The coproduction of a Dutch model of integration?

Research-policy dialogues on immigrant integration in the Netherlands

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Abstract

The Netherlands has been internationally known for its multicultural approach to immigrant integration. The genesis of this Dutch multicultural model is said to have been influenced greatly by academic researchers and scientific experts in the Netherlands. Yet, both the multicultural model for which the Netherlands has become so known and the symbiosis of researchers and policy-makers that contributed to its construction have become fiercely contested over the past decade. The aim of this paper is to delve into the ‘coproduction’ by researchers and policy-makers of the so-called Dutch multicultural model and to analyse how this coproduction may have affected the development of Dutch policies as well as the development of immigrant integration studies in the Netherlands. A framework will be elaborated that accounts for the more dynamic nature of ‘policy models’ and the role of the research-policy nexus in constructing these models. As this paper shows, researchers and policy-makers have in the Netherlands been joined in several discourse coalitions. Indeed, one of these discourse coalitions supported a multicultural model of integration, but at least two other types of discourses can be identified in the Netherlands, one of more liberal-egalitarian nature and one more assimilationist. In spite of the persistent image of the Netherlands as a representative of the multicultural model, it is in fact this multiplicity of discourses that characterizes the Netherlands. Furthermore, it is this multiplicity of discourses that complicates research-policy dialogues, as the selection and interpretation of evidence tends to be bound to specific discourses and to the networks of actors that support these discourses.
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The Netherlands has been internationally known for its multicultural approach to immigrant integration. Some even speak of a ‘multicultural model’ that would continue to inform Dutch political discourse and policy practices until this very day (Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007; Joppke, 2007; Koopmans, 2007). The basic premise of this model would be that Dutch policies have been driven by a coherent and consistent belief that the recognition and accommodation of cultural, ethnic and religious groups in society will lead to their successful emancipation into the Dutch multicultural society. This model has provided the basis for the Dutch Ethnic Minorities Policies, and would have also informed policy developments in surrounding countries such as Germany.

The genesis of this Dutch multicultural model is said to have been influenced greatly by academic researchers and scientific experts in the Netherlands. Amongst researchers involved in this field, there would have been a strong belief in the so-called multicultural model. Rath (2001) speaks in this context of an ‘ethnic minorities paradigm’ in Dutch research, which was strongly influenced by anthropology in its focus on cultural factors in explaining societal deprivation of immigrant minorities. Furthermore, researchers in this field would have been strongly policy oriented and even entwined in policy networks. Guiraudon (1999) and Rath (2001) speak in this context of a ‘technocratic symbiosis’ that enabled the development ‘behind guided doors’ of a more multicultural policy approach, while ignoring several alternative policy paradigms.

Yet, both the multicultural model for which the Netherlands has become so known and the symbiosis of researchers and policy-makers that contributed to its construction have become fiercely contested over the past decade. In mainstream political discourse, the Dutch multicultural model has been discarded as a failure. In 2003, a special parliamentary investigative committee was established to provide a new élan to Dutch policy, as most politicians agreed that the effect of previous policies had been too limited. Moreover, there is growing doubt about whether the ‘multicultural model’ has been or at least continues to be a valid depiction of the Dutch approach to immigrant integration (Bertossi and Duyvendak, 2009). Especially in terms of political and public policy discourse, the multicultural model seems to have developed into a counter-narrative against which current policy developments are juxtaposed, rather than a valid depiction of policies itself. There is however compelling evidence that when it comes to concrete policy practices, many measures still reflect the alleged Dutch multicultural model (Koopmans, 2003). However,
especially when it comes to policy practices on the local level, it is contested whether these policy practices are actually driven by a normative multicultural model or by more pragmatic concerns of ‘keeping things together’ (Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008).

Also amongst Dutch researchers, the multicultural model has been subject to growing criticism, amongst others for its tendency to reify cultural differences and to ignore other sources of social-economic deprivation (Entzinger, 2006). What is more, the involvement of researchers in the development of the multicultural model has in itself become contested as well. In public debate, the credibility of researchers was put on the line on various occasions, targeting in particular their policy orientation and their alleged multicultural bias. The technocratic symbiosis that once was a driving factor behind the construction of the multicultural model, had now become an object of controversy and a symbol for not only the scientification of politics but also the politicization of science.

The aim of this paper is to delve into the social construction, or as I will describe it, the ‘coproduction’ by researchers and policy-makers of the so-called Dutch multicultural model. In addition, I will analyse how this coproduction has affected the development of Dutch policies as well as the development of immigrant integration studies in the Netherlands. Based on neo-institutionalist literature, a framework will be developed that accounts for the more dynamic nature of ‘policy models’ and the role of the research-policy nexus in constructing these models. Whereas (rational and historical) institutionalist literature tends to accept the role of scientific research in policy-making as given (‘science speaking truth to power’), neo-institutionalists focus on the more dynamic ways in which actors operate within the fields of research and policy but also contribute to the construction of specific sorts of relations between research and policy-making. As this paper will show, this offers a new perspective on the role of research in the construction of the Dutch multicultural model, and suggest new ways to make research-policy dialogues more ‘reflective’.

The research-policy nexus and the construction of ‘policy models’

The construction of (national) models of integration

The idea of ‘national models of integration’, inspired by institutionalist thinking, has acquired great resonance in European migration research. Institutionalists focus on which models or regimes are considered rational within specific institutional settings (rational choice) or which models are legacies from the history of a specific country (historical institutionalism). An important example of this institutionalist models thinking can be found in Esping-Andersen’s (1990) conceptualization of welfare state regimes (social-democrat regime, liberal regime, etc.), which combines both elements of historical as well as rational choice institutionalism. A key trait of these policy models is that they are expected to be relatively stable over fairly long periods of time, based on the assumption that the conditions that led
to a specific model are unlikely to change rapidly and that models themselves tend to develop a certain path-dependency or resistance to change.

This models-thinking has become prominent in comparative studies of migration policies as well as to self-referential discourse within specific countries about immigrant integration. For instance, studies of France have focused on its so-called ‘Republican model’ of integration, which is oriented at the assimilation of migrants into the French political and cultural community (Favell, 1998). In fact, within France, this model played an important role in structuring research-policy relations; there were public intellectuals that strongly supported this model (Favell, 1998), but the republic model also sustains a taboo on gathering statistics on ethnic groups as this would be at odds with the color-blind premises of the model (Amiraux and Simon, 2006).

A key reference in this models-thinking is Brubaker’s (1992) ‘Citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany.’ In this book, Brubaker juxtaposes the German and French models of citizenship that provided the foundations for the integration policies in these countries; a differentialist approach in Germany and an assimilationist approach in France. Whereas the Germans stressed exclusive membership of the German community based on ethnic ties (ius sanguinis), the French adopted a more inclusive model oriented at inclusion into full citizenship of everyone born on French soil (ius soli). As a true historical institutionalist, Brubaker shows how the historical conditions in both countries that led to the construction of these national models: a strongly developed cultural and apolitical sense of national belonging in Germany versus the state-centric tradition of nation building in France.

This models thinking has had great resonance in migration studies. Take for instance the work of Christian Joppke who takes the national models as starting-point for comparative studies of immigrant integration (1995), although his more recent work has become more explicit about how countries tend to deviate more and more from their traditional models. Or Patrick Ireland (1994) who, in a comparative study of France and Switzerland, found that national institutional conditions provide the best explanation for the type of policies that are developed. Or Ruud Koopmans (2003) who in his Dutch-German comparison takes the differences in national models as main explanation for the differences in effectiveness of the Dutch and German approaches.

One of the reasons why models have gained such wide resonance in migration studies (as in various other sectors) is that they help reducing complexity: it simplifies the otherwise highly complex and contested matter of immigrant integration. Models help to construct international comparative studies to assess processes of convergence or divergence between various European countries. Furthermore, by comparing ideal-typical models with specific periods, modeling can generate in a country’s history. In this latter sense, Castles and Miller (2003) and in their footsteps, Koopmans and Statham (2005), have extended Brubaker’s dichotomy into a fourfold typology of integration models; civic-assimilationism, cultural pluralism, ethnic-differentialism and civic-republicanism. An important difference
with the historical institutionalist modeling of Brubaker is that this fourfold distinction of integration models represent ideal-types that can be used for studying country cases, rather than that these models are taken as representative for national approaches per se.

Yet, the danger of modeling is that the models are not only taken as tools for international comparison or for understanding historical periods. When a model begins to shape our understanding and beliefs about policies, the model becomes more than just a model: the model is then taken as an accurate historical reconstruction of policy rather than as a model of it. Models then take the place of historical analysis. In social science literature, this has often led instances where a model is ‘blamed’ for the success or failure of a specific policy approach. For instance, various authors have blamed the Dutch multicultural model for the alleged failure of immigrant integration in the Netherlands (Koopmans 2003: Sniderman and Hagendoorn, 2007).

In addition, models tend to oversimplify policies and overstress the alleged coherency and consistency of these policies (see also Bertossi and Duyvendak, 2009). Policy practices tend to be far more resilient and diverse than most policy models would suggest. For instance, in Dutch as well as in French literature there have been many references to differences between how policies are formulated on the national level and how they are put into practice often on the local level; some even speak of the decoupling of national and local policies in this respect (Favell, 1998: De Zwart, 2007: Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008). In fact, even when policy-makers claim to operate according to a specific policy model, their reasons for doing so may be more pragmatic and flexible then in the policy model itself in its ideal-typical form. For instance, the reason why some politicians in the 1980s framed immigrant integration in terms of the multicultural model may have much more to do with their fear of anti-immigrant parties playing the race card than with their so-called multicultural policy beliefs (Penninx, 1988: Scholten, 2007).

Yet, in spite of these methodological and empirical problems associated with models-thinking in migration research, models can be very powerful as a form of ‘policy discourse’ (Hajer, 1995). A model is not just about being valid, but also about being conceptually and normatively clear and convincing. A models helps making sense out of the complex social reality that is often associated with issues as immigrant integration, they are tools for ‘naming’ and ‘framing’ the problem and determining adequate paths for policy action. Hajer speaks in this context of the formation of ‘discourse coalitions’ which are actors that are held together by a shared discourse and not necessarily by coordinated interaction. This can include various types of actors, including politicians and policy-makers, as well as academics, experts, interest groups, journalists, etc.

Once a discourse becomes dominant and is supported by a sufficiently large or strong group of actors, a discourse can prove difficult to change. Challenging a discourse means also challenging the beliefs and interests of the groups involved in the discourse coalition. Furthermore, discourses tend to become taken-for-granted, in fact even members of a
discourse coalition may be unaware of their tacit beliefs and the presence of alternative beliefs. This is why, according to Rein and Schön, situations that are characterized by a multiplicity of coexisting discourses (or ‘frames’) tend to evolve in ‘intractable policy controversies’. Such intractable controversies do not just involve mere disagreements about how to resolve a given problem, but fundamental differences in the naming and framing of a problem. According to Rein and Schön, such controversies cannot be resolved by merely studying ‘the facts’, as discourse coalitions will have very different ways of selecting and interpreting these facts. For instance, whereas for some actors evidence of increasing labor market participation of migrants may be irrefutable evidence of the success of integration, for others it may be considered irrelevant because of the focus on cultural rather than social-economic integration.

Hence, intractable controversies would only be resolvable by reflecting on the deeper conceptual and normative premises that underlie a specific discourse (what Rein and Schön describe as ‘frame reflection’). This means that actors have to become aware of their own models or ‘frames’, have to be able to put themselves in the shoes of actors with other frames and have to be willing adapt their discourses when required. In the case of migration studies, this means that national models of immigrant integration should not be taken-for-granted. Rather, these models should be taken as object of analysis rather than as a starting point for analysis. The deductive evaluation of a model’s success or failure will never lead to the resolution of policy controversy, but the inductive analysis of the deeper premises of a policy may contribute to such critical reflection.

Research policy dialogues

The main objective of this paper is to analyse the role of social-scientific research in the construction of the Dutch multicultural model of integration, and assess to what extent research has been able to contribute to ‘critical reflection’ on this model. The standard model of the relation between social research and policy-making is one of ‘science speaking truth to power’ (Wildavsky, 1979). Indeed, as Radin (2000) shows, many of the social sciences evolved with a strong policy orientation and resolve to contribute to rational societal steering. This certainly applies to migration research which, as Favell (1998) shows, evolved in a clear parallel to emerging policy concerns about immigrant integration.

Yet, when it comes to intractable policy controversies like immigrant integration, the standard model of speaking truth to power becomes difficult to maintain. What goes as truth tends to be inherently contested in situations where there are multiple discourses, each with their own way of naming and framing the problem, and their own way of selecting and interpreting evidence. Without notion of different underlying discourses, research-policy dialogues can in such situations decay in ‘dialogues of the deaf’ (Van Eeten, 1999).

Furthermore, researchers tend to do more than just present evidence to policy-makers. Academics and experts are often part of specific discourse coalitions themselves as well. The
formation of such discourse coalitions is often referred to as a key factor in the ‘co-evolution’ (Nowotny a.o. 2001) or ‘coproduction’ of truth-claims by researchers and policy-makers. In this context, Nowotny a.o. (2001:245) refer to the growing transgression of science-politics boundaries and the contextualisation of science, which means that science not only speaks to society but society also speaks back to science. According to Shapin and Shaffer (1985: 332), there is a ‘conditional relationship between the nature of the polity occupied by scientific intellectuals and the nature of the wider polity’. Ezrahi (1990) has described the rise of modern science in relation to the rising demand by modern societies as instrumental means to sustain administrative control; science would have been an important political resource for depersonalizing and depoliticizing ideological state control and thereby legitimizing modern liberal democratic politics.

Bourdieu has, in this context, pointed to the role of the conversion of scientific capital to other sorts of capital in the relations between the fields of research and policy. This concerns the conversion of scientific capital to other types of capital, including economic, social or cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1975: 25), as well as other sorts of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 2004: 55). For instance, besides ‘strictly scientific authority’, there would also be a sort of scientific capital that is more related to other sorts of capital, or a sort of capital that involves ‘power over the scientific world which can be accumulated through channels that are not purely scientific (...) and which is the bureaucratic principle of temporal powers over the scientific field such as those of ministers and ministries, deans and vice chancellors or scientific administrators’ (2004: 57).

Thus, the fields of research and policy cannot be seen as essentially demarcated. Instead, they must be conceptualized as interconnected in their development. Following Bourdieu’s conceptualization of science-politics relations, it is likely that the conversion of capital between both fields will produce specific shared discourses (such as in the case of this paper national models of integration). In other words, the interaction between fields tends to reinforce the coproduction of truth or knowledge claims. For instance, the type of knowledge claims that are developed by researchers will also depend on the sorts of capital that can be obtained with these claims, in terms of economic capital (e.g. research funding), but also social capital (e.g. networks) and cultural capital (e.g. authority, influence).

Bourdieu’s conceptualization of research-policy relations and its implications for the coproduction of knowledge actually supports Rein and Schön’s skepticism about the resolution of intractable policy controversies by studying the (scientific) facts. Researchers tend to be part of discourse coalitions rather than having the critical distance required for ‘critical frame reflection.’ In fact, this has led many policy scientists to be very cynical about the possibilities for ‘policy learning’ or ‘social learning’. According to Hall (1993), social learning will mostly take place on the level of secondary or tertiary policy facets, but rarely on the first level of fundamental policy assumptions. Similarly, Sabatier (1987) prospects that fundamental policy change due to learning is as unlikely as religious conversion, and that
such policy changes are more likely to be due to external perturbations like shifts in political power, large-scale focus events or macro-economic perturbations.

Yet, following Rein and Schön’s concern with frame reflection, there have been attempts to reconceptualize the relation between research and policy in a way that research can contribute to the resolution of intractable policy controversies. Hajer (2005), Hoppe (2004), and Maasen and Weingart (2005) argue that the role of social research in these situations should be to help involved actors to identify and reflect upon the involved discourses or frames. Instead of speaking truth to power, research then obtains a more deliberative role of ‘making sense together.’ This means that research, rather than committing itself to a specific discourse, has to identify and make explicit the diverse involved discourse, to critically examine and confront these frames, and to engage in a dialogue with policy. Thus, discourses (like the national models of integration) have to be taken as object of analysis, rather than as a starting point for analysis.

In the following parts of this paper, I will first examine to what extent there has indeed been a multicultural model of integration in the Netherlands. And if so, what are the premises of this model, by what sort of discourse coalition is it maintained, and how has this model informed policy formulation and policy practices? Secondly, I’ll examine the role of research in the construction of Dutch integration policy discourses. What has been the contribution of social researchers and experts to the construction of the Dutch multicultural model, and to what extent has research in fact contributed to critical reflection about this model?

‘The Dutch multicultural model’

For the analysis of the role of social research in the construction of the so-called Dutch multicultural model of immigrant integration, the first step will be to analyse to what extent we can in fact speak of a such a model at all. In order to do so, we must first reconstruct what is meant by this multicultural model (how it is defined in the literature), followed by an assessment of the validity of the model (does policy indeed follow this model, has the model been consistent and coherent, does the model also inform policy practices).

*Locating the Dutch model in the literature*

A key trait of the Dutch multicultural model would be, according to the literature, its tendency to institutionalize cultural pluralism in the belief that cultural emancipation of immigrant minorities is the key to their integration into Dutch society (see also Duyvendak and Scholten, 2009). This would also reflect a rather uncontested acceptation of the transformation of Dutch society into a multicultural society. In the latter respect, a connection is often made with the peculiar Dutch history of pillarisation, referring to the period from the 1920s to 1960s when most of Dutch society was structured according to
specific religious (protestant, Catholic) or socio-cultural (socialist, liberal) pillars (Lijphart, 1968).

A recent study by Sniderman and Hagendoorn (2007), *When Ways of Life Collide: Multiculturalism and its Discontents in the Netherlands*, labels the Dutch approach in terms of a multiculturalist model. The authors claim that the labeling of collective identities has inadvertently deepened social-cultural cleavages in society rather than bridging these differences. They take the Netherlands as their single exemplary case to found their claims. They root the Dutch approach back to the history of pillarisation: ‘The Netherlands has always been a country of minorities thanks to the power of religion to divide as well as unite’ (pp. 13). In addition, the ‘collective trauma of World War II where the Dutch failed to resist the massive deportation of Jews would have contributed to that immigrant minorities have been seen in the light of the Holocaust (..) or that critical views of immigrants are labelled racist and xenophobic.’ Due to these historical circumstances, a multiculturalist model would have taken root in the Netherlands.

The German sociologist Joppke also considers the Dutch as the most radical exponent of the multiculturalist model. He describes how recently the Dutch changed their policies, since the alleged multicultural policies have been a failure: “Civic integration is a response to the obvious failure of one of Europe’s most pronounced policies of multiculturalism to further the socioeconomic integration of immigrants and their offspring. (..) In a counterpoint to multiculturalism’s tendency to lock migrant ethnics into their separate worlds, the goal of civic integration is migrants’ participation in mainstream institutions” (2007: 249).

Also among some Dutch scholars, thinking in terms of the Dutch multicultural model has acquired great resonance. Koopmans (2006) roots the Dutch approach to immigrant integration clearly in the history of pillarisation when ethno-cultural cleavages were stressed in a similar way in multicultural policies. He claims that the application of this model on new immigrant groups has had strong adverse effects, as multiculturalism ‘offers new ethnic and religious groups a formal and symbolic form of equality, which in practice reinforces ethnic cleavages and reproduces segregation on a distinctly unequal basis’ (2006:5). Koopmans points in particular to the ‘path-dependency’ in terms of policy practices. Although formal policy discourse and public discourse seem to have changed, in their actual way of dealing with ethno-cultural diversity the Dutch would have remained accommodative:

‘The Netherlands is still an extreme representative of a 'multicultural' vision of integration. (..) Outside the limited world of op-eds in high-brow newspapers, the relation between Dutch society and its immigrants is still firmly rooted in its tradition of pillarization (..) (O)rganizations and activities based on ethnic grounds are still generously supported – directly and indirectly – by the government. Whether people want it or not, ethnicity still plays an important role in public institutions and discourse (Koopmans, 2006: 4).’
Dutch integration policy discourse

To what extent can we recognize this multicultural model in the integration policies that have been developed over the past decades? The Netherlands did not develop a policy aimed at immigrant integration until the early 1980s, when it was recognized that migrants were to stay permanently. During the 1980s, an ‘Ethnic Minorities Policy’ was developed that was target at specific cultural or ethnic minorities in Dutch society, such as the foreign workers, the Surinamese, the Moluccans and the Antilleans. Migrants were framed as ‘minorities’ in Dutch society instead of temporary guests, and government decided to focus on those minorities whose position was characterized by an accumulation of cultural and social-economic difficulties and for whom the Dutch government felt a special historical responsibility (Rath, 2001). The Minorities Policy expressed the idea that an amelioration of the social-cultural position of migrants would also improve their social-economic position. The policy objective was to combat discrimination and social-economic deprivation and to support social-cultural emancipation. Moreover, although the Netherlands still not considered itself to be an immigration country, it did redefine the imagined national community as a multicultural society. Within this normative perspective, government respected the preservation of cultural identities. This indeed reflected somewhat the Dutch tradition of pluralism through ‘pillarism’, that is the institutionalization of ‘sovereignty within the own sphere’ for each minority group (Lijphart 1968). In this context, the institutionalization of cultural pluralism continued in this period (such as broadcast media for several groups, Immigrant Language and Culture Instruction, religious facilities), but now with the aim of integration in society rather than facilitating return migration.

This connection that is often made between Dutch Ethnic Minorities Policies and the history of pillarization is however contested in the literature. First of all, Dutch society had been depillarizing in many sectors already since the 1950s and 1960s. Pillarization especially seems to have been powerful as a ‘discourse’. The framing of migrants as minorities resonated with the framing of national minorities that the Dutch were already used to. Vink (2007) speaks in this context of a ‘pillarization reflex’, which means that, when faced with the issue of immigrant incorporation at the end of the 1970s, Dutch policy-makers resorted to the traditional frame of pillarization for providing meaning to the new issue of immigrant integration. This pillarization reflex strongly resembles how in France the Republican model was re-invented in the domain of immigrant integration in the early 1980s (Fassin, 2000).

Others have added that it was not so much the integration policy per se that was inspired by pillarisation (Maussen, 2009; Duyvendak and Scholten, 2009). Rather, there was the influence of more generic institutions in Dutch society that were still to some extent pillarised, such as the Dutch tradition of state-sponsored special (religious) education, a pillarised broadcasting system and health system. Integration policy itself has never been oriented at the construction of minority groups as pillars. Minority groups also never achieved the level of organization (and separation) that national minorities achieved in the
early 20th century. According to Rath (1999: 59): “in terms of institutional arrangements, there is no question of an Islamic pillar in the Netherlands, or at least one that is in any way comparable to the Roman Catholic or Protestant pillars in the past”. In fact, some critics have pointed out that there never really was a ‘national multicultural model’, as defining slogans as ‘integration with preservation of cultural identity’ were rejected already at this early stage; only later this slogan would be projected on this period in public and academic discourse. Pillarisation nor multiculturalism were really embraced as normative ideals but rather referring in a more descriptive sense to the increase of diversity in society. Thus, the references to pillarisation or multiculturalism seem to have been much more pragmatic than normative.

Besides this contested continuity between pillarisation and the Dutch multicultural model, it is also obvious that this alleged multicultural model has not been very consistent over the past decades. Since the late 1980s, the ‘multicultural model’ underlying the Ethnic Minorities has been subject to fierce controversy. In 1989, the authoritative Dutch Scientific Council for Government Policy issued a report in which it denounced the Dutch multicultural model (also in those words) for it focused too much on ‘culture and morality’ and tended to make minorities too much dependent on state facilities because of its group-specific measures (WRR, 1989). According to the WRR, the institutionalization of cultural pluralism should no longer be considered an independent policy objective. Rather, government should focus on stimulating individual migrants to be able to stand on their own feet.

In the early 1990s, formal government policy departed from the multicultural model in several important regards. In the early 1990s, the Minorities Policy was reframed into an Integration Policy that stressed social-economic participation of immigrants as citizens or ‘allochthonous’ rather than emancipation of minorities. Rather than categorizing migrants based on ethno-cultural traits, migrants were categorized on an individual basis based on foreign descent. The normative perspective of a multicultural society shifted to the background in this period, with much more stress being put on the relation between immigrant integration and maintaining a viable welfare state. Clearly, the multiculturalist perspective of the 1980s was now exchanged for a more liberal-egalitarian perspective (Entzinger, 2005). Promoting ‘good’ or ‘active’ citizenship became the primary policy goal, stimulating individual migrants to live up to their civic rights as well as their duties and to become economically independent participants in society.

Later, just after the turn of the millennia, an assimilationist turn took place in Dutch integration policy. In fact, a (second) broad national debate took place in 2000 in response to claims that Dutch policy had become a ‘multicultural tragedy’ (Scheffer, 2000). Also, the populist politician Fortuyn made the alleged failure of the Dutch integration approach into one of his central political issues. This set in motion a gradual assimilationist turn, which was codified in an ‘Integration Policy New Style.’ Whereas the Integration Policy had stressed ‘active citizenship’, the Integration Policy ‘New Style’ stressed rather the ‘common
citizenship’, which meant that ‘the unity of society must be found in what members have in common (…) that is that people speak Dutch, and that one abides to basic Dutch norms’ (TK 2003-2004, 29203, nr. 1: 8.). Persisting social-cultural differences were now considered a hindrance to immigrant integration. Moreover, the integration policy was more and more linked to a broader public and political concern about the preservation of national identity and social cohesion in Dutch society. In this period, the multicultural model was more and more used as a ‘counter-discourse’ against which new policy developments were to be juxtaposed. The assimilationist turn in Dutch policies, which has also been identified in various other European countries (Joppke and Morawska, 2003), clearly distances from the multicultural model. Inadvertently, this assimilationist turn may have contributed to a discursive reconstruction of the history of integration policies that put much greater stress on its alleged multiculturalist traits.

Clearly there has not been one dominant model or discourse in the Netherlands. Indeed, there has been a multicultural discourse in the Netherlands, which Vink (2007) links to the ‘pillarization reflex’. But in spite of the singular image of the Netherlands as representing the multicultural model, Dutch policy has been inspired, beyond the multicultural model, by at least two different discourses. One of these competing discourses is the more liberal-egalitarian (social-economic) discourse, which became particularly influential in the 1990s. And the other is the more assimilationist discourse that emerged during the 1990s and become more prominent after the turn of the millennia.

Policy practices

Another element of debate is to what extent the multicultural model has been effectuated on the level of concrete policy practices. When we accept that the multicultural model was at least a powerful policy discourse in the Netherlands in the 1980s, this does not necessary mean that this model was also powerful in terms of concrete policy practices. For instance, in France there is strong evidence of decoupling or ‘décalage’ between official policy discourse (the Republican model) and concrete policy practices which tend to be much more lenient in terms of recognizing cultural and ethnic differences in a way that contrasts sharply with the color blind national policy discourse (Favell, 1998).

There is much evidence that policies that were initiated in the 1980s were effectuated in this period, and even were continued until well after the multicultural policies of the Minorities Policy had been formally abandoned. This is what Koopmans refers to as the strong tendency of ‘path-dependency’ in the practice of Dutch integration policies (2007). For instance, Immigrant Language and Culture Instruction continued, although in different forms and with different wordings of its rationale, until after the turn of the Millennia. Whereas its goal was initially formulated as contributing to identity formation of migrants within the Dutch multicultural society, its rationale was reframed in the 1990s in terms of ‘language-transition’ by first mastering the mother-tongue language as support for the subsequent apprehension of Dutch as second language. Another practice that was continued until well
after the 1980s was the institutionalized practice of consultation with migrant organisations. At first, the establishment of migrant organizations and a National Consultatory and Advisory Structure for Minorities had the objective of democratically involving migrants in policy-making processes. In the 1990s, the institutional involvement of migrant organisations was largely continued, although its advisory function was gradually marginalized. More recently, an important rationale for maintaining this form of institutionalized ‘multiculturalism’ is that migrant organisations provide channels for debate when incidents, such as the murder of the film-maker Van Gogh, trigger broad public and political controversy. Also in other fields, there are signs of path-dependency, such as in the existence of broadcast media for migrant groups and in the establishment of Islamic schools with state help. However, the meaning and the use of these policies and the opportunities offered to migrants have radically shifted over time.

However, it is contested to what extent these practices continue to be inspired by a multicultural model, or a normative ideology of multiculturalism. To some extent, the national and local levels of integration policy seem to have followed very different institutional logics. Whereas national policy discourse was inspired by politicization, trigger events and a concern with grand themes like national identity and culture, local policy discourse seems to have been much more pragmatic of nature, concerned with pragmatic modes of problem-coping and a more instrumental policy logic.

An important instance of divergence in this respect concerns the recognition of ethno-cultural groups and minorities organisations. In the early nineties, national government formally adopted a more color-blind citizenship approach, approaching migrants as citizens rather than as ethnic or cultural groups. This citizenship approach meant that various group-specific, tailor-made projects would have to be abolished. Yet, in practice, there has been a continued proliferation of such group-specific projects (De Zwart and Poppelaars, 2007). Often, there is a pragmatic need for policy practitioners to focus on specific groups and cooperate with migrant organizations, to be able to ‘reach’ the policy target groups and to acquire relevant knowledge and information about these groups (Poppelaars and Scholten, 2008).

Although these local practices often imply the de-facto recognition of cultural groups, it would be a mistake to consider them as real multicultural policies. Rather, they form more pragmatic attempts to conduct effective policies on the local level. They are not inspired by an ideology of multiculturalism nor by a legacy of pillarisation, but rather by the more pragmatic need to recognize groups and develop tailor-made projects to conduct effective policies and to, as the mayor of the City of Amsterdam aptly phrases it, ‘keep things together.’ They do show that the ‘citizenship-approach’ that emerged in the 1990s did not institutionalize as a coherent policy model either. Neither the multicultural paradigm of the 1980s nor the citizenship approach of the 1990s did become a true ‘national model.’
Research-policy dialogues on the Dutch model

Instead of there being one dominant discourse in the Netherlands, there were obviously at least several competing discourses. Amongst them, indeed a discourse of the Dutch multicultural model, but also a more liberal-egalitarian discourse and an assimilationist discourse. Furthermore, it is clear that each of these discourses have influenced policies and policy practices in the Netherlands, although there are signs of decoupling of policy discourses and practices. This makes it particularly difficult to assess Dutch integration policies in terms of either policy success or failure. Such evaluations will always depend on the type of discourse that is adopted as a measure, and as these discourses have been obviously contested, there is no objective yardstick for determining success or failure. In this respect, immigrant integration can rightly be defined as an ‘intractable policy controversy’, or a controversy that cannot be resolved by merely looking at the (scientific) facts.

The next step is then to analyse the role that social research has played in the evolution of this intractable policy controversy. The literature suggests that policy development in this sector has been strongly influenced by social research (Penninx, 1992; Guiraudon, 1997; Rath, 2001; Timmermans and Scholten, 2006). But has research also contributed to a resolution of this controversy, or has research (as contemporary sociologists of science would predict) rather become a part of the ongoing controversies itself?

The technocratic symbiosis of the multicultural model

The Dutch multicultural model of immigrant integration emerged as a discourse in the Netherlands in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This was the period when, triggered by a series of events (terrorist acts by Moluccan migrants) and by the absence of return migration, it had become obvious that migrants would stay permanently and that some sort of policy response was required. Before this period, Dutch politicians had held on firmly to the myth of return migration, which prevented the development of an integration policy. This also was reflected in the absence of research interest for minorities: only few studies were done that really focused on the position of minorities within Dutch society (Penninx, 2005). In fact, government funded research avoided the use of the term ‘immigrant’ (Van Amersfoort 1974) so as not to punctuate the myth of temporary residence.

There is a clear relation between the rise of research interest and the rise of immigrant integration on the policy agenda in the late 1970s. A powerful ‘discourse coalition’ emerged that consisted of a comparatively small network of policy-makers and researchers. On the side of policy and politics, there was a ‘gentlemen’s agreement’ not to make this into a partisan issue, fearing radical parties that could play the race card. When government had agreed that a policy for ethnic minorities was needed, it rapidly established a departmental committee (led by former parliamentarian Molleman) that was put in charge of the development of such a policy. Also, there was a strong belief among policy makers in this
period that integration as a social problem could be resolved if approached rationally, reflecting the broader belief in societal steering from that period (Blume a.o., 1992).

On the side of research, a group of researchers emerged that was brought together in the government-sponsored Advisory Committee on Minorities Research (ACOM). This consisted primarily of researchers with an anthropological background, such as André Köbben and Rinus Penninx, but also sociologists like Han Entzinger and social-geographers as Hans van Amersfoort. The strong anthropological influences on this ACOM led to a certain cultural focus in their research; they tended to focus on the specific problems that minority groups faced because of their specific cultural and ethnic traits. Furthermore, there was a strong sense of social engagement and policy orientation amongst these researchers: they wanted their research to have a clear societal function (Penninx 2005). In 1989, a report from the Scientific Council for Government, which was strongly inspired and influenced by the ACOM, provided the basis for the development of the Ethnic Minorities Policy. Most of the recommendations from this report were silently and directly adopted in formal policy.

This discourse coalition has been described by several authors as a ‘technocratic symbiosis’ (Rath, 2001), or a strongly centralized policy structure involving the co-optation of experts and ethnic elites (Guiraudon 1997). An important function of this technocratic symbiosis was to keep the debate on immigrant integration largely behind closed doors; it was structurally depoliticized. This created a specific sort of ‘framing dynamics’ as this technocratic symbiosis was held together by a so-called ‘minorities logic’, that is a focus on what was specific to minorities in terms of culture and ethnicity rather than on their more general characteristics or what minorities had in common with other citizens. This illustrates how this discourse coalition not only sustained the multicultural discourse of that period, but also was itself held together by this discourse; there was a mutually reinforcing logic between the discourse of the multicultural model and the discourse coalition by which it was sustained. At the same time, this symbiosis effectively excluded other discourses, such as a more critical-Marxist discourse that had emerged in the social sciences in the 1970s and the nationalist (assimilationist) discourse that only had very little resonance in the field of politics in the 1980s.

**Competing discourse coalitions and the role of research**

The rise of the multicultural model of the 1980s was thus the outcome of ‘coproduction’ by researchers and policy-makers that were involved in a so-called ‘technocratic symbiosis.’ For a considerable period (during the 1980s), this symbiosis maintained a structural equilibrium in the field of immigrant integration. The model was elaborated into the Ethnic Minorities Policy and effectively implemented. Although many policy fields (especially social policy) were subject to major changes in the 1980s in the context of the politics of welfare state retrenchment, the contours of the Ethnic Minorities Policy remained largely stable. This policy ‘subsystem’ continued to be depoliticized and there was a belief that, especially during periods of economic downturn like in the 1980s, there was an even greater need for
specific measures of minorities because of their strong vulnerability for economic decline. At the same time, minorities research thrived as a rapidly growing research field that continued to be strongly policy oriented, amongst others through the Advisory Committee on Minorities Research.

Yet, social research would play a key role in ‘punctuating’ this structural equilibrium of the multicultural model. A new discourse coalition emerged at the end of the 1980s that advocated a more social-economic approach to immigrant integration to prevent migrants from becoming too much dependent on welfare state facilities. This discourse coalition involved leading politicians (such as prime minister Ruud Lubbers, opposition leader Frits Bolkestein) as well as experts (such as Wim Albeda, chair of the Scientific Council for Government Policy and former minister of Social Affairs, and Han Entzinger). Yet, this discourse coalition faced difficulties to put immigrant integration on the agenda, especially because of its political sensitivity. Behind the scenes, the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) and the Minister of Home Affairs, responsible for the coordination of the Ethnic Minorities Policy, therefore agreed that the WRR would issue a new advisory report. This report would have to focus primarily on ‘material areas’ of integration, such as employment, education and housing.

This report triggered broad public and also political debate in the Netherlands. Although it did not immediately lead to policy change, the report was revived when several years later, in 1992, a broad national Minorities Debate emerged that effectively punctuated the norm of depoliticization and cleared the path for policy change. Especially in its focus on active citizenship and on material areas of integration rather than immaterial (cultural) areas, the Integration Policy that was formulated in 1994 clearly reflected many of the ideas of the WRR from 1989. The report also triggered fierce responses from the established community of minorities researchers. The ACOM, which has closely cooperated with the WRR in its 1979 report, now denounced the 1989 WRR report as ‘a report inspired by science rather than a scientific report’ (ACOM, 1989). By putting the participation of minorities in the broader perspective of welfare state change, the WRR had punctuated the technocratic symbiosis between researchers and policy-makers that tried to defend the established policy equilibrium by drawing attention to what was specific to minorities rather than what they had in common with other ‘citizens.’

This episode brought an end to the strongly institutionalized research-policy nexus that had evolved in the 1970s and 1980s. The ACOM was dissolved in 1992, and although minorities research continued to grow as a field of research, no similar institute would evolve that had such a central position on the research-policy nexus as the ACOM. The use of social research in policy-making would instead become more selective and more instrumental. Penninx (2005) describes what he calls ‘pick-and-choose strategies’ of policy-makers to select only those strands of expertise that helped sustain the new policy discourse. Rather than research being a motor of policy development, the policy setting now determined the
selection of expertise. This became strikingly clear when the WRR issued new reports on immigrant integration in 2001 and 2007, which were inspired by international research developments (such as the emerging transnationalist paradigm) rather than by the national policy setting. In fact, these reports were now taken as indications that the WRR would have become a ‘leftist’ organization and would have become obsolete as an organization for policy advice.

Furthermore, the utilization of research became more instrumental; government wanted data to underline its new policy discourse rather than the more conceptual role that research bodies as the ACOM and WRR had played. In this context, especially the government-associated Social and Cultural Planning Bureau (SCP) obtained a more prominent role in this field. Its regular Minorities Reports were now often taken as anchor points for policy developments, especially as the SCP addressed a lot of attention to social-economic areas and increasingly also areas of social-cultural integration. In fact, the role of the SCP became even more significant when it openly developed an agenda in favor of a more assimilationist policy approach (see Schnabel 2000, and the inclusion of parts on ‘social cultural integration’ in the Minorities Reports). This created a clear match with a new policy discourse that emerged in that period.

Just after the turn of the Millennia, a new discourse emerged prominently in Dutch politics, which stressed the need for social-cultural adaptation or assimilation. In 2000, a second national minorities debate took place in response to an essay of the ‘public intellectual’ Paul Scheffer about ‘the multicultural tragedy’ (Scheffer 2000). Furthermore, immigrant integration was the central political issue in ‘the long year of 2002’ that shocked Dutch politics (Andeweg and Irwin 2005). Led by Pim Fortuyn, a broad populist movement emerged that expressed a loss of confidence in the Dutch political establishment and its alleged ignorance towards the voice from the street. For Pim Fortuyn, immigrant integration was the topic that illustrated the lack of democratic responsiveness of Dutch politicians to popular concerns about cultural tensions in society. Political concerns about immigrant integration grew further due to a series of national and international events (11th September Attacks in the US, the terrorist killing of a renowned Dutch film-maker and criticaster of Islam). Also, a number of public intellectuals (Hirsi Ali, Cliteur, Ellian, Scheffer) continued to play a central role in feeding public debate on immigrant integration, stressing in particular the limits of multiculturalism and the need to preserve Dutch identity and culture.

This new discourse was supported by a discourse coalition that consisted primarily of politicians and public intellectuals. Social research played only a very minor role in the rise of this new discourse. In fact, the discourse coalition that supported this new discourse carried a deep mistrust toward the social researchers that had thus far been involved in this domain. This was manifested amongst others around the publication of the 2001 and 2007 reports from the WRR. One of the conclusions of the 2007 report was that ‘the’ Dutch identity did not exist, which was also aptly indicated by the Dutch princess Maxima during the press
conference for the launch of this report. Several politicians, such as the rightist politician Wilders, saw this as an indication of the ‘multicultural nonsense’ from research bodies like the WRR. More in general, the public intellectuals involved in this discourse coalition often blamed social researchers for their multiculturalist bias and their policy orientation. At the same time, these intellectuals called for a stronger political primacy in this field, in contrast to what they saw as decades of depoliticization through venues of scientific expertise.

This analysis of shifting discourses and shifting discourse coalitions shows that, as already theorized by amongst others Rein and Schön and Hajer, researchers are often part of specific discourse coalitions. Research played a key role in establishing the multicultural model in the late 1970s, but also in setting a new discourse on the agenda in the late 1980s. Furthermore, we can observe that whenever a change of discourse coalition takes place, we often also see a different sort of involvement of research emerging, often also with different researchers and research bodies involved. If anything, this shows that the scientific research is not ‘exceptional’ in a way as described by the standard model of science speaking truth to power (Wildavsky, 1979; Radin, 2000). Instead, the role that scientific research plays in policy developments is itself very much a stake in the process of policy-making itself.

A missed opportunity for reflecting on the Dutch model; the Blok committee

The association of experts with specific discourse coalitions indicates that their potential for bringing about critical frame reflection is weak. When researchers associate themselves with specific discourse, such as the multicultural and the liberal-egalitarian discourse, it is unlikely that they will be able to reflect critically on this discourse and on alternative discourses. In this context, it is worthwhile to zoom in on a recent episode of research-policy dialogues that illustrate clearly the difficulties for research to contribute to the resolution of this type of intractable policy controversies; the establishment of a special parliamentary investigative committee for the integration policy, which had the mission to examine why Dutch integration policy had been so limitedly successful.

Following the Fortuyn revolt in Dutch politics in 2002, there was a consensus in Dutch parliament that a new élan should be given to the integration policy. Hence, it established a special parliamentary investigative committee in which members of the main political parties were represented. The mission of the committee was to find out why policy had been so limitedly successful thus far (earlier texts included the phrase, ‘why policy had failed’) and to provide building blocks for new policy (TK 2002-2003, 28600, nr. 24). After establishment of the committee, the committee decided to reframe its mission as to find out to what extent policy had been effective in various domains of integration, such as education, labor, housing, healthcare, youth and gender emancipation. Furthermore, it decided to commission an extensive study of available scientific sources to provide first insights to the committee regarding its mission (this research was eventually granted to the private research institute Verwey-Jonker Institute).
Rather than contributing to a revived élan for the Integration Policy, the committee (named after its chairman, the ‘Blok’ committee) fell prone to the ongoing public and political controversies on immigrant integration already before it could publish its conclusions and recommendations. The preparatory study that was commissioned by the Blok committee concluded, entirely against the political sentiment that had led to the committee’s establishment, that the integration policy had been relatively successful (VWJ, 2004). Furthermore, when this conclusion leaked to the press in the midst of the committee’s proceedings, the committee’s decision to ask the researchers of the Verwey Jonker Institute for a study of scientific sources became contested in itself. On the one hand, this was interpreted as a signal that the committee lacked political vision and courage of itself and again at new attempted to depoliticize this issue via a scientific study. On the other hand, the credibility of the involved researchers was put on the line; they were blamed for having been too much involved in past policy developments themselves in order to be able to evaluate those policies independently, and they would have had a bias in favor of multiculturalism. Regardless of this open criticism of its decisions already before being able to conclude their research, the committee eventually did conclude that the integration process was ‘a total or at least partial success’ (TK 2003-2004, 29203: 105). Largely following the observations from the Verwey Jonker Institute, the committee especially pointed to evidence of progress in ‘key-domains’ as education and labour that would legitimize this conclusion. Many politicians however dismissed the report as being biased and naive, especially because of missing attention for what were considered key problem areas such as religion, criminality, norms and values. Beyond its main conceptual conclusions however, most it’s more instrumental recommendations were eventually adopted by government.

This episode clearly shows the difficulties in resolving intractable controversies as immigrant integration with social scientific research. Also in this case, the involved research institute (Verwey Jonker Institute) was associated with a specific type of discourse; the liberal egalitarian discourse that stresses education and labor as key domains of integration. At the same time, another discourse had emerged in the political arena, stressing the need for cultural adaptation. At the same time, there was also a persistent counter-narrative of a multicultural discourse, which was used amongst others to discredit social researchers that had been engaged in policy developments in this domain over the past decades. Each of these discourses involve different ways of selecting and interpreting ‘evidence’ of either policy success or failure. For instance, whereas progress in the domain of education may indeed be seen as evidence of success by liberal-egalitarianists, assimilationists will interpret this evidence very differently and will select different sorts of evidence for instance about norms and values, about criminality and about social cohesion. The debate surrounding this parliamentary investigative committee clearly shows how research-policy dialogues can decay into a ‘dialogue of the deaf’ when a multiplicity of discourses is involved.

When analyzing this investigative committee from the perspective of ‘critical frame reflection’, what went wrong? Closer examination of the committee’s establishment and
proceedings (see Scholten and Van Nispen, 2008) reveals that at a relatively early stage the committee (or rather the committee for the establishment of the investigative committee) decided to narrow the scope of the committee’s mission down to a number of key areas, in particular education, housing, health, labor and sports. It was at this stage that the committee associated itself with a specific discourse, focusing primarily on material or social-economic areas. It was also at this stage that it dissociated itself from the discourse that had become so prominent in the political arena (and had also provided the motivation for the committee’s establishment), which concentrated rather on social-cultural matters. It did so because it stood under such great political pressure that it wanted to avoid topics that could lead to disagreement within the committee itself (Scholten, 2007). It was here that the committee, and the involved research institute, missed an opportunity to contribute to a process of critical frame reflection. Instead of associating itself with a specific discourse, it could also have explored the various discourses about immigrant integration, and subsequently formulate questions that are inspired by various discourses rather than by one specific discourse. Concretely, this would mean that that committee would have had to incorporate the ‘intractable’ cultural topics in its analysis, precisely because these topics were at the heart of ongoing debate. Rather than pre-empting a confrontation between different discourses, the committee should have organized a confrontation between these discourses on the one hand and the different knowledge claims on the other hand. As this type of analysis of multiple frames is difficult to achieve in the political arena, this would precisely have been an element to which social researchers could have made a significant contribution, provided of course that these researchers are able to oversee multiple discourses in stead of associating themselves with only one.

Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to analyse the role of social-scientific research in the construction of the Dutch multicultural model of immigrant integration. Both in national and international literature, Dutch integration policies are often described in terms of a multicultural model, which involved a tendency to institutionalize cultural pluralism in the belief that cultural emancipation of immigrant minorities is the key to their integration into Dutch society. In this respect, the Dutch model would differ from for instance the French (republican) model that would focus primarily on the assimilation of migrants into the French political community regardless of cultural or ethnic origins of migrants.

This paper, first of all, nuances the idea that there would be a dominant Dutch multicultural model of integration. Indeed, multiculturalism (inspired by pillarisation) has been a powerful discourse in the field of immigrant integration in the Netherlands, especially in the 1980s. Yet, it was at least one of several discourses; beyond multiculturalism, liberal-egalitarianism and assimilationism have also been powerful discourses in the Netherlands. In fact, when it comes to official policy discourse, the multicultural model was abandoned already in the
early 1990s, and there is evidence that even in the 1980s Dutch policy discourse in many respects deviated from the pure multicultural model (for instance, migrant communities never developed into effective ‘pillars’). Especially on the level of policy practices (mainly on the local level), we do see many instances that, even until this day, reflect the multicultural policies that were developed in the 1980s. This resilience of multiculturalism on the local level tends to be explained in terms of path dependency. However, it is doubtful to what extent these practices are actually inspired by a normative belief in multiculturalism, or by more pragmatic concerns of ‘keeping things together.’

Social scientific research played a central role in the development of multicultural policy discourse in the late 1970s and during the 1980s. A technocratic symbiosis that brought together a small network of policy-makers and researchers allowed for the development of a multicultural policy ‘behind closed doors.’ The multicultural model that was constructed in this period was therefore clearly an outcome of coproduction of research and policy. However, research also played a role in punctuating this symbiosis and the agenda-setting of a new type of (liberal-egalitarian) discourse in the late 1980s. In both episodes, social researchers formed a central part of the discourse coalitions that sustained either multiculturalism in the 1980s or liberal egalitarianism in the 1990s. Researchers played however only a very minor role in the discourse coalition that triggered the assimilationist turn in Dutch policy discourse after the turn of the millennia. In fact, this assimilationist turn was associated with growing cynicism toward social research, which was considered to be biased in favor of multiculturalism and too much involved in policy developments over the past decades.

This analysis shows that research is far from ‘exceptional’ in a sense that its role could be universally described in terms of the standard model of ‘speaking truth to power.’ Instead, researchers often tend to be part of specific discourse coalitions: they too adopt specific normative models for naming and framing social reality. Rather than policy models being verified or falsified by research, we must speak of the coproduction of policy models by researchers and policy-makers. The case-study of Dutch integration policies clearly show in this respect that, within the strongly national setting in which these policies are developed, researchers and policy-makers tend to coproduce ‘national models of integration’, be it the multicultural model or the more liberal-egalitarian model of civic integration for which the Netherlands has become increasingly known. Similar observations have been made for France, where researchers (and intellectuals) and policy-makers have ‘coproduced’ a republican model of integration.

Especially in the case of intractable controversies like immigrant integration, the coproduction of such national models of integration may in fact hinder our understanding of integration processes. As this case-study has shown, the Dutch case is characterized by at least several discourses or ‘models of integration.’ Every discourse has its own way of naming and framing integration, and its own criteria for determining policy success or
failure. Such a multiplicity of discourses complicates research-policy dialogues; what some see as evidence of policy success, may be seen by others as irrelevant or even evidence of policy failure. This way research-policy dialogues that do not manage to achieve the level of ‘critical frame reflection’ may decay into a ‘dialogue of the deaf.’

Therefore, there is a need for research-policy dialogues that allow for reflection based on at least several discourses or ‘models of integration.’ One way to achieve this is to develop more inductive empirical research to integration processes. Instead of adopting a specific discourse as a starting point of research (for instance, research on the success or failure of Dutch policies), inductive research can strive to take as many problem aspects into account (based on an exploration of various discourses), and then reason towards different discourses. This also means that research in itself can never determine the success or failure of a specific policy. Furthermore, there is a need for more international comparative research, in order to overcome the national bias that is often projected on research through specific national models of integration.

**Literature**


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