldwork. For instance, in a school of the broader sample informants reported that 'here (at this school) there are people working more hours to do reception. Me, for instance: I was doing more hours last year' (Interview with a mathematics teacher from a school from the big sample).

forms of 'diversity' ('those who are doing worse') receiving all the attention, leaving others behind.[58]

5.3.1   Student enrolment

In general terms, Gaudí school and Tapies school apply similar practices of enrolment. Immigrant pupils are assigned to Gaudí by the municipal commission of enrolment on the basis of their place of residence, order of arrival, and the availability of places in the school. The commission can assign a student to Gaudí only if the school has a vacancy in both the reception classroom and in regular classes. As we saw in the section on Tapies school, non-availability of places in the regular class is sufficient reason to reject a newcomer student sent by the commission. However, the educational authorities consider that the non-availability of places in the reception unit alone is not a sufficient reason to reject a student. Gaudí school has been overwhelmed by newcomer students who exceed the actual vacancies in the reception classroom. Like Tapies school, Gaudí has had to deal with this under the same external constraints, that is, with the rigid allocation of human resources for reception suffering a one-year time-lag. Schools have to wait from when newcomer pupils are counted (in June) to when a corresponding number of teachers is assigned (the next school year).

To solve the reception unit's overbooking, practitioners at Gaudí have applied coping strategies much like those used in Tapies school. On the one hand, when regular classes are full, they have used an *external* strategy, that is, new pupils have been dismissed and sent back to the commission. On the other, when a reception unit gets overpopulated, they apply an *internal* distributive strategy that consists of transferring some pupils to regular classes sooner (see section on transfer above).

Some of the students enrolled in the Gaudí reception classroom have not recently arrived in the country, but have attended primary education for some years. If the school considers that they are not prepared for entering compulsory secondary education (ESO), they are redirected to the reception classroom. This is mostly the case for illiterate students or students who had little schooling in their home country. Neus, the substitute teacher, explains that many students are illiterate and that this lengthens the reception trajectory: 'what happens is that almost all of them arrive in primary [education] without any previous schooling and ... teachers have to teach them how to read and write'.[59]

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58   Interview with director of studies, 27 May 2008.
59   Field notes from Gaudí, p. 3.

5.3.2   Clustering in classes

In Gaudí school, four subsequent models of organisation for reception teaching have been used, each of them implying a different arrangement of students in classes. In the first two years, reception instruction was weakly organised and had an improvised character.

> We started in quite a rudimentary way. We started taking newcomers into a classroom, in any classroom available, and I would give them some 'reinforcement' [i.e. additional lessons in the Catalan language] (Interview with mentor at Gaudí).

In the second year (2004-2005), during the absence of the official mentor, the interim teacher developed an arrangement whereby students were clustered in classes by age (12-13 year olds and 14-16 year olds) and by mother tongue (Romance vs. non-Romance languages).[60] The disadvantage of the resulting structure of four homogeneous groups was that the students only received seven hours of reception teaching per week due to the limited working hours of the interim teacher. They spent the rest of the day in randomly arranged mainstream classes in which they hardly participated. The reception teacher would prepare exercises for the newcomer students to work on during their regular classes.[61] The following excerpt shows that the regular teachers did not adapt their lessons to newcomer students, and considered it the sole responsibility of the reception mentor:

> 12.00 Coffee break in the staff room. The English teacher speaks with the reception mentor about a newly arrived newcomer student. He doesn't understand English.
> Reception mentor: Let him do Catalan. I will give him homework. With very simple grammar structures and vocabulary with drawings. They can do that alone.
> English teacher: [OK] Will you tell him?
> Mentor: I already did. If he leaves [the homework] at home tell him, 'Go to Neus's classroom'. I always tell them: 'if you go to [regular] class and they do things that you don't understand, just take out my homework and start working on Catalan'. But I don't know if they understand me (Field diary at Gaudí, p. 5).

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60   Field diary from Gaudí, p. 1.
61   Ibid.

In the 2005-2006 school year, Roser, the official reception teacher, returned and organised reception on an individual basis. Each student had his or her own timetable adapted to personal needs and capabilities. A particular room was designated as a reception classroom and students would come and go throughout the day. Some students joined in regular classes for mathematics but not for social sciences, others joined in only for gymnastics and art, etc. As a result, the same group of students was never in the classroom together, and some received a given lesson twice while others did not receive it at all. Roser, the mentor teacher, made a titanic effort to adapt the reception scheme to the individual needs of students, but in the end she concluded that 'it was maddening, and I will never do something like that again' (Interview with reception mentor at Gaudí).

The lack of involvement demonstrated by regular teachers at Gaudí school has made it impossible to adapt the timetable of lessons to newcomer pupils. Given this situation, the reception scheme became a personal initiative of the reception mentor, for which she took responsibility in the absence of support from other teachers. Roser justifies this option as the best way to maximise what students get out of their training:

> I believe that the results are … [good] because I have worked myself into the ground. Well, I did this year, but I am not going to do it again. Because I am going to … they would have to lock me up [in a psychiatric hospital]! It cannot be. I have done it because I feel very bad about the fact that the children are sitting there [in the regular classes], without listening, for hours, and hours and hours (Interview with mentor at Gaudí).

Finally, since 2006-2007, Roser has implemented a new approach. Newcomer students are clustered in two groups according to their level of Catalan. In fact, this means that Romance language-speaking students are placed in the higher track while non-Romance-language-speaking students are channelled into the lower track. Also, as we will see in the section that discusses transfers, Romance-language-speaking students tend to be transferred earlier to regular classes. However, differential treatment in clustering and transfer responds ultimately to performance in the Catalan language, thus Spanish-speaking students may also be placed in the lower track.

Gaudí school streams students in their fourth year into three tracks, that is, real tracks for all subjects, and not 'flexible' ones. For younger students, the school applies flexible tracking, as classes mix students with disparate levels and they are tracked only for some subjects. In particular, flexible tracking is applied to Catalan, Spanish, English and mathematics. Students

with better academic performance are gathered in group A in the hope of orienting them towards the academic track of post-compulsory secondary education (*Bachillerato*). Students with poor academic performance are gathered in group C, in which the aim is to help them complete compulsory secondary education. Finally, group B gathers all those students that are expected to continue their studies after completing ESO, but in the vocational track (*Ciclos Formativos*). Informants report that newcomers normally go to group C.[62]

Tracking has been criticised for decades, and there is ideological pressure from the administration and from peers not to cluster pupils according to their level of academic achievement. Nevertheless, flexible groups are nothing if not a tracking strategy based on students' skills. Gaudí school has also reinstalled a fixed streaming system for the last year of ESO, based on the idea that students have distinct abilities. Informants believe that not recognising this (i.e. that people do have distinct abilities) is detrimental to students' academic progress, because it leads to the error of making classes with mixed levels. Such mixed classes, informants believe, hinder the progress of both the highest and the lowest achievers:

> Question: Why did you stop having tracks?
> Answer: Well, you know, teaching is like the sea. As the joke goes: 'Well, [now that you saw it] what did you think about the sea? That it is a bit indecisive because you don't know if it comes or goes.' Well, teaching is a little bit like that. The discourse comes from one side, that 'we are all equal or the same'. Well, yes, we are all equal but *not all of us have the same skills and abilities*. There was a time, some years ago, when saying *that* was politically incorrect (Interview with the director of studies at Gaudí).

5.3.3   Curriculum and methodology

Over time, Gaudí school has made substantial changes to the curriculum offered to newcomer pupils in the reception classroom. In 2004-2005 newcomer students received only Catalan, with the exception of some specific vocabulary related to mathematics, social sciences and natural sciences. In 2008-2009 students were divided into two clusters and the advanced cluster received content lessons in the three subjects just mentioned, rather than only vocabulary.

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62   Interview with director of studies.

Table 27   Schedule of newcomers pupils at Gaudí School, 2008-2009

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8-9		Social Science Group B			Social Science Group A
9-10	Social Science Group A		Catalan Group B		Social Science Group B
10-11	Catalan Group A	Catalan Group B/ Society Group A	Catalan Group A/ Mathematics Group B		Social Science Group A/ Catalan Group B
11-11:30	Break				
11:30-12:30	Catalan Group B	Catalan Group B	Catalan Group B/ Mathematics Group A	Catalan Group A	Catalan Group B
12:30-13:30	Social Science Group A + Catalan (ind. attention)	Catalan Group A		Catalan Group B	Catalan (ind. attention)
13:30-14:30	Lunch				
15-16	Social Science Group B	Catalan Group A		Catalan Group B	
16-17		Catalan Group B			

Teaching Catalan to newcomers at Gaudí follows an 'in context' interactive teaching scheme.[63] Mentors explained that they pretty much adapt to what happens in each situation and improvise from then on. For instance, in one of the first lessons that I observed, the students were asked on the spot to prepare questions to interview me. Teachers consider the first step in learning is to feel 'the need' to learn and 'to be motivated'. Hence, each time a student asks a question, the teacher takes advantage of the opportunity to introduce new contents, vocabulary, grammatical structures, and so forth. 'The pupil wants to know something and you take advantage of that need to give an explanation, because he is receptive'.[64]

According to Joan, the director of studies, in the first year of reception training they try to offer students 'the maximum possible of hours of Catalan', while in the second year reception hours are reduced, 'depending on how each student progresses'. The maximum number of hours is usually between nine and twelve hours of reception teaching per week. As already mentioned, in 2004-2005 students received only seven hours of reception per

63   Interview with reception mentor at Gaudí.
64   Interview with substitute reception mentor at Gaudí.

week because there was only one person for reception, Neus, and she had to divide her working hours among the four clusters of newcomers. Since 2006, newcomer students receive twelve hours of reception per week, out of which 6-8 are Catalan lessons and the rest are divided between mathematics and social sciences. Having two reception mentors allows pupils to be clustered without reducing the number of hours of reception lessons. In addition, the Gaudí reception classroom currently has a trainee who collaborates some days throughout the week and a mathematics teacher from the general staff.

   This shows that by 2008-2009, the advocates of teaching other content besides Catalan had gained support within the school. One of the reception mentors at Gaudí says that the aim of reception should be to teach newcomers the necessary content in order to achieve their certificate of compulsory secondary education. From this teacher's point of view, content subjects should be prioritised and newcomers must learn the same subjects as their peers in ordinary education during the reception trajectory. Another implication of this approach is that Catalan is given a secondary position: language should be taught only to enable newcomer students to learn other content. In that sense, if pupils use Spanish instead of Catalan, it does not matter as long as they communicate.

> When I volunteered to work in the reception unit I asked the team: Do you give me permission to teach social sciences as an additional subject? I asked for permission to experiment. We have to work on other things. What these students need is to pass the ESO in the first place. Because they cannot learn Catalan well in the three years that they are here. They will continue learning afterwards (Interview with reception mentor at Gaudí).

Yet, newcomer students attend eighteen hours of regular lessons per week, in which non-adapted content is usually taught. Reception mentors continue providing newcomers with exercises which they can complete during the ordinary lessons. Pragmatic considerations make it difficult to design newcomer-friendly schedules. Besides, the regular teachers' ideal is still that of parallel reception, closer to the TAE model than to the LIC. In the words of the director of studies:

> Then again, that idea that they [students] have to integrate with the group, to *live the group*... But what kind of *life in the group* can they possibly have when the physics and chemistry teacher is explaining in Catalan some content that they do not understand, in a language that they don't know,

and they cannot even communicate with the pupil sitting next to them?! (Interview with the director of studies at Gaudí school).

Some regular teachers at Gaudí, however, do make an effort to accommodate their lessons to the diverging learning needs of students. This implies diversifying the teaching level for the very same lesson in order to make it more accessible for some, and more demanding for others. To do this, teachers often use the strategy of 'busying'. That is, they keep students busy with individual or group assignments in order to devote time to students who need extra attention. The director of studies, Joan, describes his personal strategies for dealing with a very heterogeneous but 'quite good' group of students in fourth year:

> I teach the Castilian language... in the fourth year, and there I have this Pakistani girl, who represents an element of diversity. Also I have a boy from Venezuela with zero prior schooling, so he almost needs to learn to write. And I have five deaf students... who make up another aspect of diversity. This means, in a class with twenty pupils: first, I have to reduce the pace so that the deaf students can follow because they have an interpreter with them... Then, to work at another level with those who can *pull* much more [take on challenges], because you cannot forget that 'diversity' also includes upward and not only downward diversity. Then, I take advantage of the moments in which I say [to all] 'Read this text'... to sit down with the Pakistani girl and explain the present tense to her and say, 'Now do this and this exercise...' Therefore, it means imagination and splitting yourself up (Interview with the director of studies at Gaudí school).

Nevertheless, the current attitude of ordinary teachers in Gaudí school is not very pro-newcomer. Teachers are reluctant to have these pupils in their classes. Teachers of the ESO ordinary lessons feel 'frustration', 'anxiety' and 'impotence' in the face of a situation that they can hardly manage. In their view, the LIC principle of maximising newcomers' participation in regular lessons is unrealistic: 'You end up having a set of furniture that you cannot [properly] address and with whom you cannot work'.[65] Since a teacher's duty is to tell the students 'what to do', for teachers it is 'a torment' 'to have a poor guy there without you being able to tell him what to do'.[66] During a meeting observed during the fieldwork, the teachers' reluctance

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65   Interview with director of studies at Gaudí.
66   Interview with director of studies at Gaudí.

to let newcomer students attend their lessons was made explicit in a very civilised way. Some teachers demanded that these pupils remain more hours per day in the reception unit:

> Director of studies (to the reception mentor): Part of the faculty has asked whether newcomer students can spend more hours in the reception classroom. In particular, the teachers of subjects X and Y. Well, that is fixed and cannot be [what they demand]. But the teachers ask for them to have additional Catalan homework [for newcomer students] which they can do during their normal classes, and for these to be corrected [the exercises]. [Interim] Reception mentor: Well, [to correct] is not necessary. I correct the exercises afterwards (Meeting of the Diversity Commission at Gaudí school).

In such a situation, it seems that generalised practice among regular teachers is to teach their classes in Castilian instead of in Catalan – legally the language of instruction – in order to communicate better with newcomer pupils. Several informants described the pervasiveness of this practice and their observations are supported by other evidence. All classes observed during the fieldwork did proceed in Catalan, as dictated by law. However, what I did observe in several occasions was that teachers gave explanations in Spanish to Latin American students during the reception lessons.

Also, according to a survey conducted by the LIC agent in the school, regular students report that they speak mostly Spanish at school, regardless of their language at home (Catalan or Castilian). In their free time, students normally speak Spanish with other students. As for communicating with teachers, they answered in large numbers that they speak 'in the language that the teacher speaks to them'.[67]

5.3.4   Schedule-making

As we have seen, Gaudí school organised reception in four different ways, with consequences for the sort of schedules adopted for newcomers. After a first period of improvisation, a scheme of four clusters with their corresponding schedules was set. Afterwards, the school applied a system of individualised schedules, and finally, a system of fixed schedules for students clustered in two groups. The first three alternatives reflect a situa-

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67   Field diary from Gaudí, p. 4. This study was carried out in all high schools in Barcelona. Unfortunately, the precise results of this survey were internal and confidential. I was only told informally about the findings for Gaudí school.

tion in which the whole responsibility for reception was put on the shoulders of the reception teacher allocated by the Department of Education. Other teachers did not assume any direct tasks in reception education nor did the management team actively support reception goals. This reflects a pragmatic attitude of doing *whatever is possible with the available resources and within the given constraints*. The reception teacher was the only one teaching reception classes as well as adapting teaching materials and assignments for other subjects.

Gaudí school was also adapting the rules from above with respect to the number of weekly reception hours that newcomer students had to receive. According to the LIC agent of the area, schools are encouraged to offer sixteen hours of reception per week.[68]

Once again, the personal attitude of the principal or the management team seems to have had a crucial influence on how the programme developed. Since schedule-making is a very delicate activity that involves diverse and often conflicting interests,[69] the principal plays a referee role. The resulting schedule is the product of a negotiation process between departments and teachers with unequal levels of power, and therefore tends to reflect the structure of power within the teachers' team. For instance, those who have been working as civil servants for longer have preference (*desiderata*), when choosing (certain subjects, days, times), over those who arrived later, and those without a definitive civil servant status (interim faculty) are the least influential in the decision-making process. If the management team plays a neutral role or is not openly and pro-actively 'pro-immigrant', then the reception teacher has little influence over the powerful interests of the larger school departments. This seems to have been the case at Gaudí school in the first three reception schemes adopted. However, the management team (or principal) may also decide to support certain interests which would otherwise be too weak and hence be overlooked by the more powerful parties in the decision-making process. The shift to a reception model with two fixed schedules and with broader participation by teachers other than the reception mentor signals that reception has gained more support within the school, possibly even from the management team.

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68   However, as we have seen, this is a soft rule reflected in mere recommendations, which sometimes contradict each other (see chapter 3).

69   Schedule-making can also be conflictual; in order to avoid conflicts many schools in recent years have chosen to outsource the making of the annual schedule ('Nowadays there are some guys in Seville who are earning their weight in gold by making school schedules', mentor at Dalí).

5.3.5   Evaluation and transfer

Practices of evaluation and transfer of students at Gaudí school closely resemble those at Tapies school. The enrolment commission, a special commission appointed within the school, makes decisions about transfer. The role of the newcomers' mentor is decisive: she pre-selects those students that are prepared to be transferred; moreover, decisions are based on the mentor's report about the student. Transfer decisions deal with individual cases and can take place at any moment. Informants emphasise that there can be no general rules for transfer, as 'Each student is unique so you can't generalise'.[70] According to them, the decision to transfer a pupil follows the natural process of adaptation of newcomer students and responds to their assessment of how ready a given pupil is. In reality, however, other elements play a role when it comes to practice. Although criteria for transfer (such as student's mother tongue or age) are indeed applied with flexibility, practitioners' belief in the uniqueness of each decision reflects their *illusio* (Bourdieu 1998), as the insiders of the reception field, making them confuse ideal ways of working with the real strategies applied in their day-to-day practice. As Lipsky (1980) found, reception practitioners must deal with students on a mass basis, which makes them develop coping techniques to recognise and to process categories of cases accordingly.

Since spaces are limited in the reception classroom, teachers are confronted with the decision of who stays and who transfers. Transfers in the short-term are dictated by pragmatic reasons and not by pure professional judgement on the individual capacities of students. Roser describes that in making these decisions, compromises also have to be made, often a matter of choosing the 'lesser evil'. Sometimes pragmatic compromises lead to non-optimal solutions in some individual cases, but the logic of this strategy seeks to maximise the benefits for the collective:

> In second year [of reception] we try to reduce reception hours gradually, among other things, as a matter of classroom management. We must free up hours and have free hours so that more pupils can continue arriving, pupils who need all the hours (Interview with the director of studies of Gaudí).

Just like in Tapies school, in the face of the growing demand, reception practitioners make discretional decisions about the transfer of students,

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70   Interview with mentor of reception at Gaudí school.

decisions concerning who, when, and to which group they will be transferred. The reception mentor at Gaudí, Roser, uses the transfer of newcomer pupils as an *internal strategy* to control demand. In the case of Gaudí School, Latin American students are transferred sooner than speakers of non-Romance languages, while older students are kept longer than younger ones. Practitioners justify these practices citing the 'educational needs' and 'skills' of pupils, which necessarily imply the subjective diagnosis of the teacher. Regardless of the accuracy of this professional judgement, differential treatment in transfer serves as a strategy to cope with the large number of newcomer students that the school receives. The next interview fragment explicitly conveys the decision-making process of the mentor in selecting which categories of pupils need longer or shorter periods of reception training:

> This year, for example, I will tell you what we did. Since we had overbooking, because I cannot have 27 pupils, that is nonsense. So, what did I do? ... Well, we decided that the children from the first cycle [first and second year] who were Spanish-speaking, they would stay in their [ordinary] class, and they would continue having Catalan [there], and ... they would gradually learn, the way it used to be done. And I kept the older guys, from third or fourth year, who don't have chances, and Catalan is very difficult for them ... So, I gave priority to these boys (Interview with mentor of Gaudí School).

Another element involved in the decision is the transfer destination. As I already mentioned, since 2008 Gaudí school has had three tracks for students in the fourth year. However, Gaudí tries to keep groups A and C small in order to increase the opportunities of both the weakest and the strongest pupils. This policy has the unwanted consequence of concentrating newcomers in group B:

> The problem is that with the *drop by drop* [constant arrival of newcomers], all the newcomers arriving later in the year end up in group B. Because we try to protect C and keep it very small, and also we try to protect A, to save *upward diversity* (Director of studies, Gaudí school).

Gaudí practitioners are aware of the result of their decision, and consider it negative for newcomers and other students in group B, but they still argue that the priority needs to go to the other two groups: track C, which they call 'downward diversity', and track A, known as 'upward

diversity'. These two groups deserve the most positive discrimination. The first group refers to students with certain social or cultural characteristics that put them in a situation of disadvantage to complete compulsory education (ESO). The second group or 'upward diversity' refers to working-class students who, despite their poor cultural capital, might be able to continue studies in the academic track (*Bachillerato*) with some extra attention. Informants argue that targeting only newcomers, for whom it is most difficult to pass, decreases the upward mobility chances of working-class, native students.[71] Being convinced of the justice of their general argument is what helps Gaudí practitioners cope with the emotional stress implied in those compromises that may be detrimental to some newcomer pupils:

> Actually, here [at Gaudi] we only have one reception class. Then, newcomers arrive in November-December and you have to make the *Judgement of Solomon* ['splitting the baby']: that is, [they go to] the reception classroom and the rest of the time to Group B, where they will not understand a word. Morally you have to cope with it (Director of studies, Gaudí school).

Nevertheless, Gaudí bureaucrats admit that newcomer students arriving in third or fourth year are in a paradoxical situation and they tend to deal with them in a lenient way. Due to the rigid age limit that the educational system imposes for finishing compulsory education (sixteen years old), newcomers arriving at age fourteen or fifteen do not have enough time to do a reception trajectory of one or two years and subsequently complete their ESO studies. Before turning sixteen they must pass both the reception training and compulsory secondary education, that is, they must demonstrate proficiency in the content of both Catalan and ESO. Informants from Gaudí school report that they tend to give late newcomers the ESO degree on the basis of 'minimum' standards.[72]

> You cannot throw them out into the street without the ESO diploma. [You must] leave the door open for them. They will get out and start working; but perhaps when they are eighteen they'll decide to start studying again.

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71   These working-class students are often native but of non-Catalan origins, their parents or grandparents being migrants from poorer rural areas such as Andalusia or Extremadura. Thus this kind of reasoning on the part of the practitioners does not necessarily imply choosing between immigrants or native children.

72   In Spanish: '*intentas que saquen la ESO evaluando mínimos*'.

> It is a decision of a *social* character, what you make here (Director of studies, Gaudi school).

The director of studies at Gaudí justifies bending the rules to pass ESO, particularly in the case of highly-skilled newcomers. Students arriving in first cycle (first or second year) are sometimes required to repeat one year in order to increase their chances of learning Catalan as well as the content of compulsory secondary education.[73] They are young enough to 'miss' one year in order to improve the final outcome. On the other hand, the strategy for those who are highly-talented and who arrive in the third or fourth year is to have them pass ESO, and they are advised to pursue post-compulsory education in an international school, whenever this is possible. Talking about a Pakistani girl with a good level of English, the director of studies at Gaudí said:

> You know that if you don't pass her, her educational career in Spain is over. What you try to do is to get her pass ESO by any means, with extra support, homework, with private lessons ... And once she has passed, then you tell the parents to take her to the British School to study *Bachillerato*. Forget about continuing [to study] in Catalan because she is going to fail! (Interview with the director of studies at Gaudí school).

5.4   Other schools that provide reception in Barcelona

In the preceding sections we described the ways in which reception was organised and implemented in the Dalí, Tapies and Gaudí schools. In this section we will outline the internal variation in the case of Barcelona, as practices in the Dalí, Tapies and Gaudí schools need to be put in the context of what happens in the rest of the schools in the city.

In Barcelona, a higher number of schools delivered reception than in Rotterdam. In 2004-2005 only thirteen reception (TAE) classrooms delivered reception training in Barcelona, but this number used to be higher during the TAE period. After the beginning of the TAE programme in the mid-1990s, around twenty TAE classrooms[74] were distributed throughout the city of Barcelona. During the LIC period, as schools were allowed to start

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73   Repeating years is quite unusual in the ESO system where it is possible for students to proceed to the next course even when they have failed subjects in the previous year.

74   Estimation of T. Serra, coordinator of LIC agents in Barcelona.

their own reception classrooms, the number of secondary schools delivering reception training increased steadily, reaching 41 in 2005-2006. In order to put into context the schools investigated in this research, a telephone survey was done in 2007-2008, with a sample of seventeen of these schools in the city of Barcelona. This survey set out to outline the dominant reception styles used by schools.[75]

Interviewees from different schools show striking similarities in their reception practices in the registration, clustering and transfer phases. Clustering practices reveal a widespread preference for organising newcomer pupils according to their level of Catalan. During their reception trajectory pupils are clustered in groups corresponding to their level not only within reception hours, but often also in the regular subjects that they follow in the ordinary classroom and once they have been transferred. As many schools have organised regular subjects in 'flexible groupings', newcomer students are subject to 'tracked transfer' to the lower tracks.

Schools also show considerable similarity in their practices concerning the registration and transfer of students. Practitioners apply coping strategies much like those in the Tapies and Gaudí schools in order to solve the reception unit's overbooking: they use an *external* strategy when regular classes are full, that is, new pupils are dismissed and sent back to the city's enrolment commission. When a reception unit gets overpopulated but they must accept new registrations because there are vacant places in regular classes, they apply an *internal* distributive strategy which consists of transferring some newcomer pupils sooner to regular classes.

The survey also indicates that in Barcelona there is considerable variation between schools in the organisation of reception and in the teaching goals/methods. As a consequence, these two criteria become the best indicators of different implementation styles in the city. We can measure the type of reception structure by the number of teaching hours that newcomer students spend in the reception classroom and reception goals (teaching just language or including other subjects) by the number of teachers teaching newcomer students.

The way in which schools interpret the LIC reception programme thus differs in terms of the organisation of reception, either in a semi-parallel or integrated manner. The findings of the survey indicate that a majority of

75   The questionnaire included questions about the year of starting their reception classroom, the number of reception students in their school, the pattern of organisation of reception, subjects taught in reception training, the number of teachers teaching in the reception classroom, and the number of hours per week that newcomer students receive Catalan.

Table 28　Telephonic survey to a sample of secondary schools providing reception in Barcelona

	Number of schools opting for:
a. Reception structure	
(semi) Parallel reception (most class hours in the reception classroom)	4
Integrated reception	13
b. Reception goals	
Language as a tool for socio-economic integration (other subjects besides language)	4
Language as a goal in itself (mainly language teaching)	13

schools provides an integrated form of reception, that is, newcomer students spend a majority of their school time in ordinary lessons (20-24 hours/week) and only a few hours in reception classes (6-10 hours/week). Schools also differ widely in their interpretation of the main goals guiding school reception, expressed by their curriculum including mainly Catalan or other subjects as well. Findings also show that a majority of schools teach only Catalan in their reception courses, leaving out other subjects. In fact, even those schools that do teach other subjects in the reception classes only provide specific vocabulary for those subject areas.

Despite the fact that only four schools out of seventeen present a parallel or semi-parallel mode of organising reception, the parallel mode enjoys considerable consensual support among interviewees. Even those that apply semi-integrated structures of reception in their schools evoked parallel reception as the most feasible and convenient form of reception for schools and teachers. Further, if we add to these four schools with parallel reception classrooms those that apply flexible groupings and tracked transfer to newcomer students, we can affirm that an ample majority of schools actually receive newcomers through separated structures that keep newcomers apart from the native students.

We must keep in mind that we are speaking about coping practices that were not directly observed by the researcher, but reported by informants. Nevertheless, the survey's findings, when compared with information from LIC agents (who interact directly with many schools), can be taken as a valid overview of reception styles in Barcelona. The survey even served as a source of hints for new practices of reception that had not previously been indicated by other informants, and which should be further investigated. A remarkable example is an avoidance strategy reported by one school.

This high school acknowledged that it had a covenant with several primary schools, 'so that they would send us their pupils' after primary education; as a consequence, they would have all their places covered at the beginning of the course. That way, only a few places would remain free, and the number of newcomer students in their reception classroom would remain very low. This suggests a strategy of blocking places in the school, so as to avoid newcomer pupils or to keep the reception classroom a manageable size.

6 Explaining gaps: Rotterdam vs. Barcelona

The previous two chapters offered a description of practices of educational reception in schools in Rotterdam and Barcelona. The present chapter sets out to compare the two case studies and explain both their common and particular traits. In this comparison I want to look beyond the practices themselves. In particular, I will compare degrees of institutional influence on school practices, which at the same time means comparing the discrepancies between school practices and official policies. A comparison of the influence of policies on practices and a comparison of the gap between practices and policies; these are the two sides of one coin.

The first section of this chapter will compare the local case studies with regard to the three institutional settings (national integration policy, educational system and reception programme) that present the most noteworthy features. Subsequently, in the second section, the chapter will propose an explanation based on three elements: a) mechanisms of discretion (*coping* or *ethical*), b) types of strategies (individual, collective, or venue-shopping), and c) the concrete application of mechanisms and strategies in each local context (field of practices). Finally, d) an attempt will be made to identify those elements of the local context which best serve to explain the gaps in each case study.

6.1 Comparison of cases

6.1.1 National integration policies

National integration policies do not matter much in the practice of receiving newcomer students in the high schools studied in Rotterdam and Barcelona. In Rotterdam, the objectives prioritised by high schools in the reception of immigrant children do not match the current national goals of cultural adaptation. It is true that schools are focusing more and more on basic linguistic reception, reducing the weight of other subjects besides Dutch in the curriculum. But it is also true that schools continue to teach other subjects, and even use complicated discretional arrangements to do so. Most importantly, focusing reception increasingly on teaching the Dutch language responds more to the pragmatic need to cope with cutbacks and

school boards' efficiency policies than to policy goals regarding the cultural assimilation of newcomers. Practitioners in the high schools studied still see equality of opportunities as the final goal of reception education. Learning Dutch is considered to be important, but the reason for this, first and foremost, is as means for successful incorporation into mainstream education.[1] This view emphasises the role of language (and of reception training) in socio-economic integration, as illustrated by the shared assumption that students with different talents need longer or shorter periods of language training. We can also assume that if the emphasis on the teaching of Dutch were driven by the need to transmit Dutch cultural values, then practitioners would probably provide language training of a similar duration to all newcomer students, or different durations would respond to a categorisation of students in terms of proximity to/distance from the Dutch standard.

Also, the organisational patterns that are preferred by national integration structures have only an indirect relation with the instruments and budgets of educational reception. This is demonstrated by the fact that while integration policies in the Netherlands have shown dramatic shifts in orientation and organisational structure over the years (Scholten 2007, Bruquetas et al. 2011), programmes for educational reception have shown a resilient continuity since their birth in the mid-1970s. After the shift in the 1990s towards universalist integration policies, special schemes for ethnic minorities were in theory abandoned to favour the inclusion of immigrants and their descendents in mainstream social policies. This change in preference for general policies did not significantly affect integration policy in the field of education, compensatory programmes for disadvantaged students or their main instruments (reception training for newcomer pupils, Dutch as a second language, and intercultural education). Dutch educational policies to reduce the level of disadvantage to pupils have shown a considerable continuity in their goals over the years (Rijkschroef et al. 2005) and relative stability in their instruments. Only the scheme for mother-tongue education (OALT) was suppressed in accordance with the goals of cultural assimilation promoted by governments in the early 2000s. The attempts to modify those policy categories behind educational priority policy in order to adapt them to newer trends of integration policy have encountered considerable resistance in the field of education. In 2006, the government modified the criteria for distribution of extra resources to schools: a student's ethnic background was replaced with the universalist criteria of the parents' level of education (*Uitwerking Leerplusarrangement Voortgezet Onderwijs* 2005). However, the

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1   Interviews with reception coordinators at Vermeer, Rembrandt and Van Gogh schools.

attempts by Minister Van der Hoeven to eliminate the ethnic factor from the compensatory policy were ultimately futile, leading instead to the use of *replacement* categories (De Zwart 2005) which in fact target more or less the same social groups. At present, schools receive extra funds for students residing in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and for newcomer students (those without Dutch nationality who have lived in the Netherlands for less than two years).

In the case of Barcelona, the picture is more complicated. As we saw in chapter 3, Spain has a federal state organisation that establishes that the regions have the main policymaking responsibilities regarding immigrant integration. Accordingly, the regions – Catalonia among them – have developed their own integration policies. The practices observed in the schools studied in Barcelona contradict a crucial organisational tenet of the current Catalonian Integration Plan as well as of the LIC reception programme: the principle of mainstreaming. According to this principle, newcomer students should be placed in regular classes together with autochthonous students as fully and as soon as possible. Furthermore, structures to support newcomer students separately from their native peers must be kept as a temporary and part-time measure. However, we have seen that schools often contradict this principle, particularly by tracking pupils according to their level of achievement. The use of flexible groups or totally separate tracks in fact creates a more permanent segregation of immigrant students.

At the same time, school practices show a discontinuity with the formal goals of the Catalonian integration plan. The Catalonian policy of integration establishes equal opportunities as its main goal, but reception courses in practice deal mostly (and exclusively in many cases) with the teaching of Catalan. At the same time, the rhetoric of 'interculturality' is widespread among schools in Barcelona, largely as a principle of political correctness. Mirroring the rhetoric of the regional plan for Citizenship and Immigration 2005-2008, some mentor teachers refuse to speak of 'integration' of immigrant students, preferring to speak of 'co-existence' in order to emphasise the 'two-way, dynamic process' of 'adjustments between immigrants and local inhabitants' (Generalitat de Catalunya 2005: 161). However, the discontinuity between policy goals and rhetoric is part and parcel of Catalonian policy; the multiculturalist advocacy for (equal) respect for other cultural/ethnic identities does not translate into the recognition of the specific collective rights of immigrants' cultures.

Nevertheless, practices regarding newcomers' reception in schools in Barcelona are congruent with the Catalonian integration policy in one important aspect: the importance attributed to the Catalan language.

However, this practical correspondence with the policy goal of teaching Catalan probably has roots that cannot be traced back to the Catalonian integration policy itself. As we saw in chapter 3, in Catalonia the educational system establishes Catalan as the language to be used in all classes. We also referred to the priority given by the regional authorities to the goal of 'normalising' the Catalan language, which has been supported with abundant resources and dominant institutional structures such as the SEDEC department. Furthermore, this feature, rather than being attributed to the influence of the integration policy, is probably better explained by the social and political dynamics of language use in Catalonia. We can assume that in Catalonia there is ample social consensus about the desirability or legitimacy of supporting the Catalan language against the dominance of Castilian. And as a result, teachers and educators would probably avoid a discretional practice such as deliberately not teaching Catalan to newcomer students, as doing so would probably imply the assumption of a symbolically marked position, with conservative Spanish-nationalist connotations.[2]

6.1.2   Educational system

The educational system, on the other hand, has a more influential effect on reception practices. Reception styles in the two local cases are congruent with the leading institutional logics and are shaped by the resources and channels that the educational system provides. This observation is in line with the conclusions drawn by other studies (Alegre & Ferrer 2009, Crul & Vermeulen 2003b, 2006, Thomson & Crul 2007, Van Zanten 1997, Osborn & Broadfoot 1992). In the case of Rotterdam, the ideology of selectivity shapes individuals' professional values and representations of their work. Reception practitioners in Rotterdam interpret the main objective of reception education as to enhance equal opportunities among newcomer children, in the light of a differentialist concern with the development of individual potential. They understand that their responsibility is to help newcomer students reach their optimal level and place them in

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2   Also, practitioners' understandings of the most effective measures for integrating newcomer students play a role in supporting the Catalan language. However, the role of such understandings is also ambivalent, as they can support the teaching of Catalan to newcomer students (acknowledged as a requisite for increased labour opportunities and social mobility) as well as the teaching of Spanish (understood as the easiest channel of introduction to the social circles and neighbourhoods where these students live). The interviews offer plenty of examples of both.

the educational track that best suits their talents.[3] In addition, all the informants who participated in the study explicitly embrace the Dutch educational ethos in general terms, which they understand to be the fairest possible system, and take for granted the social stratification this may imply. The Dutch ideology of selectivity and meritocracy also underpins the different treatment given to different student categories: practitioners from the schools studied in Rotterdam share a basic consensus on the kind of investment that pupils with different achievement levels deserve. Practitioners in the Barcelona schools have quite a different interpretation of equality of opportunity, which is universalist in essence, as it puts the emphasis on common entitlements for all and on fulfilling the same goals for every pupil.[4] Hence practitioners in Barcelona understand upward social mobility in a broad sense (not compartmentalised nor targeting a specific educational position), and conceive their role in compensatory education as a matter of helping students to climb; this sometimes requires stretching the rigid constraints of a system that strangles newcomer students' chances.

The organisational arrangements of each educational system also imply specific opportunities and constraints. For example, the type of personnel management makes a clear difference. The Dutch system allows schools to use more professional or specialised staff for reception functions, while schools in Barcelona usually have to work with less professional or motivated personnel, because Spanish public school teachers are civil servants who are randomly allocated to schools (often provisionally).[5] The mode in which the reception programme is organised can also be understood as a prolongation of the organisational styles of each educational system.[6] An illustration of this can be found in the amount and type of funding granted to schools, which

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3   Interviews with reception coordinators at the Rembrandt, Vermeer and Van Gogh schools, with teachers of both schools, and with CED advisers.

4   This different representation of 'equality' in both systems (differentialist in Rotterdam, universalist in Barcelona) reflects the findings of Marilyn Osborn and Patricia Broadfoot and colleagues in their comparison of British and French primary school teachers (Osborn et al. 1992, 1993, 2010, Broadfoot et al. 1988).

5   However, within the LIC scheme an important effort was made to improve reception professionals' training. In addition, most LIC mentors were either ex-teachers in the compensatory education programme or specialised in teaching Catalan as a second language. In the TAE scheme, a majority of mentors were interim civil servants, recently graduated and without teaching experience (interviews with Tino Serra, Isabel Almécija, Gene Gordo, Marisa Alonso, and mentors of several TAE units).

6   However, some of the programme's features are reception-specific and need to be attributed to the political dynamics in the local field of reception.

considerably determines their capacity to receive immigrant students. The cash benefits (additional grants for reception) that Dutch schools receive per newcomer pupil give schools more flexibility to use those resources in a tailor-made way (although this can also open the way to abuse of the system).[7]

All of this indicates that the reception practices observed say more about the functioning of the general education system and the educational institutions than about the national integration regime and its integration policies. At an organisational level, the ISK programme is linked to the educational authorities and to the departments dealing with education policies, rather than with those dealing with integration. The main functional links have to do with the allocation of resources (funds, personnel, etc.), the distribution of students, and regulations which bind reception teachers and managers. This connection is reflected in the network of contacts and discourses of reception practitioners. In Rotterdam reception practitioners did not give priority to integration laws or policies in their discourse; rather they made reference primarily to education laws, which constitute the frame of reference for their actions. This is also true in the case of the TAE and LIC reception programmes in Barcelona. In that sense, practitioners do not relate the goals of the reception programme directly to broader issues of integration, but to the more immediate, concrete, palpable objectives of their work: the goal of the programme is to *teach* (and *receive in the school*) newcomer students and not to *integrate* them[8] (which sounds like a broader, more ambiguous task).

Nevertheless, national educational systems function with different coordinating capacities in the two case studies. In particular, the relative influence of the guiding educational ideologies varies in intensity per case. The degree of institutional influence is stronger in the case of Rotterdam, where the ideology of selectivity strongly shapes individuals' professional values. In Barcelona, by contrast, we find more exceptions to the principle of educational comprehensiveness, which is central to the Spanish educational regime. Spanish comprehensive ideology seems less successful, partly due to the co-existence of rival educational ideologies, and in part because of certain work conditions that constrain practitioners. Thus, despite the apparent

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7 Later in the chapter we will discuss other influential organisational traits of the reception programme: the material resources, the type of enforcement, and the level of autonomy that reception departments and practitioners enjoy.

8 This was confirmed in a funny way in the interviews in Rotterdam: whenever the first question of the interview was framed in terms of 'integration policy', informants would immediately start speaking about 'civic integration programmes' (*inburgering*). Some even said 'we don't deal with this, sorry, we focus on *education* [of newcomer children]'.

acceptance of chief goals and methods by school practitioners, practices follow pragmatic orientations and defy official educational principles. For instance, the taboo of 'tracking' students according to their abilities is apparently accepted by practitioners, but schools in fact still have either explicit or implicit tracking practices (mainly through the so-called 'flexible groupings').

Strikingly, the degree of influence of educational systems over practices does not coincide with the different degrees of 'statism' (Jepperson 2002, Nettl 1968) in each case. Despite the soft regulation and broader autonomy of Dutch schools in a system of 'governing by input', the schools studied in Rotterdam complied more in their practices with Dutch long-term ideals or rationales of educational selection. The schools analysed in Barcelona, on the other hand, despite functioning within a system of 'governing by curriculum', exhibit a gap between policies and practices more often and with respect to more issues.

6.1.3   Educational reception programme

A third element that comes out of the comparison is the existence of a policy gap at the reception programme level. In both local cases, the schools studied show discretional practices that adapt, bypass or contradict the official goals of educational reception. The presence of an implementation gap in educational reception in Barcelona and in Rotterdam shows that, although the reception programme clearly channels reception practices, it also leaves considerable room for agency and discrepancy. As we saw in the previous chapter, secondary schools in Rotterdam and Barcelona explicitly contest formal policies in several ways. In Rotterdam, schools adapt the official policy in at least three aspects: extending the target population, reducing the number of subjects in reception training, and making discretional decisions on the transfer of pupils to regular education. Barcelona-LIC schools also diverge from the reception programme by discretionally handling the entry and exit of newcomer pupils to the training programme, diminishing the duration of the reception period, applying (semi-) parallel reception, and challenging the exclusive use of Catalan. In many of these examples, discretion is not simply exercised within the given formal limits of choice open for implementers (*variations in practice*) but often taken beyond this. Practitioners not only make use of the autonomy that they have been granted (*granted* discretion), but also use available loopholes in the system (*taken* discretion), or even create spaces in order to act discretionally (*created* discretion). In fact, many schools' discretional practices are divergent practices at the same time (*practical adaptations*): inconsistent with or openly contrary to the formal rules.

Observing the transition between reception programmes in Barcelona gave me insight into their ambiguous role, which simultaneously channels action in a certain direction and serves as reference for deviant practices. When the TAE programme was replaced by the LIC programme, schools' practices did not simply accommodate to policy changes, but rather seemed to follow their own dynamic. Schools that previously had reception functions have maintained, to a large extent, their ways of doing things; the survey conducted in a sample of reception schools in Barcelona showed that four out of seventeen maintained a parallel or semi-parallel mode of reception like the one used in the TAE programme. But the resistance to adapt to innovations should not only be interpreted as the inertia of practitioners triggered by the higher costs involved in organisational change. Also, the reception styles of Tapies and Gaudí schools can be understood as cases of *incorporation* (Osborn & Broadfoot 1992), also known as *appropriation* (Woods 1994), because in both schools, practitioners have taken over the new policy and appropriated it in the service of their own concerns. The concept of incorporation/appropriation is also useful in analysing Rotterdam's case, as it reflects the schools' ambiguous relation with the reception programme. That is to say that schools are compliant in many ways with the programme (both the official frame and the bottom-up STER regulation), but at the same time they follow their own interpretation of the rules in important aspects instead of following them to the letter (for example, the discretional practice of providing longer reception training to highly-talented students).

The relevance of the gap in both local cases is indicated by the high degree of institutionalisation of discretional practices. My findings in the two cities reveal a set of consolidated discretional practices that respond more to collective school strategies than to individual practitioners' own principles and interests. Discretional practices in Rotterdam are highly institutionalised in nature, as they are stable over time and involve formalised procedures applicable throughout the whole reception department. Such procedures are often shared by more than one school. In Barcelona during the LIC period we also find a considerable level of institutionalisation of practices within and across schools. Only in Barcelona during the TAE period was the degree of formalisation of strategies rather low.[9]

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9   However, my findings still support the notion of a certain collective character to the discretional adaptations agreed upon by the group of TAE teachers at the Dalí school. The case of the Tapies TAE unit constitutes an exception: there we can explicitly talk of collective strategies at the school level, as in the LIC phase or in Rotterdam schools (reception departments).

Moreover, in both cities collective strategies are the result of collective decision-making. In Rotterdam, even though the reception coordinator plays a crucial role in decision-making, discretional strategies are shaped by the opinion of the rest of the teachers and by the limits set by the principal and the board of governors (for instance, in personnel matters). The case of Barcelona under the LIC presents a comparable decision-making pattern. In this case, reception arrangements need support from at least some of the regular teachers in order to function. We have seen that strategies initiated and led only by the reception mentor are weak and unstable, while collective strategies supported by a strong group have a greater chance of enduring (see, for instance, the Tapies school case). Also, the principals' leadership is essential in creating consensus and support for reception goals within the school.

6.2 Specific characteristics of the gap in Barcelona and Rotterdam

In spite of the importance of discretional practices in the schools in both local cases, the gap is more relevant in Barcelona than in Rotterdam, where the influence of the reception programme on practices is stronger. Therefore, in this section we will scrutinise the specificities of discretional practices in each local case comparing: their relevance/institutionalisation, the predominant mechanisms of discretion and schools' reception styles. Once again, the degree of 'statism' of the cases appears to be in opposite relation to the degree of influence of the reception programme, since practitioners conform to the rules to a lesser extent in the case of Barcelona, although it has a stronger regulation, than in Rotterdam, where there is a softer mode of regulation.

6.2.1 Relevance of discretional practices

All the schools studied in Barcelona and Rotterdam diverge from the norms established in their corresponding reception programmes in one way or another. However, in each of the cities the policy-practice gap has a different character. To start with, the two cases differ in the relevance of discretional practices. Schools in Barcelona (LIC) adapt the rules in more aspects than in Rotterdam. The range of schools' discretional practices is broader. Also, there appears to be more variation between centres in Barcelona, showing different implementation styles. In addition to those variations, which arise from the exercise of functions formally granted to schools for adapting

reception policy to their own needs, other practices appear that actually challenge the limits of policy. That is clearly the case in schools which use parallel training programmes for newcomers or in practices which challenge the priority of Catalan language training over other educational contents. Although the LIC policy is scarcely prescriptive and the formal limits to what practitioners can do are few, if we consider the informal limits established by policymakers, we can affirm that there are more deviating practices in Barcelona than in Rotterdam. Among the diverse school practices that deviate from the reception programme, some of them (concerning registration and the transfer of pupils) are endorsed by a majority of schools.

Otherwise, divergence in Rotterdam is less frequent, but practices that challenge policy are more consolidated and significant. Although schools and practitioners in Rotterdam comply more to the letter with formal and informal regulations than in the case of Barcelona under the LIC, the few examples of discretional practices which challenge the norms in Rotterdam are extended to a majority of (reception) schools. An illustration of this is the extension of the duration of reception training for newcomers beyond the time subsidised by public funds, which takes place in three of the four schools. Such divergent strategies are more institutionalised in Rotterdam, as the standard ways of doing things in each school remains stable over time and is sanctioned by the school's own funds. This is even more remarkable if we acknowledge that in Rotterdam, challenging the formal norms entails a financial penalty. For instance, schools deciding to extend the reception trajectory longer than a year must fall back on their own resources. This is true for the average two-year duration of the training that a majority of the schools permit to newcomer students, but even more so for the still longer reception trajectory provided to highly-skilled students in two of the schools.

In Rotterdam, discretional arrangements imply a considerable degree of consistency in the practices of teachers within each given school/reception department. This does not rule out the possibility of discretional practices exercised by individual practitioners outside the collective strategies. Nonetheless, the fieldwork did not establish significant cases of reception teachers discretionally adapting policy (or adapting their school's collective discretional arrangements) according to their own preferences.[10]

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10   It is possible to argue that this is the result of an observational bias and that a more intensive and prolonged observation in the classroom might yield different results. However, in spite of its limitations, my ethnographic work allows me to affirm that individual discretional practices which deviate from school discretional practices are not widespread; otherwise they would have been detected in my fieldwork.

Table 29 Extension, institutionalisation, and divergence of discretional practices in Rotterdam

Discretional practices:	Extension	Institutionalisation			Divergence
	Nr. schools	Years of implementation	Additional costs at own expenses	Support within school	Deviation from policy limits
Extending target group	4	Many	Costly	Very high	Yes
Reduction of subjects	2	Recent	No (cheaper)	Very high	Only informally
Discretional transfer	4	Many	Depends	Very high	No
Longer training (2 year average)	3	Many	Costly	High	Yes
Longer training for high-skilled	2	Recent	Costly	High	Yes

This individual conformity to policy was confirmed even with respect to the content of lessons, in which teachers' interpretations of the content did not modify the school model in significant ways. Practices which did adapt the STER programme's principles – e.g. reducing the range of subjects – were the result of collective decisions at the level of the department of reception.[11]

Tables 29 and 30 synthesise the comparison of divergent practices in Rotterdam and Barcelona according to the number of schools in which they occur, their institutionalisation (indicated by years of implementation, additional costs at the school's expense, and support within the school) and their deviation from policy norms. In Rotterdam (Table 29), practices that deal discretionally with the registration or transfer of pupils are generally endorsed by a majority of the schools that provide reception training in the city. Normally, these broadly endorsed strategies are also deviations from the formal limits of policy. These strategies are highly institutionalised; they have been in practice for a long period (some for twenty or more years) and entail related costs which are covered by the schools themselves. On the other hand, practices that are specific to only one or two of the schools

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11   When I talk about the 'school level' I limit myself to the autonomously functioning unit of the 'reception department'. The whole school, in the case of Rotterdam, would comprise an organisation with several buildings and departments which interact, but also a multilayered hierarchy of decision-making which is too broad for the purposes of my analyses of practices and dynamics.

Table 30   Extension, institutionalisation, and divergence of discretional practices in Barcelona

	Extension	Institutionalisation			Divergence
Discretional practices:	Nr. schools	Years of implementation	Additional costs at own expenses	Support within school	Deviation from policy limits
Reducing duration for Romance language speakers	Majority	Recent	Not applicable	Medium (Board/ Mentor)	Informal limits
Extending duration for highly -skilled	Few	Recent	More work intensive	Medium (Board/ Mentor)	Indirectly
Reducing hours of reception	Majority	Recent	Not applicable	Medium (Board/ some mentors)	Informal limits
Parallel reception	Few	Recent	More work intensive	High (Mentor/ teachers/ board)	Yes
Tracked transfer	Majority	Recent	Not applicable	High (Mentor/ board/ teachers)	Indirectly & informal limits
Challenging Catalan	Few	Recent	More work intensive	Low (Mentor/ some teachers)	Yes
Adapting curriculum	Few	Many	More work intensive	Low (Mentor)	No

seem to be a more recent phenomenon, particularly those practices which have to do with reducing the number of academic subjects that newcomer students take.

In Table 30 we can see that Barcelona presents rather the opposite picture. Schools adapt policies in more ways than in Rotterdam (as the range of practices in the table also shows), but practices present a lower degree of institutionalisation. Also, more variations between schools appear in the responses to perceived challenges than in Rotterdam (Table 30 shows the most widespread practices). Practices which challenge the symbolic touchstones of the LIC programme are only endorsed by a minority, such as the use of parallel training programmes for newcomers or challenges

to the priority of Catalan over other educational content. In Barcelona, discretional practices are in general more recent than in Rotterdam, with the exception of curriculum adaptation. Parallel reception dates from the beginning of reception policies in the city, but then it corresponded to the official TAE programme and only recently has it constituted a deviation from the norms. This is logical, as we have seen that TAE practitioners complied more to the letter with the TAE policy, while LIC practitioners apply the reception programme more leniently.

If we compare the support that divergent strategies receive within schools, we see that practices in Rotterdam are strongly backed up while in Barcelona the scenario is much more fragmented. In Rotterdam, discretional strategies from reception departments receive either *high support* (compliance from reception teachers) or even *very high support* (from reception teachers and school board). None of the practices appears to be an individual strategy of the reception teacher (*low support*), or a strategy of the reception coordinator not backed by other actors (*medium support*).

The support that discretional practices enjoy in the schools in Barcelona varies greatly, from isolated strategies by reception mentors (*low support*), to mentor practices backed up by some teachers (*medium support*), to practices that receive the active support of the school board (*high support*). In Barcelona, the different positions of reception mentors, regular teachers and school boards translates into much controversy and division of opinions. In general it holds that the more support reception professionals receive, the more consistent their practices are, both internally and in coordination with ordinary education practices. Free-rider strategies are more prone to appear in situations in which the collective reception arrangement that the school defines does not reflect the professional or personal views of the reception teachers and/or their practical constraints. Yet, there are more possibilities than *all or nothing*: some strategies supported by the school boards are not backed up by reception mentors and regular teachers, others are supported by the board and the reception mentor but not by the regular teachers, etc. This indicates that school micro-politics result in various possible coalitions between school actors (mentors, boards, regular teachers) concerning reception issues and this, in turn, determines the relevance of discretional practices. Interestingly, we observe that the two strategies that seem to enjoy the most consensual support from all the school actors are parallel reception and its twin sister, tracked transfer. I will come back to this later.

**Table 31   Discretional practices in both cities according to the type of discretion**

	Type of discretion	
Practices	Coping	Ethical
Rotterdam		
Extending target	X	X
Reduction of subjects	X	
Discretional transfer (longer for highly-skilled)		X
Barcelona		
Inscription and transfer	X	X (less often)
Reducing duration	X	
Reducing hours of reception	X	
Parallel reception	X	X (less often)
Challenging Catalan		X
Adapting curriculum		X
Reducing curriculum	X	

6.2.2   Predominant types of discretion

Although the cases resemble each other in the two main types of discretion applied in educational reception (coping and ethical), they differ with respect to how extended each of these forms of discretion is. In Barcelona coping discretion prevails, while in Rotterdam ethical discretion appears more frequently. This suggests that each of the local cases presents a combination of conditions that is more fitted to the development of one of these two types of discretion. At the end of this chapter we will discuss what these conditions are.

6.2.3   Reception styles

The dissimilar mechanisms of discretion that prevail in each case shape the reception style of schools in divergent directions. On the one hand, we see that in Barcelona, a *pragmatic style* predominates which pursues minimalistic goals, focuses on language training only, and applies semi-integrated structures of reception (with varying degrees of curriculum adaptation for the newcomers). On the other hand, in Rotterdam, school practices constitute a *compensatory style,* broader in its goals and instruments – including other subjects besides language in the training programme – and complying with the official model of parallel reception. However, given increasing similarities in work constraints, both cases tend to converge towards the instrumental language training pole.

Figure 6   Typology of reception styles of schools: Rotterdam and Barcelona
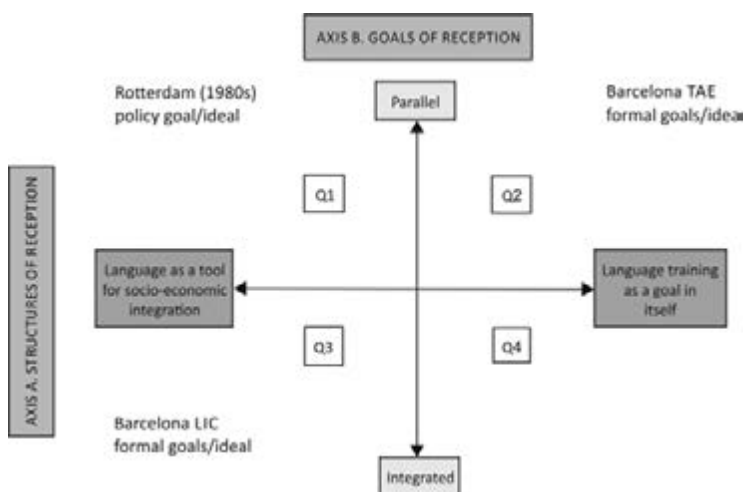
In Figure 6 we can see a diagram representing the reception style of the schools studied. Each school's position is represented by the cross of two dimensions of the style, e.g., the organisational structure and the goals of reception. The first dimension is represented by the vertical axis of the diagram, with positions ranging between parallel and integrated reception. Reception goals are represented by the horizontal axis, which ranges from the fostering of socio-economic equal opportunities (instrumental goal) to pure language training as a goal in itself (intrinsic goal). Schools situated close to the first pole apply broad integration schemes, with a variety of subjects, and tend to view language teaching as a means to foster integration of newcomers in the educational system. Schools close to the second pole tend on their part to see (Dutch/Catalan) language teaching as an integration goal in itself. Moreover, language teaching as an instrumental goal for equality tends to put more emphasis on teaching 'cognitive academic language proficiency' (CALP), while language teaching as an intrinsic goal is more limited to 'basic interpersonal communicative skills' (BICS) (Cummins 1989, Cummins & Swain 1986).

In Rotterdam, the discretional practices of schools tend to consolidate the emphasis on socio-economic integration as established in the official goals. Schools' adaptations of policy goals and instruments often set out to improve students' opportunities for socio-economic integration. In practice, Dutch meritocratic values mediate this equal-opportunities goal. So we observe that the work of reception is more diversified in practice than in theory (policy), as it applies the selective logic of post-compulsory secondary educa-

tion. Rotterdam's municipal regulations for reception introduced different tracks (treatment) for students on the basis of their skill-levels, and the STER informal policy applied this same principle in its teaching methodology. Initiatives undertaken by reception schools to extend the reception trajectories of highly-skilled pupils are consistent with this way of framing issues.

In Barcelona, the official discourse of the TAE was that of compensation via assimilation, i.e., compensating for the language disadvantages of newcomers by teaching them Catalan. In principle, Catalan was understood as an instrument to enhance not only newcomers' socio-economic opportunities but also their acculturation; in practice, since it signals cultural adaptation of newcomers to the Catalonian culture, Catalan language becomes also a policy goal in itself. TAE practices diverged from official policies and differed from one school to the next, but the official choices in terms of cultural adaptation, social integration with peers, and socio-economic equality were not contested in general. Nowadays, the official discourse of the LIC programme in Barcelona combines multiculturalism and equal opportunities. In practice, assimilation prevails: multiculturalism becomes window dressing, and the principle of equal opportunities is once again pursued as a secondary goal. Compensation is still pursued, however, by balancing the level of Catalan. Thus, variations between schools can be best represented along the axes of goals (instrumental vs. intrinsic) and instruments (separated reception vs. social integration) of reception.

The weak position of reception bureaucrats within the LIC school structure produces a pragmatic reception style which limits the effectiveness of reception education. Discretional practices – by mentors and teachers of reception classes, and by regular teachers when newcomers attend their classes – in Barcelona tend to correspond to a coping logic in which each actor seeks the best for immigrant pupils within the most convenient situation for themselves. Apparently, this translates nowadays into a tendency towards emphasising intrinsic language goals within integrated (mixed) structures of reception (Q4, in Figure 6), as the findings of the survey of reception schools in the city indicates (see Table 28). However, as suggested above, if we also count the schools that use tracking structures, what actually prevails is intrinsic language goals with parallel structures (Q2). Thus, the three schools investigated (Tapies, Dalí and Gaudí) follow the general tendency verified in the survey and occupy similar positions in the diagram (Q2, Figure 6).[12]

12 Strictly considering its reception structures Gaudí school is situated in Q4; however, if we take into account its flexible groupings which function as 'parallel structures in the shadow', Gaudí is actually situated in Q2.

At present, a tendency towards reducing the curriculum to the teaching of Dutch (closer to the intrinsic language teaching pole) within parallel reception structures is discernible in Rotterdam (Q2 in Figure 6). The impact of introducing market standards of efficiency in education exerts a contrary influence on the predominant style of school reception and its emphasis on equal opportunities. Schools in Rotterdam face a trade-off between their equality goals (promoting the socio-economic integration of newcomers) and their efficiency goals (schools as economic actors). As a reaction to constraints in their available resources, schools' (and reception departments') discretional practices currently tend to undermine the informal reception goals stated in the STER programme (particularly regarding the broad range of subjects in reception training). Schools make creative efforts to counterbalance this watering down of their reception objectives, which results in a curriculum that is less diversified but not less intense (in terms of hours). As we have seen, schools with a strong position in the local field of reception are better able to resist the consequences that cutbacks might have for their educational ideals (e.g. Rembrandt school, located in Q1 of Figure 6). Which is to say that the schools in a weaker position tend towards a reception trajectory which provides language training in Dutch and often reduces the teaching of content subjects to merely providing specialised vocabulary related to those areas of knowledge (e.g. Vermeer school in Q2).

This shows the present motivations of coping practices in Rotterdam. Divergent practices that challenge official policy try to counter the impact of the commodification of education on the equality of opportunities (*saving* practices), and incorporate a logic of compensation within the general ideology of meritocracy (additional schemes for the highly-skilled). The core of the current official policy, its segregated character and its assimilative character (due to the priority given to teaching Dutch in opposition to mother tongues) remain unchallenged by school practices.

6.3   Explaining gaps: Discretionary practices in Barcelona and Rotterdam

Up to this point, this chapter has compared, analysed and ordered the empirical material presented in previous chapters. After systematically comparing the cases and discussing the specificities of the Barcelona and Rotterdam gaps, we will move on to the explanatory part of the chapter.

Reception schools in Rotterdam and Barcelona present an array of reception practices which deviate from official policy. Schools in both cases

develop discretional practices either as a reaction to material or organisational constraints (coping discretion) or to close the gap between ideological values and real outcomes (ethical discretion). Below follows a description of each of these *mechanisms of discretion*. Besides these two main mechanisms of discretion, schools apply one of three possible *strategies* which make practices either remain at a lower level of aggregation, become collective strategies or even trespass the school level and seize the most convenient venues for discretional practices in order to fulfil their interests.

However, as we have seen, in each city either the first or the second of these motivations for discretion predominates (coping or ethical). Different degrees of institutionalisation and of collective action also prevail in each of the two cases. How can we explain why some mechanisms and/or strategies are more common in one city than the other? In order to understand the relative resemblance or difference between discretional practices in Barcelona and Rotterdam, we need to put into perspective the application of these mechanisms and strategies in each local context.

My basic argument is that different contexts with specific institutional arrangements favour different motivations for discretion and the development of different strategies. Each context comprises a set of 'contextual factors' that simultaneously entails conditions of possibility and constraints. Discretional practices are the result of the interaction between mechanisms/strategies and contextual factors. By 'contextual factors' I mean the institutional arrangements of the reception field (ideology, actors/ policymaking dynamics, degree of consolidation of the field), the specific characteristics of the programme of reception (material and organisational resources, enforcement mechanisms and autonomy of the reception staff), and the characteristics of the demand. The contextual conditionings of each case study facilitate the application of the various mechanisms and strategies to differing extents.

Distinct configurations of institutional arrangements encourage different practices. The contexts mediate not only how agents perceive the problems (organisational patterns as constraints or possibilities and the interpretation of dilemmas), but also the solutions they come up with. Each case shows a specific configuration of elements that serves as a trigger, pushing actors to adopt coping strategies or else opening the way for ethical ones. This is why the discretional practices in Barcelona are mainly coping in nature, while in Rotterdam ethical practices have more relevance.

All of this means that the main differences between the two cases can be associated with specific fields of reception (or local configurations of institutional arrangements). We need to understand such a field as the

Figure 7   Explanatory model
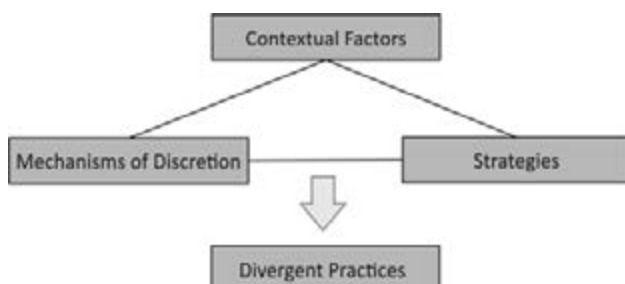
direct framework of reference that practitioners use for their action. Broader institutional arrangements are only considered as they are conveyed through that frame of action.

6.3.1   Motivations and mechanisms of discretion

Coping discretion
As the existing literature (Lipsky 1980, Woods 1994, Hargreaves 1984, Van der Leun 2003) describes, the drive to cope with working conditions appears in the schools studied as a central motive to discretionally modify the reception policy. School practices that adapt formal policies in order to improve or ameliorate difficult working conditions are present in both local cases. These practices reflect what I label 'coping discretion', as practitioners use discretion motivated by their need to cope with structural constraints on their jobs. Consequently, the main drive behind its use is the attempt to ensure better working conditions for the school workers involved in reception.

   The coping drive corresponds to a specific coping mechanism that works as follows: compelling material and organisational constraints generate certain *dilemmas* of action for practitioners, often in the form of trade-offs. For instance, in Barcelona under the LIC, reception mentors have to choose between keeping reception classrooms overcrowded or transferring students who are not yet fully prepared for regular education. New students arrive throughout the school year and the school does not hire more teachers to accommodate the increasing demand. These and similar dilemmas trigger a *coping response*, i.e., reception bureaucrats and schools adjust reception programmes in a pragmatic way. This means that the official objectives of reception become secondary to organisational priorities, and practitioners'

driving motivation is achieving acceptable working conditions. This can be understood also as a personal drive to 'minimize the danger and discomfort of the job and maximize income and personal gratification' (Lipsky 1980: 18). The coping strategy does not, however, mean simply ignoring considerations about the educational opportunities of students, as we will see.

Dilemmas normally take the form of a conflict between ideal and actual work conditions. Frequently, such conflict involves inconsistencies between ambitious ends and meagre means. Other dilemmas involve ambiguities between norms and regulations, as in the case of schools in Rotterdam that face the contradiction of having to accept undocumented students (required by the right of minors to education) and not being able to formally declare them part of their reception programme and thus not receiving subsidies for them (as national regulation excludes undocumented students from the policy target). Practice is trapped in a prisoner's dilemma in which means and ends are irreconcilable and the only way out for practitioners is a compromise in order to achieve the 'least bad outcome'.[13] When practitioners work under conditions that overload them or subject them to psychological pressure, discretion is normally put to the service of improving bureaucrats' quality of work.

The coping response entails the agent tipping the balance to favour his or her pragmatic interest in ensuring feasible, acceptable (tolerable) working conditions. In order to proceed in his or her work, the practitioner must make a situationally-based judgement. The practitioner needs to find a compromise between what is desirable (acceptable work conditions and reception ideals) and what is possible (available resources and given organisational constraints). One example is how a mentor at the Gaudí school (Barcelona) made the decision to transfer some pupils to regular education earlier in order to make room for new ones in the reception programme; in her choice she sought the best compromise within the given circumstances. Another example is the decision of Vermeer school (Rotterdam) to adapt to budget constraints by firing teachers or reducing the number of academic subjects.

Often the trade-off between ideal working conditions and given realities (resources, organisational constraints) implies a parallel trade-off between acceptable working conditions and policy goals. For instance, mentors in

13   A definition of this pragmatic solution is to be found in Thomas More, 1516, book I, p. 28. In his dialogue with Hythloday, More says: 'You ought rather to cast about and to manage things with all the dexterity in your power, so that if you are not able to make them go well they may be as little ill as possible.'

Barcelona transferring students to make room for new ones acknowledged that the ideal goal was to offer them a longer reception training period; however, keeping them in the programme would entail an impossible, unfeasible situation for the teacher (large, heterogeneous group of newcomers). These practices modify the policymakers' original intentions or procedures and adapt them to practitioner's expectations, values and ideals of what working in a school reception programme should be. In fact, by choosing the pragmatic option, policy goals are watered-down.

Illustrations of this process at the individual teacher level appear in both local case studies, although the situation is more intense and frequent in Barcelona. A typical example refers to teachers' efforts to give selective attention to students, which for the reception teachers of the Dalí or Gaudí schools in Barcelona was a real struggle. A similar dynamic takes place in Rotterdam's Vermeer school, when students do autonomous assignments in big multi-level/multi-age groups and teachers must distribute their time to assist them. At the collective level, examples of school strategies triggered by this motivation appear both in Rotterdam and in Barcelona. In Barcelona the logic of coping is at work in the practices related to students' registration and transfer, modification of the curriculum, and scheduling (reduction of the duration and the weekly hours of reception training) (see Table 28). In Rotterdam, reducing academic subjects in the reception curriculum responds to a coping intention.

The coping motivation is clearly manifested in two discourses. The *'conservative discourse'* appears very bluntly among teachers of ordinary education in Barcelona, and to a lesser extent (and in a mild form) in Rotterdam. According to the *conservative* discourse, the goal of integrating immigrant children in the school system is extraneous to the functions of (regular) teachers. Thus, this 'additional' function must be externalised to other professionals who can give specialised attention to this particular educational 'anomaly'. Newcomer students are viewed as a nuisance that demands additional work on the part of teachers and compromises the quality of the teaching for the rest of the students. Since dealing with immigrant children is a 'reception teachers' job', regular teachers do not have 'the moral obligation to speak Urdu or even English', nor should they be asked to pay extra attention to immigrant children.[14] Those who make use of this discourse advocate a parallel mode of reception that keeps newcomers apart from native students until the former learn the basics of the language of instruction. This discourse assumes the principle that

14   Interview with director of studies of Gaudí school (I), pp. 4-5.

student homogeneity is the ideal context for teaching, thus any element introducing heterogeneity justifies the application of coping reactions. In fact, practitioners making use of this discourse resolve the tension between educational goals (general vs. specific goals of reception) by prioritising the general 'transmission of knowledge' and dismissing the goal of 'reception' as 'ours'.[15] When taken to an extreme, this unilateral focus on general education leads to xenophobic attitudes that justify a more permanent segregation of newcomers, as well as relegating the beneficiaries of reception education to a secondary place because *they arrived later,* hence recognising that *nationals have the priority.*[16]

Moreover, from the perspective of the reception coordinators and the principals, a 'realist discourse' emerges both in Barcelona and Rotterdam. This realist discourse accepts the role of the school in promoting equality of opportunities, but also assumes the non-attainability of ideal goals of reception. The major problem in the application of reception goals is that they have to compete with other educational goals. The realist discourse defends the notion that immigrants' reception is ultimately a question of resource distribution. All schools have limited resources which have to be distributed among different educational goals on a zero-sum game fashion: 'At the end, we distribute what we have among all [school] departments and reception [the department] gets something'.[17] Also, teachers have to distribute their time and attention among students. Moreover, the reception classroom has to be constantly cleared of students because there are other pupils constantly arriving who also require reception. The realist discourse is used to justify all kinds of coping strategies. Advocates of this discourse are aware of the contradictions that their coping strategies imply, but they believe that they do 'their best' given the material and organisational deficiencies. Those who make use of this discourse in Barcelona complain about the insufficient public investment in reception and think that schools

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15   'Ours' refers to an implicit subject 'We, the (regular) teachers', as constructed against 'the reception teachers/mentors', who are symbolically connoted as 'the Other'. Such discourse uses an analogy that naturalises the relationship between 'teachers-Other' and 'Other-students' (ethnically/culturally different).

16   Studies in Spain register an increase in intolerant attitudes towards immigrants. Recently, the discourse of the 'priority of the nationals' has become considerably widespread, as confirmed by the findings of opinion surveys and qualitative research based on focus groups and interviews (Pérez Yruela & Desrues 2006, Cea d'Ancona 2008, Cea d'Ancona & Vallés 2009). For instance, 78% of the informants in the IESA survey thought that autochthonous parents should have preference in choosing schools, before immigrant parents (Pérez Yruela & Desrues 2006).

17   Interview with director of studies of Dalí school, p. 1.

have been abandoned in reception matters. Additional means would be required to improve reception.

Ethical discretion (or discretion based on professional ethics)
Contrary to the predominant view in the literature, another impulse to discretionally adapt reception policy comes from the views of practitioners about the education of young immigrants. Teachers hold specific professional or personal views about the key goals of education for immigrant students and the best methods to achieve them. Individual practitioners and schools adapt reception rules to their values concerning educational goals and requirements. This includes: prioritisation (what is the goal of education? Are socio-economic or cultural goals more important?), general approach and pedagogy dealing with unequal opportunities, and teachers' roles. While the coping motivation seeks to advance professional and personal values related to ideal working conditions, the ethical motivation generally aims to improve the educational opportunities of newcomer students. Hence, the main difference between these two motivations concerns the focus of interest of the discretional practice, whether it is the newcomer student (learning conditions) or the practitioner themselves (working conditions). Ethical and coping motivations concern both pragmatic issues and ideology as well as personal and professional values.

Although most ethical practices are prompted by the teachers' genuine interest in improving students' opportunities, the outcomes are not always positive. Practitioners also make negative pre-judgements about the potentialities and skills of students, which may in fact function as self-fulfilling prophecies. Thus, in the analysis we must differentiate the motivation for action and its real consequences over the school career of students.[18]

The mechanism of ethical discretion is also triggered by a *dilemma;* or in other words, certain dilemmas motivate a discretional choice to adapt policy. Divergent practices are activated by an inconsistency between practitioners' ideals regarding the education of immigrant students and the reality of policy. This disjuncture is, in these cases, provisionally resolved to favour practitioners' ideals with respect to service provision (i.e., the equality of opportunities provided by reception programmes) instead of pragmatic demands for acceptable working conditions, as in the case of coping mechanisms.

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18   To be clear, coping does not lead *per se* to negative outcomes and ethical to positive ones, although the consequences of coping are more often restrictive of rights and opportunities.

Sometimes the practitioner considers that the legitimate goal of providing equal opportunities for newcomer students clashes in fundamental ways with the officially stated goals of the reception programme. This represents a mismatch between the visions of school personnel and those of policymakers regarding social justice and the equality of educational opportunities. For instance, reception-programme workers in Rotterdam consider it unfair that undocumented or Antillean students are excluded from the target group as described by the official policy, and are therefore not formally entitled to reception training. Likewise, we have seen that a minority of teachers in Barcelona believe that really improving the educational opportunities of immigrant pupils requires teaching them the curriculum for compulsory secondary education (ESO) rather than mainly teaching the Catalan language.

At other times, what school workers question is not so much the official goals but rather the methods provided for achieving them or for implementing policy. For example, reception mentors in the Barcelona TAE programme perceive that the nine-month reception training prescribed by policy is insufficient for some pupils to reach the targeted minimum level of Catalan. In fact, school staff from both the TAE and LIC programmes in Barcelona questioned the sincerity of policymakers' intentions, given the scant resources and inadequate implementation arrangements allocated for fulfilling the stated goals.

The commitment of the agent in question is crucial for triggering the ethical response. I define commitment as the self-perception that educators have of themselves as active agents who are socially responsible for children's education. This may also entail a commitment to the achievement of social justice and equality through education. At a collective level, the ethical dilemma concerns the school and its role regarding those public policies aimed at compensating educational disadvantages. Some workers experience this as a moral obligation, like an informant in Barcelona who described her choice of undertaking a costly, work-intensive procedure of individualised reception as 'a matter of conscience': it was the best that she could do for students because 'otherwise they would have only attended the reception class four hours a week'.[19] Some experience this commitment as a political response: those educators with a progressive political or pedagogical vision often see themselves as active participants in the production of educational (and socio-economic) opportunities for students. In any case, whether it is a moral or a political issue, commitment is a structural

19   Interview with reception mentor in Gaudí school, p. 3.

property, partly shaped by the prevailing ideology of the social context in which the practitioner is embedded and socialised.

Clashes of values can be explained by the fact that individuals belong to multiple and diverse fields of practice, each of them with their own ideological/cultural values and *habitus* (Bourdieu 1993, Emirbayer & Johnson 2008). Societies are amalgams of subsystems and intertwined layers with different or even competing logics. Institutional arrangements within the same society normally present a diversity of values, a phenomenon which can be found across sectors, territorial units (regions, cities) and organisations. This implies that as teachers are social and political actors who belong simultaneously and successively to different socio-political spheres, the values that they hold correspond to different subsystems and sometimes collide with each other, leading to dilemmas of action. Furthermore, fields of practice are for their part embedded within diverse institutional arrangements, and as a consequence tensions between conflicting principles are intrinsic to them. Even within the same field there may be contradictory values in successive historical moments: practitioners may experience a clash between deeply accepted values and new policies. The multilayered and pluralist nature of contemporary societies is not the only source of inconsistency. Institutional pluralism implies that one single principle can have several institutional realisations (Bader & Engelen 2003) therefore there is not an exact fit between normative principles and concrete institutions. The meaning of basic values such as educational equality of opportunities – which in general terms is supported by all programmes of reception considered here – ultimately has to be interpreted within its specific institutional translations in each context.

In the case of Barcelona, competing educational ideologies coexist (i.e. progressive vs. conservative, nationalist vs. non-nationalist), dating from the origins of the democratic system of education. Here we should mention the presence of strong teachers' movements (such as the 'Rosa Sensat' association), which promote progressive education and enjoy broad support among teachers. Practitioners and schools with this view may experience a tension between their preferences and the conservative style of the educational authorities (until 2003). Progressive teachers likewise clash with some old-fashioned teachers from the former BUP secondary education system,[20] who try to protect their prerogatives and are very unwilling to cooperate with reception tasks.

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20   In the previous education model, BUP was the academic track of post-compulsory secondary education, starting after primary education at age fifteen and leading to university. See footnote 204.

In Rotterdam, the source of the ideological conflict that feeds ethical practices has to do with the vision of reception and of equal opportunity that underlies official policy nowadays. Schools still rely on the principles and spirit of the policy as it was formulated in the 1980s, when it was a more comprehensive programme with a clear compensatory intention aimed at improving the educational opportunities of newcomers both in the socio-economic and cultural sense. Two examples in which this conflict is made explicit are the differentiation of trajectories for different student profiles and the attempts to keep a diversified reception curriculum instead of giving in to political tendencies that favour a minimalistic, language-focused training programme. A second source of divergence in Rotterdam is the contradiction between the philosophy of the reception programmes (compensation) and the ideology that dominates general education (selectivity). Practitioners solve these inconsistencies by adapting reception to the general philosophy of education prevailing in the Netherlands. They do this, for example, by developing arrangements to extend the duration of the reception trajectory for highly-skilled students. Although the original spirit of the policy held that reception courses must be adapted to the different types (tracks) of education (Beleidsplan culturele minderheden in het onderwijs, 1981: 8), present financial provisions cover an equal duration of the programme (one year) for all students regardless of the education track to which they are expected to transfer. A subsidised time-span which is the same for all students corresponds to an ideology of *equality* in the application of compensatory teaching; unequal duration of the trajectories, on the other hand, implies a logic of *selectivity* which considers it fair to treat students differently according to their capabilities. Thus we can deduce that reception actors exercise a 'selective' approach to their duties.

In fact, the pragmatic concerns of practitioners go hand in hand with concerns that derive from their ideology or values. This means that in reality, the ethical mechanism does normally appear in combination with and is reinforced by the coping mechanism. An example of this is Rotterdam's extension of the policy target. The broadening of the actual reach of the ISK policy in Rotterdam to other categories of students has been interpreted here as an example of ethical practice. The explicit motivation behind it – as registered in practitioners' discourse – is the need for Antillean students to improve their Dutch. This also relates to a basic belief in the right of any newcomer student to receive reception training in order to bring their knowledge of Dutch and content subjects up to the level of their peers. Furthermore, schools have openly pleaded for the inclusion of those categories of students that are left out by the policy. However,

schools also have budgetary interests in enlarging the official target group, since unsubsidised students are costly for the schools. Besides, for public-run schools – like Vermeer and Rembrandt – which are obliged to accept all students, the most convenient option for regular teachers is to place newcomers in the reception programme. This double interest (practical and ideological), acknowledged by informants, indicates that in this case, the coping and the ethical character of school adaptations go hand in hand.

The ethical motivation corresponds to an idealist discourse, best represented by reception teachers, and by some regular teachers and managers. The *idealist discourse* defends the goal of equality of opportunities for immigrant children. Advocates of this discourse consider that it is possible and desirable to commit further to this goal. This implies coming up with additional resources from the school and from teachers' own resources. However, it also requires being creative and innovative with the adopted measures. Fostering equality also means questioning the curriculum for newcomer pupils and seeking the most useful means to learn. In Barcelona, some supporters of this discourse emphasise the importance of learning Catalan, while others defend the need to diversify the curricula taught to newcomers by including content subjects and not so much (the Catalan) language ('What these students need is to pass ESO …'; 'What they need is to obtain their school certificate!').[21]

This discourse justifies policy modification in order to improve the educational opportunities of newcomer students. However, since there are several routes to reach this goal, the discourse splits into several sub-variants. In Rotterdam we find a '*selective discourse'* that introduces meritocratic principles within compensation policies. According to this discourse, newcomers must receive special treatment in order to allow them to reach the educational track that corresponds to their innate skills. High potential students deserve more attention, as it is more difficult for them to reach the *right place* (because they have to climb higher).[22] Similarly, the *double-equity discourse* expressed in Barcelona assumes that schools have to facilitate the integration of immigrant students without damaging the educational opportunities of other students. This means that the school's goal is to improve the life-chances of all students with particular arrears, and not to focus only on those with the most difficulties. As resources are limited, this goal implies a zero-sum game in which teachers have to

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21   Excerpts from interviews with the reception mentor and the director of studies at Gaudí.
22   Interviews with reception coordinators at Vermeer and Rembrandt, and with CED-adviser M. Zweekhorst.

distribute their time and attention. The measures which schools choose to adopt have to balance the support given to different categories of students, both immigrant and working-class native, both those who need help to obtain a basic degree and those who can obtain a better degree ('We have to help the diversity from below without hindering the diversity from above'). Therefore, advocates of this discourse understand that the teacher's duty sometimes involves helping disadvantaged students reach minimum standards, while at other times it consists of helping them reach the maximum level. Tracking and flexible tracking are defended as measures that help 'protect' the opportunities of those at an intermediate level ('who are too good for vocational training, but not good enough for university'), who are considered a particular target group.[23]

6.3.2   Strategies or levels of discretional action

Fragmented/isolated action
In some of the schools observed, discretional practices remain at the lowest level of aggregation, basically as individual strategies carried out by reception teachers and mentors. These practitioners develop their reception functions in a hostile or indifferent organisational context that does not allow them to find support among other colleagues in order to discretionally adapt the reception programme. This is clearly the case in the TAE programme in Barcelona, which scatters its workers into TAE classrooms that are located in ordinary schools, but are formally disconnected from those schools. Also, we observed that fragmented action prevails in the LIC Gaudí school (Barcelona), particularly in the early arrangements for reception.

At this individual level of action, practitioners have at their disposal two of the potential channels of discretion identified in chapter 2. The first alternative is to exercise the formal autonomy granted to them to interpret the policy within the given limits (*granted* discretion). For instance, mentor teachers in the TAE classrooms in Barcelona simply exerted their responsibilities vis-à-vis the curriculum when they adapted the teaching contents to the degree of advancement of each student.

However, reception teachers have limited formal autonomy. Thus, in order to advance goals other than the official ones, individual practitioners also use the gaps and loopholes in the system in order to introduce

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23   Interview with director of studies at Gaudí school (I), pp. 4-5. For a reference to these practices, see chapter 5.

either coping or ethical modifications (*taken* discretion). As we have seen, practitioners face a broad array of rules and regulations that often contradict each other. School practitioners take advantage of the leeway created by ambiguity, confusion or omission of the rules to develop coping strategies. Here the coping and ethical drives are not necessarily expressed in direct opposition to the formal policies, but rather by means of 'incorporation' (Osborn & Broadfoot 1992) or 'appropriation' strategies (Woods 1994). This means that teachers take on the policy and appropriate it in such a way that it addresses their own concerns. This implies sometimes using 'radicalised versions' of widely accepted norms and principles (Bader & Engelen 2003).

Collective engagement at a school level
The potential dilemmas that working conditions pose for reception teachers are many and are not easy to resolve. Reception practitioners can apply individual discretional strategies as a response to those riddles, but the impact of these individual practices on the classroom is limited. As a consequence, reception practitioners in both cities tend to engage in activities that allow them to enhance their levels of autonomy and discretion. Schools also want freedom to respond directly to reception challenges, especially because newcomers' education has repercussions for the rest of the school. Although individual teachers may contradict school policies, the school as a whole seems to function as the main catalyst of discretional practices. In this process, school discretional practices become more than a mere aggregation or combination of individual practices, resulting in the particular discretional strategies employed by the school with respect to policies designed at a higher level.

Elevating discretion to the school level can also create distinct conditions for the exercise of discretion. We have seen before that under working conditions which impose many limits on practitioners' activity, survival strategies prevail. When pressure is relieved, practitioners can use discretion in a creative way in order to further their ideals of equality. Finding more convenient institutional venues – such as the school – can open the door for professionals to use discretion not so much as a protective and pragmatic mechanism, but rather as a form of advocacy or defence of specific educational ideals and values.

As observed in the case of Barcelona, in organisational environments that tend to isolate reception practitioners, the degree and direction of collective discretion depends on internal school micro-politics. In Barcelona's hostile environment, the development of a strong reception coalition within the school ensures a collective, coordinated, and coherent reception strategy.

The more successful a reception mentor is in building a pro-reception coalition within the school, the more discretional strategies will be developed at a collective level (be it at the level of the reception department or the school).

In Rotterdam, the dilemmas that prompt discretional reactions clearly find solutions which are more satisfactory for reception practitioners when undertaken at a collective level. The extension of the target, including categories of students not covered by public subsidies, can only be systematically applied as a collective strategy if the school as a whole assumes the costs involved. As we have seen, the schools in Rotterdam offer reception training to unsubsidised categories of newcomer students (Antillean students or undocumented students) and accept that the reception department has a deficit in this regard, trying to compensate for that deficit through other means.[24]

As school practices require more collective organisation, they necessarily require a higher degree of awareness (and reflexivity) on the part of practitioners. Likewise, open political opposition to policy and to the decisions made by higher ranks of civil servants is more visible in collective arrangements at a school level or higher. We observed above, for example, that Tapies school does not admit some newcomer students when there are no vacancies in their reception classrooms, putting them on a waiting list as a way to pressure the authorities to provide resources for an additional classroom.

The consequences of collective organisation are particularly important for the exercise of ethical practices. Again, the exercise of ethical strategies is not merely a matter of commitment at an individual or school level; it also depends on the existence of favourable institutional venues. Certain dilemmas confront the practitioner with his or her own responsibility as an educator, requiring an active response according to his or her commitment to equality. However, the institutional channels available determine to a great extent the final response (equality-enacting or not), particularly when it comes to formulating collective solutions at the school level. Institutional channels may protect goals of equality from competing objectives within the school, as in the case of Rotterdam's independent reception departments, or else channels may leave the treatment of newcomers in the individual hands of tutors working in the reception programmes. Ethical practices are often the result of collective action that bends the existing institutional channels to provide greater guarantees to students.

24 Interview with vice-principal of Rembrandt school.

Venue-shopping: Moving upwards in the decision-making ladder
Reception-programme schools and staff in Barcelona and Rotterdam actively engage in lobbying activities, identifying the most convenient institutional decision-making venues in which to defend their interests and preferences. This strategy has been labeled 'venue-shopping' in the literature (Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Guiraudon 2000) because actors seek the venues that are more beneficial for them, understanding that 'the rules that guide each political arena favor different kinds of actors as they require different resources and call for different strategies' (Immergut 1992 in Guiraudon 2000: 258). My study shows that in the two local cases under scrutiny, schools used strategies of venue-shopping to deal with the dilemmas of reception better. Partially as a result of this, we can appreciate a considerable increase in the decision-making ability of schools (in both cities) in matters relating to reception, which the schools use discretionally to adapt policies. Also as a result of the venue-shopping strategy, some discretional practices that contradict formal policy in important ways have acquired a collective, institutionalised character at the school level.

Practitioners try to use the institutional venue that best serves their goals and preferences, in which the balance of forces is tipped in their favour. Venue-shopping by hands-on participants in the educational programmes does not necessarily entail attempts on their part to obtain more autonomy or decision-making power; sometimes, in fact, it may be more convenient for them to push for greater regulation and devolve some responsibilities to a higher level. In particular, the cases studied show that practitioners prefer to keep decision-making at the school level for financial and organisational issues (e.g. clustering students, schedule-making), but in the definition of the curriculum and teaching methodology, they prefer regulation and guidelines to come from higher levels. The standardisation of the curriculum has several advantages, such as making teaching materials available so that teachers do not have to develop them on their own, or facilitating the mobility of students between schools and types of education. This is why schools in Rotterdam strongly supported the STER programme. Otherwise, for organisational issues (enrolment, transfer and clustering of newcomer students), schools or certain school sections seem to be the most convenient venues in the opinion of reception-programme personnel. This impels concerned personnel to seek solutions at the school level, rather than leaving these matters to the discretion of individual teachers.

The venue-shopping strategy has coincided with other political shifts in each city's system towards the devolution of more responsibilities to schools. A necessary condition for such a strategy is that practitioners have access

to higher venues, but this access can come as the result of being formally granted autonomy (from above) or else of *taking* it via bottom-up struggles. Both in Rotterdam and in Barcelona there are examples of bottom-up initiatives on the part of schools, which either result in the empowerment of schools or in the inclusion of their interests on the political agenda. Schools in Barcelona and Rotterdam tend to use their formal autonomy in a discretional manner, sometimes overtly opposing the official boundaries established by the reception programme.

In Rotterdam, schools have engaged in venue-shopping strategies from early in the history of newcomers' education. In the 1970s, those schools that opened reception classrooms organised a national federation with the aim of elevating the issue from the school level to the national political level. This search for regulation and funding was initiated by the schools themselves, on the basis of their own interests. Later on, in the 1980s, schools considered that decision-making about some dimensions of newcomers' education (curriculum and teaching methodology) should be elevated from the school level to the municipal level. As a result, the four reception schools and the municipal department supported a standardisation of curricula and teaching methods among all schools (STER programme). But not all efforts have been in favour of more regulation and centralisation of policies; schools have retained considerable autonomy in financial and organisational issues. In particular, they have used this autonomy to concentrate (segregate) newcomer students within the school, a strategy favoured by regular teachers but which produced the unintended consequence of lending disproportionate power to reception-programme teachers.[25]

In Barcelona, venue-shopping efforts by schools date back to the approval of the TAE reception scheme in the mid-1980s. A few schools like Tapies, with extraordinary numbers of immigrant students, demanded permission to create a reception classroom within their school (instead of sending their newcomers to a classroom in the area). Essentially, this was a demand for more school autonomy in order to regulate the issue internally. Since 2003, the LIC programme has devolved some decision-making from the regional level to the school level. Schools can now, for instance, transfer their newcomer students from reception education to regular classrooms at will, and cluster them in the way they find most convenient. For tutors

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25   Reception teachers/departments in Rotterdam are more influential than those in Barcelona. Yet, they are scarcely influential at all if compared to other departments within Rotterdam schools: the fieldwork confirms that reception priorities are not strongly backed by the general board of governors.

in the reception programme this can mean better solutions to some of the inconsistencies in their work, elevating the issue from the isolated venue of the classroom to the more empowered one of the school. For a reception mentor in charge of an overcrowded reception classroom, it is very convenient that the decision to move some of the students earlier to regular classes depends solely on the school board[26] and not on higher levels of the school system. However, in other cases, elevating the issue to the school level has meant disempowering mentors. The outcome of each shift for reception mentors depends on the school politics and the support that the reception programme receives within each particular school.

6.3.3 The local fields of educational reception: Mechanisms and strategies at work in the local contexts

Rotterdam
The specific configuration of elements that make up the field of reception education in Rotterdam accounts for a limited presence of discretional strategies on the part of schools, among which the most notable are highly institutionalised ethical practices. The present configuration needs to be understood as a product of past historical processes shaping the field in both its structural and ideological dimensions. In the period between 2004 and 2006, the field in Rotterdam reached a stable, consolidated state, with well-established procedures in a context of decreasing demand. This stable phase is the product of a path-dependent process in which early choices have been reinforced by various sources of institutional 'positive feedback'. This consolidation of policy is clearly reflected in the presence of fewer discretional practices and the strong institutionalisation of those that do exist. Some of these discretional practices have a clearly path-dependent character which can be traced to the original intentions of policy back in the 1980s.

In the Netherlands, the educational reception programme was built following a bottom-up process (see chapter 3). The initiative was originally taken by urban schools with high concentrations of newcomer students. Subsequently, the form and content that the official programme of reception eventually adopted was a direct translation of the measures that schools had pioneered prior to the existence of public policy on the issue. Such a pattern

26 Reception mentors have significant influence in this decision-making process. The mentor proposes that certain students be transferred and this is discussed in the school's faculty meeting. Proposals are normally accepted.

of policymaking suited the interests of national policymakers back in the 1970s, when they were still reluctant to acknowledge immigration issues as a policy problem for the Netherlands. This probably helped keep the issue low-profile, allowing schools to maintain their own in-house pragmatic choices regardless of broader ideological or political connotations. Subsequent policy developments in Rotterdam followed the same bottom-up pattern and reinforced early policy choices. In 1993 the co-operation between the municipal Department of Education and the four schools providing reception education allowed for the creation of an informal municipal policy (the STER programme) that introduced a curriculum and methodological standards. The existence of such a programme, agreed upon by consensus and reflecting practitioners' preferences, accounts for the high degree to which reception-programme staff identify with it, which in turn explains high levels of compliance.

Paradoxically, in parallel to this bottom-up development, the right of foreign children to be educated in their mother tongue was the topic of heated debate in political and academic circles (Lucassen & Köbben 1992). In the mid-1970s, the general opinion on this issue shifted from the *assimilationist* paradigm to the *integrationist* paradigm advocating the right to keep one's own culture and the need for bi-lingual education. While in the 1950s and 1960s the first reception programmes for children of repatriates from the former Dutch Indies consisted in assimilating them into the Dutch language and culture, the massive arrival of Surinamese and Antillean children in 1974-75, along with guest workers' children, was received with a very different spirit. Within this framework, some schools were already piloting mother-tongue courses by the end of the 1970s.

Nevertheless, the attention given to mother-tonguelanguages and bi-lingual education was not detrimental for the reception programmes that schools had set up to teach Dutch to immigrant students. On the contrary, early reception policy was reinforced thanks to its convergence with the broader institutional net of education. Bilingual education (OALT) was only relegated to a marginal place in the 1980 policy document 'Cultural minorities in education' (Beleidsplan culturele minderheden in het onderwijs 1981), which placed the emphasis on a general compensatory policy for children of low socio-economic status (Lucassen & Köbben 1992). The reception programmes for newcomers fitted well with the compensatory philosophy behind the national scheme for educational opportunities and its basic strategy of infusing schools with additional resources in order to overcome educational disadvantages. At the time, the option of establishing a separate educational system for newcomers was not interpreted as a racist

or segregationist action, but rather was seen in light of Dutch institutional corporatism. Separation had a positive connotation, as reception classes were seen as homogeneous social clusters meant to temporarily empower and support their members in their future participation in mainstream society.

Considerable financial support should be acknowledged as another form of positive feedback for the ISK programme. In general terms, since schools first obtained financial support from the Ministry for reception activities in the 1980s, there has been a growing provision of funds for reception in addition to those directed to regular education. Chapter 4 described in detail the additional funds per newcomer student that schools receive. Since the early 1980s the tendency has been towards an increase in funds and a decrease in the flow of newcomer students. This provision of funds, proportional to the demand, has ensured that student/teacher ratios remain reasonably low and therefore reception classes may be taught under feasible working conditions. Adequate working conditions reduce the drive to invent coping strategies. Moreover, funding in the form of cash benefits favours an improvement in working conditions as they lend schools and reception departments considerable flexibility, permitting them to respond to their most urgent needs. In addition, the financial conditions won thanks to the schools' mobilisations have remained quite stable over the years. This permanence of funding together with a relative continuity of the policy has opened the way for a substantial stability of school practices.

Although the relative generosity and stability of funding has served to empower schools and teachers, funding in Rotterdam also has important prescriptive effects. This particularly affects reception programmes because of the political struggle over reception, and determines where and how discretion is applied. As we have seen, funds in Rotterdam are governed by strict rules of eligibility. In particular, rules establish a distinctive target for the policy, i.e. the types of students who entitle schools to receive resources. Schools have lobbied and developed discretional arrangements to contest the boundaries of that policy target because of the inconsistency it creates between the number of students who are formally subsidised and the number that actually *sit* in the classrooms. School strategies both *advocate* extending the subsidies to students left out of the programme, and *cope* with the additional costs that including those 'outsiders' in their classrooms entail for the school budget.

The role of the municipality in this local field has been crucial in sorting out imbalances that could be a source of tension for practitioners. This role is dual: it serves as a referee between the local partners of the policy network and also as a mediator between national policymakers

and local practitioners. As a referee, the local authority has shaped the network of schools delivering reception training to mirror the pillarised model of equality in the national arena. According to this logic, schools from all socio-political pillars (Protestant, Catholic, public, etc.) are equally entitled to public funds for education. In Rotterdam, the entitlement to run reception schools has been granted to two boards of governors, one public (BOOR) and one Protestant-Catholic (LMC). In addition, the municipal Department of Education has been in charge of distributing public funds for reception among the schools participating in the programme, particularly since 1998, when equal opportunities policies were decentralised.[27] As a mediator between national and local actors, the municipality has injected additional funds to close the gap between the theoretical and the real policy target, and to cover the time lag between counting dates and the cashing of the subsidies.

Municipal intervention has managed to mitigate the gap between policy in theory and practical requirements by fulfilling the demands of school practitioners that had been disregarded by the Ministry of Education. Such intervention has contributed to the low level of conflict in the field and thus to the legitimacy of the official reception programme. The active role of the municipality in reception matters has made the local arena an attractive venue for schools. This has encouraged schools to take some of their concerns to the local administration rather than creating discretional solutions at the school level.

Rotterdam's ISK programme consists of a parallel type of reception that separates newcomer students during their transitional training. An evident legacy of its origin, this centralised programme has been sustained by two self-reinforcing elements: its tendency to empower school practitioners and improve organisation. This full-time parallel programme keeps newcomer students more spatially concentrated than in Barcelona. The advantage of this fully separated programme is that schools can cluster newcomer students by age and time of arrival, and provide training much more suited to their levels of knowledge. Curriculum and contents can be adapted at convenience, and the reception trajectory can be longer (lasting an average of two years) and more intensive, introducing many other subjects besides language. All these conditions make for a win-win situation. Regular teachers are relieved of the additional burden of having to teach freshly arrived pupils in the same classroom as regular ones, allowing regular teaching to proceed at its own pace. At the same time, a specialised team

27   As we saw in chapter 3, this role dramatically changed in 2006.

of teachers administers reception education, fitting it to the precise needs of newcomers. Newcomer students themselves have the opportunity to optimise their language skills and adapt to the Dutch education system. The low salience of the issue has given practitioners a free hand to opt for the most convenient solution according to their preferences. The flexibility schools are granted in organising reception training has prevented them from resorting (more) to informal discretional arrangements.

All these organisational advantages ultimately entail benefits in terms of enhanced decision-making power for schools. Schools have used their broad autonomy in reception issues to organise independent reception departments with their own teams of teachers, even locating them in separate buildings. This detachment of general education and reception functions was introduced to facilitate the work of both reception and regular teachers. Creating autonomous reception departments with their own budgets increased the decision-making capacity of reception practitioners. At the same time, it guarantees that the goals of reception have more weight within the school's overall agenda and thus can be protected against possible internal political struggles which would favour other priorities.

This reception scheme, which was established from the bottom-up and is well-resourced and well-organised, with ample autonomy of decision-making, has reached a mature phase of policymaking and a considerable degree of stability. This consolidated phase of the policy process, distinguished by inertia, continuity and self-reproduction of practices, can logically be linked to the small gap between policy and practice to be found in Rotterdam. In the period under study (2004-2006) reception-programme professionals in Rotterdam reached favourable working conditions in many aspects, particularly in terms of teacher/pupil ratios, but also in terms of decision-making and control over their own work. As we have seen, reception professionals in Rotterdam enjoy ample resources, stability of policy, a comfortable organisational framework for their work, and a high degree of autonomy of decision-making. The flows of newcomer youngsters are limited and gradual, without substantial peaks in the last five years, unlike the massive and constant arrival of students that schools in Barcelona have to face at present. Practitioners function in an atmosphere that is not fraught by politicisation and confrontation, and thus tend to internalise the common goals nurtured by the bottom-up origin of policy. The result of these conditions is that discretional practices happen less frequently, although when they happen, they are quite pervasive – e.g. the admission of pupils without subsidies, or longer reception courses.

Another consequence of these historical processes is that discretional practices are less often inspired by a need to cope than in Barcelona. Schools

set out more often to improve opportunities for students. The ethical mechanism is triggered when the school staff step in to defend what they consider crucial ideological points, despite the fact that ethical practices in Rotterdam sometimes entail economic penalties for schools.

On the other hand, in Rotterdam the coping mechanism is invoked as a response to cutbacks and top-down policy changes implying material constraints (either by the national administration or by the school board). Violating the informal STER policy does not have an economic consequence for schools, so it is an easier decision for them to make, despite the fact that schools still support the ideological principles behind STER. When cutbacks are imposed, softly regulated informal policy rules are the first to be abandoned. Schools are more reluctant to modify policies that contradict their ideological priorities when this choice would require costly deviant practices. In this sense, schools in Rotterdam confront strongly sanctioned official norms (such as those regulating the official conditions for funding) and accept the economic penalties when essential path-dependent ideological principles are jeopardised. Otherwise, schools prefer to comply with the financial conditions of policies.

In sum, schools in Rotterdam contradict informal procedures to adapt to reductions in the resources available (i.e. efficient behaviour) and contradict official regulations when these contradict the schools' own views regarding their reception duties, regardless of the price (non-economic behaviour). Schools do not always respond to policy sanctions in a purely rational way but rather in a rationally-bounded way. Coping practices seem to be efficient and correspond to a rational-economic calculus, but ethical practices are rationally-bounded and may contradict economic logic when this is deemed necessary.

Costly expansionist strategies and cost-efficient restrictive ones may be read as complementary. Strategies to reduce the number of subjects and to include non-target students in reception classes should not be taken as isolated units within which a rational calculus is applied, but rather should be understood within the context of the general state of accounts as a sort of *soft budgeting* (Petmesidou 1996).[28] Schools in Rotterdam belong to large educational companies with diverse branches, offering different types of education. The final state of accounts is the aggregation of the accounts of

28   The concepts of *soft budgeting* and *resource pooling* refer to certain practices of accounting within families and households according to which each member of a domestic unit recognises that although he or she may spend more than what they contribute, some other member will be able to cover the financial deficit produced (Petmesidou 1996).

each department; therefore financially healthy ones can cover the deficits of others. Perhaps on a smaller scale, the same logic is applicable. Reception departments can afford costly advocatory practices such as extending the trajectory of highly-skilled students by saving in other ways, such as by applying cost-efficient coping strategies (e.g. reducing the number of teachers).

A last consequence of the stability and cohesion of this system is the fact that deviant practices do not challenge the system, but rather push to further its ideological premises. As we saw in chapter 4, practical variations between schools in Rotterdam can be explained to a great extent by the variations in the profiles of students attending them. The discretional practice of extending the reception trajectory of highly-skilled students beyond average limits responds to the logic that I have called 'meritocratic reception'. That logic conveys the 'selective' philosophy of the Dutch system according to which different participants deserve different treatment, as a function of their abilities. Since selective-differentialist values are path-dependent in character, a question arises about the meaning of ethical practices in Rotterdam, whether they should be understood as a means to change or to reproduce the existing system. Which is the ultimate motivation of reception programme workers when they choose a discretional course of action: conscious ethics, or mere inertia and reiteration of routinised action?

Barcelona
The specific configuration of elements that make up the field of reception-education in Barcelona under the LIC scheme accounts for generalised discretional strategies of schools, with a predominance of coping practices. Prior to 2003 under the TAE programme, the configuration of the field was different, and this corresponded to the generalised discretional strategies of individual practitioners, with more room for ethical practices. Although Barcelona already began to develop reception policies in the 1980s, the field is at present very unstable, with growing demand and a changing political response.[29] The shifting state of the policy process is clearly reflected in the broad variety of school responses and the experiments and pilot initiatives of policymakers still responding to trial and error.[30]

In Catalonia, educational reception programmes have been elaborated in a technocratic fashion by high-level civil servants of the regional Department

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29   The flow of newcomer youngsters in Barcelona seems to be reaching its climax; last year's figures for the first time show that fewer students arrived than in preceding years.
30   The question remains: what will policy look like when the field reaches a stable, consolidated state? In which ways will it resemble Rotterdam, and in which ways will it not?

of Education with the support of relevant experts. Both the TAE and the LIC programmes (and less significant initiatives like the PAANE programme) are the product of a top-down process. Reception measures in secondary schools assumed a reactive and defensive character following the explosive increase of newcomer students from the mid-1990s onwards. Policymakers from the department responsible for the normalisation (mainstreaming) of the Catalan language (SEDEC) took the lead in coordinating reception efforts, since the underlying assumption was that the massive arrival of immigrant pupils would represent a threat to the Catalan language and culture. However, the elaboration of policies also received some bottom-up feedback. During the TAE period a few schools were given *carte blanche* to experiment within certain limits; some of these pilot experiences inspired policymakers to formulate the LIC programme (Tapies school, for example). But due to the strongly centralised top-down pattern of policymaking that prevailed until 2003, schools have been allowed scant participation in decision-making. This mode of operation stimulates mismatches and incongruence between the theory and praxis of reception.

The two major programmes resulting from this policymaking pattern share some characteristics. Both appeared against the background of massive and rapidly increasing demand, comprised of students arriving continuously throughout the school year. The fast tempo and non-stop growth of the number of arrivals created additional uncertainty for schools and policymakers, making it difficult to assess the resources required. Also, TAE and LIC were created in a socio-cultural context marked by bilingualism. In Catalonian bilingual society, language is a distinctive trait of social class and status and thus a relevant axis of social inequality and political struggle (Ruiz Vieytez 2007, Zapata-Barrero et al. 2009, Garreta-Bochaga 2006, Hogan-Brun & Wolff 2003). Educational policies have been the basic tool in defending the minority position of Catalan, and as it is the official teaching language, both policy projects found it consistent to teach Catalan to newcomers. Finally, both policies provide insufficient resources relative to demand. Despite the massive and uncontrolled arrival of newcomer students in Barcelona's schools and the strong reaction of the regional government, reception schemes were not backed up with substantial resources. The TAE programme was poorly funded, as its student/teacher ratio demonstrates: far too high for intensive language training, and increasing each year. TAE mentors complained about the stinginess of the teaching material, computers and audiovisual teaching support, as well as teacher training. The LIC programme received considerably more funding (see Table 20), but established a rigid system of allocation that created a large supply-demand

mismatch. Not only did the assignation of reception mentors to schools encounter a one-year time lag, but also schools could receive a maximum of two mentors (if they surpassed the twenty newcomer students) regardless of how many more students were assigned to the school. Also, since newcomer students are dispersed throughout the city, LIC funds need to be translated into more personnel than would be the case if students were concentrated in fewer schools and an economy of scale were to be applied.

The semi-parallel reception scheme outlined by the TAE received mixed support, soon making it a target of policy change. In spite of being under-resourced and poorly managed, the system received positive feedback due to several organisational advantages that it offered, derived from the concentration of newcomer pupils. During half the school day, relatively professionalised staff worked intensively with reception students, thus 'liberating' reticent secondary schools from this responsibility. As reception mentors worked in teams of two, they could split the group and teach at different levels of difficulty or accomplishment. Enrolment, evaluation, and transfer of pupils were also facilitated, as these functions could be standardised and applied simultaneously. On the other hand, the TAE reception programme also received constant criticism from progressive circles, which served as negative feedback. The main claim was that a parallel mode of reception would have segregationist and stigmatising effects for students. Detractors from the programme were given a voice in the media and public debate and the programme became politically controversial.

After elections in 2003 the new majority in power opened the way for a new advocacy coalition of top-level regional bureaucrats and experts critical of the TAE. The resulting reception programme (LIC) gave considerable autonomy to schools to design ways in which to fulfil the policy goals. This organisational flexibility suggested that the programme would open the way to practical adaptations. It was expected that schools would be content with their broader autonomy in reception issues, and that this would generate positive feedback for the programme. However, although the LIC programme has just recently been implemented, evidence shows that the apparent advantages of this scheme do not correspond to a lower degree of discretion.

The two successive configurations of the Barcelona field (TAE and LIC) paved the way for different patterns of discretion and compliance. The conditions of the field in the TAE stage account for the dominance of individual discretional practices. Discretional practices were exercised as individual strategies or at most as collective strategies shared by the two teachers working in any given unit. Reception workers were granted relative

flexibility to adapt the policy with regard to content and methodological issues, and their actions and outcomes were barely monitored. Also, their working conditions were constant. As schools had very few responsibilities in reception matters, and reception units were spatially separated from the school, reception professionals were protected against interference from other interests within school micro-politics. As a consequence, coping strategies were less compelling and the conditions left more room for creative discretion in the interest of the students.[31] However, the limited responsibilities of TAE reception workers and their isolated position relative to the schools meant that their diverging practices had a less relevant impact.

The implementation of the top-down, inadequately-resourced, bureaucratic LIC programme was accompanied by generalised divergence between policy and practice, and an increase in the frequency of coping mechanisms. In the LIC phase the extension of coping practices appears in connection with the demanding and contradictory working conditions that both reception professionals and regular teachers experience. The increase in autonomy and more ambitious goals with respect to the TAE programme, not accompanied by solutions for material shortages or for organisational rigidity, puts school staff in a situation in which it is very difficult to carry out their work. Such contradictions in the working conditions contribute to three main types of dilemmas that are faced by practitioners: those related to inadequate resources, to organisational constraints, and to ambiguities in the regulation. The LIC programme radically increased the budget for reception in comparison to the TAE scheme, but in absolute terms it is still insufficient for the existing needs, as the crowded reception classrooms in many schools demonstrate. Moreover, the allocation of funds is inadequate because it is subject to stiff bureaucratic norms that impede an equilibrium between demand and resources. The increase in schools' decision-making power regarding reception issues has not been accompanied with budgetary autonomy or power to decide on the distribution of resources. The scarcity and rigidity of specific means for reception measures only reinforces the chronic lack of funds for education in the region (Ferrer et al. 2009).

Furthermore, in the LIC programme there is a contradiction between the relative autonomy granted to schools and the strict, bureaucratic constraints for decision-making. The spatial dispersion of reception students throughout the city's schools means that each reception classroom is completely

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31   Although my limited observation cannot rule out the possibility that in other TAE units, discretional practices could be more adequately described as coping mechanisms.

heterogeneous in terms of the students' ages, levels and situations. However, the given organisational rules limit the range of alternatives available for dealing with such diversity, as each school is granted but one reception mentor (exceptionally two). What is more, students arrive in large numbers throughout the school year, as the registration of newcomers per school/reception unit has no formal limits.

Moreover, practices that attempt to extend LIC policy goals or to modify them in order to improve newcomers' opportunities seem to be marginal. The limited number of collective ethical strategies has to do with the weak position of reception mentors within schools. Reception choices depend on the internal decision-making of schools, and this depends on the micro-politics of the particular school and the ability of reception staff to rally support for their goals among their colleagues. But reception staff members are structurally in a position of disadvantage within the school, as their function is perceived to oppose general interests, and because they are a new minority, they are often seen as outsiders within the school's staff. Therefore they are rarely able to build strong support. The increase in school autonomy has not been directly translated into an enhancement of reception goals[32] because these have been subordinated to broader school politics and have to compete with other interests of the school staff (Carabaña 2006).

The appearance of pro-immigrant coalitions of teachers within schools allows reception teachers to carry out ethical practices in combination with coping elements. An example of ethical-coping practice is the semi-parallel scheme at Barcelona's Tapies school, which simultaneously allows the school to offer an adapted curriculum for newcomer students and also to optimise the hours of language training, minimising the disruption which newcomers might cause in regular classes. The ethical character of this choice is shown in the high commitment of the team of teachers who participate in the reception programme: many regular classroom teachers contribute to it and devote time to discussing and adapting its content and teaching materials. The parallel reception scheme administered by the Tapies school is a legacy from its past, reinforced with positive feedback over the years, thought to be a win-win situation (pragmatic and ethical) and supported by a strong pro-immigrant coalition within the school.

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32   The conflict between reception goals and general goals within the school can be seen in various areas. The function of reception mentors and coordinators is to ensure preferential treatment for newcomer pupils within the school without having enough resources to support this special policy.

6.3.4   Seven contextual factors that shape practices of reception

The former discussion indicates that, although in both cases there is a policy-practice gap associated with coping or ethical mechanisms, the gap is shaped differently in each case study by specific contextual factors that favour one or the other modalities of discretion. Practitioners from both cities share dilemmas specific to their structural position as street-level bureaucrats, but such dilemmas are interpreted in light of their different cultural frames and specific structural position. Although in both cases practitioners' concerns can be clustered under three groups of dilemmas (organisational constraints, shortage of resources and ambiguities of norms), these concerns fit differently within the organisational culture in each case. The contexts mediate not only how agents perceive the problems, but also the solutions they devise: coping strategies in Barcelona, coping but also ethical strategies in Rotterdam.

Each case shows a specific configuration of elements that serves as trigger, pushing actors to take on coping strategies or else opening the way for them to make ethical choices. In short, the concentration and constant arrival of newcomers, the shortage of means, and the weak position of reception teachers within schools all contribute to explain why schools in Barcelona resort to coping strategies. On the other hand, the differentialist-meritocratic ideology, the stability and even reduction of the influx of newcomers in the period under study (2004-2008), the availability of generous public means, and the independence of reception departments seem to account for the presence of stable ethical practices in Rotterdam. Likewise, the different ideologies at work in the two cases plausibly explain to what extent practitioners interpret something as ethical or not (and therefore close the gap between ideal and real). Differentialist ideology in Rotterdam (students with different skills deserve different treatment/tracks) helps justify practices of coping by selection, and facilitates the combination of coping and ethical practices. In Barcelona, the ideology of equality based on comprehensiveness (all students deserve equal treatment to reach equal opportunities) hinders teachers from finding a balance between altruistic and pragmatic values.

These contextual elements that to differing extents facilitate the exercise of (coping or ethical) discretion do not work as independent factors. Rather, we must think in terms of *configurations* of interrelated, mutually influencing elements that work as wholes. Each configuration is the result of a particular historical process in which both contingencies and path dependency mix to produce a unique situation. Seven aspects of that con-

figuration play a crucial role in explaining the differences in discretion between Rotterdam and Barcelona, namely: 1) demand, 2) resources, 3) enforcement, 4) autonomy of reception-programme staff, 5) educational ideology, 6) consolidation and 7) the policymaking dynamic of the field. These elements are crucial in shaping practices, and therefore in defining to what extent practices comply with the rules or diverge from them, and the type of discretion exercised. Diverse combinations of the seven elements already mentioned enable different degrees of conflict for the implementation of reception policies. At the same time, different combinations of the seven components also dictate the degree of agency that reception practitioners are granted. This means that different contextual configurations allow not only different degrees of reflexivity but also constraint or facilitate certain forms of action and mobilisation.

Characteristics of the demand and problem-pressure

From the analysis of the two institutional configurations, we can infer that the arrival of newcomer students triggers policy responses, but also many discretional strategies by schools. The process has been as follows: schools began to receive a number of foreign students who could not speak the language of instruction. Such newcomer student population needed supplemental attention from the school in language training and in order to compensate for the possible lack or difference of content acquired in prior schooling. The emergence of this demand corresponded to the development of policies of reception but also to discretional practices, mostly of a coping nature.

Some characteristics of the demand, like the ethno-cultural and linguistic heterogeneity of newcomer students, can produce specific modalities of reception. In the case of Barcelona, students in the TAE programme received disparate treatment depending on their mother tongue. Also, many schools nowadays interpret the LIC programme differently for Romance-language speakers than for the rest of the students.

But the size and the rate of increase in the influx of newcomers were nonetheless, by far, the most influential aspects of the demand on schools and the responses generated by policymakers. The two case studies represent two different dynamics of response corresponding respectively to moments of intense, uncontrolled, constant arrival of students or to times of gradual, reduced flows. Barcelona's policies reflect a period of massive arrivals and Rotterdam's reflect a stabilised flow of newcomers.

According to the characteristics of the incoming flow of newcomers, schools and practitioners are put under differing degrees of pressure.

Problem-pressure is not only a matter of figures; rather, the pace of arrivals (fast vs. slow, sudden vs. gradual arrival) and the pattern of their arrival (constant arrivals throughout the school year/arrivals concentrated in the enrolment period), as well as the immigration profile (level of schooling, linguistic and cultural heterogeneity), are influential elements that determine the amount of additional workload that newcomer students entail for schools. In Barcelona the conjuncture leads to a more changeable, improvised and sometimes poorly-organised response in which schools and policymakers are engaged in trial and error. Massive and continuous flows also impel more drastic and indiscriminate discretional strategies in the spirit of coping 'just to get by' or even 'to survive', using informants' terms. In Rotterdam, the stable flow allows practitioners to adapt changes more thoughtfully; for example the reduction of funds in recent years has produced not only coping responses, but also has left room for some ethical solutions. The well-organised, well-funded response is also the result of three decades of policymaking and reception in practice. But in the 1970s and early 1980s, the sudden and massive arrival of immigrant children to Rotterdam led to improvised reactions, just as is now the case in Barcelona.

The demand also supposes a different degree of conflict, in combination with certain features of the receiving context. In Barcelona the bilingual cultural context, in which Catalan and Castilian play different roles, is decisive, as is the 'normalisation' policy to promote Catalan via the educational system. In this context, the arrival of Latin American students *en masse* has significantly modified the power balance between languages and cultures in the school context and consequently in society. This implies a much higher degree of conflict for Catalonian schools and policymakers than a comparable flow of students would imply for Rotterdam's counterparts.

Material and organisational resources
The extension of coping practices among practitioners seems to be directly related to the adequacy of public means provided to meet the policy demand. Material resources allocated for reception and (related) organisational arrangements need to be considered in relation to the size and characteristics of the demand. An inadequate provision of means and channels to implement the reception policy puts school practitioners under stress, overcrowding reception classrooms and making it impossible to comply with ideal standards for reception training (duration of the training programme, student/teacher ratios, etc.). The generalisation of coping practices

in Barcelona under the LIC appears connected with the work constraints that practitioners experience, both reception professionals and regular teachers. Discretional arrangements in enrolment/transfer of students can be interpreted as a reaction to problem-pressure in the face of a limited and rigid allocation of resources.[33] In Rotterdam, conditions for reception workers are more favourable for two reasons: the substantial allocation of funds and the creation of organisational channels that protect reception goals. Newcomer students in Rotterdam are more spatially concentrated than in Barcelona and follow a full-time parallel programme, which means that (financially) independent reception departments can be organised, facilitating the work of both reception practitioners and regular teachers.

Moreover, the degree of mismatch (and thus conflict) between demand and resources relates to the fundamental question of the applicability of the reception programme.[34] My cases reveal that the least applicable programmes, such as Barcelona's LIC, are associated with extended discretional practices of a coping character, while the most applicable programmes, like Rotterdam's ISK, correspond to a reduced exercise of discretion. 'Applicability' summarises two sets of potential conflicts regarding the nature of policy goals (ambitious and contradictory in Barcelona; modest, concrete and very schematic in Rotterdam), and the investment of means (scarce in Barcelona, sufficient in Rotterdam). My comparison also reveals that the most applicable programme (i.e. ISK) is a tailor-made product of a bottom-up initiative that advances the practitioners' perspective, while the less realistic programmes (i.e. TAE, LIC) are both top-down products designed by high-level civil servants.

Forms of enforcement and assessment
Schools' practices and procedures are difficult for policymakers to monitor, and individual teachers' strategies in the classrooms even more so. In both cases, Lipsky's notion that assessing street-level bureaucrats' work is intrinsically difficult holds, meaning that bureaucrats have in fact considerable freedom to act. A case like that of Barcelona, with a high degree of statism,

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33   Several studies point out the detrimental effects of the budgetary deficits of educational policies in Catalonia, particularly for immigrant children (Garreta Bochaca 2006, Albaiges & Valiente 2009, Carabaña 2006).

34   Analysts of the implementation gap in immigration policies have pointed out that the size of the gap depends first and foremost on the policy goals at stake, and whether they are realistic enough to be achieved (Sciortino 2000, Zolberg 1997). Also diverse scholars in the field of implementation have concluded that the coherence of policies is essential in narrowing the gap between goals and outcomes (Brodkin 2000).

shows that, paradoxically, overregulation produces less regulated practices. The excess of rules (governing the curriculum, the assignation of teachers, etc.), which often contradict each other, produces a high degree of ambiguity and therefore makes their enforcement more difficult. Nevertheless, the degree and form of policy enforcement also correlates to different degrees of compliance in the practices in each case. In reception education, enforcement mechanisms are mainly provided to control students' access to and exit from the programme.

A crucial difference between Rotterdam and Barcelona is that the former applies financial penalisations for deviations from the policy in certain aspects, such as the conditions of entitlement of reception students, while in the latter, the allocation of reception funding is not conditional upon the observance of the essential rules of the programme. In addition, the educational inspectorate plays a less prominent role in overseeing reception education in Barcelona, merely participating *ex ante* in the even distribution of immigrant students among schools through the municipal commission of enrolment. In Rotterdam, the inspectorate checks the attendance of newcomer students at schools by means of on-site visits; the allocation of funds per student is based on the number of students in attendance.

Verifying that the programme ends at the established time is also more efficiently controlled in Rotterdam than in Barcelona. Although no formal enforcement mechanism is provided in Rotterdam for the financial rules which establish the maximum period of reception, schools' governing boards use internal controls to ensure that newcomer pupils do not remain too long in the reception department after the subsidy ends. As for the LIC programme in Barcelona, the LIC liaison – in addition to his or her role as pedagogical adviser – exercises control over the whole process of reception. However, the actual capacity these civil servants have to prevent or correct certain school practices is rather weak (particularly because the rules that they must enforce are technically mere 'recommendations') and varies considerably from one liaison to another, as well as from one school to another. Let us say that despite the physical presence of the liaison in relevant decision-making moments (for instance, in meetings to decide students' transfer to ordinary education), the school always has the final say in the decisions.

All in all, we can say that the softer enforcement in Barcelona opens the way for more widespread discretional practices while the efficiency-oriented, closer follow-up of practices concerning access to and exit from the programme in Rotterdam ensures more compliance with the rules. Hence, differences in the degree of influence of the reception programme over

practices appear to be related to the modes of enforcement and assessment of policy implementation provided in each system. Nevertheless, this is not a sufficient condition in itself, and needs to be taken as part of a configuration of interrelated elements.

Degree of consolidation of the reception policy
Even when a high degree of 'statism' and strong enforcement mechanisms prevail, a recent policy issue leaves much more margin for manoeuvre. The case of Barcelona is an illustration of this dynamic. In the early years of the TAE programme and later on, at the start of LIC programme, schools were granted more *formal* discretion for improvisation. Policymakers have not completely developed an approach yet, and therefore profit from occasional innovations introduced by schools (as in the case of Tapies school), or even by intentional pilot projects.

   In addition, practitioners have not yet internalised recent norms, especially if these have undergone rapid changes in a short period. The fast substitution of policies in a trial-and-error fashion creates confusion and ambiguity, and also undermines their legitimacy as it seems that 'anything goes'. The shifts in orientation that policy follows in its early moments can be annoying for practitioners, inciting them to ignore the changes. Discretional practices are more likely to appear in cases in which reception policies are still recent, and thus very malleable and unstable. This means that when policymaking is in its phase of problem-definition, the high level of ambiguity opens room for practitioners' discretion, and opens the way for some of the actors to influence the orientation that the policy will finally take (Blau 1955).

   Yet, at the same time, a more consolidated policy field/policy does not *per se* imply fewer discretional practices; rather, it depends on the degree of conflict that remains structural to that field. The discretional practices that appear in such a consolidated field, as in the case of Rotterdam, are probably more strongly institutionalised, as the contradictions at the origin of such discretional responses are structural and not so much related to the undecided state of policies.

Type of policymaking dynamic
The degree of consolidation of a given reception policy appears to be associated with discretion, but combined with other characteristics of the local policy field of reception: particularly with its power structure and its degree of conflict. As the local policy field is the result of a specific historical process with particular power struggles between actors,

distinct types of policymaking dynamics become intrinsic to that field. Such dynamics of policymaking reproduce the historical legacy in terms of empowering certain actors and disempowering other (*distributional* effects) and favouring the permanence of a particular point of view on reception issues (*framing* effects). The type of policymaking dynamics at the origin of the programme, whether formulated from the top down by high-level civil servants and politicians or devised by school practitioners from the bottom up, is inseparable from certain actors and institutional channels.

By definition, a top-down policy will favour an essentially different way of framing issues (and providing instruments for their execution) than a bottom-up policy. The TAE and LIC programmes are examples of the first, which privileges philosophical or ideological principles and neglects pragmatic considerations. A bottom-up policy like the ISK, on the other hand, tends to privilege the concern for its applicability and implementability: consequently, it tends to enact the concerns of those closer to practice and give form to more flexible policy schemes, susceptible to adaptation to local specificities. The parallel model of reception adopted in Rotterdam exemplifies this; the concerns of schools and regular teachers in the 1970s gave birth to the main strategies of concentrating newcomer pupils in a few locations and offering them intensive transitional courses. Indeed, the bottom-up creation of the programme seems to grant it greater legitimacy and coordinating power. Practitioners in Rotterdam undoubtedly identify themselves with the basic framing of issues inherited from the 'founding mothers'.[35] Far from this, implementers of the top-down TAE programme in Barcelona feel abandoned by their superiors who, in their opinion, 'don't know what it is like to be *here*'.[36] Obviously, the kind of *reflexivity* introduced by each of these relationships between the implementing agent and the policy is radically distinct and would open the way for very different motivations for transformative agency (i.e. for discretional practices).

Partly an unintended consequence of the model of educational reception chosen, stronger levels of reception-practitioner autonomy can be associated with the bottom-up origins of the policy. Concentrating newcomer pupils led to devising independent reception departments within sizable schools, and this in turn led to the departments' relative autonomy of

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35 Given the predominance of women working in the education sector, I reckon that most of the persons fighting for the reception issues in the early years were women. To be more precise, we should probably speak of founding mothers and fathers.

36 Interview with mentors in the TAE programme, Dalí school.

decision-making and collective discretional strategies. The bottom-up ISK programme developed in Rotterdam by schools brought along higher levels of autonomy for reception professionals than the top-down TAE or LIC programmes in Barcelona. The question is thus not so much 'how much autonomy does a programme grant?' but rather 'how much autonomy did the constitution of the policy field grant?' and 'to whom is that autonomy granted?'

Educational and integration ideology

Ideology is generally invoked as a mechanism of reproduction and self-reinforcement of institutions (Broadfoot & Osborn 1992, Broadfoot et al. 1993, Wuthnow 1989); this was also evident in my case studies, since the educational ideologies – as reflected in each local reception field – had strong, self-reinforcing positive feedback effects. At the same time, my cases prove that ideology can provide input for reflexivity and elements to problematise experience (and therefore for institutional change) in three situations: in critical junctures, in institutionally dense environments with competing ideologies, and in highly conflictive contexts. The literature indicates how the path-dependent nature of ideology can be reversed in 'critical junctures' (Collier & Collier 1991), special choice points in which a change of paradigm is possible. Critical junctures require practitioners to accommodate the organisational and ideological basis of the reception field when changes are introduced in one or another dimension of policy. My research highlights two such critical junctures. In Barcelona, the shift from the TAE programme to the LIC one – despite the continuity of the goal of teaching the Catalan language – signified a huge shift in philosophy, rhetoric and instruments. In Rotterdam, despite the fundamental continuity of the ISK instrument, in 2006 national policymakers introduced changes in policy rhetoric and funding systems. Although egalitarian goals still prevail and the values of teachers remain the same, modifications in the conditions of funding imply a recalibration in the hierarchy of policy goals implicit in the ISK programme.

My findings demonstrate that ideology can also become a source of reflexivity and discretion for practitioners in institutionally dense environments in which competing ideologies coexist. In general, due to the pluralist and multilayered nature of society, practitioners belong simultaneously to different social spheres and institutional subsystems. They are social actors that belong to a specific social class, cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and family networks. They are members of large organisations, such as public authorities, as well as small organisations or communities, such as schools.

They may also belong to certain teachers' unions or organisations or to political parties. They are also political actors to the extent that they put in place policies designed by higher levels. In fact, they are policy implementers of several policies and rules simultaneously (general education policies, integration policies, etc). This complexity means that practitioners must make discretional judgements in their everyday activities, to deal with competing principles and trade-offs between principles across diverse social spheres.

In particular the degree of discretion employed by practitioners depends on the specific degree of congruence between different institutions, within what North (1990) calls the 'interdependent web of an institutional matrix'. In the present research, the extent to which reception philosophy matches general educational ideology is particularly important. The more they clash, the more chances arise for divergences in practice. In Rotterdam, the clash between the general ideology of meritocracy and the specificities of reception policy leads to advocacy practices in favour of the highly-skilled.

In Rotterdam, educational ideology is more uniform and there are fewer divergences, while in Barcelona it is more fragmented. In the first case the goals pursued by discretional practices are taken from the mainstream educational ideology (Rotterdam), while in the second they stem from an array of alternatives to the system (Barcelona). If practitioners endorse educational ideology (and reception philosophy) to a large extent, as is the case in Rotterdam, discretional practices and formal policy arrangements start off from the same principles. In ideologically fragmented contexts, as in Barcelona, practitioners' ways of problematising experience will be based on certain ideological views which contradict official educational ideology, whether from the old BUP 'dinosaurs' or the progressive movement in defence of equal opportunities.

Another crucial connection in this institutional matrix is the match between the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of integration. My cases show a practical tension between socio-economic and cultural dimensions of integration in the educational field. Although in theory socio-economic and cultural goals can be complementary, in practice they can also be opposed and conflicting. Duyvendak et al. (2008) have shown how different policies assume a specific relationship between these two dimensions of integration. In my cases I found a trade-off between attempts to provide newcomer students with equal opportunities and to culturally assimilate them. In Rotterdam, this trade-off is solved in favour of the primacy of the socio-economic goal; the cultural goal, although it has dominated the

discourse in the national arena since the turn of the millennium, remains a secondary goal, instrumental in achieving the societal integration of immigrant students. In Barcelona, the coexistence of socio-economic and cultural policy goals with equal status is a source of practical contradictions: it is up to practitioners to accommodate both in a feasible way. This leads to much tension and many inconsistencies in practice.

Finally, ideology serves as a basis to problematise experience and look for alternatives in contexts with a wide inconsistency between practitioners' views of the world and the reality of the daily practice of reception. Ideology can also be a source of change in contexts in which the dilemmas of action that practitioners face hobble their ability to perform their job. Ideological principles serve as a bedrock for the transformation or adaptation of policies, particularly when they coincide with the defence of satisfactory working conditions for professionals (reception professionals and also regular teachers when directly affected, as in the case of Barcelona).

Different ideologies can favour more or less the adoption of a reflexive attitude regarding how to carry out reception in schools. Depending upon the ideology which predominates in each city, practices are more or less likely to be interpreted in light of professional ethics. Diverse ideologies may also approve or disapprove divergences in policy implementation. In Rotterdam, differentialist ideology (which holds that students deserve different treatment) justifies coping practices based on selection, and facilitates the combination of coping and ideology. In Barcelona the ideology of equality based on comprehensiveness (equal treatment for all students) hinders teachers' ability to make compromises between altruistic and pragmatic values.

Autonomy/support provided to reception professionals

The degree of compliance with or divergence from the rules is also related to the autonomy of decision-making that schools and, particularly, reception professionals have. The level of autonomy that schools and practitioners enjoy depends not only on the general provisions of the educational system, but also on the characteristics of the programme and on the historical process of formation of the reception field.[37] However, practitioners' degree of autonomy does not explain *per se* the degree of compliance or divergence

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37 Reception programmes make a difference for practices inasmuch as they entail different degrees of autonomy for schools and school-level practitioners. But we also need to see autonomy as a property resulting from the historical process: we just mentioned above that different policymaking dynamics that empower different actors imply more or less autonomy for reception practitioners.

of their practices. The evidence from the case studies does not support the argument that 'the greater the level of autonomy, the greater the discretion exercised by practitioners' put forward by those who claim that discretion is essentially *granted* (Howe 1991). Although reception professionals in Rotterdam are more professional than those in Barcelona and therefore have a greater margin to make discretional decisions, the former ultimately exercise less discretion than their colleagues in Barcelona (under the LIC programme).

Rather, it is the specific combination of autonomy and other features that seems to account for more or less discretion. In particular, the presence of adequate resources and reception professionals' autonomy is crucial for a particular type of discretion (coping discretion or ethical discretion) to prevail and for a particular degree of collective action to emerge. When schools are granted more autonomy but are given scant resources for reception, as in the LIC case in Barcelona, they tend to use this decision-making capacity to improve regular teachers' work conditions, often to the detriment of reception goals. High levels of decision-making power in combination with serious material constraints leads to contradictions. In particular, the lack of control over budget and personnel constraints indirectly affects schools, no matter how broad their autonomy is to decide over reception issues, as their ways of organising reception depend upon the availability resources and their capacity for human resource management.

An increase in schools' autonomy when it comes to decisions about reception matters cannot simply be equated with greater autonomy for reception professionals within those decision-making processes. If, as in the case of the LIC programme, schools are granted greater autonomy in managing reception but reception mentors still have a weak position within the school, then coping strategies often work against the interests of official (ideal) reception goals and the quality of education for newcomer students is sacrificed. Thus, autonomy (for the school) does not necessarily lead to a more tailor-made organisation of reception training, better adapted to practitioners' needs and hence to the elimination of discretional practices by individual practitioners. Rather, it institutionalises certain discretional practices at the school level.

The analysis also indicates that increased autonomy for reception professionals within schools in combination with more resources opens the door to ethical practices. The case of Rotterdam exemplifies this well. If we conceptualise discretion as a scale of freedom to make decisions, a considerable amount of autonomy in combination with ample resources allows practitioners to focus such freedom on issues other than improving their own working conditions (student/teacher ratios, etc.). In spite of their struggles to cope with personnel cutbacks and shrinking student numbers,

the reception departments of Vermeer and Rembrandt schools in Rotterdam have devoted considerable time and energy to organising the extension of the reception trajectory for students perceived as particularly talented. This implies creating spaces in which to act discretionally for the improvement of the educational chances of newcomers.

Finally, the sub-case of Barcelona under the TAE seems to exemplify the null hypothesis (i.e. no relationship), with the lowest levels of autonomy for reception professionals (less professional, isolated position within the school) and scarcity of resources. However, some of the organisational peculiarities of the TAE programme seem to reverse the restrictive effects of lack autonomy on discretion, corroborating Lipsky's thesis which maintains that powerless street-level bureaucrats enjoy a greater margin for agency. As schools did not have autonomy in reception matters during the TAE period, reception professionals were protected against interference from other interests within the school micro-politics. In addition, the working conditions of TAE professionals, although far from ideal, were more constant. The units had a maximum number of pupils so, in principle, it was not possible to keep receiving students throughout the year above that limit.[38] As a result, the coping practices of TAE mentors were less overt, since there was less conflict between the defence of mentors' working conditions and goals relating to the defence of newcomers' education. Evidence shows that there was even room for some ethical practices. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that, although discretion appears within spaces with little autonomy, it is kept low-profile and mostly exercised at the individual level. This is why the isolated position of TAE reception professionals entailed a lower impact and lower institutionalisation of their discretional practices.

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38 We have seen that the formal limit was often surpassed; however, the few extra students in TAE classrooms are not comparable to the 'open gates' of LIC classrooms.

7   Fields, embedded agency and collective practices

This journey comes to an end. I must now ask myself what I have learned from it. This investigation set out to explain practices of educational reception, that is, the way secondary schools incorporate recently arrived immigrant students. In the preceding pages we have analysed the implementation of reception policies by schools, examining in particular whether practices comply with or deviate from policies. My search has been theoretically grounded in two rival explanations: the national regimes of integration and the implementation gap. I have used a comparison of reception programmes in Rotterdam and Barcelona in order to study the policy-practice gap in different institutional settings. My study has confronted two local cases embedded in nation-states with very different regimes of integration and of education. The central research question was twofold: to what extent do the reception practices of schools comply with the national guidelines on integration? And to what extent is there a gap between policy and practice?

Contrary to what the literature on integration regimes suggests, the present comparison of extremely different systems has shown striking similarities. In spite of being embedded in very different policies of integration (and programmes of reception), the schools in Barcelona and Rotterdam present considerable affinity in their practices of educational reception. In both cases practitioners prefer to receive newcomers separately from native students; however, this preference is endorsed by the policy in one case, but not in the other.[1] The similarity in practices defies the differences in rhetoric and policy goals between national integration regimes in Spain and the Netherlands, and between programmes of reception for newcomers in Barcelona and Rotterdam.

However, the most remarkable finding of the present research – the existence of a policy gap in both case studies – emphasises the differences between the cases. The inconsistency between school practices and policies, the so-called policy-practice gap, has proved to differ according to the institutional framework of each case. In Barcelona the gap is larger, and responds mainly to the coping mechanism of discretion and to the immediate pragmatic requirements of the situation. In Rotterdam school practices are in general more compliant with the reception programme and

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1   Logically, similar practices embedded in two very different policies indicate the existence of a policy-practice gap in at least one of the case studies.

path-dependent, but schools make use of a few discretional arrangements motivated by the wish to improve students' educational opportunities. Hence, the gap is fundamentally linked to the institutional framework in which it is embedded. This also means that the similarity of parallel reception practices in the two countries is due, to a great extent, to the considerable gap in Barcelona.

In sum, the picture that arises from the comparison of reception schools in Barcelona and in Rotterdam is more complex than simply confirming the citizenship regime or the implementation gap theories. The findings reveal much more of a discrepancy than that assumed in the literature on integration regimes, showing a firm and institutionalised gap at different levels. Yet at the same time, the actual picture is one of more institutional congruence than that anticipated by the implementation gap hypothesis, since the organisational channels and the ideologies of the educational system conveyed in the field of reception increase the probabilities of certain courses of action and diminish others. Neo-institutionalist theories are applicable to the study of policies of educational reception, since not only do the practices comply with some institutional rules, but also implementation gaps are embedded in the institutional context. This allows us to say, echoing Emirbayer and Mische (1998), that 'discretion' is essentially relational in character, since it always operates in a concrete institutional context whether *in relation to* it or as *a reaction to* it. This means that practices are simultaneously shaped by institutions and exhibit a degree of agency in the form of discretional deviations from policies.

In this concluding chapter we will present the main findings of the research and discuss their main implications with regard to the theories provided in chapter 2. In the second section of the chapter we will analyse the implications of the study with respect to the relationship between the practices of actors and political institutions. In section three we will offer a preliminary heuristic model based upon the seven explanatory factors described in chapter 6. This model may prove useful for future studies: these seven elements of the local field of reception are expected to make a difference in the capacity of institutions to shape practices and therefore in the significance that the gap acquires in different cases. In section four we will discuss the consequences of the findings for the study of the reception of immigrant students. In which direction do reception practices influence the educational outcomes of newcomer students? And what future challenges will the reception of immigrant students encounter? Finally, as the findings also imply consequences for the study of policies of integration, the chapter will conclude in section five with a research agenda for the future.

7.1   Main findings of the study

Contrary to what the scientific literature on citizenship regimes conventionally presupposes, national policies of integration exert little influence over the reception practices of high schools in Rotterdam and Barcelona. A remarkable finding of this research is that school practices in both local cases are carried out quite independently of national integration policies. The broad goals and rationale of national integration policies do not directly shape the objectives prioritised by schools in the reception of immigrant children. Also, preferred patterns of organisation of national integration seem to have only an indirect relation to the instruments and budgets allocated to educational reception.

Inseparable from the first finding comes a second: both cases present a gap between policies and practices, indicated by the presence of discretional practices which contradict the official goals of educational reception. Teachers and schools modify, bend, bypass or overtly defy programmes of reception in a number of ways. This gap is very significant in the two local cases, as it shows the high degree of institutionalisation of discretional practices (meaning that discretional practices are not merely individual actions but rather collective strategies). The importance of this finding relates to the very different conditions in the two cases with regard to discretion, leading us to expect more discretional practices in Barcelona and fewer in Rotterdam.

It is also remarkable that despite the fact that practices in the schools studied present a gap with policies in both cities, the characteristics of these breaches vary per city. My third result shows that while the two cases coincide in the presence of highly institutionalised divergent practices, they vary in their frequency, the type of discretion used, and the resulting style of school reception.

This does not mean, however, that political institutions do not matter. This takes us to our fourth key finding. Educational systems have a strong influence on reception practices, shaping them according to the dominant institutional logic in each country. Educational systems model individuals' professional values and social representations of their work, but also provide the specific channels and resources for action. This means that each educational system increases the probabilities of certain courses of action and diminishes others. The Dutch educational ideology of selectivity shapes practitioners' interpretation of reception. Likewise, although the Spanish ideology of comprehensive inclusion seems less successful, the organisational conditions of the Spanish educational system effectively restrict

practitioners to working in a certain manner. Also schools as institutions matter with regard to educational reception. My research demonstrates not only that schools play an influential role – specific to each system – but also that the specific dynamics of a given school can challenge the broader influence of educational systems and can certainly be a source of dissent from formal policies.

Moreover, the institutional influence of educational systems and reception programmes varies in intensity between cases. This fifth finding poses a paradox. Strikingly, the degree to which educational systems influence practices does not coincide with the different degrees of 'statism' of each case. Despite the soft regulation and broader autonomy of Dutch schools in a system of 'governing by input', the schools studied in Rotterdam complied more in their practices with Dutch long-term ideals or rationales of educational selection than those in Barcelona (within a system of 'governing by curriculum') with equality goals. The Spanish comprehensive ideology conveys an obsession for mainstreaming educational structures to the point of impeding practitioners from calling things by their name. When what they do contradicts the comprehensive spirit of the educational system, unequal structures meant to produce equality are actually hidden behind a rhetoric of inter- and multi-culturality.

Also the influence of the reception programme seems stronger in Rotterdam than in Barcelona. Here, once again, the degree of 'statism' in each of the cases appears in opposite relation to the degree of influence of the reception programme. In the case with stronger regulation (Barcelona), practitioners conform less to the rules than in the case with a softer mode of regulation (Rotterdam). Paradoxically, the intention to regulate tightly produces less regulated practices.

7.2   The collective dimension of discretional action

My study started from a profound interest in analysing the link between the practices of policy implementers at a micro-level and political institutions at a macro-level. In particular, I wanted to scrutinise the capacity of immigrant integration policies to shape the practices of the persons responsible for executing such policies. And vice versa, I wanted to investigate the extent to which implementation practices can re-shape policies.

My study revealed that the practices of teachers and school actors are constrained in important ways by the institutional context of the field of reception. The contextual conditions described in the previous chapter thus

conform to a milieu that favours certain actions over others. However, my analysis is at odds with a structuralist approach to political institutions that assumes that all actors placed in a similar position have an identical set of preferences and tend to develop similar strategies. Implementers of reception policies are also 'strategic, seeking to realise complex, contingent and often changing goals' (Hay & Wincott 1998: 954). This implies that, though institutionally embedded, political actors are seen as 'agents of history'. Political institutions, as well as social institutions such as educational systems, can shape and 'constrain political strategies in important ways, but they are themselves also the outcome (conscious or unintended) of deliberate political strategies of political conflict and of choice' (Thelen & Steinmo 1992: 10). In sum, my cases echo historical institutionalism's distinctive view of the relationship between structure and agency, which can be characterised as a 'complex duality linked in a creative relationship' (Hay & Winctott 1998: 956). My comparison emphasises that discretional practices of reception can partially transform the institutional context in which they are embedded. The question is, how?

An original finding of my study is the use of discretion as a collective strategy of schools, school departments, or groups of teachers. The literature has generally seen discretion as an individual characteristic and the collective results of discretional practices have been considered primarily as 'individual actions' which, 'when taken in concert, add to agency behaviour' (Lipsky 1980). However, practical dilemmas of reception can also be addressed with *collective discretion* as the result of explicit *collective strategies* and not simply as the aggregation and random combination of individual actions. Distinctive collective discretional strategies can be distinguished, just as there can be diverse individual stances.

Collective judgements and actions imply a greater level of reflexivity and problematisation of experience than individual ones. In principle, collective discretional solutions entail a sort of 'enlarged mentality', a capacity for abstracting from one's own limited experience and for putting oneself in the position of everyone else and thus deliberating over the collective good (Kant in Arendt 1982). Potentially, collective strategies have a higher level of effectiveness in dealing with practical problems. Collective arrangements to respond to practical challenges at a school level are in principle more effective in modifying the dilemmas that impelled them in the first place; at the same time, collective actions are also compromises between the diverse positions of individual practitioners or groups of practitioners. Practical dilemmas of reception become a political issue or a question for collective decision-making.

An important lesson here is that insofar as it is granted responsibilities for organising reception education and it develops collective discretional strategies, the school can become either a channel for solving the dilemmas of individual street-level educators, or an impediment. In principle we can assume, as do those who advocate institutional rational choice, that collective discretional strategies stem from actions pursued by rational individuals who try to improve their circumstances by altering institutional arrangements (Bromley 1998: 252, Ostrom et al. 1994). However, we cannot assume a simple, direct link between collective strategies and goals, as a consequence of the politics of structural choice. As we find a hierarchy of various statuses/positions within any given school, the school as a collective actor may or may not adequately represent the interests of teachers in different positions. In any case, my analysis disproves that collective arrangements generate *per se* mutual gains as a result of positive cooperation between all parties in overcoming collective action problems.

Rather, collective strategies are the result of politics of structural choice (Moe & Wilson 1994), since conflicts over power make opponents compromise in order to formulate common solutions acceptable to all parties. This means that collective arrangements only suppose a relative solution to individual demands, as the compromise reached may contradict some individuals' interests. Likewise, the school board may adopt certain postures that promote a fragmented, conflictive atmosphere, placing teachers in opposition to each other, or else it may have a joining effect, possibly bringing together, to the extent possible, the preferences of the different parties. Institutional arrangements in Rotterdam ensure more often a situation of the second type, in which there is less intrinsic opposition between positions and at the same time reception goals are protected. Barcelona's education-related institutional arrangements, on the other hand, propitiate confrontation between teachers and practitioners with different positions within the schools, with the corresponding risk to the reception interests of immigrant children.

Despite these elements of rational choice theory, the reception practitioners reflected in this study – either as individuals or as collective entities – are not correctly represented by the notion of the *rational actor* with a fixed and immutable set of preferences and access to extensive information. Neither are they purely self-interested in their strategies – as we have seen that the motivation to improve the educational opportunities of immigrant children is even present within coping strategies – nor can their motivations be attributed to the individual's essential character (whether more altruistic or more selfish), since we have seen that different institutional

configurations empower different actors and favour the exercise of either ethical or coping practices.

7.3 Contextual factors: Towards a heuristic model for explaining degrees of institutional influence on practices and varieties of gaps

The differences in the gaps in Barcelona and Rotterdam demonstrate that institutional arrangements have different capacities to influence practices in each case study. This raises the question of what conditions stimulate institutional influence over practices. I have already mentioned that the degree of influence that educational systems have over practices does not coincide with the different degrees of 'statism' of each case. If the degree of regulation/'statism' of a nation-state does not explain compliance, we need to search for other factors in the institutional framework that do explain it.

We could also approach this question from the opposite angle and ask which factors favour discretional practices. Discretional practices are more obvious in Barcelona – where schools diverge more from the reception programme – than in Rotterdam, where practitioners are more compliant with the programme. Discretional practices in Barcelona are associated with imbalances between means and demand and the strict organisational constraints in a situation of particularly large-scale arrival of immigrant students. In this case it seems evident that coping is the principle motivation for discretion. This demonstrates, in line with the literature on street-level bureaucrats, that the actions of schools in Barcelona obey compelling requirements of practice, i.e. practical limits and concerns. Hence, the gap is generated by the contradiction between the logic of practices and the logic of policy (Lipsky 1980). Specifically, this study also demonstrates that a second mechanism of discretion – and a related motivation – is often at work, meaning that the actions of reception practitioners should not be understood to respond solely to external constraints and therefore to rational calculus and self-interest. According to this second possibility the gap stems partially from ethical motivations that seek to enhance the educational opportunities of recently arrived immigrant students. The ethical motivation is triggered when practitioners perceive that the policies lack social legitimacy or social justice. In this case the gap is related to the institutional plurality of society, and has to do with the under-determinacy (interpretability) of principles and the trade-offs between dominant principles in diverse spheres and institutional spaces (Vader & Engelen 2003).

The urgency of certain material and organisational constraints or the appropriateness of ideological principles can only be read in the context of the field. The field of reception sets the context for practices, in the ideological (symbolic) dimension as much as in the organisational one, even when these practices deviate significantly from policy regulations. Certain contextual elements facilitate the application of discretion (coping or ethical), but they do not work as independent factors. Rather, we need to think in terms of *configurations* of interrelated, mutually-influencing elements which work as units. Each configuration is the result of a particular historical process in which both contingencies and path dependency mingle to produce a unique situation. The constitutive conflicts of the field and its dominant policymaking style set the tone for subsequent actions that occur on this stage.

The question of which conditions favour the exercise of discretional practices thus needs to be complemented by the question of which contextual conditions (of the field) favour the application of coping or ethical forms of discretion in different settings. In the comparison of my cases, seven contextual elements were determinant within their configurations. These are: 1) policy demand, 2) resources, 3) enforcement, 4) policymaking dynamics, 5) consolidation of the policy, 6) educational ideology, and 7) the autonomy of reception practitioners. Within 'policy demand' I include the characteristics of the flow of immigrant students, such as: number, profile of the children (age, level of schooling, language and cultural background), pace (fast/slow), pattern of arrival (concentrated in the enrolment period/gradual and throughout the school year). By 'resources' I mean the relative adequacy of the material and organisational means allocated to reach the proposed goals (including policy goals), always defined in relation to the previous element, i.e., resources *in relation to* the given demand. As for 'enforcement', I refer to the degree and the forms of verification of policy execution, that is, the mechanisms available to control the access of students to the programme and their transfer to mainstream education. The 'degree of consolidation' of the reception programme is linked to the relative recentness or maturity of that policy, whereas the 'type of policymaking dynamic' corresponds to the bottom-up or top-down initiative followed in the initial development of the reception programme. By 'educational and integration ideology' I mean a 'set of values and beliefs that frames the political thinking and action of agents of the main institutions of a nation-state at a given point in time' (Van Zanten 1997: 352). Finally, the 'degree of autonomy of reception professionals' refers specifically to the capacity for decision-making granted to reception professionals, which depends not only on the general provisions of the educational system or the reception programme, but also on these

professionals' position within the school. The amount of support that the strategies of reception practitioners receive from other colleagues depends more or less on micro-dynamics at the school level.

These seven elements can function both as *motivation* and a *channel* for discretional action. They function as triggers for discretion inasmuch as they constitute conflictive dimensions for the implementation of reception policies. My evidence shows that the driving impetus for discretional practice is *conflict* and problematic situations from the practitioners' perspective. As Emirbayer and Mische (1998) make clear in their analysis of agency, conflicts increase social actors' reflexivity. Practitioners gain more critical distance from habits when they perceive a problematic situation. Challenge and conflict spur creativity, and open the way for incremental change by creating alternative discretional responses.

My comparison indicates that contexts which entail more conflicts and challenges stimulate the exercise of imagination, inventiveness and change. Diverse combinations of the seven elements already mentioned generate different degrees of conflict. The allocation of sufficient material resources to meet demand seems to be an indisputable source of conflict/confrontation in both cases. The room to manoeuvre (or lack thereof) that reception-programme staff have in order to carry out their job can also cause them much distress. Moreover, the degree of ideological incoherence between different institutional levels and sectors is another source of conflict, as seen for example in the competing meanings given to the principle of 'equality' in the integration and education subsystems and in programmes of reception. Also, reception programmes' lack of internal consistency generates conflict for practitioners, as we see in the tenuous balance in Barcelona's policy between goals of socio-economic integration, acculturation and social mixing.

At the same time these contextual elements function not only as triggers but also as channels of discretion, either by facilitating or by hindering the critical motivation. Different combinations of the seven components also lead to varying degrees of 'agentic possibility' or room for agency granted to reception practitioners. This means that different contextual configurations allow not only different degrees of reflexivity but also constrain or facilitate certain forms of action and mobilisation.

7.4   Challenges and the future of educational reception

What does the future look like? According to my research, a general convergent tendency towards *parallel reception* can be discerned on the horizon.

The case studies coincide in showing practitioners' preference for teaching newcomer students apart from native ones. This indicates the prevalence of pragmatic interests among regular teachers in both systems, aiming to improve working conditions and reduce excess workload. The ideal situation for them would be teaching homogeneous groups of students. The cases also seem to converge towards a *minimalistic* reception style, limited to the basic teaching of language to newcomers. If we observe the developments in Barcelona and Rotterdam over the years, reception education is tending towards a superficial defence of equal opportunities, which 'interprets equality in broad cultural and ethical terms, overshadowing the more important accent on rectifying socio-economic criteria' (Favell 1997: 191). According to this tendency, promoting equal opportunities basically means teaching the host language to newcomers. In Barcelona, schools implementing the LIC policy are clearly sliding in this direction. In Rotterdam, although the compensatory style that provides newcomer students with an ample curriculum during their reception trajectory continues in practice – and despite practitioners' attempts to defend this holistic reception – there is clear pressure to move towards a more basic, minimalistic kind of reception training.

Is it likely that this tendency to converge in parallel-minimalistic reception schemes exists in other cases besides Rotterdam and Barcelona? The EURYDICE survey (2004) corroborated that most European countries are adopting this linguistic, minimalistic reception strategy. This shift in reception education also calls to mind the general movement identified by Joppke and Morawska (2003) towards a convergence in minimal integration policies in Europe: civic integration schemes based on language teaching and basic liberal values. In any case, the apparent spread of parallel-minimalistic reception may be a reason for concern if there is evidence of a detrimental effect on the educational outcomes of pupils.

In the cases of Barcelona and Rotterdam, similar practices seem to push students' outcomes in the same direction. In spite of practitioners' genuine motivations, in both systems newcomer students have a high probability of ending up in a low form of education and finishing their educational careers with a low-level qualification. In Spain only 10% of immigrant students continue their studies after obtaining the basic certificate of compulsory secondary education (ESO) (López Peláez 2006), and those who continue are underrepresented (4% of all the students) in general academic tracks (Baccalaureate) and are overrepresented (12.8%) in programmes of *Garantía Social,* the most basic educational certificate for those pupils who were not able to pass ESO (CIDE 2006). In the Netherlands, pupils of non-Dutch

background are more likely to attend pre-vocational secondary schools (at 10.9%) than senior general education (4.6%) or pre-university tracks (2.8%) (Luciak 2004).[2] In 2002-2003, 47% of non-Western ethnic minority students attended VMBO and 26% attended HAVO/VWO, as opposed to 30% and 42% for native students (CBS 2004).[3] Despite the improvement in mobility to types of higher education, there is still a considerable educational gap between native Dutch and ethnic minority pupils (Dagevos et al. 2003, Tolsma et al. 2007, OCW 2009).[4]

These scattered indications basically coincide with the findings of international studies. Research establishes that newcomer children have less access to social mobility via education than their second-generation peers born and raised in the receiving country (OECD 2007b). This difference is often explained with reference to newcomer children's language disadvantage, which would function as an additional bias, and this inequality is expected to gradually disappear as they become more acculturated. According to this argument, the remaining challenge of improving the educational opportunities of second and subsequent generations could be tackled adequately with the same policy tools used for disadvantaged native children. However, while there is ample evidence of the role of social class and the cultural capital of parents in the educational outcomes of students (Bourdieu & Passeron 1977, OECD 2007b, 2010a), and many studies demonstrate that second-generation students have a lower level of educational attainment because their parents have a lower level of education (Van Ours & Veenman 2003), this does not help to clarify fully why first and 1.5-generation students score lower than peer students in similar socioeconomic positions. Results from PISA show that, after controlling for social class, a substantial disadvantage remains to be explained, particularly for students of the first generation. Therefore, it seems that the concerns raised by the education of first and 1.5-generation immigrants cannot be dismissed as a temporary problem that will be solved with time, since the

2   Recent studies still register the higher probability of ethnic minority students attending lower tracks of secondary education (VMBO, and in particular in the lowest level, VMBO-B) than natives, although data also show a considerable increase in the participation of ethnic minority students in higher education (13% in HBO and 14% in university)(CBS 2010).

3   2007-2008 figures show an improving tendency, as 43% of non-Western ethnic minority students in their third year enrolled in the lowest tracks of VMBO (versus 27% native pupils), while 28% of minority students attended HAVO/VWO (vs. 43% of native students) (Ministerie Onderwijs, Cultuur & Wetenschap 2009).

4   Unfortunately, most studies in the Netherlands do not distinguish between the attainments of first and second-generation students. Some exceptions are Van Ours & Veenman (2003) and Tolsma et al. (2007).

educational gap cannot be solely explained by a social class effect. As some studies suggest, ethnicity continues to play a role, intertwined with parents' education/occupation (Van de Werfhorst & Van Tubergen 2007, Tolsma et al. 2007). But some studies also suggest that institutional mechanisms are accountable for this inequality in final educational levels, particularly selection processes for secondary education. As Tolsma et al. (2007) say, 'it might be that migrants themselves as well as teachers underestimate migrants' chances in the educational career' (2007: 336).

Moreover, in view of the relatively low educational achievements of ethnic minority students in these two very distinct institutional settings, we can speculate that certain practical styles of reception hinder the promotion of equal opportunities more than others, thus they could in fact restrict immigrant children's right to education. The *pragmatic* approach of schools in Barcelona does not improve the educational opportunities of newcomer students. Rather, this pragmatic way of doing things limits the effectiveness of reception outcomes. Qualitative evidence from the interviews suggests that levels of persistence are very low, while the drop-out rate is remarkable. Interviewees also acknowledge that schools allow newcomer students to pass with insufficient preparation, according to the formal requirements of compulsory secondary education.[5] An evaluation of the reception programme in primary education shows that the levels of Catalan attained after two years of (LIC) reception training is *good* in oral comprehension (75% of the students passed the test) but only *acceptable* for speaking and *poor* for writing (Vila et al. 2009).[6] The results of the former TAE programme were not substantially better. As one of the mentors at Dalí school puts it, 'out of the 150 [pupils] who have passed by here in the past five years, only *two* have *made it* [to post-compulsory secondary education]'.[7] Nevertheless, given that the focus of the present study is not students' outcomes, this evidence needs to be taken with the necessary caution.[8]

If Barcelona's reception practices do not seem to lead to successful outcomes, neither do Rotterdam's. Although Rotterdam seems to better defend the interests of newly-arrived immigrant children in comparison

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5   Interview with principal of Tapies school and with mentors at Dalí.

6   This study evaluated the results of a sample of 5,868 newcomer students in primary education, most of them aged 9-11 (77%). It is reasonable to expect that the outcomes of a comparable evaluation of students between twelve and sixteen years old would be worse.

7   Interview with mentors at Dalí school, 28 May 2004.

8   Since the focus of this study is not the outcomes of policy, I did not collect data in my fieldwork to assess the extent to which practices are in fact influential on students' future careers.

to Barcelona, the success of the *compensatory* approach in Rotterdam is only moderate. Interviewees report that nearly all reception students finish the reception trajectory and complete compulsory secondary education. However, informants also acknowledge that most students transfer to low tracks of secondary education, even those who were initially allocated to the higher-level reception track.[9] This suggests a 'gap' between the actual skills of newcomer students and the type of secondary education that they get. Other studies prove that students in the Netherlands are unequally distributed among different tracks of secondary education, given the small differences in achievements between pupils in high and low tracks (Van de Werfhorst 2008, PISA Education at a glance 2006, OCW 2007, Forum 2007). These findings prove that in the Dutch educational system, opportunities are not granted according to the objective skill level of students.

My research demonstrates that schools' discretional judgements and arrangements in Rotterdam and Barcelona affect the form and content that reception policy takes in practice. In turn, this policy-in-practice is very likely to influence the educational outcomes of students due to its high stability and consistency (as collective strategies of schools or reception departments). Above all, institutionalised discretional practices modify the formal policy of educational reception in important aspects, either by extending, reducing or adapting policy goals. Moreover, such practices include elements that are determinant for the future career of newcomer students, such as registration or transfer to regular education.[10] Schools' discretional strategies have clear effects in terms of enrolling certain categories of students in reception courses, transferring them earlier or later, or transferring them to one or another type of education. For instance, in the case of Rotterdam, schools' strategies make a difference for Antillean pupils, who attend a reception course instead of passing directly to regular education. Another example is seen in Barcelona under the LIC, where Latin

9   Interviews with present and former coordinators of reception at Rembrandt school, and with CED adviser M. Zweekhorst.
10   It is disputable whether the consequences of actually following reception training are positive or negative for the future educational careers of students. An improvement in students' educational opportunities can be expected as they improve their language skills, at least. It could also be argued that by devoting extra time to reception they are reducing their available time for other subjects and this may have negative side-effects. Some newcomer parents in the Netherlands seem to believe that attending the ISK programme is detrimental for the students' chances of upward mobility, as most ISK pupils are subsequently transferred to the lower levels of secondary education. The data collected by the present research are not sufficient to support or confirm either theory, but they do permit us to expect an alteration of students' educational careers and therefore opportunities. It is conceivable that both effects take place simultaneously.

American students are normally transferred to regular education after a short reception period.

The behaviour of practitioners and schools affects the educational trajectories and final outcomes of newcomer students in other decisive ways. Practices of reception can compromise the effectiveness of reception policies and produce opposite effects from those desired, thus feeding inequality. Particularly in the case of Barcelona, our findings suggest that the potential equity offered by the Spanish comprehensive system of education in the end may be counteracted by the practical tendency to teach immigrant students separately from their autochthonous peers. This would suggest that newcomer students in Spain reach worse final educational outcomes than their native peers because they are treated with selective discretional practices that bend the original compensatory intention of policies. This argument is congruous with studies that point out that more selective educational systems, which track students in secondary education between ability levels at an early age, produce more educational inequalities than comprehensive systems (Duru-Bellat et al. 2004, OECD 2007b, Alegre & Ferrer 2009).

The main effect that ability-groupings are found to have is the amplification and reproduction of the social class and family background of students, thus hindering the channels for upward social mobility that education *could* otherwise offer (Foster et al. 1996). This means that the educational underachievement of newcomer pupils can be associated with the lack of positive references (native middle-class students) and to the lack of higher educational stimuli experienced in the lower ability groups, but also to the lower expectations that (middle-class, native) teachers hold for them. My ethnographic research provides plenty of illustrations of newcomer students who live up to these (lower) expectations through *self-fulfilling prophecies* (Merton 1968), and end up stuck in less-valued levels of education, which decreases motivation. According to the literature, another possible reaction of students to differentiation and stigmatisation is the deliberate strategy of 'defensive non-learning' (De Vos 1992, Suarez Orozco 1987, 1989), and the development of reactive identities or group sub-cultures also described as *polarisation* (Lacey 1970) or *resistance* (Willis 1977). In my fieldwork I did not encounter examples of this, although informants from the Casal del Raval reported the tendency of certain ethnicities to follow this resistance strategy (for example, immigrants from the Dominican Republic).[11] Just as

11   This is reliable information as Casal del Raval's educators work directly in the re-education of a gang of Dominican youngsters engaged in soft drugs and petty crime. Many of them are students of Tapies school.

this process of differentiation is believed to disadvantage working-class pupils, who are overrepresented in lower ability groups due to the middle-class orientation of school expectations (Ball 1981, Hargreaves 1967, Keddie 1971), we can reasonably expect that this disadvantage becomes amplified for immigrant children. On top of the negative effects of ability streaming, newcomers have the additional burden of not mastering the language of instruction and lagging behind in content after having devoted one or two years just to learning the language. Although well-intentioned, teachers may believe that lower ability tracks are the only way for newcomer students to get an education and overcome their additional language disadvantages and curriculum delay, while in fact these groupings appear to work against the interests of newcomer students.

In fact, it is not so much the parallel reception of newcomer students that seems to be detrimental *per se* for their future outcomes, but rather its combination with certain elements of the local field like the bilingual context or with a minimalistic style of reception. Particularly negative is the combination of minimalistic reception that teaches only language in parallel structures of reception, especially the tracking of newcomers into lower types of education (VMBO in Rotterdam) or into the least able groups ('D' in the flexible groupings in Barcelona) after their reception period. We need to put this in the context of the heated debate about the consequences of discretion by street-level bureaucrats, whether they are positive, negative or both. The results of my study show that discretional arrangements can modify policy in ways which *either* benefit *or* prejudice immigrant students. Potentially, discretion is neither good nor bad in itself (Evans & Harris 2004), as practitioners may use discretion in a variety of ways: (Lipsky 1980) to fill in the gaps in public policy (Ellis et al. 1999: 277), or to undermine official policy (Baldwin 1998).

My findings also suggest that global trends external to the local and national contexts exacerbate a shift to a practical style of reception that curbs equity. In particular, a global process that is described in detail in the literature is the neoliberal tendency towards the commodification of education (Ball 1990, Tomlinson 1997, Bonal 2003). Education has moved from a Fordist to a post-Fordist form, which means the deregulation of public education and increase of schools' autonomy and school-based management, greater emphasis on parental choice, and competition between specialised forms of provision. In Rotterdam, the impact of market standards of efficiency in education exerts a contrary influence on the 'compensatory style' of school reception characteristic of the city. Schools in Rotterdam face a trade-off between their equality goals of promoting

the socio-economic integration of newcomers and their efficiency goals. We have seen that as a reaction to constraints in their available resources, schools' (and reception departments') discretional practices tend to obviate the equity goals stated in the STER programme.

But there is still room for optimism. The neoliberal tendency to thwart equal opportunity policies and favour educational policies which improve the quality and selectivity of education has been identified as a global movement. However, the fact that schools across the planet will have to face this global pressure does not necessarily mean that all schools will respond in the same ways. On the contrary, we can expect a variety of reactions. First, because there are national-specific ways of combining educational equality goals with market ideologies (Jordan et al. 2003). Second, because we have learned from this research that discretion reacts differently in diverse contexts, according to the level of conflict that practitioners encounter. Third, because we have also seen that the schools themselves matter. Schools and practitioners have varying degrees of agentic capacity, depending on their autonomy, available resources, and the support that reception personnel enjoy among their colleagues. This is to say that schools in a weaker position tend towards reception styles which provide language training alone. But, as observed, schools with a strong position in the local field of reception are better able to resist the consequences that cutbacks might have for their educational ideals.

If my study proves something, it is that change comes hand in hand with discretional strategies informed by *professional ethics*. My study shows that under certain conditions, those collective practices motivated by the drive to enhance newcomers' educational opportunities may develop alternatives to counter the pressures of commodification. In Rotterdam, schools make creative efforts to counterbalance the watering down of their reception objectives, resulting in a curriculum which is less diversified but not less intense (in terms of hours). Divergent practices which challenge official policy try to counteract the impact of the commodification of educational goals and to defend equality of opportunities, incorporating a logic of compensation within the general ideology of meritocracy (for example, through additional schemes for the highly skilled). In Barcelona, we have also seen some brilliant strategies to keep all the balls in the air: for instance, the earlier transfer of some categories of students while simultaneously including them in lower flexible tracks for language so as to offer them some additional hours of Catalan.

Yet the promise offered by pro-immigrant school practices must overcome many obstacles in order to generate results. The potential for partially

reversing what may be a general trend towards commodification is there, in the hands of schools. But as we have seen, *ethical* collective arrangements which oppose the global forces eroding compensatory educational schemes depend on quite specific conditions. My cases indicate that discretional reactions of a coping nature are more generalised and ethical practices are less widespread, as they often have to overcome many obstacles just to emerge.

7.5   Research agenda

At the end of this research journey many important questions remain unanswered, constituting a relevant niche of research for the future.

A first line of inquiry concerns research on the effects of integration and citizenship regimes. The main conclusions of this study have important implications for research on immigrants' integration in host societies and research on integration policies. If what holds for Barcelona and Rotterdam is applicable in other places, it would be of little use to resort to policy regimes alone in order to explain the practices of reception in schools. Familiarity with an abstract model does not help to predict the ways in which schools in a given country are likely to apply their corresponding policy to receive immigrant children. In line with what other studies have found, integration regimes are useful for describing discourses and the rhetoric of integration, but not for understanding policy programmes on the ground or the actual procedures and practices developed by implementers (Bousetta 2001, Favell 2001, Alexander 2003a). Likewise, a direct link between certain regimes and certain outcomes can no longer be taken for granted. The theoretical debate about which model of integration is best in terms of integrating immigrants therefore seems futile when it comes to practices and outcomes.

This also implies that to research integration policies, the study of integration ideologies as an abstract enterprise is sterile, as is the study of practices as pure means-ends reactions. Nowadays many European countries converge in increasingly assimilationist ideologies and rhetoric; the programmes for civic integration which have mushroomed in many countries are a clear signal of this tendency (Joppke 2007). But as Kymlicka (2003) notices, civic integration programmes can also be at the service of multicultural ideologies, as the Canadian case shows. Hence, these and other ideologies must be studied as working logics in specific policy fields, and in relation with the conflicts that structure that field. Putting ideologi-

cal principles into practice is often fraught with contradictions that impede a direct and univocal application of such principles. Practitioners must necessarily interpret, deal with ambiguities and make choices. Discourses and practices must be faced as independent objects of study. At the same time, studies must clarify their interrelations and this must be done in specific historical-spatial conjunctures.

The local field of reception does matter and therefore research must address different policy fields of integration, their actors and structures. Consequently, a debate emerges regarding which policy fields favour which type of integration practices, but also what type of fields are more beneficial for the integration of immigrant persons. An effort needs to be made to differentiate the specific consequences for various categories and groups. Studies should set out to discern the net of institutional structures that come together and the specific interrelations of these elements. The logic of a given policy field must be taken as the result of a specific interrelation of broader institutional spheres related to that field. The interrelations between institutional arrangements crucially determine the capacity of these institutions to influence practices, whether this leads to 'reinforcing' or 'contradictory' effects among them. Compliance in my case studies depended greatly on the lack of ambiguity and the good coordination of integration regimes and reception programmes on one hand, and on the coordination of these with education systems on the other.

A related line of research concerns work on the implementation of policies, and particularly, the study of the discretional practices of policy implementers. Here we must concede that institutional influence is a given in spite of discretion, and this has to be seen as *embedded agency*. Hence, as Peter Evans says (1995: 10), the appropriate research question is not 'how much' influence do state institutions exert, but 'what kind' of influence. Studies must focus on those kinds of political institutions that shape practices of integration and on the mechanisms of influence that they apply.

The embedded character of discretion implies that more research is needed to reconstruct the particularities of agency and discretional implementation of policies by street-level bureaucrats in diverse spatial-temporal settings. The developments within the case of Barcelona show that the extension and kind of discretion in a given spatial-temporal conjuncture is subject to change. Transformations in contexts imply changes in discretional practices, as conflict and agentic possibilities may vary. This means not only that discretion can increase or decrease, but also that reflexivity

can increase (problematisation of experience) or decrease (routinisation). Also, the degree of collective institutionalisation of discretion may vary over time, as may the content and consequences of individual practices and collective strategies. This means that we cannot give a definitive and satisfactory answer to the disputes about the character of discretion, whether it is restrictive and discriminatory or empowering and serves to expand students' rights, as answers will vary for different spatial-temporal settings.

Because discretion as 'embedded agency' can manifest itself in a variety of ways, reconstructing the diversity of discretional practices in different cases within their respective contextual conditionings is not the only relevant empirical question. Most importantly, we must reconstruct the specific gradation of freedom, and the structure-agency interplay in each case study. It is important not to take such interplay for granted because changing conceptions of agentic possibility are related to structural contexts. Also, the existence of collective discretional arrangements implies the need to broaden the focus when studying discretion. Future studies on the role of individual policy implementers need to reconstruct their actions in the context of micro-politics within their organisations.

From the comparison of my cases, seven elements of the local field of reception appeared as crucial in defining the extent of discretion or compliance with the rules and the type of discretion exercised. Whether these factors apply in other socio-political and spatial-temporal conjunctures is another relevant empirical question. More research is needed to determine whether the elements identified as influential in this study also play a key role in other places and policy sectors.

Finally, research must approach the specific impact which different practical styles of receiving immigrant children in schools have upon outcomes. Much research concentrates on solving the riddle of the failure to integrate the second generation. The 1.5 generation – those born and schooled in their country of origin until they migrated with their parents – constitutes quite another problem. Their educational careers allow us to get a closer look at the impact of the practices of policy implementers on students' outcomes. Often their weaker educational results (in comparison to their second generation peers) are attributed to causes directly relating to the migrant condition (having a different mother tongue, being socialised in another culture and educational system). This would help to explain why dissimilar reception programmes lead to similarly poor educational outcomes. But to what extent can the inferior educational outcomes of 1.5-generation students be linked to school strategies of shortening reception trajectories? How closely are they linked to strategies that limit recep-

tion to basic language training? To what extent can unequal results be associated with the tendency of teaching these students separately from other students? To what extent do differences depend upon the migrant condition? All these empirical questions remain beyond the reach of my study. Future research should address these important issues.

Glossary of terms and acronyms

Allochtoon: In Dutch, a person born abroad. In the Netherlands this term is used to refer to persons of immigrant origin, either from first or second generation. *Allochtoon* is anybody born outside the Netherlands or with at least one parent born abroad (CBS 2003).

Autochtoon: Person born in the Netherlands from (both) Dutch parents.

Autonomía (or *Comunidad Autónoma*): Each of the 17 regions in which the Spanish federal system is divided.

Bachillerato: In Spain, Senior General Education, the academic track after obligatory secondary education.

BOOR (Bestuur Openbaar Onderwijs Rotterdam): Board of governors of the public schools in the municipality of Rotterdam.

Bridge class (brugklas): Class combining students with different tracking advice, normally during the first year of secondary education, until teachers make a definitive decision about which track each student must go.

BUP (Bachillerato Unido Polivalente): Until 1990 BUP was the academic track of secondary education, Secondary General Education, comprised of three courses between ages 15 and 17. The vocational alternative was FP (Formación Profesional). Presently the BUP has been replaced by 'Bachillerato' and the vocational track by 'Ciclos Formativos' (CFGM).

Ciclos Formativos (or CFGM): In Spain, vocational education. It comprises a Junior level and a Senior Level.

CDA (Christen- Democratisch Appèl): Christian Democrat Party in the Netherlands.

CIU (Convergencia i Unio): Conservative-nationalistic party of Catalonia.

Charter school ('concertada'): In Spain, a privately owned publicly funded school. Charter schools are private schools which sign a covenant ('concierto') with the public administration in order to obtain public subsidies.

CED (Center for Educational Consulting): A semi-private institution that provides pedagogical advice to schools, supporting them in the implementation of the educational priority policy, reception, and teaching of Dutch as a second language.

Cito test: A school achievement test taken in Dutch schools at the end of primary education, around age 11 or 12. Based on their scores, pupils receive advice for a particular track of secondary education. Although the Cito test is not the official national standard its use is widespread among schools.

CUMI funds: General funds from the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to fight educational disadvantage, specifically earmarked for ethnic minority students. Later substituted by *Leerplusarrangament VO*.

DSO (Dienst Stedelijk Onderwijs): Department of Education of the Municipality of Rotterdam. Later substituted by JOS (Youth, Education and Society).

ERC (Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya): Republican Party of Catalonia, that stands for a progressive nationalist approach.

ESO (Educación Secundaria Obligatoria): Obligatory secondary education in Spain. It comprises four courses from 12 to 16 year old. After completion students can proceed to post-obligatory

secondary education, having to choose between the academic track (Bachillerato) or the professional track (Ciclos Formativos).

Estado de las Autonomías: Spanish federal state.

GRECO programme (Programa Global de Regulación y Coordinación de la Extranjería y la Inmigración en España): National programme for the integration of immigrants in Spain issued within the framework of the Law 8/2000. In 2006 it was substituted by the programme PECI.

Flexible tracking (Agrupamientos flexibles): Schools' tracking strategy that streams students into groups according to their level for some subjects only. Typically it is applied to mathematics or to language lessons.

HAVO (Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs): In the Netherlands, Senior General Education, one of the tracks of secondary education.

HBO (Hoger Beropsonderwijs): Senior Vocational Education in the Netherlands, the professional equivalent to university.

ICV (Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds): Ecologist-socialist party of Catalonia.

IES (Instituto de Enseñanza Secundaria): In Spain, high school or school for secondary education.

ISK (Internationale schakelklassen): In the Netherlands programme for educational reception of newcomer students between the ages of 12 and 16.

KWT (Keuze Werktijd): Free-choice working time, that is, lessons in which the pupils may choose the activities that they want to do.

LCVOA (Landelijk Commissie Voortgezet Onderwijs Allochtonen): A national organisation that coordinates and represents all secondary schools receiving immigrant students.

LIC (Llengua, Interculturalitat i Cohesió Social): 'Language, Interculturalism and Social Cohesion' programme.' A Catalonian programme for the reception of newcomer students in secondary schools, launched in 2004.

LINC (Learning in New Contexts): Initiative launched in school Vermeer (Rotterdam) to teach content-area subjects using self-learning methodologies.

LMC: Body of governors of a large Christian-Catholic group of schools in Rotterdam.

LOE: Fourth Spanish educational law (2006), formulated by the Labour Party (PSOE).

LOCE: Third Spanish educational law (2002), enacted by the Conservative Party (PP).

LODE: First Spanish educational law (1980) following the transition to democracy.

LOGSE: Second Spanish educational law (1990), enacted by the Labour Party (PSOE).

LCVOA (Landelijke Commissie voor het Voortgezet Onderwijs en Anderstaligen): National Commission for Secondary Education and Non-Dutch Speakers. Organisation created to represent the interests of schools that teach newcomer children with other mother tongues than Dutch.

MAVO (Middelbaar Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs): In the Netherlands, Junior General Education one of the tracks of secondary education.

MBO (Middelbaar beropesonderwijs): In the Netherlands, senior vocational education; one of the tracks of secondary education.

PEC (Programa de Educación Compensatoria): In Spain, Compensatory Education Programme, launched in 1983 to give preferential attention to disadvantaged students.

PECI (Programa Español de Ciudadania e Integración): Spanish National framework for Immigrants' Integration launched in 2006.

PI (Pla Interdepartamental d' Immigració): First Catalonian policy for immigration and immigrants' integration (1993-2000).

PP (Partido Popular): Conservative Party of Spain.

PRISMA: Reception programme for students aged 6-11 years of age (primary education) in Rotterdam.

PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español): Labour Party of Spain.

PvdA (Partij van de Arbeid): Labour Party of the Netherlands.

RAVEN test: Intelligence test applied in Dutch schools.

ROAP (Rotterdam Onderwijsachterstand Plan): Plan of educational opportunities of Rotterdam.

ROC (Regionaal opleidingcentrum): Teaching centres in charge of delivering vocational training of intermediate level (between junior, VMBO level, and senior, HBO level) and adult education in the Netherlands.

Second phase (Tweede fase): Last year(s) of secondary education in higher tracks (HAVO and VWO).

SEDEC: Within the Education Department of Catalonia, a unit dealing with the 'normalisation' or mainstreaming of the Catalan language, aiming to solve its disadvantage with respect to Castilian.

SOLT (Subject Oriented Language Teaching): Teaching methodology for teaching a foreign language during ordinary classes of content-area subjects. In Dutch known as "vakgericht taalonderwijs".

STER programme: Programme applying a common reception curriculum and teaching methodology for all schools providing reception to immigrant students in Rotterdam.

TAE (Taller de Adaptació Escolar): 'Workshops for Educational Adaptation' (1996-2003).

VMBO (Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs): Preparatory vocational education.

VWO (Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs): University preparatory education, one of the tracks of secondary education in the Netherlands.

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