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# Zooming in on proximal life domains: A literature review on family, peer, and school dynamics in adolescents' acculturation and psychosocial adjustment

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## ABSTRACT

Current research on acculturation is engaged in a debate over the links between acculturation and psychosocial adjustment, particularly in light of the recent meta-analytic findings of longitudinal studies. During adolescence, young people experience acculturation differently across proximal life domains, within which their development unfolds. Adopting a developmental domain-specific approach, this literature review provides an overview of key acculturation concepts to clarify the family, peer, and school domains for adolescents' acculturation. It further reviews the most salient acculturation conditions in these proximal life domains that precede adolescents' psychosocial adjustment directly and indirectly through acculturation orientations. Specifically, this literature review presents domain-specific acculturative conditions linked to socialization processes, intergroup relations, structural diversity, and the approaches schools take towards this diversity. Altogether, the current review advocates investigating adolescents' acculturation separately in each proximal life domain while considering the effects of the domain-specific conditions as a promising route to address the interplay of acculturation and adjustment during adolescence.

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## Introduction

Contemporary societies have experienced progressive growth in international migration, resulting in at least one in every 30 people being considered international migrants as of 2015. European countries currently host over 80 million international migrants, and the share of children and youth in this growing population is considerable (International Organization for Migration, 2019). For example, the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 led to one of the largest refugee flows in Europe (International Centre for Migration Policy Development, 2023), and nearly half of these war refugees are children and adolescents (European Commission, 2023; UNICEF, 2022).

Such diversification inevitably requires ethnic minority adolescents<sup>1</sup> to fulfil not only normative developmental tasks, such as forming coherent identities, but also the additional task of acculturation to achieve long-term psychosocial adjustment (Jugert & Titzmann, 2020; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2018). However, fulfilment of the acculturation task is not entirely independent from the developmental tasks in adolescence, during which substantial biological, social, and psychological changes occur (Titzmann & Lee, 2018). Therefore, merging acculturation and developmental perspectives is crucial for understanding the interplay of acculturation and adjustment in adolescence (e.g., Juang & Syed, 2019; Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012).

Acculturation represents psychological and cultural changes arising from contact among members of diverse ethnic and cultural groups (Berry, 2005). Hence, it is an iterative *process* through which young people negotiate heritage and destination cultures, which may ultimately affect their psychosocial adjustment (e.g., Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). In the context of acculturation, psychosocial adjustment pertains to doing and feeling adequately well, which broadly refers to academic achievement, life satisfaction, and overall well-being (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012; Schachner et al., 2017). To achieve psychosocial adjustment, integration of heritage and destination cultures has long been regarded as the most adaptive way (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). However, this well-established link has recently been questioned (Kunst, 2021) due to meta-analytic findings of longitudinal studies that revealed weak and inconsistent associations (e.g., Bierwaczzonek & Kunst, 2021).

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<sup>1</sup>The term ethnic minority adolescents refers to young people who were born outside of the destination country or with at least one parent who was born outside of the destination country (European Commission, 2020).

A potential explanation for these unexpected associations may lie in focusing on acculturation as a holistic strategy without considering its developmental and domain-specific nature. In adolescence, advanced social and cognitive maturity (Abrams & Rutland, 2008) may heighten adolescents' sensitivity and receptivity towards social (or group) norms within and across various life domains central to their socialization experiences. As such, while negotiating heritage and destination cultures, young people may gain better insight into the distinct, and often incongruent, conditions they encounter in each life domain. For instance, in the family domain, the parents may expect youth to maintain their heritage culture. Conversely, in the school domain, the expectation from adolescents may be adopting the destination culture. Consequently, young people might endorse heritage culture more in the family domain and destination culture more in the school. On the one hand, endorsement of heritage and destination cultures at different levels across life domains may counterbalance each other and enhance youth adjustment. On the other hand, it may cause stress and confusion that undermine adjustment. Therefore, exploring acculturation in separate life domains and considering the conditions specific to each may help better address the associations between acculturation and adjustment during adolescence. In this regard, the current literature review aims to provide an overview of key concepts in acculturation to clarify the central life domains for acculturation in adolescence. Furthermore, it aims to provide a comprehensive review of the most salient conditions specific to each life domain that influence adolescents' acculturation in relation to psychosocial adjustment.

### *Acculturation process: From orientations to strategies*

Early theories conceptualized acculturation as a unidimensional process, represented by a linear spectrum that begins with discarding heritage cultural values, practices, and attitudes and progresses towards the adoption of those elements in destination culture (Gordon, 1964). However, this model has encountered substantial criticism as it fails to fully capture the lived experiences of immigrants, who, to a certain extent, often endorse elements of both cultures. Consequently, the seminal bidimensional model (Berry, 1997) proposed heritage culture maintenance and destination culture adoption (or desire for destination

culture contact<sup>2</sup>) as orthogonal acculturation orientations that can be simultaneously embraced to varying extents.

Heritage culture maintenance and destination culture adoption have not only been delineated as distinct acculturation orientations but have also formed the basis of four fundamental acculturation strategies (e.g., Berry, 2005, 2017). These strategies may arise depending on the extent to which individuals maintain and adopt heritage and destination cultures, respectively. Integration entails maintaining the heritage culture while adopting the destination culture. Assimilation involves adopting the destination culture and discarding the heritage culture, whereas separation represents the opposite pattern of maintaining the heritage culture while rejecting the destination culture. Marginalization indicates neither maintaining heritage culture nor adopting destination culture. Altogether, these strategies reflect achieving a balance between the two cultures (i.e., integration), favouring one culture more than the other (i.e., assimilation or separation), or disregarding both cultures (i.e., marginalization).

Building upon the bidimensional model, acculturation has been further refined as a multicomponent process (Schwartz et al., 2010). This process encompasses heritage culture maintenance and destination culture adoption in terms of specific contents, namely cultural practices (e.g., language use), values (e.g., collectivism), and identifications (e.g., ethnic and national identifications). Longitudinal findings have shown that heritage culture maintenance and destination culture adoption for various content types can change at different rates over time while also being interconnected (e.g., Lee et al., 2020; Schwartz et al., 2015). So far, several longitudinal studies adopting person-centred approaches in diverse cultural contexts have identified inconsistent classifications, such as increasing and stable identity profiles (Schwartz et al., 2015) or varying dual identity (or integration) profiles (Spiegler et al., 2019). Conversely, our recent longitudinal study revealed four distinct identity profiles (i.e., ethnic-oriented, national-oriented, dual, and marginalized identities) that can fully be mapped onto the outlined acculturation strategies (Karataş, Crocetti, et al., 2023). In this sense, the content-wise distinction may further refine how youth operate acculturation to achieve psychosocial adjustment.

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<sup>2</sup>In Berry's bidimensional model, heritage culture maintenance is combined with the desire for and participation in contact with the destination culture. In other bidimensional conceptualizations, the latter is extended to the adoption of destination cultural elements (e.g., Schwartz et al., 2010). For clarity, this review employs the terms heritage culture maintenance and destination culture adoption to describe the acculturation process during adolescence.

### *Integration hypothesis revisited: Recent meta-analytical findings on the interplay of acculturation and adjustment*

Regardless of which acculturation conceptualization is adopted, integration has long been regarded as the most adaptive strategy because psychosocial adjustment has been assumed to be achieved more likely when individuals successfully combine heritage and destination cultures (Berry et al., 2021; Grigoryev et al., 2023). A meta-analysis using 83 studies supported the integration hypothesis, showing that biculturalism (i.e., integration) was strongly associated with better adjustment outcomes, such as higher self-esteem, improved academic performance, and fewer emotional or behavioural problems (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). Recently, this hypothesis has been questioned by emphasizing that integration might not universally lead to the most favourable outcomes (for a review, see Kunst, 2021).

In particular, the recent meta-analytic findings (Bierwaczzonek & Kunst, 2021) have shown that the cross-sectional associations between integration and adjustment were weaker than anticipated. The longitudinal associations, however, were found to be nearly negligible and somewhat inconsistent, fluctuating between positive and negative. In other words, while integration sometimes has positive over time effects on psychosocial adjustment, it may occasionally have adverse effects. These findings have been further contested by re-analysing extensive cross-sectional datasets, representing positive yet relatively weak cross-sectional associations (e.g., Grigoryev et al., 2023). Taken together, interpreting these inconsistent and small effect sizes may pose challenges in understanding the anticipated interplay between acculturation and adjustment (Bierwaczzonek et al., 2023).

So far, much of the discussion on these findings has centred around the inherent heterogeneity of the datasets and variations in multicultural policies across countries (Bierwaczzonek et al., 2023; Grigoryev & Berry, 2022). However, there may be more than cultural and sample heterogeneity at play. Herein, the current literature review emphasizes the necessity of adopting a developmental domain-specific approach (see also Juang & Syed, 2019; Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012; Titzmann & Lee, 2018) as a promising route to understand the complex interplay between adolescents' acculturation and adjustment.

### ***Developmental domain-specific approach: Addressing adolescents' acculturation within proximal life domains***

The bioecological model of human development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) conceptualized an individual's development as unfolding through dynamic interactions between individuals and their ecological systems. Building on this developmental model, various frameworks have emphasized the broader ecological context of acculturation (e.g., Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Among these, Arends-Tóth and van de Vijver (2004) have differentiated between public and private life domains. Public domains consist of the contexts predominantly characterized by the destination culture, such as work or school. In contrast, private domains are those where the heritage culture is more apparent, such as family.

Similarly, the Relative Acculturation Extended Model (RAEM, Navas et al., 2005) distinguished central and peripheral life domains. Consistent with the previous classifications (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2004), central domains include areas where heritage culture is more difficult to exclude (e.g., family relations, religion). On the contrary, peripheral domains consist of areas where the destination culture is more prominent and nearly impossible to entirely exclude (e.g., school or work; Mancini et al., 2018). This division has been clarified specifically for adolescents by categorizing school, peer relations, and consumer habits under the peripheral domain, as well as family relations, religious beliefs, and ways of thinking under the central domain. More specifically, it has been shown that ethnic minority youth in Italy maintain heritage cultural elements more in central domains while adopting the values and practices of the destination culture in others (Mancini & Bottura, 2014).

Beyond the public vs. private classification, the proximal domains of family, peers, and school are of particular importance. According to the immigrant youth adaptation framework (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012), the family is associated with conditions that facilitate heritage culture maintenance, while the school predominantly involves elements of the destination culture. However, interactions within ethnically and culturally diverse peer groups might reinforce the simultaneous endorsement of both cultures. Thus, the peer domain may set a bridge between cultures and intersect with both family and school domains.

Importantly, each of these proximal domains has its own specific conditions that, both directly and indirectly, precede youth psychosocial adjustment through acculturation orientations (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2006). In their integrative framework, Schachner et al. (2017) have

underscored the specific conditions of family and school domains. However, young people place greater value on the expectations and opinions of their peers during adolescence (Brown & Larson, 2009). Thus, determining the unique conditions of the peer domain is also crucial. In this regard, the current review revisits previously covered acculturation conditions within family and school domains (see Schachner et al., 2017) in light of the up-to-date findings and introduces additional ones. Moreover, it provides a comprehensive overview of the most salient conditions specific to the peer domain.

### *The family domain: Addressing family dynamics in adolescents' acculturation and adjustment*

Family serves as the first and foremost socialization agent for ethnic minority adolescents and guides them through parental practices regarding ethnic-racial socialization. These practices may include socialization towards heritage culture, raising awareness of potential bias and discrimination, encouraging caution in intergroup interactions, and supporting a focus on individual qualities over ethnic-racial group membership (Hughes et al., 2006). Among these, cultural socialization pertains to transmitting heritage cultural values, behaviours, and traditions. Parents may do so by teaching their children about heritage cultural elements, encouraging participation in heritage cultural events and holiday celebrations, decorating the living spaces with objects reflecting heritage culture, and supporting the use of heritage language (Hughes et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2009). Indeed, the beneficial effects of cultural socialization practices have consistently been found for ethnic identification and adjustment among ethnic minority youth (Huguley et al., 2019; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2013). Importantly, indirect associations between cultural socialization practices and adjustment outcomes through ethnic identification have also been identified (Hughes et al., 2009; see also Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020 for a review).

Besides heritage culture, parents may also socialize their children in the destination culture by sharing knowledge about its practices, values, and identifications (e.g., Wang et al., 2015). Our recent study (Karataş et al., 2020) reflected the dual-sided influence of parents on youth acculturation. More specifically, we found positive associations between parents' heritage culture maintenance, destination culture adoption, and the corresponding acculturation orientations of ethnic minority youth. Similarly,



developing stronger emotional commitments with the family members predicted the development of integration in terms of cultural identifications (Karataş, Crocetti, et al., 2023). These findings might be complemented by prior research indicating that perceived parental support for, or expectation towards, integration is associated with a greater endorsement of heritage and destination cultures, which may, in turn, contribute to better youth adjustment (Schachner, Van de Vijver, et al., 2018).

In migrant families, ethnic minority adolescents and their parents may also endorse heritage and destination cultural elements to varying extents, resulting in at least four distinct types of discrepancies (or acculturation gap; see Telzer, 2011 for a review). These discrepancies might be in favour of parents or children according to the relative endorsement of both cultures – i.e., parents endorse heritage culture more (or less) than their children, and parents adopt destination culture more (or less) than their children. The most apparent discrepancy may likely occur when parents endorse higher heritage culture maintenance and lower destination culture adoption compared to their children, who strive to adopt destination cultural elements more rapidly (e.g., Sun et al., 2020). Their prevalence aside, acculturation discrepancies might threaten family functioning, which could be related to adverse youth adjustment (Schwartz et al., 2016). These findings call for further research with multi-informant designs, including parents' and adolescents' responses towards their own acculturation orientations over and above the parental ethnic-racial socialization practices and acculturation expectations.

### ***The peer domain: Addressing peer dynamics in adolescents' acculturation and adjustment***

Beyond the family, peer groups are another salient socialization agent for youth acculturation (e.g., Crocetti et al., 2024). Daily interactions with peers, whether with same-ethnic or cross-ethnic friends, involve socialization practices towards both heritage and destination cultures, such as discussing both cultural aspects (Wang et al., 2015). Such interactions inherently offer various opportunities for youth to discover different cultures and recognize cultural (*dis*)similarities. A study conducted in Germany (Vietze et al., 2019) found that talking about heritage and destination cultures with peers was positively linked to greater identification with respective cultures. This, in turn, was related to higher life satisfaction and more positive educational values.

Although these findings speak about the central role of peer socialization practices in shaping adolescents' acculturation and adjustment, distinguishing the socialization processes engaged with same-ethnic and cross-ethnic peers is notable. Interactions with same-ethnic peers encourage ethnic minority youth to maintain their heritage culture or integrate it with the destination culture, while interactions with those from ethnic majority group are expected to orient youth more to the destination culture (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012). Although the expected direction of influence may not always hold (e.g., Leszczensky, 2013), having cross-ethnic friends (i.e., majority group friendships) strengthened identification with the destination culture over time. In contrast, same-ethnic friendships were not linked to heritage cultural identity (e.g., Munniksma et al., 2015). Given that interactions with both groups of friendship contribute to youth psychosocial adjustment (e.g., Karataş et al., 2021), accounting for how much young people interact with same-ethnic and cross-ethnic peers may also be pivotal to unravelling the links between acculturation and adjustment.

In fact, ethnic minority youth tend to interact more often with peers who share similarities in terms of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, a phenomenon known as the homophily principle (McPherson et al., 2001). In this context, the extent to which ethnic minority youth engage in peer cultural socialization practices, as well as their acculturative and integrative outcomes, may depend on the share of same-ethnic and cross-ethnic members in their peer groups. However, a corpus of research has focused on the ethnic composition of schools (or classes; Stefanek et al., 2015) rather than peer groups (for an exception, see Crocetti et al., 2024). Thus, while addressing the link between acculturation and adjustment in adolescence, it is worth considering the proportion of same-ethnic and cross-ethnic friends in peer groups, such as classmates and friendship groups.

In acculturation research, classmates have often been considered part of the school domain (e.g., Crocetti et al., 2024; Vietze et al., 2020), as they are the peers with whom young people regularly interact within a structured environment of institutional norms and policies. A group of friends involves young people who voluntarily interact with each other during their leisure time across various social settings (Albarello et al., 2018; Crocetti et al., 2024). Because a group of friends may also include classmates (Albarello et al., 2021), differentiating peer interactions based on the context, whether inside or outside the school, is necessary (e.g., Karataş, Eckstein, et al., 2023a, 2023b). That is, the interactions with classmates within the school may typically be conceived as school-

related acculturative conditions. On the contrary, experiences with them and other friends outside the school can be perceived as part of the peer domain (for a similar distinction on identity; see Crocetti et al., 2024). In future research, this division may allow not only for better positioning of classmates across life domains but also for distinguishing the acculturation conditions of peer domains from those of the school, which shape adolescents' acculturation and adjustment.

### ***The school domain: Addressing school dynamics in adolescents' acculturation and adjustment***

Today's ethnically and culturally diverse schools are the main intergroup context of minority acculturation (Phalet & Baysu, 2020). Schools provide ample opportunities for ethnic minority adolescents to interact, negotiate their identities, and navigate cultures (e.g., Crocetti et al., 2024; Schachner, Juang, et al., 2018). For many ethnic minority adolescents, schools can be a place to learn about the values, behaviours, and norms of the destination culture, often more so than heritage cultural elements (Horenczyk & Tatar, 2012; Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012). Such cultural exchanges may occur during repeated harmonious intergroup interactions with teachers and classmates (Phalet & Baysu, 2020), which can be reinforced by promoting conducive contact conditions (Karataş, Eckstein, et al., 2023a).

However, schools can also be environments with hostile and unfriendly interactions (e.g., Baysu et al., 2014; Karataş, Rubini, et al., 2023). These school-specific negative contact interactions may trigger an imbalance between endorsing heritage and destination cultures that might be detrimental to psychosocial adjustment. Although previous research underscored the role of contact quality in moderating achievement benefits of acculturation processes (Phalet & Baysu, 2020), exposure to discrimination in schools was found to affect academic achievement negatively, and this association was mediated by increased heritage culture maintenance (Guerra et al., 2019). Accordingly, the quality of intergroup contact within schools may be conceptualized as school-specific dynamics that condition acculturation and adjustment.

Notably, a larger share of ethnic minority youth in schools (or classes) might reduce the opportunity for intergroup contact with majority classmates (e.g., Baysu et al., 2014), thereby decreasing socialization experiences towards the destination culture. In Germany, the proportion of ethnic minority students in classes was negatively associated with destination culture adoption. However, the heterogeneity of ethnic minority

groups in classes was positively, albeit marginally significantly, related to endorsing destination culture (Schachner et al., 2016). Together, a large and homogeneous ethnic minority group representation in classes may be less conducive to navigating across both cultures and achieving adjustment. Thus, both factors should be considered closely to tackle the associations between acculturation and adjustment.

In addition to structural diversity in itself, the approaches taken towards ethnic and cultural diversity in schools have widely been considered major antecedents of acculturation and psychosocial outcomes (Schachner, 2019; Schachner et al., 2016). Equality-inclusion and cultural pluralism are prominent approaches to cultural diversity in schools. The equality-inclusion approach emphasizes promoting fairness by treating all students equally, regardless of their ethnic or cultural backgrounds. This approach also encourages students to engage in contact and cooperation during school activities, such as through encouraging mixed seating arrangements, ethnically and culturally diverse study groups, and cooperative learning activities (Schachner et al., 2016, 2019). However, an overemphasis on equality with no reference to cultural diversity may lead to colour-evasion, which impairs ethnic identification (Byrd & Legette, 2022) and adjustment (e.g., academic success; Celeste et al., 2019). Therefore, an ideal approach might complement the promising elements of equality-inclusion with those of the cultural pluralism approach (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010; see also Civitillo et al., 2017).

The cultural pluralism approach promotes a climate where cultural diversity is welcomed and acknowledged. Adopting this approach involves emphasizing diversity as a valuable learning opportunity for all school components and encouraging all students to incorporate their heritage culture into school activities through multicultural practices (Schachner, 2019; Schachner et al., 2016). Implementing such an approach superficially by focusing only on cultural elements (e.g., food and celebrations) while neglecting the aim of developing a more holistic understanding of diversity could pose risks of reinforcing stereotypes (Civitillo et al., 2017). This undesirable reinforcement could be detrimental to adjustment, as it might also impede acculturation.

Higher endorsement of both approaches can largely be related to positive psychosocial outcomes (for a review, see Schachner, 2019). Importantly, the extent to which both approaches are promoted might also matter for how youth acculturate. Longitudinal research showed that, at the individual level, embracing equality-inclusion

increased destination culture adoption, whereas promoting cultural pluralism increased heritage culture maintenance. The endorsement of both acculturation orientations fuelled by these diversity approaches subsequently contributed to better adjustment, represented by higher school belonging, academic success, life satisfaction, and fewer behavioural problems (Schachner et al., 2016).

The effects of cultural diversity approaches may differ at the classroom level. Unlike the individual-level patterns (Schachner et al., 2016), the equality-inclusion approach promoted assimilation at the classroom level. Moreover, the positive effect of cultural pluralism on heritage culture maintenance has turned out to be insignificant. However, a recent study conducted in the same cultural context (i.e., Germany) showed that, at the classroom level only, cultural pluralism predicted the development of average and stable profiles of both ethnic and national identifications, which were, in turn, associated with greater life satisfaction (Juang et al., 2024). Altogether, these findings denote that school-specific conditions should be considered at both levels to delve into how acculturation and adjustment intertwine throughout adolescence.

## Discussion

Research on acculturation is currently in a debate over the established links between acculturation and psychosocial adjustment. To better understand these associations, the current literature review draws attention to exploring acculturation separately in proximal life domains during adolescence – a crucial developmental phase in which the family, peer, and school domains unfold youth development. Additionally, it (re) emphasizes the necessity of considering the impacts of domain-specific conditions on both adolescents' acculturation and adjustment (see also Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2006; Schachner et al., 2017).

Within the domains of family and peer, the ethnic socialization processes are conceptualized as the primary domain-specific conditions in shaping youth psychosocial adjustment, either directly or indirectly, through acculturation orientations. Moreover, parents' expectations regarding how youth should acculturate and the discrepancies between parents' and children's acculturation orientations are viewed as alternative conditions in the family domain. In school, the way schools approach cultural diversity and the quality of intergroup contact among students are posed as the core

conditions. Alongside these conditions related to the socialization processes, structural elements, such as the proportion of same-ethnic and cross-ethnic friends in peer groups vis-à-vis in schools, are considered for their impact on youth acculturation and adjustment. Altogether, these domain-specific conditions position each proximal life domain central to adolescents' acculturation in relation to adjustment.

### ***Moving beyond: Capturing adolescents' acculturation separately in each proximal life domain***

In distinguishing the conditions per proximal domain and their varying impacts, this review proposes disentangling the extent to which adolescents endorse their heritage and destination cultures separately in each proximal life domain based on the distinct domain-specific acculturation endeavours (e.g., Crocetti et al., 2024; Mancini & Bottura, 2014). According to the RAEM (Navas et al., 2005), acculturative endeavours in the family domain involve relationships with both nuclear family members and other relatives living in the destination country. In the peer domain, acculturation is evident in how individuals choose, interact with, and spend time with friends. In the school domain, primary acculturative endeavours involve ways of studying and interacting with teachers and classmates during school activities.

Herein, the ideal path requires addressing acculturation based on relevant endeavours to each proximal domain together with specific conditions. This approach involves not only examining how youth acculturate separately in each domain but also accounting for the effects of specific conditions that may influence youth's adjustment directly and indirectly through acculturation orientations. In the peer domain, for example, the extent to which ethnic minority youth engage in socialization towards heritage and destination cultures enhances the adolescents' adjustment directly and indirectly by bolstering (peer-specific) acculturation orientations. Therefore, to understand whether acculturation orientations in each proximal domain affect adjustment congruently, a preliminary step for future studies is to examine these orientations separately within family, peer, and school domains in light of their specific conditions. This way, any potential suppressive effects of

incongruent domain-specific acculturation orientations on psychosocial adjustment might also be examined.

### ***The ideal path with steep challenges: Testing absolute domain-specific models***

When addressing youth acculturation in each domain and the specific conditions, involving domain-specific psychosocial adjustment outcomes is also an alternative. In other words, these alternative 'absolute domain-specific models' should assess domain-specific acculturation orientations and adjustment outcomes by considering the relevant conditions. For example, one might investigate the indirect relationship between school cultural diversity approaches and school belonging through adolescents' engagement with heritage and destination cultures in school. In this example, the ways of approaching cultural diversity in schools represent domain-specific acculturation conditions, while school belonging pertains to a domain-specific adjustment outcome. Acculturation orientations within the school domain can be reflected by the extent to which youth endorse both acculturation orientations while studying and interacting with their teachers and classmates inside the school.

Regardless of their 'absolute' nature, the simultaneous application of domain-specific models may be time- and resource-intensive (Titzmann & Jugert, 2024), especially for research that tackles longitudinal associations (Kunst, 2021). However, each domain-specific model is well suited to explore how acculturation conditions longitudinally influence youth adjustment through acculturation orientations at both within- and between-person levels using the Random-Intercept Cross-Lagged Panel Model (Hamaker et al., 2015). Beyond this, family-specific models offer a more nuanced approach to disentangling between- and within-family variance (for such an approach, see Mastrotheodoros et al., 2020). Similarly, peer-specific models also address between- and within-peer group variance. Lastly, school-specific models can facilitate the designs and analytical strategies that address individual and classroom-level associations through multilevel frameworks (e.g., Schachner et al., 2016). As such, domain-specific models enable testing the interplay of acculturation and adjustment at a more accurate ecological level of interpretation.

### ***Looking ahead: Further recommendations for acculturation research***

This review advocates for examining acculturation processes within each of the proximal life domains by considering the specific acculturation conditions. Although it presents the primary conditions within the domains of family, peer, and school separately, these conditions may interfere. Therefore, an essential direction for future acculturation research may be unravelling whether and how these domain-specific acculturative conditions interact and contribute to youth's acculturation and adjustment.

Besides life domains, embracing heritage and destination culture varies across multiple acculturation components (i.e., cultural practices, values, and identifications; Schwartz et al., 2010). That is, the extent to which young people endorse both cultures in one acculturation component may not directly map onto the others. Along this line of thought, capturing how domain-specific conditions influence youth psychological adjustment separately through (domain-specific) practices, values, and identifications is an intriguing avenue for future research. To this end, developing a valid and reliable tool that can be equally applied to assess each acculturation component across proximal life domains is crucial.

Last but not least, the current review provides a conceptual overview based on a narrative examination of existing cross-sectional and longitudinal studies. As such, it summarizes the most salient acculturative conditions per domain but hardly addresses many other domain-specific conditions. For example, because teachers are the primary practitioners of cultural diversity approaches (Karataş, Eckstein, et al., 2023a; Schachner, 2019), their own beliefs about cultural diversity (Civitillo & Juang, 2020) might influence how adolescents should acculturate and adjust. Similarly, parental school involvement (Schachner, Van de Vijver, et al., 2018), as well as acculturation expectations (or preferences) of same-ethnic and cross-ethnic peers, can also be additional conditions. Further systematic reviews (with meta-analyses) may be conducted to systematically demonstrate which conditions in these proximal life domains concurrently and longitudinally affect acculturation and adjustment.

### ***Concluding remarks***

This literature review provides crucial insights into investigating adolescents' acculturation in each proximal life domain through relevant acculturation endeavours. The salient conditions related to the family, peer,



and school domains further refine whether and how domain-specific conditions function as antecedents in shaping adolescents' adjustment through acculturation orientations. Altogether, this review calls for future research to account for the promoting and diminishing effects of domain-specific conditions during adolescence while disentangling the associations between acculturation and adjustment. The knowledge presented here may contribute to tailoring intervention programmes to increase youth's awareness of the different, sometimes conflicting, conditions across proximal life domains and their potential impacts on their own acculturation and adjustment. It is hoped that the delivery of these interventions may enable ethnic minority youth to synthesize their unique and harmonious way of fulfilling acculturation and developmental tasks to achieve psychosocial adjustment in current societies.

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## Data availability statement

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

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