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CHAPTER 5

Talkin' 'bout My Integration: Views on Language, Identity, and Integration Among Dutch and Finnish Migrants to the Swedish Countryside

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The main heading is an allusion to and adaptation of The Who's 'My Generation'; music and lyrics by Pete Townsend (1965). Cf. *People try to put us d-down (talkin' 'bout my [integ]ration)/Just because we get around (talkin' 'bout my [integ]ration) / Things they do look awful c-c-cold (talkin' 'bout my [integ]ration)*

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5.1 Introduction

Transnational migration to the North of Europe, involving different types of migrant populations typically referred to as labour migrants, refugees, or life-style migrants, is nothing new. Swedish research on language contact due to transnational migration has commonly focused on the challenges that immigrants (typically from outside of Europe) encounter in big cities in Sweden, whereas migration to sparsely populated dialect areas has received less attention (cf. Ryan, 2018). In this study, by contrast, we scrutinise the long-standing intra-European migration process to rural areas in Sweden, with a special focus on migrants from Finland and from the Netherlands who have settled in small countryside villages in the Värmland area. Specifically, the study focuses on how individual Finnish and Dutch migrants themselves view their integration.[1]

Our starting point to get a handle on the 'chaotic concept' (Robinson, 1998) of integration is the conceptual framework developed by Ager and Strang (2008). Based on a thorough literature review and documentary analysis of survey data and fieldwork data in sites of migrant settlements, Ager and Strang identify four overall themes as central to a proper understanding of the concept of integration:

- achievement and access across the sectors of employment, housing, education, and health;
- assumptions and practices regarding citizenship and rights;
- processes of social connection within and between groups in a community; and
- structural barriers to such connections related to language, culture, and the local environment.

Their analyses reveal that in policy documents, attainment of successful integration is discussed mainly in terms of access to employment, housing, education, and health (Ager & Strang, 2008). All of this can also be applied to the situation in Sweden. Recent Swedish Government Official Reports (e.g., SOU, 2020, p. 54; 2021, p. 2) emphasise that knowledge

[1] In this study we use *migrant* as a catch-all term for people who have moved to the countryside in Swedish Värmland. For different labels, based on type and length of mobility, see Canagarajah (2017).

of the majority language Swedish is the ultimate tool to get access to these sectoral areas. The mantra that language skills in Swedish is *the* key to integration is also constantly brought to the fore in political and public debate.

The increasing housing segregation of migrants is often pointed out as a factor that hampers migrants' opportunities to get in touch with native Swedes and thereby to gain access to the Swedish language. Since housing segregation is an urban phenomenon, this primarily affects migrants who settle in big cities. But what about L2 acquisition among migrants who have settled in rural areas? And what is really the role of language in migrants' aspiration for social belonging in a local, rural community and in their on-going construction of identity? More specifically, how do these migrants experience their own integration? Is successful integration for them only a matter of language competence, a place to live, and a job? Or is it also about achieving an affinity with other inhabitants in the place where they as migrants settle?

Our analyses illustrate the relation between language, identity, and integration from the transnational migrants' perspectives, based on the views and arguments that they themselves present when they talk about language and discuss their relation to their new home country, to their country of birth, as well as to other places where they have lived.

In Sect. 5.2, we give brief overviews of the background and reasons for migration to Sweden from Finland and the Netherlands. Section 5.3 specifies our research questions and presents our method and manner of data collection. Section 5.4 deals with the views of migrants from the Netherlands and from Finland about their 'new community' and, in particular, about the extent to which knowledge of Swedish is crucial for 'feeling at home'. In Sect. 5.5 we explicate how the migrants construct their identity, and Sect. 5.6 deals with pre-migration aspirations and post-migration realities. The study concludes, in Sect. 5.7, with a general discussion of the implications of the findings.

5.2 Finnish and Dutch Migration to Sweden

In the present study, we focus on migrants from two Northwestern European countries not unlike Sweden: Finland and the Netherlands. Despite obvious similarities between these countries, the time of and reasons for migration to Sweden differ for people from, respectively, Finland and the Netherlands.

The majority of the Finns migrated to Sweden in the 1960s and 1970s due to high unemployment, housing shortage, and economic instability in Finland. At that time, Sweden was in great need of labour for its expanding industry. Thanks to the Nordic Passport Union, there were no legal barriers to move, settle, and seek employment in another Nordic country. At the peak of migration from Finland (1968–1970), as many as 100,000 Finnish workers migrated to Sweden (Allardt, 1996; Korkiasaari & Söderling, 2003). Many of them settled in the Stockholm and Gothenburg areas, or in smaller industrials towns in southern and central Sweden, and were typically employed in the textile industry, or in forestry, steel, shipbuilding, and other heavy industries (cf. Lainio, 1996).

The Finns had a reputation of being hardworking and silent, and of never complaining (SOU, 1974, p. 70). Swedish companies recruited workers directly from Finland through advertising in Finnish newspapers or via recruitment campaigns in Finland. In addition, recruitment often took place by word of mouth: Finnish migrant workers in Sweden talked friends and acquaintances in Finland into joining the companies they themselves worked in. Working in heavy industry did not require any language skills in Swedish, and for those who wanted to learn the language, possibilities to participate in language courses were often limited due to employees having to work in shifts.

Finnish networks in Sweden were dense: Both in the workplace and outside working hours, Finnish workers mostly socialised with other Finns. Contacts with traditional Swedish society were sparse. Stereotypical and prejudiced views about Finnish workers (as sad and melancholic alcoholics, often involved in knife fights) were common and widespread among the Swedish majority population (cf. SOU, 2005, p. 56; 2012, p. 74; Borg, 2016; cf. also Bijvoet, 1998), and derogatory wordings (e.g., *finnjävel* 'fucking/damned Finn') were typically used to refer to Finns—even in newspaper headlines. Results from a large 1969 survey (SOU, 1974, p. 70) of Swedes' attitudes to different migrant groups showed that Finns were perceived in a very negative way and placed at the bottom of the SOU list, second to last. Under these circumstances, the Finnish associations established throughout Sweden became very important for the Finnish migrants.

The Dutch migration history to Sweden is a different one, both with regard to the number of migrants and to the time of and motives for migration. A general synopsis of the numbers of Dutch and Finnish migrants to Sweden over the last 70 years is given in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Population statistics Sweden: Finnish and Dutch migrants in Sweden, 1950–2021, in absolute numbers. (Extracted from data available at https://www.scb.se/.)

	1950	*1960*	*1970*	*1980*	*1990*	*2000*	*2010*	*2021*
Population Sweden	7,041,829	7,495,129	8,076,903	8,320,438	8,590,630	8,882,792	9,415,570	10,452,326
Born in Sweden	6,844,019	7,195,250	7,539,318	7,693,485	7,800,185	7,878,994	8,030,641	8,361,823
Born abroad	197,810	299,879	537,585	626,953	790,445	1,003,798	1,384,929	2,090,503
Born in Finland	44,821	101,307	235,453	251,342	217,636	195,447	169,521	136,607
Born in the Netherlands	1,213	2,105	2,916	3,077	3,543	4,532	8,700	13,523

While the Finnish migrants were typically referred to as labour migrants, the Dutch migrants are best captured by the concept of *lifestyle migrant*, that is, 'relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that, for various reasons, signify, for the migrant, a better quality of life' (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009, p. 609).

As in the case of the Finns, migrants from the Netherlands have also been actively recruited to move to Sweden. Due to an extended period of out-migration by young people, many Swedish rural municipalities faced—and still face—population decline and, concomitantly, social and economic stagnation. In order to reverse this process, place marketing campaigns were and have continued to be launched (at the domestic market as well as internationally) to promote in-migration to the Swedish countryside. In the first decades of the twenty-first century, as many as 164 Swedish municipalities (of a total of 290) have been engaged in place marketing efforts in the densely populated and highly urbanised Netherlands, targeting prospective migrants who seek to escape their urban lives.

Participation in the annual Emigration Expo in the Netherlands is one example of such efforts. Since the late 1990s, Swedish rural municipalities, regional councils, migration consultancy agencies, real estate agencies, and other Swedish stakeholders have been present at the Emigration Expo, promoting the Swedish countryside and attempting to attract new residents, enterprises, and investments to the rural region (https://www.emigratiebeurs.nl/). The Internet has also proved to be a useful tool for conducting rural place marketing campaigns (Eimermann, 2015).

After the turn of the twenty-first century, many Dutch citizens migrated to Sweden to set up businesses and 'to live their dream'. Unlike many recent immigrant groups, Dutch migrants generally prefer nature, space, tranquillity, and less populated surroundings over urban areas for settlement (Eimermann, 2013; Hedberg & Haandrikman, 2014). The Dutch migration flow to rural Sweden has attracted positive attention in the Swedish media: Dutch settlers generally have a good reputation, being perceived as 'well educated, highly skilled, hardworking, enterprising and possessing adequate social and language skills' (Eimermann 2015, p. 409). The Dutch are nowadays clearly overrepresented in the private service sector in the Swedish countryside, running camping sites, hotels, and restaurants (Eimermann et al., 2012).

From the overview above, it is clear that many in the large group of Finnish migrants who moved to Sweden some 40–50 years ago have

very different migration histories from the Dutch migrants who came to Sweden in the 2000s.

5.3 Research Questions, Data, and Methods

The general topic of this study is if, and to what extent, the Finnish participants in our study differ from the Dutch participants[2] in the way they conceive of integration into their new, rural home location. In what ways and to what extent does the Swedish language—and the local dialect—play a role for them to feel socially included in the new community? And do the differences in migration histories contribute to the development of different post-migration identities among the Finns and the Dutch?

5.3.1 Data

Data were collected during two week-long fieldwork trips (autumn 2018–spring 2019) to the sparsely populated Duvbacka,[3] a rural region in western Sweden, bordering on Norway. The region covers two municipalities that are characterised by a strong presence of traditional industries (steel and engineering, forestry, and mass and paper industry). Taken together, the two municipalities have about 15,000 inhabitants with an average population density of 17 people per square kilometre. Foreign-born residents make up 14–15% of the population in both municipalities.

Our data consist of audio recordings of focus-group discussions and semi-structured interviews with immigrants in Duvbacka (esp. Finnish, Dutch, German, Iranian, and Ukrainian immigrants), as well as with members of the traditional local population in the municipalities. In all, 27 participants from Duvbacka took part in the project. Table 5.2 gives an overview of the Dutch and Finnish participants that we will be referring to in the present study.

[2] In the following we refer to our participants in a condensed manner as 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch', naturally realising that the fact that a migrant has started their journey from a particular nation-state does not mean that they have the same worldview and cultural baggage as others from that nation-state. This is particularly important in the present study, where we specifically want to focus on the individuals' stories and attitudes.

[3] For reasons of integrity, pseudonyms are used for the municipalities and for all participants in this study.

Table 5.2 Brief description of the participants in the present study

Participants	*Male/female*	*L1*	*Age (at the time of the focus-group discussion)*	*Year of arrival in Sweden*
Anja	F	Finnish	64	1985
Paavo	M	Finnish	70	1976
Erja	F	Finnish	85	1955
Uskali	M	Finnish	90	1948
Mauno	M	Finnish	71	1966
Janneke	F	Dutch	49	2007
Sandra	F	Dutch	16	2007
Helma	F	Dutch	69	2006
Gerard	M	Dutch	70	2006
Josefien	F	Dutch	59	2011

The interviews and focus-group discussions were conducted mainly in Swedish, but codeswitching to Finnish and Dutch occurred frequently throughout our data, no doubt partly because we ourselves have our roots in Finland (Östman) and the Netherlands (Bijvoet) and thus speak Finnish and Dutch, respectively. Codeswitching was thus not an obstacle to analysis.

The Värmland region is well known for its dialects that markedly differ from the spoken Swedish standard. For native speakers of Swedish outside Värmland, some of the Värmland dialects are almost incomprehensible. Preliminary analyses of the data from traditional residents in Duvbacka indicate that some 50 dialect features, comprising all linguistic levels (phonology, syntax, morphology, vocabulary), are found in the speech of members of the local community (with respect to a neighbouring community, cf. Nilsson, 2015). These locals[4] are highly aware of the fact that their way of speaking Swedish may cause problems for people outside the region in general, and for non-native speakers of Swedish in particular, since, among other things, the vowel qualities are different and words are shortened in the local dialect; one of the locals explains, 'we kind-of cut off the words'.

[4] In this study, we refer to the traditional local population whose ancestors have lived in the area for generations as 'the local population', or 'the locals'. We furthermore use the term '(dialect) community' as a term for the imagined linguistic community Duvbacka (see Anderson, 1983). These terms thus do not refer to actual (linguistic) homogeneity, but rather to popular notions of (linguistic) communities.

To people from other parts of the country, the local dialect sounds so different that it can be mistaken for another language. Still, for the local population, using the Duvbacka dialect is the preferred choice of language; speaking standard Swedish is seldom an option for them. When they talk about the close-to-standard spoken language that they sometimes have to speak, they use descriptions like 'to speak elegantly' (*att prata fint*), 'to pretend' (*att göra sig till*). If you speak that way, you are a 'better-speaker' (*fintalare*). And in connection with the feelings they experience in situations where they have to speak the standard language, they describe these situations as 'extremely difficult' (*jättesvårt*), 'ridiculous' (*löjligt*), 'annoying' (*jobbigt*), 'fake' (*fejk*), or 'artificial' (*konstgjort*). 'The words do not fit my mouth', says a 48-year-old local carpenter, and he points out that he actually prefers to speak English (cf. Røyneland & Jensen, 2020).

5.3.2 Methods and Research Questions

In order to explore the experiences of the Finnish and Dutch migrants in the Värmland area, the study uses a phenomenological qualitative method, which starts off from an understanding of social phenomena from the participants' own perspectives and describes the world as it is experienced by them—in accordance with the assumption that what *constitutes* reality is determined by what people *perceive as* relevant reality (cf. Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014).

We thus primarily study the opinions that the participants themselves express with regard to issues concerning language learning, integration, and identity construction. Since the participants' views are expressed in different sequences of the discussions, in the company of different constellations of participants, and in relation to different topics that are brought up, we can also take into account the more implicit attitudes they hold by bringing together and comparing the variation in the ways they express themselves under different circumstances. In this way we get a deeper understanding of what factors have influenced their variegated stances and positionings than if we had for instance collected questionnaire data.

Unlike many studies of contact situations in transnational migration that use a constructivist approach (cf. Creese & Blackledge, 2018; Pennycook, 2018), we see it as important to take our participants' own labels and use of identity categories as the basis for our description of their identity, in accordance with our bottom-up approach. As Sallabank (2013,

p. 79) points out: 'Postmodern ideas on the constructed, fluid nature of languages and identity are not well known among "lay" people, so that […] respondents tend to have quite traditional, even "essentialist", views on these matters' (see also Pavlenko, 2018).

In addition to presenting and analysing the views of the Dutch and Finnish migrants—and, where relevant, those of the traditional residents in Duvbacka[5] in relation to the settlement of the Finns and the Dutch—we will also be paying attention to aspects of responsibility: How do our participants talk about who is responsible for the social and linguistic integration of migrants in the community?

In our strictly empirical, phenomenological methodology, we give voice to the participants and their experiences, using extracts from the data in order to illustrate explanations and explications of their attitudes and feelings. With this in mind, the following specific research questions have guided our analysis of the data:

A. What are the views of 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch' about different aspects of their 'new community' (the local community, language learning, life in the village), and in particular,
B. To what extent is knowledge of Swedish a determining factor for migrants to feel that they are integrated into their new society? Furthermore,
C. How is identity constructed by 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch' in the present situation of transnational migration?

5.4 Findings: Language and Social Integration

We will deal with the issues covered by questions A and B in Sects. 5.4.1–5.4.5. Identity construction (C) is discussed in Sect. 5.5.

5.4.1 The Migrants' Views on the Locals

The focus of this subsection is the extent to which participants in the two migrant groups feel that they are part of the local community; we

[5] Detailed analyses of the views of the traditional residents are dealt with in Ekberg et al. (forthcoming).

approach this topic by looking at the ways they talk about the local population.

The Dutch participants in our study all agree that it is not easy to get proper contact with members of the local population. Janneke refers to Duvbacka with the negatively charged Dutch word *een gat* 'a den'. According to her, there is a *bruksmentalitet* in the local community, that is, the community is governed by traditional norms and values, including an air of social control and narrow-mindedness: You are not supposed to stick out.

Janneke, who works in tourism, describes village solidarity as a very close one, but whereas the traditional local residents in our study see this as something positive from an insider perspective—you care for each other, and if you haven't seen a member of the community for a while, you check that everything is all right—Janneke, from the perspective of an outsider, sees this as something negative. Everybody is in some way related to everybody else, Janneke says, and the close cohesion among the locals makes it difficult for immigrants to become part of it. In this criticism of hers, she makes herself a spokesperson for other migrants to the area; cf. (1).[6]

(1)

Janneke: *det är många ställen man kan bo utomlands # det går jättebra kanske # men i* [Duvbacka] *är det väldigt svårt # å det är inte bara vi som eh*

'there are many places one can live abroad # there's maybe no problem # but it is very difficult in [Duvbacka] # and it's not only our opinion'

[6] We use broad transcription in standard Swedish, but the syntax is that used by the participants. We have retained a number of prominent pronunciation characteristics of the migrants; for instance, the Finns' challenges with initial consonant clusters and both groups' occasional pronunciation of voiced stops and fricatives in Swedish as voiceless. We have also retained possible Dutch and Finnish words when reproducing what is being said. In the transcriptions, codeswitches (to Finnish and Dutch) are underlined, English words are given in boldface and German words in small capitals. We use # to indicate a pause, a break, or a new start in the participants' expression. Pseudonyms, other explanatory material, interlocutors' supports and speaker's asides are given within square brackets, […]. Reported speech and others' voices are given within pointed brackets, <…> .

The *bruksmentalitet* practice in the local school was also the reason why Janneke's daughter Sandra changed schools to a school in the nearest town, which means two hours' travel every day. But she thinks it's worth it: She has made friends with many others in her new school, youngsters who are also the children of transnational migrants.

Janneke tells us that she had a completely different impression of Värmland and its people when she was on holiday there—before she herself moved to Värmland. At that time everybody was open, helpful, and accommodating. Having moved to Sweden, Janneke and her husband started a company in the tourist sector. Their positive experiences during their vacations in Sweden gave them hope that they could cooperate extensively with the local population. But that was not how things turned out (cf. also Eimermann et al., 2020). Janneke feels that the responsibility for the ensuing absence of cooperation is that of the locals, who have shown no interest whatsoever in their tourist company; cf. (2).

(2)

Janneke: *ingen var intresserad här # sen lägde vi ner hela företaget # vi sålde alla grejer å* […] *de säger att de vill jobba tillsammans å # de bara säga # sen blir det ingenting*

'nobody was interested here # so we shut down our business # we sold everything and […] they say that they want to work together and # it's just talk # but nothing happens'

Similarly, Helma and Gerard, who run a Bed & Breakfast in Duvbacka, also experienced that the locals are not that interested in newcomers. In Helma's opinion this is due to cultural differences between the Netherlands and Sweden, and she misses what she regards as Dutch openness; cf. (3).

(3)

Helma: *man är inte så intresserad # eh eh # man är <hallo> # lite pratad # men men inte verklig intresserad i nya personer ja # dat is # det är lite svårt för mig jag är mycket open # jag kommer från centrum från Amsterdam # så* […] *eh men det är wat jag missar* […] *jag tänker det is een een een annorlunda kultur i Holland # det är* ***when*** *man eh eh är tot de deur en man sagt snel kom in en eh vi dricker lite kaffe en vi pratar lite # men dat det är inte svensk kultur så mycket jag tänker*

> 'people are not that interested # well # they're like <hello!> # and talk a little # but they are not really interested in new people # that's # it's a little difficult for me because I am very open # I come from the centre of Amsterdam # so [...] but that's what I miss [...] I think there's another kind of culture in the Netherlands # that is, when somebody comes at the door, they are rapidly told to come in and have a cup of coffee and a chat # but I don't think that is as much part of Swedish culture'

By contrast, the Finns' connection to the locals was hardly ever mentioned or discussed in our data. The Finns did not seem to have much contact with members of the local population—but this is not something that disturbs them. Anja and her husband Paavo do not have any Swedish friends and they are never invited to barbecue feasts or to Midsummer events, but they also do not have any need for such invitations; cf. (4).

(4)

Anja: *vi har inte # vi har inga svenska kompisar* [laughs] # *nej men öh nej nej # å jo, det är helt okej # jag vill inte hoppa där runt stången å # sjunga små grodorna # å sen äta samma mat både midsommar å jul å påsk # vi har i alla fall lite annat mat # eller hur?!*

'we don't have # we have no Swedish friends [laughs] # no but, no # and that's perfectly okay # I don't want to be there jumping around the maypole [at Midsummer] and # sing "Små grodorna" ['The Little Frogs', a song] # and then eat the same food both on Midsummer and at Christmas and Easter # at least we have variation in our food # don't we?!'

As we can see from the examples above, neither the Dutch nor the Finns in our study feel that they themselves are members of the local community. But in contradistinction to the Finns, the Dutch see this as a problem.

5.4.2 The Migrants' Views on Learning Swedish

As already mentioned, there is a common conception among Swedes that when people from the Netherlands move to Sweden, they learn the

language rapidly.[7] One of our local participants, who has worked as a teacher in the Swedish-for-foreigners programme, certifies that the Dutch seem to have a special gift (*nåt speciellt språköra*) for learning Swedish fast. But from the Dutch participants in our study we get a somewhat different picture: Some of them do rapidly gain a good command of Swedish, while others, due to their more mature age when starting to learn Swedish, still experience challenges.

This is the case with Gerard. Despite having taken language courses prior to migration, he still experiences challenges with the Swedish language. The lack of concrete contacts with members of the local population has decreased Gerard's motivation to further his Swedish studies; cf. (5).

(5)

Gerard: *en det är synd att vi behöver en extra år voor prata mer svenska # efter eh vi vi bor nu permanent tio år i Sverige en du hör också dat vi pratar inte honderd procent nå inte eh nitti procent också inte # en* ***then*** *jag kan inte förstår en eh optimalisera wat jag vill säger* ***when*** *när vi pratar tillsamman*

'and it's a pity that we need additional years in order to speak better Swedish # after eh we've now lived ten years permanently in Sweden and you can hear that we do not speak one hundred percent, not even ninety percent [Swedish] # and [even] then, my understanding is not complete, and I can't optimise my talk [to correspond to] what I want to say when I talk with someone'

For the Finnish participants in our study, it often took years before they started to learn Swedish. The need for Swedish was not felt to be that necessary, since all of them were part of dense Finnish-speaking networks in Sweden; cf. (6).

[7] It is not uncommon for Dutch life-style migrants to study the basics of Swedish in a language course in the Netherlands before they move to Sweden and to continue studying the language in municipality-organised 'Swedish for immigrants' classes as soon as they arrive in Sweden.

(6)

Anja: *jag hade finska arbetskamrater å # hans släktingar # vi besökte bara hos dom # vi hade inga svenska kompisar # min husmor # jag jobba på hotell Continental då # husmor var finsk # alla som arbetar var finnar # så jag lärde mej typ ingenting # kanske dom som stör- står på paketerna mjölkpaketer och smörpaketer och dom där # men inte mycke*

'I had Finnish colleagues at work and # his [=Anja's husband's] relatives # we only visited with them # we had no Swedish friends # my Matron # I worked at Hotel Continental then # my Matron was Finnish # all those at work were Finns # so I learnt like nothing # maybe [the text] on milk cartons and butter packages and stuff like that # but not much'

Paavo finally took the course in Swedish that all workforce migrants were entitled to, but in his story, he says that the language course was of little use: All the participants were Finns and all of them spoke Finnish, also during Swedish lessons. In general, there was always someone among the Finns who knew a little Swedish and who could then function as a contact person and interpreter. In Erja's case it was her sister who had the role of interpreter. Erja came to Sweden in 1955, but did not start to learn Swedish until 45 years later.

For the migrants from the Netherlands it was obvious that they would have to learn Swedish before they moved to Sweden; but once in Sweden, they realised and were frustrated that the (standard) variety of Swedish they had acquired in their FL classes did not work as a means of interaction in their new rural community (cf. Van Ommeren, 2010). By contrast, there were no requirements to have a working competence in Swedish at the time the Finns arrived in Sweden. The level of interactive competence in Swedish was thus not an issue for our Finnish participants, nor was their limited knowledge of Swedish experienced as a problem by themselves thanks to their membership in the available Finnish networks.

5.4.3 The Migrants' Views on the Local Dialect

As pointed out in Sect. 5.3, the local dialect in Duvbacka differs markedly from the spoken Swedish standard. This was also something that the participants in our study had noticed.

Both the Dutch and the Finnish participants in our study indicate that they have major problems understanding the local dialect. Gerard and Helma argue that it is so much easier to understand Swedish guests from the more urban parts of Sweden; cf. (7).

(7)

Gerard: *men vi har eh mycket svenskar sjutti procent van* UNSERE *eh gäster är svenska en* ***when*** *de kommer från Göteborg och Stockholm vi tänker ba <oh vi pratar mer svenska* ***then*** *vi tänker på> # men* ***when*** *man kommer från* [Duvbacka] *en man pratar typisk* [Duvbacka] *vi tänker <oj oj oj min svenska är inte så bra>*

'but we have a lot of Swedes—seventy percent of our guests are Swedish and when they come from Gothenburg and Stockholm we just feel <oh, we speak more Swedish than we realise> # but when people come from [Duvbacka] and they speak typical [Duvbackish], we think <ouch, my Swedish is not so good>'

Helma: *de säger ofta bara hälften av ordet*

'they often only say half of a word'

Despite the Dutch participants' desire to become part of the local community, the effort to learn the local dialect seems insurmountable to them. Helma, in (8), suggests that this is due to her lack of contact with the local residents.

(8)

Helma: *men jag tänker eh* ***when when*** *man har mer kontakt met met svenskar # det motiferar mer för prata mer svenska # men nu efter många år det # jag säg att det är svårt ha kontakt med svenskar i* [Duvbacka] [...] *eh den eh jag in- jag är inte så motiferat eh dat eh* [...] *men nu det är eh en spiral man men prat- eh har ingen mycket kontakt med svenskar # och* ***then*** *man inte pratar så mycket svenska #* ***then*** *kontakt är mer svårt # så det är spiral*

'but I think that if you have more contact with Swedes # that would motivate you to speak more Swedish # but now after many years it is # I say it's difficult to have contacts with Swedes in [Duvbacka] [...] and so I am not so motivated [...] but now it's a spiral ['a vicious circle'] that you don't have

> much contact with Swedes # and then you don't speak a lot of Swedish # and then contact is more difficult # so it's a spiral'

Of all our focus-group participants, Uskali has lived the longest in Duvbacka. He says that he has not learnt how to speak the local dialect, but he understands everything that the locals say: *själva meningen förstår man ju och det räcker för mig* 'I do understand the actual contents, and that is enough for me'. Even though Uskali himself says that he does not speak the dialect, a number of dialect features are prominent in his Swedish, like *di* 'they' (instead of standard Swedish *de, dom*), *syster min* 'my sister' (instead of *min syster*), and *boka* 'the book' (instead of *boken*).

Anja works in health care and is the only one of our participants who has actively tried to learn some words in the local dialect, and she feels that Duvbackians do appreciate this (cf. Van Ommeren, 2010). According to her, the locals struggle with standard Swedish and the dialect is important for them. When she needs to communicate with a member of the local community, she uses short, distinct sentences—*det funkar* 'this works'. Paavo agrees with the view that the locals are not happy using standard Swedish. He remembers his encounter with a man in the village whom he knows from work and who only speaks dialect. The first time he met the man, Paavo had asked him: *kan du prata venska?* 'do you know how to speak Swedish?'. The man had tried, said Paavo, but it was not easy for him.

All migrant participants in our study agree that the dialect is 'terrible'. What is especially interesting in relation to all of this is that our migrant participants use exactly the same words when they describe the local dialect as the locals do when they describe standard Swedish: It's 'very difficult', 'awful', 'strange'.

All in all, due to difficulties in understanding the local dialect, the Dutch and Finnish migrants do not feel that they belong to the local language community.

5.4.4 The Migrants' Views on Social Integration

The challenge with learning the local dialect is closely connected to social integration generally. The Dutch participants in our study told us that they consciously did not contact other Dutch people—at least during the first years after they had moved to Sweden. They wanted to integrate and

be integrated and become part of the local village community. There is, for instance, no Dutch association in Duvbacka; cf. (9).

(9)

Janneke: *nä men det ha- hade de pratit om det när vi flyttade hit # men jag tänkte <nej jag vill integrera # jag vill inte sitta tillsammans med alla ostätare>*
'no but, they talked about it when we moved here # but I thought <no, I want to get integrated # I don't want to sit together with a bunch of cheese eaters>'

Josefien: *nej dan ka- dan kan du bättre stanna i Nederlanderna*
'no, in that case you should rather stay in the Netherlands'

Gerard and Helma have started up a choir and hope to meet locals through choir activities. In order to attract Swedish members to their choir they have adapted their repertoire so that they also sing Swedish songs. The choir performs at festive church events, organises sing-along evenings, and also performs at the retirement home in the municipality. Gerard hopes that being active this way will facilitate their integration.

Janneke has also tried to enter the local fellowship in several ways, for example by participating in a local trade-and-industry group and by functioning as contact person at the Dutch Emigration Expo. In (10) she describes how she has devoted herself to quite a lot of volunteer work. In this way she has herself attempted to take responsibility for her own integration.

(10)

Janneke: *så det är inte att vi # det är inte så att vi är inte aktivt # vi vi försöker vad vi kan och jag har varit eh inte bara på emigrantmässan # jag har gjort sju år har jag gjort allt frivilligt på skolan å överallt så vi visste inte vad vad kan jag gör mer [...] hm # och jag var med i företags eh # möte två gånger i månaden # för vad kan man ändra här i byen # så jag har gjort mycket # så det är inte att jag satt bara på soffan*
'so it's not that we # it's not so that we're not active # we try what we can and I've been not only at the Emigration Expo # I have for seven years done voluntary work at school and everywhere so we didn't understand what else I could

> do # and I participated in enterprise # meetings twice a month # [to discuss] what can be changed here in the village # so I've done a lot # so it's not as if I was just sitting on my couch'

But her endeavours have not met with much positive response, so she is sometimes in doubt with respect to her future in Duvbacka. She tells us about the time she met a doctor at the Health Centre who had himself come to the region from the south of Sweden, and who had told her that he did not think Duvbacka was the proper place to settle in for Janneke and her family. He assumed that they would not be happy there: *ni passar inte ihop med* [Duvbacka] 'you simply don't fit in with [Duvbacka]'.

The efforts made for the refugees who came in 2014–2015 and were placed at the Duvbacka refugee centre were also touched upon in our discussions. There were very many different kinds of activities organised in order to facilitate social integration for these refugees: language cafés, growing vegetables and flowers, knitting cafés, and so forth. Even though our participants readily acknowledge that there is a difference between having to flee, and coming of one's own free will, the Dutch point out how tough it also was for them to arrive in a new country and feel lonely (cf. Eimermann, 2017). Since the expected social integration has more or less not taken place, the Dutch in Duvbacka have now started to establish contacts among each other—despite their initial attempts at not doing so. You do need social contacts, says Janneke in (11).

(11)

Janneke: *när man kan prata svenska hela dagen det är också annorlunda # nu är det # ja vi söker kontakt med varann # innan sa vi <nej vi vill inte ha för mycket kontakt med holländare # vi ska integrera> # men sen om det blir inget*

> 'when one can speak Swedish all day long it's also different # now it's # yes, we seek contact among ourselves # earlier we said <no, we don't want to have too much contact with the Dutch # we want to integrate> # but then if nothing happens'

There is now a group of between ten to twelve migrants from the Netherlands who meet regularly to have a sauna and speak Dutch. There is also a group who meet once a week to have coffee: *det är min svenska familjen* 'that's my Swedish family', says Gerard.

The Finnish participants in our study also do not have a lot of contact with the local population (cf. Sect. 5.4.1), but as we saw above, this is not something they crave. Anja notes that she almost *känner mera holländare än svenskar* 'knows more Dutch people than Swedes'. When the discussion gets into aspects of social belonging, it is the Finns and the Finnish associations that get mentioned. Old memories come to the fore of times when there were many more Finnish associations than today. Recurring topics include the dance evenings and the superiority of the Finnish way of dancing in comparison to the Swedes' dancing; cf. (12).

(12)

Erja: *jaa det är finska tans ja # det är bara finska tans # det är ingen annan det är bara finnar*
'yes, it's the Finnish dance, yes # it's only Finnish dance # there's no one else there, just Finns'

Anja: *det kunde vara liksom tans på Degerfors å Hallsberg å Köping samma kväll # å det var trehundra pers # på varje dans # å det kom artister från Finland # typ Reijo Taipale Eino Krön va*
'there could like be a dance in Degerfors, in Hallsberg, and in Köping the same evening # and there would be three hundred people # at each dance # and there were artists from Finland # like Reijo Taipale, Eino Grön, y'know'

Paavo: *men det är så # finsk och vensk dans det är inte lika # det är bara bugg å sen eh tryckare # [...] det är inge annat # men finsk tans det är olika # så att det är helt annorlunda*
'but it's like # Finnish and Swedish dancing are so different # [the Swedes] only do the bugg and slowdance # [...] there's nothing else # but Finnish dance has variations # so it's completely different'

There is no Finnish association in Duvbacka anymore, and the nearest town with a Finnish association, Karlskoga, is quite far away. But if they were to live there, they would certainly 'be married to the association', says Anja: *då skulle vi vara gifta med finska föreningen.*

They nowadays gladly take part in celebrations and feasts (like the Day of the Sweden Finns,[8] Finnish Independence Day, etc.) that are organised

[8] The term *Sweden Finns* was first used in 1970 in a newspaper article. Today, it is the official term for Finnish-speaking Finns living in Sweden (and their descendants), and it is used in laws and other legal documents (e.g., SFS, 2009, p. 724; SÖ, 2002, p. 2).

by some of the Finnish associations in one of the towns, even if far away. On those occasions, there is always a great turnout, and Anja sings in a Finnish choir which typically performs on such occasions.

In short, neither the Dutch nor the Finns feel socially integrated in Duvbacka. However, they respond to their situations differently. The Finns are eager to seek company among and from other Finns—even from Finns living rather far away in different towns, much more so than seeking closer connection to the locals in Duvbacka. The Dutch, on the other hand, make huge efforts to become part of the Duvbacka community, and are frustrated that this is anything but easy.

5.4.5 The Migrants' Views on Life in Värmland

Despite their feelings of loneliness and their perception that they have not been let into the local village community, our Dutch participants nevertheless tell us that they like life in Duvbacka. Janneke compares her situation to a set of scales (*våg*): It's about weighing different things against each other; many things are not perfect in Sweden, but then again, there are also many things that are all right and make it worth one's while to stay here. What is greatly appreciated is the feeling of being safe, the tranquillity, the closeness to nature, the cheap housing prices, and the fact that life in the village community is not that stressful. The Swedish social security system is also mentioned. Helma in (13) says she has not even once regretted moving to Sweden during all the years they have lived in Duvbacka.

(13)

Helma: *men jag bor här nu i tretton år en eh eh # jag har ingen een dag spijt*
'I have now lived here for thirteen years and # I have not once regretted it'

Janneke corroborates that she and her family still love the area and that they would not want to live anywhere else in Sweden.

Helma and Gerard have children and grandchildren in the Netherlands, and they do see moving back to the Netherlands as a possibility, especially if they were to develop health problems. But neither Josefien, Janneke, nor Sandra wants to move back; Josefien tells us that she has not

even once been back to the Netherlands after she moved to Värmland seven years ago.

For Janneke and her family, Sweden is not, however, necessarily their final place of settlement. They have experienced transnational migration before they moved to Sweden, and they can fairly easily move on in case they get tired of life in Värmland. They have already bought a house in another European country, where they regularly stay. Janneke says that she is not 'stuck in one place' (*sitter fast på en plats*). According to her, the most important thing in life is that you feel at home and like it; it doesn't really matter whether you are in Sweden, in the Netherlands, or someplace else.

The Finns in our study unanimously do not want to move back to Finland. *Vad ska jag där att göra?* 'What on earth should I do there?', Anja exclaims. She loves the place where she lives in Duvbacka, which she describes as being 'just like back home in Finland' (*precis som hemma i Finland*); cf. (14).

(14)

Anja: *å när vi var här å titta på huset # det var # vi hade ingen mäklare med oss eller nånting # vi bara såg tid- eh huset på tidningen # så vi åkte direkt hit # så jag kände att jag kommer hem # så jag skulle ha köpt huset utan att se hur det var inuti* [...] *jo för att det var som # det var som hemma i* [Name of hometown] *i Finland # det var en liten berg å det var lite skog å det var ån å* [...] *ja jag kom hem*

'and when we were here to have a look at the house # that was # we were not joined by a broker or anything # we just saw the news- the house [advertised] in the newspaper # so we drove here straight away # so I felt I'm coming home # so I would have bought the house without checking what it looked like inside [...] yes, because it was like # it was like at home in [Name of hometown] in Finland # there was a small hill and there was a little forest and there was the stream and [...] yes, I came home'

Erja and her first husband once tried to return to Finland, but they did not like it there. Sweden Finns are not much liked in Finland, according to her: *dom mobba oss mycke* 'they bullied us a lot'. They were regarded as having become too Swedish, so after a year and a half, the family moved back to Sweden. Paavo tells us that people react negatively when they are

in Finland and drive cars that are registered in Sweden. He also does not want to move back to Finland.

Overall, we see that the two groups of migrants are quite happy with Sweden as a country and with Duvbacka as their place of living. The Finns in particular are very much settled in Duvbacka. They even feel that they are not welcome in Finland any more. For the Dutch in our study, the picture is more diverse. They like Duvbacka as a geographic place; the only 'annoying detail' is that the place is populated by Duvbackians. One of the Dutch participants (Josefien) ignores the cons because she likes the place itself so much; others (Gerard and Helma) do see it as a possibility to move back to the Netherlands when they get old, while Janneke and her family are almost in their starting pits, ready to move to another (and to a warmer) country when and if they feel like it.[9]

5.5 On Identity Construction

In discussions on identity, none of the migrant participants in our study want to see themselves as Swedish. *Jag ska aldrig bli en svensk nej* 'I will never be a Swede, no', says Josefien flatly, while at the same time she also expresses a sense of insecurity with respect to her identity in relation to her former home country; cf. (15).

(15)

Josefien: *eh jag vet inte riktit # jag tror jag inte är en # neder<u>land</u>ska # människor längre*
'I don't really know # I don't think I am a # Dutch # person anymore'

Sandra describes herself as a European and as international, and Janneke says she doesn't know: It feels different depending on where she is at, but she definitely does not feel Swedish; cf. (16).

[9] In studies by Ekberg and Östman (cf. in particular 2020), Bosnian migrants to the Swedish-language countryside in Finland were discussed from the perspective of how they narratively position themselves in relation to their migration—as mediators, generic immigrants, or permanent emigrants. With reference to Ekberg and Östman's classification, Janneke and her family could on a general level be characterised as *permanent emigrants*.

(16)

Janneke: *jag känner mej ingen svensk jag känner mej holländare här men eh jag försöker att eh ja # gör vad alla gör men när jag är i Holland då känner jag mej ingen holländare där längre # ja* […] *så jag vet inte vad jag är*

'I don't feel Swedish, here I do feel Dutch but I try to, yes # do what others do, but when I'm in the Netherlands, then I don't feel that I'm Dutch there any more # yes [...] so I don't know what I am'

None of the Finnish participants in our study distance themselves from what they describe as Finnishness. For Paavo and Erja, there is no doubt that they see themselves as Finns: *jag är finne å jag känner att jag är finsk* 'I'm Finnish, and I feel that I am Finnish', says Paavo, and Erja immediately adds: *jaa jag också* 'yes, me too'.

Mauno explains that you cannot become a Swede if you have your roots somewhere else—even if you live your life as a Swede and if you're used to the political and social system in Sweden; cf. (17).

(17)

Mauno: *nä jag är inte svensk # rottweiler blir inte schäfer fast han lever med schäfer #* [...] *om du fattar* [...] *nä man blir inte svensk # det spelar ingen roll #* [...] *jag tänker å lever som svenskarna så* [*här*] *men men # det har en eh # rötterna är en annanstans* [...] *# däremot* [...] *en kroppen är här # rötterna är nån annanstans*

'no, I'm not Swedish # a Rottweiler does not become a German shepherd dog even though he lives together with German shepherds # [...] if you see what I mean [...] no, one does not become a Swede # it doesn't matter # [...] I think and live like the Swedes, like this but # one has # one's roots are elsewhere [...] # by contrast [...] one's body is here # the roots are somewhere else'

Anja, too, who refers to herself as a Sweden Finn, problematises the question of identity when she introduces a nuance with respect to her identity: She constantly differentiates between the country where she has lived for many years (Sweden) and the country where she was born (Finland); cf. (18).

(18)

Anja: *det här är mitt hemland men Finland är min fosterland # hmm # naturligtvis en bit min hjärta är där # det kommer alltid att vara*

'this is my home country but Finland is my native country # hm # of course part of my heart is over there # it will always be that way'

As we have seen, some of our participants do not have a simple answer to questions about their identity, but argue that identity is variable and dependent on time and place. But they do not experience this as a problem—quite the contrary: This way of thinking can be enriching, according to Anja, who explicitly says, 'I think you are rich that way' (*jag tycker att- jag tror att eh man är rik då*). Janneke and Josefien agree.

Identity construction in general is a difficult issue—both for people seeking or brooding over their own identity and for scholars attempting to investigate how identity construction works. As the examples in this section show, it is mainly the identity category of ethnicity that is made relevant in our participants' interactions. This is, of course, not surprising: Ethnic identity is '[o]ne of the deepest layers of identity that many people feel strongly about' (Horner & Weber, 2017, p. 108), especially in situations of transnational migration (cf. Bauman, 2004). In our data, identity is often talked about in an essentialising way: 'I am a Finn', 'I am no longer a Dutch'. Even in cases where identity is perceived by individuals themselves as something that is sufficiently constant and homogeneous to be named—a perception that is fairly common (cf. Bucholtz & Hall, 2004)—it is important to be aware of the dissimilarities between different individuals' constructions of these 'entities'. Examples (17–18) above nicely illustrate the different ways in which Finns use the very identity category 'Finn'.

Our data show several cases of how the participants in our focus-group discussions link perceived cultural differences to notions of ethnicity. In (3), Helma gives an account of how people in the Netherlands simply call on others in order to have a chat and a cup of coffee; in (4), Anja makes a joke about the monotonous and repetitious food on important holiday celebrations in Sweden: it's the same irrespective of whether it is Christmas, Easter, or Midsummer; and in (12) Paavo highlights the superiority of the Finnish dance in comparison to that of the Swedes, who just do the bugg or slow dance. According to Eriksen (1992, p. 220),

ethnicity is de facto construed when (experienced or imagined) differences are actualised and made relevant in on-going interaction: 'it is not the actual cultural differences between groups that create ethnicity, but rather the insistence of group members, or outsiders, on stressing such differences and making them relevant in interaction' (Cf. also Bucholtz & Hall, 2005).

In the context of the focus of the present study, that is, in situations of transnational migration, we find both the migrants in their new community-to-be and the community's traditional inhabitants frequently making (real or fictive) cultural differences relevant. The incoming settlers in our study use different 'ethnic' labels in their descriptions of the cultural differences they have experienced: *holländare, svenskar, finnar, sverigefinnar* 'the Dutch, the Swedes, the Finns, the Sweden Finns'. These labels are also used to navigate between different cultures and to express one's own group affiliation. The participants' use of different personal pronouns also signals how they identify themselves in relation to the imagined groupings. In order to refer to 'the Others', that is, to participants belonging to the local Duvbacka community, one or several of the following labels are typically used by the migrants: *svenskar, värmlänningar*, [*Duvbackingar*] 'Swedes, Värmlandians, [Duvbackians]' or they use the 3rd person plural pronoun *de* 'they'. For instance, in (4), Anja tells us that she and her husband 'don't have any Swedish friends'; Helma, in (8), describes how hard it is 'to get in touch with Swedes in Duvbacka'; in (2), Janneke complains that 'they' (i.e., the locals) say that they are interested in cooperation, but then nothing happens; and Sandra describes the dialect by saying that 'they [the locals] change all their vowels to [ø:]': *de ändrar typ allt till öööö*. The 1st person plural pronoun *vi* 'we' is used to refer to one's own group, the Finns or the Dutch in Sweden. Paavo in reference to a language course in Swedish says 'there were only Finns there # and we spoke Finnish' (*det är bara finskarna där # å vi pratade finsk*); Erja in reference to her job tells us 'we knew no Swedish at all then # we were just Finns hanging out together' (*vi kunde inte svenska nån alls då # vi bara finnar som är sammans*); and in (11) Janneke describes how the lack of contact with the local population made 'us now seek contact among ourselves'.

Interestingly, though, we do find a couple of cases when the participants use 'they' as a distancing device when referring to others than the locals in Duvbacka—in particular, in stories about the inhabitants in their own former home countries. Thus, Erja uses 'they' to signal her distance

from Finnish people when she tells us about the experience she had of not being accepted by Finns in Finland when they moved back to Finland: 'they bullied us'. And in (19) below, Janneke and Sandra use 'they' to dissociate themselves from others in the Netherlands, while 'we' is used in an including manner for 'we who live in Sweden'.

(19)

Janneke: *hon sa <alla pratar om varann> och det gör vi inte här i Sverige*
'she said <everybody talks about each other> and that's not what we do here in Sweden'

Sandra: *alla jämför sig väldigt mycket med varann # bara # dom bara diskuterar om längd # det gör vi också här ibland men liksom de pratar typ en halvtimme om du är för lång eller du är för kort eller <jag var längre än dig>*
'everybody compares themselves very much to one another # just # they only discuss how tall they are # we do that here, too, sometimes, but like they can talk for half an hour about whether you are too tall or you're too short or <I was taller than you>'

These voices clearly show that identity is nothing stable in individuals, but instead situated and negotiated in interaction. Our migrant participants' (implicit) positionings thus clearly support an understanding of identity as 'a relational and sociocultural phenomenon that emerges and circulates in the local discourse contexts of interaction rather than a stable structure located primarily in the individual psyche or in fixed categories' (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005, pp. 585–586).

5.6 Pre-migration Aspirations, Post-migration Realities

Our data show that the Finns and the Dutch in the present study differ markedly from each other in how they experience their integration into their new home country. The Finnish participants feel very comfortable with life in Sweden. They treat Duvbacka as their home and have little inclination to move away from where they are. By contrast, the Dutch participants are frustrated that they cannot seem to get as close contact

with the local population as they had hoped for. They do not feel integrated into the local community and some of them are not sure they want to stay in Duvbacka.

In order to properly understand these results, we argue that we have to take into account the differences in the reasons why members of these two migrant groups moved to Sweden in the first place, including the very expectations they had with respect to their actual migration.

The Finns' main objective for moving to Sweden, that is, to get employment and housing, was quickly fulfilled, and they are satisfied with life in Sweden. Before arriving in Duvbacka, the Finnish participants had worked and lived in other places in Sweden. They have now settled peacefully in Duvbacka, a place they appreciate because it felt like *komma hem till Finland* 'coming home to Finland'. For them and for many other Finnish workforce migrants the motivation to learn Swedish has primarily been of an instrumental nature. The Finnish participants have not aspired to get socially integrated and become part of the Swedish majority population; their strong Finnish community has filled their general need for social belonging (cf. Ager & Strang, 2008). This is also why they are not disappointed at the lack of deeper, long-lasting contacts with the members of the local population. Following the positioning approach advocated in Ekberg and Östman (2020), we could describe the Finns in Duvbacka as *self-marginalised migrants*.

The Dutch participants in our study moved to Sweden in order to get away from what they experienced as negative factors in the Netherlands—stress, the lack of nature, too many people, and so forth. These life-style migrants had high expectations for life in Sweden, which had partly grown and been fuelled on the basis of their positive experiences of previous visits to Sweden. They prepared their migration carefully by taking language courses even before they moved, and by carefully weighing alternative places of settlement in Sweden. For them, the motivation to learn Swedish has been integrative: They specifically want to become socially integrated into the local community and they take initiatives and engage in local activities in the community. They feel that they have themselves taken as much responsibility as possible for their own integration, and they are consequently disappointed when their goal of attaining social belonging is not fulfilled. They are also disappointed that the language they have learnt in language classes does not really function in their contacts with the locals, who 'stubbornly' keep to their dialect and who do not like to

speak what the locals themselves consider to be pretentious language.[10] In other words, their main objective to move to Sweden has not been fulfilled. We thus suggest the term *involuntarily marginalised migrants* for the Dutch in Duvbacka.

The motives behind the migrants' decisions to move to another country shed further light on their own identity constructions. The Finns moved because of the job situation in Finland—and not because they were otherwise negatively inclined toward Finnish society. Even after having spent a long time in Sweden, they still identify as Finns. The Dutch left the Netherlands in order to get away from what they thought did not function well in Dutch society. They no longer identify as Dutch, but rather as 'internationals' or as 'Europeans'.

Our results clearly show that *expectations* play an important role for how migrants view their own integration (cf. also Pitkänen et al., 2019). And we suggest that, in general, causes and reasons for moving are important aspects that need to be taken more seriously in any study on immigrants' social integration.

5.7 Concluding Remarks and Discussion

Let us finally return to our research questions (A–C). First, in relation to research question (A) (*What are the views of 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch' about different aspects of their 'new community'?*), we discussed the migrants' views on the local community (in Sect. 5.4.1), showing that they do not feel that they themselves are members of the Duvbacka community. But we also showed that whereas this does not bother the Finnish migrants, the Dutch migrants experience it as a challenge. In Sects. 5.4.2–5.4.3 we gave voice to the migrants and their experience with learning Swedish. Again, the experiences of the migrants were quite different, especially when they met with the local dialect of their new rural community: The Finnish participants in our study were quite indifferent to their relationship with the language(s) around them, whereas the

[10] Interestingly, there is an (even explicitly mentioned) understanding among the local population that the local dialect is hard for migrants, especially for people with a different mother tongue than Swedish. The locals, too, see this as an aggravating circumstance for language learning: The migrants learn Swedish at school, but they will not hear standard Swedish in everyday life. One of the locals says: 'I can really see # I can see a problem with this because # they learn a language that is not used in [Duvbacka]'.

Dutch experienced their meagre possibilities to interact with the locals as a major drawback. With respect to social integration (Sect. 5.4.4), the Finnish participants in our study are quite happy to be left alone, whereas the Dutch do their utmost to become part of the community—but feel that they most often fail in this endeavour. But in Sect. 5.4.5 we saw that despite all of the challenges of living in a small rural community, neither the Finns nor the Dutch regret that they have moved to Duvbacka.

With respect to research question (B) (*To what extent is knowledge of Swedish a determining factor for migrants to feel that they are integrated in their new society?*), we can note that our Finnish and Dutch participants have very different experiences of the importance of having a working knowledge of Swedish for their integration. The general (and in particular, politicians') mantra (cf. Sect 5.1) that language skills in Swedish is *the* key to integration clearly needs to be variegated and further discussed if it is to be made a society's general agenda. We will return to this in the discussion below.

With respect to (C) (*How is identity constructed by 'the Finns' and 'the Dutch' in the present situation of transnational migration?*), our data confirm that identity is a situated relational phenomenon (cf. Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) which means that there is no straightforward relationship between people's pre-migration country and identity, and how they end up constructing their identity in their new homeland. Our data also confirm that people in general have quite essentialist, ethnicity-based views about how to define 'their identity', struggling with defining themselves as belonging to one pre-defined identity construct rather than another.

5.7.1 Discussion

Against the background of the widespread belief and mantra constantly put to the fore in political and public debate that knowledge of the national language is *the* key to integration, we have here presented a number of individual migrants' views on how and to what extent language really plays a role in their feeling of being socially included in their new community.

Our study shows that for the Finns in Duvbacka it took a very long time before they learnt Swedish. But they were rapidly integrated in the Swedish community in the sense that they received jobs and dutifully paid their taxes. In other words, they lived up to the demand, as formulated

in Swedish integration policy documents, that migrants should be able to support themselves (e.g., SOU, 2020:54, p. 17). Moreover, they like life in Sweden, especially because there is a tight Finnish network that they can turn to. They also feel highly valued at their workplace. In this way, they feel integrated—irrespective of their level of competence in Swedish.

The situation for the Dutch in Duvbacka is almost the opposite: Some of them started learning Swedish already when they lived in the Netherlands. Just like the Finns, they promptly became part of the Swedish community in the sense that they got jobs and paid their taxes. But they are ambivalent with respect to life in Sweden. They do not feel integrated—despite their skills in Swedish.[11]

These findings raise a number of important issues. We do not question the importance of language skills for anyone[12] to be able to fully participate in today's society, that is, to get a suitable job, housing, and education (cf. Pareliussen, 2019; Rooth & Strömblad, 2008). Rather, our results show that we have to question how the very term *integration* is used in popular discourse, where the mantra of learning the 'new' language being the key to integration is presented over and over again.[13] What do people actually mean when they talk about 'integration' (cf. Grzymala-Kazlowska & Phillimore, 2018)? In order to avoid 'a simplistic, one-dimensional, "all or nothing" view of migrant "integration"', Ryan (2018, p. 237) uses the concept of 'differentiated embedding' to explore how migrants negotiate attachment and belonging to varied degrees across different domains of society: household, workplace, neighbourhood, and the wider community. Using Ryan's terminology, the Finnish and Dutch participants in our study are (or had been) successfully embedding in the work sector, but they are not embedding at all in the local

[11] We are very well aware that the empirical data supporting our findings are limited. But the picture that has emerged from our data concurs well with descriptions in other studies of the Finnish workforce migrants and the Dutch life-style migrants in Sweden; cf. the contributions in Lainio (1996), Borg (2016), Eimermann (2017), and Eimermann et al. (2020).

[12] Except for privileged migrants who are employed at companies and institutions where they can manage well in English.

[13] Research on language and integration suggests that answers to questions like 'Are language skills a guarantee for successful integration?' cannot be given in a straightforward manner—not even when one is more specific and distinguishes between social, economic, and political integration (cf. Forsberg Lundell, 2020; Rocca et al., 2020).

community. Our findings point to complex and uncertain 'interlinkages' between different domains of integration.

Furthermore, the study clearly shows that for the individual migrant, language skills are not a guarantee for social inclusion, nor is integration achieved as soon as the migrant has a job and housing. From the migrant's point of view, integration is also about a sense of being part of the new society, a sense of belonging that can take different expressions. It can, for example, as in the case of the Finns in our study, be about feeling needed and appreciated at work or in association life; or as the Dutch in our study hoped for, it can be about being seen and included by members of the local community.

All of this calls attention to the following very important point about integration: Integration is not a one-sided process for which only the migrant can be held responsible. This is so, irrespective of whether we are dealing with urban communities often characterised by housing segregation, or with rural communities with seemingly extensive opportunities to live next door to traditional local residents (cf. Ager & Strang, 2008). In contrast to assimilation, integration is about reciprocity, and thus it is everyone's responsibility: that of the migrants, and that of the members of the receiving country and community. As pointed out by Kamali (2006, p. 20 [our translation]; see also Pötzsch, 2020): 'Integration is a state of society that applies to everyone who lives in that society. Limiting integration to apply only to "the others" must be changed'.

An equally important issue we would finally like to raise is the question of who is responsible for in-migrated community members' second language acquisition. And who is responsible for creating opportunities for the migrants to use, and in so doing, improve their skills in the language of their new home country. In the discussions, Gerard, Helma, and Paavo explicitly crave for increased possibilities to use Swedish with members of the local population in order to further their own proficiency in the language. This crucial role of interaction for second language learning has been brought to the fore in research on SLA throughout the years (for an overview, see Lindberg, 2013). We thus see that, like integration, learning a new language is not a one-sided process for which only the migrant should be held responsible.

In short, both integration and learning the language of the new country require interaction between the migrants and the local population, and are thus everyone's responsibility. It simply takes two to tango.

Aavan meren tuolla puolen jossakin on maa…
Oi jospa kerran sinne satumaahan käydä vois
Niin sieltä koskaan lähtisi en linnun lailla pois[14]
(Unto Mononen, *Satumaa*)

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[14] From the beginning of the Finnish tango *Satumaa* 'Fairy-tale land': 'There is a land somewhere—on the other side of the high seas … Oh, if I could go to that fairy-tale land, I would never, like a bird, leave it'.

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