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School of Management and Governance

Integration Buddies
in Enschede:
An Evaluation

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ABSTRACT

In 2007 the city of Enschede presented the “Integration Agenda Enschede”. Next to the acquisition of the Dutch language, the immigrants’ participation and engagement in social life are at the core of the social – and lately – economic integration of immigrants.

This study evaluates the Buddy-project which was set up to promote the immigrants’ participation in the social community: Immigrants are accompanied by local volunteers with whom they practice the Dutch language and from whom they receive orientation in the city. This qualitative study evaluates the Buddy-Project as part of the local integration strategy on its effectiveness in promoting social integration. Fifteen interviews with immigrants and buddies illustrate the strength and weaknesses of the Buddy-Project as supportive element in the process of social integration, but also reflect fifteen individual perceptions and feelings towards integration.

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1. Introduction

During the last years, the issue of immigrant integration has gained importance in politics and public debates. The discussion mainly focuses on the negative consequences of social des-integration: unemployment, social disorder and a weakened social community are perceived as threats to a country resulting from unsuccessful integration of minorities (Castles, 2000, p. 191). National policy-makers are thus highly interested in an effective immigrant integration policy, assuming that the level of integration is directly connected to the immigrants participating in the labor market and social well-being in and of the host-society. In the Dutch political tradition, immigrant policies focused on economic integration, assuming that employment is the source of social integration. (Entzinger, p. 5) In 2006 however, a shift towards a civic integration approach was finally manifested in the national legislation “Wet Inburgering” (Law on Integration). It requires immigrants to follow compulsory integration courses to gain “oral and written competences in the Dutch language and knowledge of the Dutch society.” (Hirsch Ballin, 2006, p. Art. 7) With the civic approach the process of immigrant integration is assumed to take different paths: knowledge on the Dutch culture and the command of the Dutch language are assumed to be prerequisites to economic integration. (Joppke, 2007, p.6)

In line with the Dutch national Law on Integration the city of Enschede presented in 2007 the “Integration Agenda Enschede” (Inburgerings Agenda) as local integration strategy for immigrants living in the city of Enschede. The Integration Agenda was implemented to support “integration, education and re-integration as impetus for participation” with different projects (Gemeente Enschede, 2008a, p. 2). The policy came into effect in 2008. According to the municipality of Enschede ‘integration’ is defined as participation in four domains: burgerschap, werknemerschap, vakmanschap en ondernemerschap. Stage one, “citizenship” (burgerschap) aims at a participation in society that fulfils the basic needs of citizenry (e.g. language courses/voluntary work); “employment” (werknemerschap) describes activities that aim at re-integration (e.g. regular employment); the stage “entrepreneurial spirit” (ondernemerschap) is about the development of competences for the autonomous exercise of a profession and the final stage “professional competence” (vakmanschap) is the exercise of a profession (Gemeente Enschede, 2008c, p. 9). Economic self-sufficiency and participation in society in form of employment is thereby viewed as the last stage and key element in a successful integration process. (Gemeente Enschede, 2008a).

Apart from the economic level, participation is further seen as taking place not only on an economic level (along the four stages) but also in four dimensions: economic-, cultural-, social-, and medical help (Gemeente Enschede, 2008c, p. 9). The participation and engagement in the social life in Enschede such as taking part in sport associations, school activities and neighborhood activities are regarded as crucial elements for integration and the immigrants’ well-being (Gemeente Enschede, 2008b, p. 6). Successful ‘*integration*’ means than not only the self-sufficient participation in the labor market but also the *active participation in the community life*.

The Integration Agenda Enschede refers to “social competences, education and integration” (Gemeente Enschede, 2008a, p. 2) as being the impetus for participation. In order to promote integration, the city of Enschede set up a project that should level the barriers to the participation of immigrants in the community, by means competence developments: The Buddy-project, which will further be described in the following.

1.1 The Buddy-Project in Enschede

The Buddy-project in Enschede was set up as an integral component of the local integration strategy for newcomers laid out in the Integration Agenda. Dutch local volunteers accompany participants for 12 weeks in which they meet once a week for about two hours. Before the projects starts, the buddy and participant meet to discuss the goal of the individual project. The goal specifies the help needed and determines the practice: training in the Dutch language, showing newcomers around in the neighborhood, informing them about the possibilities of participation as well as providing support in daily life activities are the core elements within this project. The Buddy-project is intended for newcomers and migrants that already reside in Enschede but are not familiar with the city and/or were unable to make social contacts. But, is the Buddy-project an appropriate and effective tool to reach the goal of increased immigrant participation and thus contributes to an effective integration process? From a comparable Buddy-project undertaken in Germany (City of Münster), the following advantages of the employment of a buddy as 'Integration-Buddy' are perceived: the administrative process of integration can be speeded up due to specific guidance by the Buddy, and, the process of social integration can be facilitated due to the emotional connection with the immigrant (S. Seveker, Thränhardt, , 2007, p. 28). The Buddy-project in Enschede can be described as aiming at the social- and cultural dimension of integration because it is designed to stimulate participation in the community and neighborhood through social contact making. In short: by means of the Buddy-project, immigrants shall be supported in orientation and encouraged to actively participate in their new country of residence.

1.2 Aim of the Study and Research Question

The purpose of this report is two-fold. Per definition, the evaluation of the Buddy-project shall provide information about the value of observed and expected policy outcomes (Dunn, 2008, p. 6). In practice this means that the goal is to generate knowledge about the Buddy-project in its function as a supportive element in the integration process of immigrants. Given that the Buddy-project only started in 2008, the research will be exploratory in nature. Its outcomes are of particular relevance for policy-makers and stakeholders in the city of Enschede as the research also suggests improvements of the Buddy-project.

The overall research question of the study is as follows:

To what extent does the Buddy-project in Enschede fulfill its goal of contributing to a successful process of integration and orientation of immigrants?

The following specific sub-questions are posed to assess the overall research question:

- Which theoretical frameworks are most applicable to this study in terms of immigrant integration and Buddy-projects?
- To what extent does the work of the buddies facilitate the orientation and integration process?
- How is the Buddy-project evaluated by buddies and participants?

1.3 Structure of the Report

The structure of the paper is the following: The relevant theory on Buddy-projects as strategy for supporting social integration and the theory on immigrant integration will be discussed in section two. This theoretical part ends with an explanation about how we can embed the Buddy-project in theory on immigrant integration. Section three explains the methods to be applied to the research and justifies their usage from a scientific perspective. In part four the data is presented followed by a summary of statements in the form of tables. Part five provides for an analysis of the experiences with the Buddy-project as a tool to facilitate integration in Enschede, followed by a conclusion. This last and final part critically reflects upon the theoretical framework used and the definition of integration formulated by the city of Enschede.

2. Theory

The relevant theory in this work relates to two substantial areas: Theory on the functioning of Buddy-projects and theory on immigrant integration. Both areas are crucial to develop an understanding for a Buddy-project in its function to encourage immigrant integration.

Firstly, the concept of social embeddedness by Granovetter (1985) is the starting point for a theoretical framework. Additionally the theory on social capital introduced by Bourdieu (1979) and further interpreted by Coleman (1988) will be used to understand immigrant integration from theoretical lens. The third part of the theory presents relevant literature on Buddy-projects and filters relevant findings. Special attention will be paid to the difficulty to estimate (positive or negative) effects of Buddy-projects.

2.1 Immigrant Integration: Embeddedness and Social Capital

This section gives insight in how we can understand immigrant integration from a theoretical lens. The theory starts with a consideration of Granovetter (1985) who sees social embeddedness as a condition for successful participation in the labor market. The concept of social capital by Bourdieu (1979) and Coleman (1988) sheds light on how this social embeddedness can be achieved. Networks and social communities are thereby the key institutions in which social capital exists and provides members with expertise.

The term 'integration' stretches out in an economic, -cultural and legal dimension. Within the legal dimensions the access to national citizenship remains an indispensable module for immigrant integration (Joppke, 1999, p. 632). The sole legal status of citizenship however does not guarantee the successful economic and cultural integration since states in their politics tend to favour the ethnic majority over the immigrant minority population (Joppke, 1999, p. 630). Economic and cultural dimension refers to the participation in the labour market and in the community. Language and education, equal treatment as well as cultural and social interaction and civic participation are pathways to integrate immigrants into the host-society and are indicators of integration at the same time (Petsod, 2006, p. 28). The economic and cultural integration of migrants is reinforced by the levelling of barriers to participation in the labour market and community. This is done by providing immigrants with the necessary skills to participate in society.

According to Granovetter (1985) economic action and participation in the labour market of an individual is dependent on social embeddedness. In his theory, social relations, structures and networks are defined as variables influencing economic action (Granovetter, 1985, p. 490). Following the theory of Granovetter, the social cultural integration of immigrants with the development of social relations and networks gains importance because it is followed by a facilitated social-economic integration.

In order to conceptualize the social-economic and social-cultural integration for this research the theory on 'social capital' will be used. According to Bourdieu (1979) 'social capital' describes "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 248). Social capital is thereby defined as the sum of the assets (activities) which are available to a member of a network or community. It stems from the idea that social networks possess a value from which the individual profits. That is, through social connections

the access to shared expertise, knowledge and thus cultural capital, is facilitated and places the individual into an advanced position. According to Bourdieu, social capital is a source to obtain economic capital which is materialized in ownership and financial means. Coleman (1988) in his interpretation of social capital emphasizes the social structure and relations within social networks as embedding system in which social capital emerges and exists. Coleman interprets social capital as “aspects of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within the structure.” (Coleman, 1988, p. 98) Coleman sees the closure of social networks through trustworthiness among actors as a condition for a social structure (or network) that enables social capital building. A network can only then transform and benefit from social capital if the network as such is dense and if actors establish a relation of mutual trust that is reciprocal.

If social capital is inherited in social structures then the immigrants’ participation in communities and organizations is the key to social-economic integration. Coining the social capital theory on immigrant integration, highlights the benefits obtained from social structures: Immigrants often lack resources such as language skills, knowledge of culture and customs that prevent them from engaging in the community/social networks, establishing social relations and hence from developing social capital.

According to Coleman (1988) social capital evolves in social networks. Immigrants will therefore profit from membership in social networks because they gain access to expertise through personal relations. Thus, successful integration can be understood as embeddedness in social networks through associational life (Jacobs, 2001, p. 419). A tool to enable membership of immigrants in social networks is the Buddy-project. This is explained in the following.

2.2 Buddy-Projects

This section covers the theory, mechanisms, strength and weaknesses of Buddy-projects as a method of intervention to improve performance. My central interest lies hereby on the possibility to assess positive (or negative) effects of Buddy-projects as it is the goal of this study to do so for the Buddy-project in Enschede. For this purpose, concepts and instruments used for evaluations in other Buddy-projects will be reviewed and used for demarcation.

Buddy–Projects are programs set up to make use of the concept of mentoring as a method of intervention in order to improve the performance of a disadvantaged target population. It is hypothesized that the guidance of disadvantaged persons is leading to observable patterns of improvements and/or deterioration. In these projects participants are coupled to a buddy who provides guidance, moral support and acts as a role model. Providing personal guidance as a method of intervention is then assumed to have positive impacts on the performance of people that are “at risk” (Royse, 1998, p. 1). Buddy-projects, especially for young people, gained popularity in the last decade (DuBois, 2002, p. 157). Mentoring programs for youth “at-risk” increased in number, assuming that strategic mentoring has a positive impact on the development of various young disadvantaged target populations. Evaluation studies generally report beneficial results in which participants were for example less likely to skip classes or to initiate drug or alcohol abuse (Sipe, 2002, p. 252). It is remarked that a Buddy-project can only be beneficial if there is a relationship of trust between the mentor and participant (Sipe, 2002, p. 253). The training of mentors would therefore be a crucial component for setting up a successful Buddy-project.

2.2.1 The Difficulties to measure the Effectiveness of Buddy-Projects

Three difficulties to measure the effectiveness of Buddy-projects exist that should be kept in mind when drawing conclusions on the Buddy-project in Enschede.

Firstly, it is not clear whether a person that is coupled to a buddy improves because of the matching or because of the influence of a third (unknown) variable. In an evaluative study on 59 mentoring programs, DuBois *et al.* (2002) come to the conclusion that the “findings do not necessarily reflect causal effects of either monitoring or the different moderator variables examined” (DuBois, 2002, p. 191). Even though DuBois *et al.* (2002) research focuses on a target group other than immigrants, the findings indicate that the influence of third (unknown) variables on performance plays a decisive role. DuBois *et al.* (2002) refer to those third variables as “other supportive services linked to the mentoring program”(DuBois, 2002, p. 159). When researching on social interaction and behavior, it is difficult to assume that there is no third variable that influences social behaviors of participants of Buddy-projects. Thus, it is difficult to assume the mentoring to be the only explanatory variable for improved performance.

The second difficulty is associated with the undiscovered role of the buddy itself. Amongst others, Hamilton and Hamilton (1992) suggest that the buddy’s self-assessment about his/ her role can have considerable impacts on the actual outcome. It would make a big difference if the buddy sees his or her role primarily in developing a relationship with the participant or if he primarily aims at the participant’s character and competence development. According to Hamilton and Hamilton (1992), the positive benefits of mentoring are likely to be highest when the learning process of the participant is stressed.

Another difficulty is that a person coupled with a buddy might be disturbed in his/ her natural self-development and orientation process. In this case, a buddy would appear as rather disturbing, preventing the person to naturally develop competences and to engage with the social environment. This difficulty should, however, only play a minor role for this evaluation.

These difficulties must be kept in mind when performing the research.

In nutshell, due to the fact that a buddy has knowledge about the city and the social environment he is assumed to make disadvantaged people profit from sharing expertise. The manner in which the project is put into practice has considerable effects on the outcomes. Literature on mentoring programs stresses the role of the buddy and the relationship between buddy and participant. Outcomes are further not easy to assess because it is hard to trace improved performance solely back to the participation in the Buddy-project. The difficulties described in this section have important implications for the operationalization presented in the next part.

2.3 The Role of the Buddy-Project in Immigrant Integration

This section merges the theory on immigrant integration and buddy-projects with the aim to develop an understanding for the Buddy-project in Enschede.

Employing the theory of mentoring as method of intervention emphasizes the design and implementation of the Buddy-project in Enschede. The hypothesis of improved performance through guidance can be transferred to immigrants as target population: Through the coupling with a buddy immigrants can profit from the buddy’s experiences and guidance while settling

down. Also immigrants can be categorized as being “at-risk” in a sense that they often lack basic skills such as language skills or customs necessary for orientation in the host-society. The focus of Coleman (1988) on social networks as generating social capital identifies participation in the community, the neighborhood and the active role in the society as crucial factors for immigrant integration. The Buddy-project pursues this approach by providing immigrants with expertise about the community and by aiming at the acquisition of competences necessary for participation: language development.

Immigrants are therefore assumed to profit from the Buddy-project because it is designed to socially embed immigrants in their new place of residence and thus to stimulate social capital building. This in turn will facilitate the overall goal of immigrant integration through the participation in the labor market and community. The Buddy-project as a strategy to enhance integration should therefore be effective. The Buddy acts as a mediator between the host-society and the immigrant and facilitates the integration process by sharing expertise about the host society and about how to orientate and connect in the local community. From the theory I derive the following hypothesis: Guidance of immigrants (in orientation/integration) is followed by observable patterns of improvement (successful orientation/integration).

3. Method

This section presents the methodological framework for the qualitative research, provides for a conceptual framework, explains the design developed for the research and describes the mechanisms of data collection. Additional emphasis is placed on the strength of the research, but also its limitations.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

Next to the language development, the city of Enschede intends the Buddy-project for immigrants to make social contacts with other inhabitants and to show them the city and neighborhood. The personal guidance of immigrants is therefore conceptualized as practicing the Dutch language, showing newcomers around in the city, and to encourage them to make social contacts and to participate in the society.

The Grounded Theory Approach by Glaser and Strauss (1967) is the inductive approach that is applicable to this study. It is “the attempt to derive theories from an analysis of the patterns, themes, and common categories discovered in observational data” (Babbie, 2007, p. 296). In order to facilitate the inductive reasoning I pursue a study that uses a rather pre-structured conceptual framework. The justification of this conceptual framework is straightforward: The Buddy-project shall be evaluated with regard to its effectiveness of a successful integration of newcomers into the city. Since it was the first project of this kind in Enschede and the purpose of the research is to answer the question of whether or not the Buddy-project was a success or not (and if so, why), an inductive approach is appropriate. However, the research also includes elements of deduction: from the theory of Buddy-projects and mentoring, expectations on the relationship between buddy and participant are derived and considered in the inquiry. The interplay of inductive and deductive reasoning is further explained in section 3.4.

3.2 Design and Strategy

The design of the study is a qualitative field research with a non-numerical data collection in which interviewing is used as a research method. For studying participants of the Buddy-project, in-depth interviews are used as research method. Interviews are undertaken with participants on the one hand and the matched buddy. I assume that participants experience the Buddy-project on a highly personal level, so that the evaluations on the project may differ between participants and Buddies. This means that a recording of personal and emotional reactions to the project constitutes an indispensable module in the evaluation of the Buddy-project. Methods for an evaluation of the effects of mentoring immigrants are therefore designed to leave room for individual assessment. By interviewing both parties a complete and coherent picture about the strength and weaknesses of the project can be revealed.

3.3 Data Collection: Instruments and Procedures

Participants of the Buddy-project are randomly assigned to participation. An individual subscription for taking part is not possible. The interviewees are collected from the randomly assigned elements. 16 interviews are undertaken in total. From the study population comprised of immigrants living in Enschede and newly arriving immigrants to Enschede, 10 persons are chosen: Five immigrants that were coupled to a buddy (two male/three female) and five migrants that did not receive help through a buddy (two male/three female) are selected for interviews by this method. It is assumed that the two groups are comparable at the start of the research, because although the problems they faced might have been different in its nature, it is likely that they all faced problems related to orientation and integration. However I cannot be sure of the comparability of characteristics of the interviewees and must check the immigrants backgrounds when undertaking interviews. Attention is therefore paid to relevant characteristics of the selected interviewees: male/female age and origin in order to select a representative sample of the population under study. Additionally six interviews are undertaken with Buddies (two male/four female), four of whom are also coupled to a selected participant.

The interviews will have elements of a *descriptive* and an *explanatory* research: a descriptive part will answer the question of how the Buddy-project and how the mentoring as part of the project functions, while explanatory elements identify patterns that explain why integration through mentoring was facilitated or hindered.

3.4 Operationalization: The Questionnaire & Indicators

The questionnaire has a malleable structure with open-ended questions in which themes are addressed rather than a fixed sequence of questions asked. A flexible and continuous research method with open-ended in-depth questions enables the re-design of questions throughout the process of interviewing (Babbie, 2007, p. 305f).

I make use of the problem-centered interview method by Witzel (1985). The main feature of this interview method is that the researcher frames the problem in advance (preceding cognition), and possesses relevant previous knowledge. Hence he guides the interviewee in an open atmosphere to the relevant discussion points (Witzel, 2000, p. 2). During the interview the researcher only announces the field of problem without mentioning the exact purpose of the

research. The researcher’s expectations and suspected relationship remain secret so that the respondent is likely to react more open. The interviews are half-structured: the inquiry happens by asking partly open-ended questions so that the respondent is encouraged to answer freely. Therefore, general questions are asked, for example: *how is it like for you to build up a live in the Netherlands*. This form of interviewing allows for an “interplay of inductive and deductive thinking” (Witzel, 2000, p. 1). Even though an inductive approach is pursued, interview design does not reinforce an inductive or deductive approach but is instead organized as an “inductive-deductive mutual relationship.”(Witzel, 2000, p. 2) This design gains importance when having in mind the difficulties about reporting (positive) effects of Buddy-projects described earlier such as the tracing of improved performance back to the coupling of a buddy. Because I assume that the help received through the Buddy constitutes only a part of the help during the orientation/integration process, an open interview design seems appropriate in order to detect the significance of the Buddy-project. For example, during interviews with participants I do not mention that I am about to evaluate the Buddy-project, but instead, guide the interviewee to the problem of orientation/integration. If the respondent in this context does not mention the buddy project at all, the reaction can tell a lot about the effectiveness and relevance of the Buddy-project. The questionnaire is then designed to leave room for indentifying unexpected patterns that were not anticipated beforehand. Since the research requires questions about performance and social behavior, questions can appear threatening to the respondent and attention must be paid to the wording and sequence of questions as a whole (Bradburn, 2004, p. 36).

3.4.1 Indicators

The indicators presented to assess the role of the Buddy are derived from the theory of Buddy-projects. Thus, the social relationship with the participant, the buddies’ opinions on the training strategy and their evaluations on the projects effectiveness are assessed. For example, the indicator *Good Relationship with Participant* states whether or not there was a relationship of trust and a good communication with the buddy.

The indicators presented for the group of immigrants (participants and non-participants) are derived from the definition of integration by the city of Enschede as *participation in community life* and from the conceptualization of *orientation*. For example, the indicator *Maintaining Social Contacts to Dutchmen* refers to the social interaction in society.

The questionnaire is designed to assess the following indicators (per group of interviewees)¹:

Experiences of Buddy	Experiences of Participants	Experiences of Non-participants
Good Relationship with Participant	Good relation with the Buddy	
Aiming at Language Development	Feeling integrated	Feeling integrated
Providing Orientation in the City	Maintaining social contacts to Dutchman	Maintaining social contacts to Dutchman (other than family)

¹ The complete questionnaires can be found in Annex 8

Support with administrative processes Encouragement to Participation	Participation in organizations; voluntary work; social communities Experience improvements/encouragement through the Buddy	Participation in organizations, voluntary work, social communities etc.
Opinions on Training Strategy (classes at Volksuniversiteit) Assessment of Buddy-Project as supportive Element in Integration process	Assessment of Buddy-project as supportive element in integration process	Identifies integration process as difficult

3.5 Strength and Weaknesses

Since participants are randomly assigned to take part in the project, I can assume to have a representative sample of participants from which elements for interviews are selected. The research is reliable because the motivation for subscription is ruled out. Further, the operationalization with in-depth interviews as research method is strongly related to the strength of the study. A high internal validity is achieved by means of the in-depth questioning: since I am able to gain a complete and personal picture about the experiences with the Buddy-project with regard to integration from participants and buddies, the study accurately reflects what went on in the Buddy-project. Threats to internal validity such as the occurrence of events that cause certain observed effects rather than the treatment (in this case participation in the Buddy-project) can be ruled out if the interviewer is aware of this threat and is able to set out his questions accordingly.

The research also has some substantial limitations that are worth mentioning: I can assume that immigrants who complete the Buddy-project and actively engage with his or her buddy are more interested in integrating than participants who reject the support from the buddy. In the former case, I can assume that the immigrant in general is more interested in making social contacts and is more willing to participate in the community. Secondly, the evaluation of the project through the personal perspective of the participants and the buddies can be biased by other factors. That is, a smooth integration process will not exclusively be dependent on the participation in the Buddy-project. Other factors (third variables) that can determine a smooth integration are not grasped by this research. Thus a spurious relationship cannot be excluded automatically. I believe, however, it is possible to restrict this validation by a thoughtfully designed questionnaire and by paying attention to it while undertaking the research. Thirdly, the Buddy-project was designed and implemented in a particular and unique local setting, the city of Enschede. This means that a possible success of the Buddy-project may not hold if another city was under study, challenging the question of generalization. Additionally some undetected variable might function as an explanatory mediator of the causal relationship in one setting, but might not mediate in a different setting. In other words, the external validity might be threatened by a change in setting. Thus, one needs to be careful with generalization.

There is another weakness: no pre-testing was done in which immigrants were interviewed before they got coupled to a buddy. Knowledge of the starting position and a self-assessment of the migrants would add to the evaluation of the mentoring process. The comparison between the group of migrants with a buddy and a control-group, however, constitutes a sufficient measurement to answer the posed research question and overcomes this weakness.

4. Results: Experiences of Integration in Enschede

This part presents the data collected. The interviews in the following are presented in a strongly shortened version due their complexity. The interviews usually lasted for about 30 to 40 minutes. A summary of statements (according to the indicators specified) is present at the end of each group of interviewees in form of a table. A plus (+) indicates that the interviewee positively stressed the topic or that a practice is present, while a minus (-) means that the interviewee did not mention the topic or that a practice was not present. A zero (0) indicates that the participant was neutral on a topic. Since some buddies already worked with more than one participant, also more than one valuation is sometimes named for on specific indicator.

4.1 Experiences of Buddies

This section gives an overview about the experiences made by buddies who voluntarily accompanied migrants 12 weeks within the buddy-project.

Buddy A

Buddy A (38 years old) has a migration background herself and comes from Latin America. She accompanies two participants in the Buddy-project and wanted to help people to orientate and to get along in the Netherlands. She says that she knows how difficult it is to arrive here and feels best prepared to explain cultural differences. The people that come here do not know how to organize their new life, she says. It is then very helpful to have somebody explaining the do's and don'ts of the new culture. A buddy is more a real life coach, she says.

A mostly shows the participants around in the neighborhood and city, talks about daily life problems, or organizes daily things (e.g. help with arranging an internet connection.) A says that the problems of the participants come up spontaneously and that she does her best in offering solutions. A indicates that it is important to explain things to the participants so that they are able to do them alone in the future. Guiding towards independence would be most important. A says that she feels that during the project the participants learned how to do things themselves.

In some situations A felt not responsible to provide help because she found the problem to be too intimate. It would be difficult to say 'no' sometimes but at the same time to remain a reliable source of help. Communicating on a personal level would be the only ground for guiding people, A says, because she could not approach somebody on a factual manner and the personal guidance would also be necessary for the immigrants. A specifies the language as isolating people and adds that the more Dutch the participants speak, the more they got outside and participate.

A considers the classes at the Volksuniversiteit important because they taught her to emphasize the independence of the participant in the project. Listening would be the most important feature of a buddy and that you can make the participant talk and articulate problems. There is the need to develop a relationship of trust so that the buddy knows where exactly he or she could help. The work is also about having a feeling what participants want and what is needed, it is about being sensitive to people, and to understand the needs, A says. A further believes that the project is as important as the language courses because it would really help, it would open up the possibilities for immigrants to build up a life.

Buddy B

Buddy B (61 years old) works with a participant to improve the language skills and thinks that the 12 weeks of the project are almost enough to reach this goal. He meets with the participants to practice the Dutch language, but sometimes also helps with other things, such as accompanying the participants to

the temporary employment agency (uitzendbureau) to help with the intake interview. B says that his participant is motivated and willing to learn. He also stresses that sometimes it would be also necessary to help with private problems, but it would be important that this happens on a voluntary basis.

B found the classes at the Volksuniversiteit good to exchange experiences with other buddies, but says that he knew already most of the things that were taught there.

For immigrants speaking Dutch would be most important for the integration process, and B believes therefore to have a positive influence on the life of the participants. Also, B says that it is important that immigrants communicate with Dutchmen because then they get a better understanding of the culture.

For a buddy, B thinks it is important that he/she is aware of the fact that he comes across very different people and that a buddy therefore needs to have a feeling for people, to listen to them before talking.

Buddy C

Buddy C (59 years old) worked with two people in the Buddy-project. With one immigrant he learns Dutch and with the other one he helps to find his way in the city. Helping with daily problems such as going to the doctor and translating letters are also named as activities. C thinks that he can really help when there is a good relationship and when the participant likes to meet him. During the project C found the participants to get more enthusiastic to participate. C states that three month is too little time for the project and that there are always more problems that take more than three month to be solved.

C finds the classes at the Volksuniversiteit helpful because he can exchange experiences and opinions with other buddies, but also says that he already knew what was taught in the classes. C believes that for a buddy it is important to be calm and to listen to the participants. When guiding people, it would also be important to see the differences in culture and mentality.

Buddy D

Buddy D (23 years old) participates in the Buddy-project within the framework of her studies. She works with two families which she sometimes visits at home and sometimes meets at institutions to help with organizing papers (e.g. the home-cooperation). D says that a buddy is there to organize the paper work and to get an overview of what the people that come here actually have to do. The Buddy-project would be there to explain things and to teach people how to do things themselves, D says. D believes that she reached the goal of the project.

D also reports that she worked in the past with a participant that she could not motivate at all even though she tried a lot of things. D then quit working with this person because she did not show up for meetings. People need to want the help, D says, otherwise the project is useless. Immigrants would often be ashamed of speaking Dutch because they would be afraid to be laughed at, D reports. She further thinks that the language is a barrier and that some immigrants just do not dare to speak.

The classes were not considered to be very helpful. D says that there was nothing new to her. A buddy rather needs to keep the goal in mind that she wants to reach with the participant and constantly work towards it. With most of the participants this would be language improvement, but the buddy also functions as an incentive to get people outside. D thinks that a basis of trust is necessary, but that it would also be important not to go too far because then the buddy wouldn't be neutral anymore and could not provide the right help because he/she would be biased. A buddy would need to set limits (times in which he/she is not available) but needs to be authentic because the project would also work via emotional connections.

D enjoyed being a buddy, especially when she saw that participants realize that they can do more on their own than they thought at the beginning of the project.

Buddy E

Buddy E (19 years old) accompanied two participants. In the first project she worked with a participant where the goal was to get the person outside. E could not motivate the person at all and says that a personal relationship did not develop. E then quit the project. In the second project E worked with a

participant whose goal was language improvement. In this project E reports slight improvements, but this project was ended earlier from the side of the participant. E did not know why. E felt not sufficiently prepared by the responsible organization because she once had to do an intake meeting on her own with which she felt overcharged. E thinks that the organization and the backing of the buddies should be better. The classes at the Volksuniversiteit were found to be helpful because they trained her in communication. Buddy E did not see a success with the projects and says that the Buddy-project can only be for people who really want the help.

Buddy F

Buddy F (48 years old) worked with three participants to improve the language skills and does small role-games to practice daily situations (e.g. picking up the phone). F also sees her task in getting people outside and to encourage them to interact with others, but in some cases she would also define herself as social worker when problem occurred, F says.

F prepares the language classes for the participants herself but says that she is sometimes too ambitious, but that individual preparation is necessary because all the participants are different. Buddy F generally thinks that she is successful in reaching the goal of the project but that this is dependent on the motivation of the participant. F says that it is hard when people do not want help or like to meet other people, see the neighborhood etc. F says that there was a project in the past in which she could not encourage a participant to leave the house and to make contacts to other people (in another one she succeeded in that). F reports that immigrants who do not speak Dutch very well, feel uncomfortable to interact with others. The missing language skills isolate them. F then thinks that participating in the Buddy-project is really helpful for immigrants because then they get in contact with a Dutch person and this would help to understand the cultural differences.

Buddy F specifies patience, having a feeling for people and the ability to explain things as important features of a buddy. Further there would be a need for good social interaction with the participant because this would create a comfortable atmosphere. However, it would equally be important to find limits and not to invest too much work.

4.1.1 Summary

The most striking feature of the interviews with the buddies is the similarity in terms of practice. In most cases the buddy aims at the acquisition and improvement of *language skills* of the participants next to providing *orientation in the city*. *Support with administrative processes* (such as registering at institutions) are only reported in two cases. Only in two cases, buddies report to *encourage to participation in social communities*, which failed in one case.

Opinions on the training strategies (the courses at the *Volksuniversiteit*) are mixed. Only two Buddies indicated that their contents helped them to provide help, while four out of the six of the interviewees found the courses to be of no or little help only.

Assessments of the Buddy-project as supportive element in the integration process are generally very positive. In three cases buddies reported also negative experiences in which they experienced no progress of the participants. With one exception, buddies report to have developed a good relationship with the participant.

Table A: Interviews Buddies

Statement	Buddy					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Relationship with Participant	+	+	+	+	-	+
Aiming at Language Skills	-	+	+	+	+	+
Providing Orientation in the City	+	+	+	+	-	-
Support with administrative processes	+	+	-	-	-	-
Encouragement to Participation social communities	+	-	-	-	-	+
Opinions on Training Strategy (classes at Volksuniversiteit)	+	0	0	-	+	0
Assessment of Buddy-Project as supportive Element in Integration process	+	+	+	+ and -	-	+ and -

+ = positively stressed / present

- =negatively stressed / not present

0 = neutral

4.2 Experiences of Participants

This section gives an overview of the experiences of participants in the Buddy-project. During the interviews emphasis was placed on the significance of the support from the Buddy in the life of the immigrant. Participants were asked about a self-assessment of improvements during or after the project. Two of the interviewees already lived quite some time in the Netherlands (18 years or longer), while two participants are newcomers and arrived here within the last two years. In one case an interviewee just started with the project.

Participant A

Participant A (41 years old) came from Turkey to the Netherlands 19 years ago. He was employed in Enschede for 14 years. A says that his Dutch could not really develop because at work he was surrounded with people that spoke his mother tongue. At home A also speaks his mother tongue with his family. Participating in society is really important for him in order to feel at home. A also enjoys the contact with the neighbours and says that they also listen to him even though it takes time with his Dutch but that they have a lot of patience and are very friendly. To be in contact with Dutch people would also be good to remove and not to develop prejudices. The language, says A, is most important to achieve a situation in which you can participate. Good language skills mean small problems, bad language skill mean big problems, A says. Participant A says that he especially has problems with using verbs. In this context A mentions the buddy-project. A says he participated to improve his language skills and that he saw the project as a good chance. Once a week the Buddy comes to his home and he most of the time stays a little longer. His buddy is a very friendly person and he enjoys spending time with him. The buddy also knows about family problems and A hopes that he can help to communicate between family members. A thinks that the language training with the Buddy is very helpful to practice and that he has the feeling to have improved during the project.

Participant B

Participant B (39 years old) came from Central America to Enschede in 2009 to live with her husband. B enjoys living here, she thinks that the people are very friendly and that it is calm and organized. Her husband and her family do their best to make her feel at home and she gets a lot of support she says. B speaks only little Dutch, but her neighbors also help her in the sense that they make her feel good. They are patient and speak slowly with her, B says. B reports that it is difficult to adjust to the new culture, that all the customs and for example the family-reunions are very different in the Netherlands. Acquiring the basics in the Dutch language is however the most difficult task. You can arrive here well prepared but this does not help you when you do not speak basic Dutch, B says.

B thinks that her Buddy helped her a lot. She showed her around and offered her possibilities to participate and so she did, B says. In this way, she also found friends from Latin America to whom she can connect better than to Dutch people. Connecting with other people and contributing something to the Dutch society is really important to her, it makes her feel at home here, B explains. B enjoyed the time with her Buddy a lot, they had a lot in common and B liked that her Buddy also spoke her mother tongue. Her advice for people that come to the Netherlands is to embrace the Dutch culture as your second culture, which makes you happy.

Participant C

Participant C (44 years old) just started with the Buddy-project. C lived in the Netherlands for 18 years already and moved to Enschede only six month ago to find work. C says that coming to Enschede was a bit difficult, but that it is always difficult to adjust to a new environment. When he came to the Netherlands 18 years ago it was very difficult. The new language and everything was new, C says. There were some foundations in the city in which he had lived before that helped him, but it was still very difficult. C thinks that is boring to sit at home and therefore found some voluntary work in the new neighbourhood. He thinks that voluntary work is good to get to know the people here and that it can be a first step in finding a new job.

C only had the intake meeting with the Buddy yet and his goal is to get support with finding a job. C is curious how the Buddy-project will go and says that he really hopes that the Buddy can help him with finding work, being most important for him.

Participant D

Participant D (21 years old) is a student and came together with her family to the Netherlands one and a half years ago. D says that at the beginning the language was really difficult, but that she had no other problems. D visits the integration classes and complains about the slow progress within the class. D wants to learn the Dutch language very fast and thinks that the level in class is too low for somebody that is young and really wants to learn Dutch fast. D indicates that it is absolutely necessary to manage the Dutch language, for making contact with others and to follow a study. D wants to continue her studies as soon as possible, but says that she first needs to have a good command of Dutch. Participant D hardly remembered the Buddy-project when asked about her participation and Buddy. D says that the Buddy visited her only twice but because the buddy also spoke her mother tongue they hardly spoke or practiced Dutch. D says that this was not helpful because there was the possibility to avoid speaking Dutch which eventually led to a situation in which they almost only spoke Arabic. For this reason D then cancelled working with that Buddy and called for another buddy but until now there was no other Buddy has been coupled to her. D says that practicing Dutch is most important for her and that she therefore found a language internship herself.

Participant E

E came from Poland in 2004 and lives now with her family in Enschede. Her husband helped her with settling down and finding the way through paper work. E says that the cultural differences are not very

big and that she feels very much at home in the Netherlands. E says that the more Dutch she speaks, the easier the life here is and that she has to learn Dutch in order to have her diploma admitted and to find a job in the future. E says that she enjoyed the time she spend with her Buddy and that her goal was to learn and practice Dutch. The buddy who was coupled to her participated in the Buddy-project because she had to do an internship for her school. The buddy, E says, could not really help me because she was not willing to explain things to me, she could for example not explain the grammar and said she would find out and tell me in the next meeting. This however never happened and so E reports that she was not satisfied with this project. Finally, E says that she did not feel that there was an improvement for her. E thinks that because her Buddy was somehow obliged to do this work she was not really motivated and suspects that the project would have been more successful when there was a buddy that did the work on a voluntary basis. Instead, to learn the Dutch language E joined a small group of immigrants that meet to practice Dutch and that is accompanied by teachers. She enjoys going there because the teachers encourage her to really speak and further explain word usages and grammar. Here, E says, she really learns the language.

4.2.1 Summary

In one case, the project just started and in another the project was abandoned. Two other participants report to enjoy the time with the buddy and that they have a good relationship, while one participant reports the contrary. Four out of five interviewees report to feel *well integrated*, and three of the interviewees report to be in social contact with Dutchmen. Participants who finished the project at the time of the interview experienced *improvements and/or encouragements* through the Buddy and assessed the project as *supportive element* in the integration process.

Table B: Interviews Participants

Statement	Participant				
	A	B	C	D	E
Good Relation with Buddy (reference person)	+	+	0	-	0
Feeling integrated	+	+	+	-	+
Maintaining social contacts to Dutchman (other than family)	+	-	+	-	+
Participation in organizations; voluntary work; social communities	+	+	+	-	+
Spontaneous mentioning of Buddy (project)	+	+	-	-	-
Experience improvements/encouragement through the Buddy	+	+	0	-	-
Assessment of Buddy-project as supportive element in integration process	+	+	0	-	-
+ = positively stressed / present					
- =negatively stressed / not present					
0 = neutral					

4.3 Experiences of People without a Buddy

This section reports experiences of immigrants that did not take part in the Buddy-project. During the interviews, questions about experiences with regard to integration into the Dutch society, orientation in the city and participation in community life were asked. Two of the interviewees already lived for some time in the Netherlands (nine years or longer), while three were newcomers and arrived here within the last two years.

Immigrant without Buddy A

Immigrant A (42 years old) came to live in Enschede in 1992. A worked for a long time for the same company and speaks Dutch well. A says he has a lot of Dutch friends, that he feels very Dutch and that he is integrated in this culture. A also has to take part in Dutch language and obligatory integration courses. A however thinks that he would not have to participate in the integration courses because his Dutch is very good and he knows everything about the life here. A says, for him this is ridiculous to go to integration classes. A does not understand why he is obliged to go there and instead he would rather like to work. A says that he likes Enschede a lot and knows the city well because of his experiences in working. A says that he was happy that he had help with finding a job when he came her, but he says that there was no further help for him.

Immigrant without Buddy B

Immigrant B (24 years old) came to the Netherlands nine years ago from China and ever since worked in a company where he speaks his mother tongue. B had the expectation that the life in the Netherlands would be very nice. B said that his expectations are fulfilled and that he enjoys living in Enschede. B has to go twice per week to integration courses in order to learn the Dutch language. B states that he is in good contact with the colleagues from work. B indicates that he has difficulties in learning the Dutch language also because at his work he only speaks Chinese and that he has no practice. B says that he has no problems with orientation in the city and the neighbourhood.

When I asked B about hobbies and activities that he would like, B tells me that he does not do anything except spending time at the computer. B says that he is not in contact with the neighbours or with other Dutchmen.

Immigrant without Buddy C

C (29 years old) came to Enschede in September 2009 to live with her husband. C visits the integration classes and indicates that it is important for her to learn Dutch, but that it is very hard. At home she would only speak her mother tongue. C says that she does not have the practice and wished that she could practice more in school or speak to the neighbours. C thinks the start in the Netherlands is very difficult and that the whole life begins new here. C is sad about the fact that she cannot communicate with other people. C further says that her diploma is not accepted here making it more difficult to find a job. Further she does not know anything about her possibilities to either find a job or to visit a school of higher education. C complains that she does not get support at all. C says when she misses a class of the integration course they would send her a letter to remind her of being absent from the classes. The language, C says, is a big barrier, but that it is important to speak to Dutch people, also for practicing. C says that she cannot do anything on her own except for shopping or taking a bus to the city centre.

Immigrant without Buddy D

D (24 years old) has been living in the Netherlands for twelve months and came to Enschede from Brazil to live with her husband. D speaks only little Dutch and does not work. D says that it is not easy to build up a new life and that she feels a strong inner pressure to integrate, but that this process takes very long. D says that she gets a lot support of the family of her husband but that integration is about

understanding the way people communicate here, the differences in culture and that being independent is the core of integration. D says that she does not feel integrated because she does not know much about how the things work here (e.g. the tax system or the higher education system). She says that she could not live on her own in the Netherlands. D says that she would like to find a job but that it is very difficult with the missing language skills.

Immigrant without Buddy E

Immigrant E (27 years old) arrived nine months ago in the Netherlands. She came from China to live with her husband who already lived in Enschede for some time. E says that her husband helped her with settling down but that she further received no help. Having somebody that supported her was very important, but in order to feel comfortable in the new country you have to do a lot by yourself, you have to join the society, take part and not stay at home, E says. E does not speak Dutch, but mostly communicates in English. At first orientation was difficult E says because everything was just new. After half a year E found a job in a company and says that working is important for her because it creates a feeling of importance. E also says that she found friends at work and that the social contacts there are important. E further hopes to her Dutch language skills in the future because not speaking Dutch creates misunderstanding in her job and makes her feel embarrassed sometimes. Integration, E says is about respecting the new culture and people but that integration is also about contributing something in the new country.

4.3.1. Summary

Three of the five interviewed people without a Buddy reported to be well-integrated in the Dutch society, two of whom already lived in the Netherlands nine years or longer. Those two people participate in society in form of employment. Further, in three cases people report not to be in social contact with Dutchmen (other than family), two of whom are newcomers and arrived in the Netherlands only 12 months ago or a shorter time.

The integration process was (with one exception) specified as difficult with missing language skills as the main reason. More specifically, not being able to communicate with Dutchmen, getting outside and knowing what possibilities exist for participation were specified as consequence of insufficient language skills.

Table C: Interviews with Non-Participants

	Non-participant				
Statement	A	B	C	D	E
Feeling integrated	+	+	-	-	+
Maintaining social contacts to Dutchman (other than family)	+	-	-	-	+
Participation in organizations; voluntary work; social communities	+	+	-	-	+
Identifies integration process as difficult	-	+	+	+	+

+ = positively stressed / present
 - =negatively stressed / not present
 0 = neutral

5. Analysis

The analytical part strives for an understanding of the significance of the Buddy-project in the process of immigrant integration and orientation in Enschede. In order to answer the overall research question - To what extent does the Buddy-project in Enschede fulfill its goal of contributing to a successful process of integration and orientation of newly arrived immigrants? -, the interviews are analyzed on the basis of the indicators specified. Findings are interpreted using the theory and assumptions generated from the theory on social capital and buddy-projects presented earlier.

The analysis focuses on four main aspects having the following structure: The first part compares participants and non-participants in terms of performances, experiences with integration and experiences with the Buddy-project. The second part focuses on the role of the buddy as a driving force in the projects as well as on the social relations between buddies and participants. The third part analyses the assessments of buddies and self-assessments of participants of the project as supportive element in the integration process. The fourth and final part addresses the immigrant's improvements applying the theory of social capital building and social embeddedness.

5.1 Comparing Participants and Non-Participants

This part compares self-assessment of performance and opinions on integration between participants of the Buddy-project and non-participants. The goal is to identify major differences in the interviewees' participation in community life and to detect the significance of the Buddy-project in the process of immigrant integration.

First of all, participants and non-participants report similar obstacles to integration: low language skills and missing knowledge of the functioning of Dutch society are stated as hindering the process of social integration. Especially missing language skills were identified as a barrier to integration: Interviewees say that it is on the one hand hard to find a job without speaking Dutch, but that it is on the other hand frustrating not to be able to even talk to the neighbors. "Good language skills, small problems, bad language skills, big problems" summarizes a 41 year old male immigrant the situation.

Among the non-participants are two cases in which immigrants stated not to feel integrated, not to maintain social contacts to Dutch people and not to participate in society in any form. The same picture is found only once among the group of participants. It is true that in the control group (non-participants) people are less active in participating in society. But because the study uses a rather small sample, this finding is not strong evidence. Additionally, because three of the non-participants were newcomers, we cannot conclude that those people will live a life far from society, but rather that the integration process takes time.

What we can, however, derive from the comparison is that participants clearly state that the buddy helped them with solving daily life problems (such as translating letters, going together to the supermarket) and with making social contacts. The enthusiasm and thankfulness some participants expressed for the buddy's help clearly emphasizes the projects' importance. Therefore, comparing participants and non-participants leads to the conclusion that the integration process develops smoother if immigrants receive personal guidance.

A strong significance of the Buddy-project in the integration process is, however, challenged by the participant's behavior during the interviews: Remarkably, the buddy was in all cases mentioned only when explicitly asked for it. The family was always named first when asked about support with integration and orientation. It seems that the buddy is perceived as having a minor role in the integration process. Yet on the other hand, participants who found the project to be helpful also said that they did not want to miss the help they received and that the contact made them feel very comfortable. Thus, even though the guidance by a buddy might *not be a decisive element* in the integration process, it plays a *substantial role in the process of well-being*. This in turn seems to be an important condition for the willingness and capability of starting the integration process. To support this argument, some of the immigrants that did not receive personal help from a buddy stated that they would enjoy having somebody to whom they could turn to, especially somebody with whom they could practice Dutch. This shows that the guidance by a buddy is welcomed and desired, finally identifying the Buddy-project as a significant project for social integration.

5.2 Role of the Buddy

In order to answer the sub-question - To what extent does the work of the buddies facilitate the orientation and integration process?-, the role of the buddy as a driving force in the project is explored in more depth. Because the theory on Buddy-projects emphasized the self-definition of the buddies' role and the social relationship to the participant as crucial for the success of mentoring, the experiences of the buddies are analyzed extensively. To do so, the section focuses on the social relationship between buddy and participant, the buddies' self-assessment on his or her role as well as on the opinion on the preparatory courses at the *Volkshogeschool*.

According to the theory on Buddy-projects, a relationship of trust was assumed to be crucial for improved behavior of participants. A positive picture on the relation to each other prevails in the interviews and buddies as well as participants report to have developed a certain personal basis (in some cases stronger in others not). The personal relationship is visible in the personal consultation and guidance. One female buddy for example defined the personal basis as important ground for communication and states that she could not guide somebody on a factual manner and that an intimate basis was necessary to understand the problems of the participant. Also in order to help somebody, buddies stressed their ability to listen to the participants and to understand their personal problems. One male buddy argues: *"The idea is to help people with integration and this can go very far (...) it is really important to listen first and then talk, sometimes it is also necessary to ask a bit deeper to get the problem that is at hand, but not everyone is open to that."* The assumption of a relationship of trust as a necessary condition for mentoring seems to be equally confirmed through projects that failed: Two buddies who reported to have quit working with a participant indicate that they were not able to connect or communicate with this participant and that the participants could not be motivated. Thus, within projects which are perceived as successful buddy and participant developed a good personal relationship, resulting from good communication.

The buddy's self-definition of his or her role was further assumed to have an impact on the project outcome. The theory suggested the positive benefits of mentoring were likely to be highest when the learning process of the participant was stressed.

In all projects the competence development, mostly language development, is at the heart of the project. However other help such as solving daily life problems and personal consultation/guidance were reported on a similar frequent basis, indicating that the task of the buddy cannot be reduced to the problem definition at the beginning, but that the buddy also adapts to problems of the participant.

There is no case in which the buddy perceived his or her role primarily as developing a personal relationship. However, a personal connection developed in many cases. Since competence development is the central aim, the assumption that the buddy could appear as disturbing and hindering a natural self-development and orientation cannot be confirmed. None of the buddies reported dependence from the participant towards him/her, but instead reported to be happy to see how participants realized what possibilities they have and what they can actually do on their own.

Remarkable in this context however are the frequent reports of the buddies about the difficulty to set limits in how far they actually want to carry out their work on a personal basis. All interviewed buddies say that there were situations which became too intimate for them, whereas the perception for this was very individual. For example, for one buddy joining his/her participant to the doctor was an obvious and welcomed task, whereas another buddy found this to be too personal. It follows that the buddies' self-definition about his or her role differs, however, only to the extent in which they want to carry out the project on a personal basis.

The assumption that the outcome is influenced by the role the buddy plays can be partly confirmed. From projects in which buddies report to exclusively focus on the learning process also positive outcomes in terms of improved skills are reported over an intensive personal relationship and vice versa. It follows that it seems to be true that the buddies' self-definition of his or her role is of importance to the project development. It is, however, not an indicator for the success of the individual project. It might be the case that being a reference person and person of trust is in some projects more important than competence development and that its fulfillment satisfies the needs of a participant. Due to the individuality and flexibility of the project no statement can be made on the role the buddy *should* play and what tasks he *should* fulfill. Rather the contrary is the case: Buddies need to listen to participants, be adaptive to occurring problems and detect major problems to lately provide the necessary guidance. This approach is confirmed by all buddies.

The courses at the *Volksuniversiteit* were only partly experienced to be helpful. Buddies who found the courses to be a good preparatory training for their tasks did not report a significantly more positive picture of their experiences with their coupled immigrants than compared to buddies who found the courses to be of no or only of little help. These statements coincide with the matched participant. I conclude that the applied training strategy has no or only little influence on the success of the project. Instead, buddies stress a good sense for social relationships as the most important skill to guide an immigrant. Listening to the participants, having a delicacy of feeling and patience are told to be the most important features a buddy needs to have.

In a nutshell, the role of the buddy has its strongest features in the adaptivity towards individual problems and in the attentive reaction to participants for which a good communicative level is the basis for. The work of the buddy then facilitates the orientation and integration process by *providing orientation in the city and culture, training the language as well as offering personal solutions* to individual problems.

5.3 Evaluation of Buddies and Participants

This part analyses the assessments on the Buddy-project made by participants and buddies. Central to this are the evaluations in terms of reaching the individual project goal, thus the participants' improvement. The section will answer the sub-question - How is the Buddy-project evaluated by buddies and participants? - while exploring the grounds to do so.

First of all, buddies generally report improvements of participants, in terms of language skills, social contact-making, orientation in the city or a perceived higher level of self-confidence of the participants. Not surprisingly buddies report that the *motivation of the participants to improve or integrate* would be crucial for reaching the goal of the intake meeting. Assessments about the Buddy-project contributing to a successful integration suggest a high dependency between the motivation of the participant and the actual outcome: For example, two Buddies report that a participant was not to be motivated to leave the house (which was the goal of these projects). In these two cases Buddies say that they did not see a possibility to provide help and thus, quit working with the particular person. When asked about the improvements of participants, all interviewed buddies stress the willingness of the participant to learn/integrate when addressing his or her improvement: *"Participants need to want the help, else there is not much to do with the Buddy-project, because else the buddy is the one who does everything, which is not the idea of the project."* (Buddy, female, 23 years old).

Second, among participants evaluations are mixed. Two participants report to have improved during the project, while two others report no improvements. In the latter cases, one person quit the project because the Buddy did not speak Dutch to her. This particular participant stressed the importance of speaking Dutch and ended the project earlier because he/she felt no improvements. One other participant was not satisfied with how the Buddy taught her and stated *"yes, I liked working with the buddy, but I cannot say that my language really improved."* These two cases demonstrate how important immigrants perceive the command of the Dutch language.

Remarkably participants who were newcomers reported to have been encouraged to participate in a club/meeting group through the buddy. One participant remarks: *"before I met with the Buddy my life was boring, she showed me where I can participate, get in contact with other people, and so I did"*. In projects where participants already resided in Enschede for a longer time already, participants claimed to be integrated well. In all these cases the language improvement was the central aim. It seems that only for newcomers the Buddy-project is also used more extensively for providing orientation in social networks and offering possibilities to be active and participate.

Finally, assessments from buddies are generally positive. The motivation of participants is identified as crucial for the success of the project since negative experiences can be traced back to low motivation and a unsatisfying communication between buddy and participant.

Evaluations from participants are mixed; negative experiences are traced back to (for the participant) not satisfying outcomes, but in one case also on a low motivation of the buddy to practice Dutch. Positive evaluation by participants is provided in projects where they saw an improvement in their language skills.

5.4 Improved Performance and Social Capital Building

This final part of the analyses addresses the main research question - To what extent does the Buddy-project in Enschede fulfill its goal of contributing to a successful process of integration and orientation of newly arrived immigrants? -.

The Buddy-project was assumed to encourage social integration through enhancing participation in social networks and hence stimulating social capital building. First of all, from the experiences and insights gained during the interviews we can indeed identify the Buddy-project as providing immigrants with guidance towards community participation. That is, the identified practices within the Buddy-project aim at providing immigrants with skills necessary to participate in society: First, the language practicing provides immigrants with the necessary prerequisites on the way to social capital building. That is, the command of the Dutch language was defined as a crucial element to integration by all interviewed immigrants. The difficulties of immigrants to find work or to continue (higher-) education result from missing language skills. One immigrant (newcomer) explains: *"I would like to find a job, but it is difficult without speaking Dutch"* and continues *"somebody that could explain me the higher education system would be helpful, because I want to study further, but I know only little about it, what I can do with my diploma here"* (Immigrant, female, 24 years old).

According to the theory of social capital by Bourdieu (1979), training language skills can be identified as stimulating social capital building because it is the first way of communication and thus opens up ways to social networks in which social capital is inherited. Sharing knowledge about the functioning of culture and community are to be interpreted as activities guiding the immigrant to social capital building because the immigrant gets equipped with expertise necessary for participation: knowledge on how and where one could for example obtain information on the educational system are essential information for newcomers.

Taking a look at participants reveals that the employment of a buddy as a mentor can indeed create an integration process that is *smoother and faster*. That is, immigrants are supported with expertise on how to solve daily life problems and organize their lives.

Finally, the Buddy-project fulfills its goal of contributing to a successful process of integration and orientation by stimulating social capital building: having expertise about social communities and speaking the Dutch language are crucial conditions to participate in society, and to build up social capital. Following the theory of Granovetter (1985), this social embeddedness has a positive influence on the economic action of individuals. The Buddy-project is therefore identified as supportive element that should facilitate the participation in the four domains (citizenship, employment, entrepreneurial spirit, professional competence).

6. Conclusion

The Buddy-project in Enschede as part of the Integration Agenda is identified as an effective supportive element in the integration process. Immigrants define the language as forming the biggest barrier to participation and social interaction in community life. Because the Buddy-project aims successfully at the competence development of immigrants, it encourages social capital building by equipping immigrants with skills necessary to participate in community life. The conceptualization of immigrant integration as social capital building is verified by the identification of language as barrier to associational life, hence, participation in social community life.

The response rate among participants was with 60% rather high. Surprisingly, also the response rate of 50% was rather high among immigrants (non-participants). This suggests a general interest in talking about integration and openness towards the topic. However, because integration is such a fundamental issue in the life of a newcomer, the interest in sharing opinions about it appears natural. Yet, there is attrition and we must assume that the research does not reflect all experiences of integration in Enschede. This is however not the purpose of the research.

However, there are limits in drawing final conclusions on the effectiveness of the Buddy-project: First, the interviews showed that in most projects participants received further help by family members or institutions. When immigrant newcomers were asked about concrete supportive elements with integration they named in the first instance the family as supportive factor. Therefore, tracing improved performance solely back to the coupling to a buddy is wrong because of the presence of other supportive elements. Second, when participants were not motivated to work with the buddy, the project failed. The extent to which the project is successful depends thus strongly on the motivation of the participant to integrate. A further factor in this context is the social relation between buddy and participant: a good social communication is identified as a necessary condition for the success of the project since in cases where there was no good social contact the project failed.

Against these limitations, the strength of the research conducted lies in its internal validity: The in-depth interviews with buddies and the matched participants reflect a complete picture of the Buddy-project. The importance of the Buddy-project in the integration process lies in its individuality: interviews show that the idea of individual support of immigrants creates a more smooth orientation process, not only because immigrants get equipped with expertise, but because they have somebody to whom they can turn to with personal questions. A buddy concludes on her work:

“I think the Buddy-project is really important, I am more than a language instructor, I say, I am a life-coach” (Buddy, female, 38 years old).

The Dutch civic integration approach and the formulated strategy to integration by the city of Enschede assume social competences and command of the Dutch language as necessary conditions to economic integration, i.e. employment, the final stage of integration (Gemeente Enschede, 2008a, p. 1). The Buddy-project pursues this approach by enhancing social embeddedness and strengthening the language skills. While undertaking interviews with immigrants, opinions of interviewees on integration confirm the definition by the city of

Enschede: social integration into community life and the Dutch language are the first steps towards economic integration:

“Integration means to be independent, to survive on your own, to work. And I am not, I do not speak Dutch, I am dependent on my husband.”

(Immigrant, female, newcomer, 24 years old)

“Integration is about a feeling. It is about connecting to other people.”

&

“You can arrive here well prepared but this does not help you when you do not speak basic Dutch.”

(Immigrant, female, newcomer, 27 years old)

This paper shows that immigrants themselves hold language and social integration as the prerequisite for economic integration. Therefore the approach pursued by the city of Enschede is appropriate. As assessed in this paper, the Buddy-project aims at this and is therefore a suitable tool to promote integration.

Finally, integration approaches on a local level such as the Buddy-project in Enschede are best suited for developing methods of inclusion because on the local level the knowledge about how to access the community is highest (Cochrane, 2007, p. 139). Social exclusion is then to be encountered through community capacity building towards a balanced urban system (Cochrane, 2007, p. 133). In terms of immigrant integration policies this means that the city can be described as a place where orientation in the community takes place, that it is “the community and the local (environment) in which citizens are motivated to act as citizens of a state” (Staeheli, 2003, p. 89) constituting thereby a substantial part of social integration. Local integration strategies such as the Buddy-project in Enschede are very well suited for enhancing social capital building. Since participation in the community is at the core of integration, training competences and offering possibilities to interact in social networks removes barriers to social isolation.

6.1 Ideas for Improvement

Although it is not the primary goal of this research to suggest improvements of the Buddy-project, I would like to make some annotations:

In order to improve the Buddy-project one for sure has to pay attention to the coupling practices: Only when undertaking the research I realized that the matching of buddy and participant is done by gender and seemingly sometimes also by ethnic background. The matching produced negative as well as positive feedback: One buddy could not understand why he should not be able to work with a female immigrant, while another found it logic and stated that this division is good because it averts possible tensions. Apparently matching also happened by ethnic background, at least in two cases buddies and participants spoke the same mother-tongue. For one participant this was a problem, while another enjoyed this. When matching it seems that caution should be paid to the will of the participant.

Second, I suggest a reviewing of the preparatory courses at the *Volksuniversiteit*. That is, one could check whether or not the offered courses are really necessary for the individual buddy.

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8. Annex

8.1 Questionnaires

This questionnaire design builds upon an interview developed for the qualitative follow-up study presented in the report “Hoe kunnen we integratie optimaliseren? Innovatieve concepten voor bevordering van integratie in Münster en Enschede” (S. Seveker, Svensson, J., Thränhardt, D., 2007, p. 136) by Seveker, Svensson and Thränhardt in 2007. The question catalogue used for this report was designed to reflect the personal perspective about the lives of migrants in the Netherlands who took part in the integration courses described earlier. Some of these questions will be used in the catalogue. Three different different will be presented: One for migrants who did not take part in the buddy-project in Enschede, one for those who participated and one questionnaire for the buddies themselves. The questionnaires are subdivided in subject areas and mainly consists of open-ended questions allowing the respondent to answer freely (Leitfadengesteuertes Interview) (S. Seveker, Thränhardt, , 2007, p. 58).

8.2 Questionnaire for Buddies

Theme I

Motivation

1. What was your motivation for becoming a buddy?
2. How did you expect the coaching to be like?

Theme II

Competences

1. What do you think is an important feature of a Buddy?
2. What did you learn in the preparatory course from the Volksuniversiteit?
3. Do you think the course was helpful? Why or why not? Can you give an example?

Theme III

Possibilities for Support

1. What kind of help could you provide to the migrant with?
2. What kind of problems/troubles did you experience with the migrant?
3. How did you help or support the migrant?
4. Had the immigrant problems in which you could not help? What kind of problems?
5. If sometimes you could not help the migrant, why do you think this was the case?

Theme IV

Sense of well-being

1. Did you feel comfortable being a Buddy?
2. What kind of role do you think you have/had?

Theme V

Social Relations

1. Did you enjoy spending time with the migrant?
2. Do you think you are/became a person of trust for your migrant?
3. Did you also learn something from the migrant?

Theme VI

Assessment

1. Do you think that your contribution made a difference in the life of the migrant? Why?
2. Do you have suggestions on how to improve the organization of the Buddy- project?
3. Which advices would you give to somebody that would like to become a Buddy also?

8.3 Questionnaire for Participants

Theme I

Expectations

1. What did you think the Buddy-project would be like?

Theme II + III

Experiences with Coach as Assistance

2. Did you have problems or trouble in which the coach could help you?
If yes, what kind of problems/troubles? Could you give an example?

(Suggestions)

Problems related to administrative processes (e.g. subscription of children to school)

Problems related to doubts about my behavior (e.g. in the Dutch culture)

3. How did the buddy provide you with help? Can you give an example?

(Suggestions)

He/she solved my problem by accompanying (e.g. to a institution)

He/she told me how I could behave best

He/she explained me how I can solve problems

He/she listened to my problems, but made unclear suggestions for a solution

4. Do you think that your buddy had a lot of ideas on how to help/assist you?
5. Did you have problems/troubles in which the coach could not help you?
If yes, what kind of problems/troubles? Could you give an example?
6. In the case the coach could not help you, why do think this was the case?

(Suggestions)

He/she didn't know what to do / how to proceed

He/she had no time when it was needed

He/she messed something up and it went wrong

Theme V

Social Relations

1. Would you say that you had/have a good relation with your buddy?
2. Did the buddy become a person of trust/friend for you?
3. Do you think you learned something important from your buddy? Can you give an example?

Theme VI

Organization

1. How often did you/do you meet with your Buddy?
 - a. 1-2 times a week
 - b. About once a week
 - c. About every two weeks
 - d. About once a month
 - e. Never
2. In what time span did you meet with your Buddy?

- a. About 1 – 8 weeks
 - b. About 2 – 4 month
 - c. About 4 – 8 month
 - d. Longer than 8 month, namely:
 - e. We are still meeting on a regular basis
3. How did you set up meetings?
 - a. By phone, whenever help was needed/there was a question
 - b. By fixed appointments beforehand
 - c. Via an institution (Alifa)
 4. Was it/is it difficult to set up a meeting? Why or why not?
 5. Where did you mostly meet with your coach and why?

Theme VII

Assessment

1. In which cases did you mostly need help and in which cases not?
2. Do you think that the coach taught you how to get along alone?
3. All in all, do you think that the coach helped you making a start in the Netherlands?
4. Were the expectations of the fellow buddy you had met?
5. Would you recommend the coach project to other immigrants?

8.4 Questionnaire for Immigrants

Theme I

Expectations

1. What were your expectations before you came to The Netherlands? Did you have any?
2. Did you have concrete plans? Things that you wanted to realize here?

Theme II

Experiences in The Netherlands

1. How is it like for you to build up a live in the Netherlands?
2. Do you find arriving here easier or more difficult than expected?
3. Was there something easier than expected? Do you have an example?

4. Was there something more difficult than expected? Do you have an example?
5. Do you think that you needed help for settling down in the Netherlands or could you get along alone quite well from the beginning?

Theme III

Possibilities for Support

1. Did you receive support from people or organizations?
2. Do you think that you got sufficient support?
3. Which organization or people helped you the most?
4. Do you have the feeling that some support was unnecessary or did not help you or whose help you experienced as disturbing? Can you give an example?
5. Did you get support from people in your surrounding? (Neighbors, family, friends etc.)

Theme IV

Sense of well-being

1. What is the life in the Netherlands for you like? Is it better or worse than you expected?
2. What do you like about your life in the Netherlands and what don't you like so much?
3. What is most important for you here (Family/Employment/Spare time etc.)
4. Could you find a job here? How were you able to find a job and did somebody help you with it? If not, who do you think could help you finding a job?
5. In general, do you think you are able to manage your life in the Netherlands quite well? Is there something still difficult for you?
6. Do you feel Dutch? Why or why not? What does it mean for you to be Dutch?

Theme V

Social Relations

1. Is it important for you to have contacts with local people? Why?
2. Is it important for you to have contacts with other immigrants? Why?
3. Do you feel treated well by Dutch people?
4. In your opinion, what is important to know in order to participate and function in Dutch society?

Theme VI

Assessment

1. Do you have suggestions on how to improve the contact with migrants?
2. What shouldn't we do anymore?
3. Which advices would you give to newly arriving immigrants?

8.5 Overview interviews

Buddies

Buddy A	22.06.2010
Buddy B	22.06.2010
Buddy C	24.06.2010
Buddy D	24.06.2010
Buddy E	25.06.2010
Buddy F	06.07.2010

Participants

Participant A	30.06.2010
Participant B	07.07.2010
Participant C	13.07.2010
Participant D	20.07.2010
Participant E	25.08.2010

Immigrants without Buddy

Migrant A	24.06.2010
Migrant B	06.07.2010
Migrant C	14.07.2010
Migrant D	12.08.2010
Migrant E	14.08.2010