

Being intercultural through text

**A case study of using a *cultuurtekst*-approach
as a conceptualisation of language and culture
teaching.**

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**Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy**

Institute of Education

University of London

2011

Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following people who each have contributed in significant ways to help me to complete this journey. First a word of thank to all the students who I have taught in the course of my work whose own learning journeys have been so instrumental in my own reflection and fine tuning of my pedagogy. In specific I would like to thank the students who participated in this particular cohort which I used for this study, for allowing me to record, observe, interview and analyse them. Their openness and engagement with the course and their honesty in giving me feedback underpin this study.

In additon I would like to thank Jane Fenoulhet for reading early drafts of chapters 3 and 4 and making valuable comments. Special thanks are due to Theo Hermans and David Block for reading this thesis closely and scrutinizing my arguments in detail. Further thanks go to Martin, who has encouraged me to believe in myself in the completion of this study.

I am extremely grateful to Cathie Wallace, whose unwavering support over the years and whose close reading of chapters have kept my arguments on track, and who also encouraged me to believe in myself.

Last, I would like to thank Chris, Kim and Remi for giving support of a different kind; believing in me, encouraging me and never making me feel guilty of my regular mental absences and the time – too much time – spent behind the computer. I can not thank you enough.

I dedicate this thesis to my father, Nico Quist, who unfortunately died before it was completed. He was an inspiration as an original and creative thinker.

Abstract

This thesis is an account of a qualitative study which explores language and culture teaching through the notion of 'cultuurtekst', a concept coined by the Dutch literary theorist Maaïke Meijer, as an approach to using text to develop learners into critical intercultural language users as part of the general language classroom in Dutch as a Foreign Language pedagogy.

The study is located in the context of a fourth year language class at a traditional university as part of a degree programme studying Dutch as a single subject or as a combined honours subject. Using a variety of qualitative research methods, this study borrows from the principles of action research, ethnography and grounded theory to explore how the students in this class engaged with this pedagogy by analysing the transcripts of two lessons and two sets of student interviews.

I seek to contribute to the development of an intellectual and critical approach to language and culture education beyond skills based instrumental approaches. In doing so I build on Kramsch's (1993) and Byram's (cf 1994, 1997) work in intercultural communication in language teaching and draw on Foucault's notion of discourse, Malinowski's notion of context of situation and context of culture and Kress's notion of conflicting discourses in text to outline the 'cultuurtekst' pedagogy. Applying views of intercultural communication (cf Blommaert, 1998) to the notion of 'cultuurtekst', this study explores whether a 'cultuurtekst' pedagogy can contribute towards developing students' critical intercultural awareness by encouraging them to consider the cultural influences in texts and the complexity of these as signified through multiple discourses (265 words).

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Word count (exclusive of appendices, list of reference and bibliography:
87,163 words.

Signed

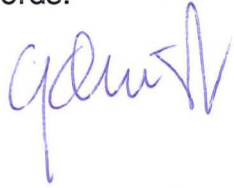
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INTRODUCTION

This thesis represents a professional journey taken place over the past 10 years or so as a Lecturer in Dutch at one of Britain's traditional universities. A journey, with many different turns, exploring new tracks that sometimes ended up in dead ends, occasionally almost losing the way and ready to abandon the journey altogether. A journey, which took longer than anticipated as obstacles and interruptions, linked to other personal, family and professional responsibilities and important life events, intervened along the way.

Having reached the end of this journey, I can now say that, like all exciting journeys, the most difficult sections became the deepest learning experiences leading to the most significant insights.

This study developed out of my own experiences as a Lecturer in Dutch, and my dissatisfaction with instrumental approaches to foreign language teaching in general, and in the field of Dutch language teaching specifically.

Whilst this study started over 10 years ago and the data was collected early in that process, the concerns of this study are as relevant now, as they were 10 years ago, perhaps even more so, as language teaching has in the intervening years moved even further in the direction of instrumental approaches. The text which students discussed during the two lessons, which form the focus of this study, was published in 1999. As a result, the analysis of the text relates to a cultural environment and discourses which reflected that particular time and place. The discourses to which I point in my own analysis of this text, may indeed not be as

prevalent as they were then. However, the principles which underpin this kind of analysis are exactly the same; that of mapping discourses and critiquing their ideological stances and their role in maintaining power structures. Moreover, the text does not feel dated, as the topic of gender relations and representations is as current as ever.

My initial reason for embarking on this study was to distill principles for language and culture teaching by developing and evaluating a general language course which addressed the integration of language and culture, and which, as well as developing students' language skills, also aimed to develop a critical language awareness.

For the development of my course I drew on the notion of 'cultuurtekst' – a term coined by the Dutch literary theorist, Maaïke Meijer (1996), as an approach to analyzing literature. The important part of cultuurtekst for me was that it accounted for culture being reflected in language through discourses, including conflicting ones. My pedagogic aim was especially to make students aware of these discourses, and concurrently, to design exercises where students could practice the use of different styles and discourses in different contexts.

Other notions I drew on for my pedagogy, were those of the context of situation and the context of culture (cf Malinowski, 1923). The notion of context of culture chimed naturally with that of cultuurtekst. The notion of the context of situation, also allowed me to address areas of conventional language in looking at text, e.g. looking at content and the immediate context of a text. In short, I conceived of the context of situation to relate to text as 'text', whereas the context of culture relates to text as 'cultuurtekst'.

Furthermore I had wanted to make students aware that, some of the texts we discussed seemed to be inflected by a tone, which, I felt to have a particular Dutch flavour. I called this 'Dutch articulation'.

Finally, I drew on Bakhtin (1986) for my pedagogy, as his notion of text being a 'dialogue' between the self and the other, would be worth

exploring as a model for intercultural communication. Particularly the notion of addressivity, 'the quality of turning to someone', has influenced my approach in trying to make students aware of the 'other' in their communicative behaviour.

My data consisted of recording my lessons, of which I fully transcribed two, and individual student interviews. After analysing the data, I was disappointed with my initial findings. The various findings did not seem to merge into a clear overall conclusion. I found there were many half-understandings of the notion of *cultuurtekst*; that students had taken different reading approaches to the text; that students would often contradict themselves; that students were easily drawn into making stereotypical statements; and finally, what I felt at the time to be a failing of the course, that students' personal experience and views formed an obstacle to seeing the text as a *cultuurtekst*. Rather than 'recognising' the discourses in the text, students would frequently respond to the content only from a perspective which seemed to be influenced by their personal experience.

My initial conclusion therefore was that intercultural communication is infinitely more complex, and that using a *cultuurtekst* approach needed an even clearer conceptualization coupled with a more considered pedagogical approach which could develop the students' critical language awareness more gradually.

Some years later – and this is where conducting this study over a longer period of time than initially anticipated has produced unexpected benefits - I looked at the data again. This time I looked at the data from an ethnographic perspective, and not with the idea in mind of how 'successful' the approach had been. Instead, I focused on what happened in the classroom, how the students engaged with the text and one another and what the significant dialogic moments in the class had been. Something interesting emerged. In the earlier interpretation I had seen students' interpretations of the text based on personal experience as a weakness; students had failed to analyse the text using the

language of analysis and talking about the concept of culture and representation. Instead, it emerged that it was precisely the moments where students brought their personal experience and interpretation to bear upon the text, that brought the most dialogic and intercultural moments. These were the moments where students applied their 'self' to the text, where they tried to respond to the text and explain this to others - the moments where students were 'struggling for meaning'. This struggle was a collaborative process, where students were thinking and engaging with one another and with the text. It is that reflexive personal engagement which makes language exchanges real intercultural dialogues, whether in speech, reading or writing. I coined the phrase 'being a text ethnographer' to account for the way that students can engage critically and reflexively with a text from an 'inside' as well as an 'outside' perspective.

My overall research question became: 'How did students engage with the cultuurtekst pedagogy?' To answer this question I pose the subquestion in chapter 5 'What different ways of reading do the perspectives of text as 'text' and text as 'cultuurtekst' yield?', and in chapter 6 'Did students make the journey from 'text' to 'cultuurtekst'?

This thesis is constructed so that

Chapter 1 provides the context of modern language teaching in Higher Education in England and sets out the educational paradigms of liberalism and vocationalism and how these have impacted on language teaching itself.

Chapter 2 explores views on the nature of language and culture, which have impacted on teaching culture as part of the language curriculum.

Chapter 3 focuses on intercultural communication and on reading texts as a way to approach the interrelationship between language and culture. In this chapter I conceptualize the notion of cultuurtekst as an approach to intercultural communication as part of a language pedagogy.

Chapter 4 describes the context of the course and provides the methodology of the study.

Chapter 5 analyses the classroom data of two specific lessons discussing one text, using the framework for text analysis which I designed making use of the text both as 'text' and text as 'cultuurtekst'.

Chapter 6 analyses the data from the student interviews to triangulate the classroom data.

Chapter 7 will conclude the study and suggest areas for taking this study further.

CHAPTER 1

THE INFLUENCE OF EDUCATIONAL IDEOLOGIES AND LANGUAGE LEARNING THEORIES ON LANGUAGE TEACHING: AN ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

Introduction

In the introductory chapter I described how this study arose out of a lack of contemporary language pedagogies and materials for Dutch at university ab initio level, which addressed culture as a complex construct, were intellectually stimulating and included the development of critical skills. This lack of material does not stand on its own; it is part of the 'uncomfortable' position language teaching has at university.

This chapter traces the roots of two dominant educational philosophies and examines how these have impacted on language teaching, relating this to the methodologies occupied within these contexts. I argue that both these opposing views, and the language teaching approaches which were employed within these frameworks, contributed to the subsidiary position that language teaching has in many Modern Languages degrees.

I start this chapter with referring to the position of language teaching at universities in Britain and I then examine the impact on foreign language teaching of the liberal humanist versus the instrumental paradigm – the latter having become the dominant paradigm. I argue that there are

elements within the liberal tradition which warrant a re-interpretation to inform my pedagogy, particularly its emphasis on intellectual engagement. However, neither the liberal, nor the instrumental paradigm on their own offer a sufficiently complex theoretical framework for a pedagogy that contributes to encouraging students to become critical intercultural language users.

Current situation

At the start of this study, in the late 90-ies, language teaching at university seemed to be flourishing. Bailey stated in 1994 (p. 41) that language teaching at our universities is thriving because of the mushrooming of language courses at universities, mainly as an extra module available to students of different degree subjects at Language Centres and Institution Wide Language Programmes, and because of the increasing number of modern foreign language degrees where the curriculum displays a greater emphasis on language learning at the expense of literature.

Now, over a decade later, the situation is very different. Instead, language learning is said to be in crisis. There has been a decline in recent years in the number of student applications for modern languages degree courses except for school leavers from non-state schools. The concern over these falling figures, together with concerns over the funding provision for Modern Languages prompted the Higher Education Funding Council for England to commission a review of language in Higher Education in 2009 to investigate the health of modern languages (Worton, 2009). Worton attributes the decline of students studying modern foreign languages in part to the government decision to make languages optional for pupils after the age of 14 (Worton, 2009: 2). But, there are other reasons. Phipps explains the preference for non-language degrees by the fact that students are exposed to a utilitarian framework that makes a direct link between their decisions

about education and the shape of the labour market (2007:4). Despite marketing attempts by universities and other stakeholders to convince potential students of the pragmatic value of studying modern languages, students are still 'voting with their feet', she says. In fact, it may be precisely the emphasis on gaining instrumental skills, which is counter productive when it comes to considerations of employability. Canning (2009: 1,2) argues that if university language departments keep on marketing themselves mainly in terms of providing the learner with language skills, employers will offer jobs to native speakers whose skills in that language are supreme, and in addition will have other skills than just linguistic ones. Canning makes a distinction between promoting languages as 'skill' and languages as 'discipline', giving learners 'humanities type skills'. He further cites Brumfit's (2005) rationale for a modern languages degree as 'giving learners the linguistic tools to behave as critical beings in 'other' cultures'. For this intercultural understanding linguistic skills are not sufficient, but language graduates 'should possess in-depth cultural insights' (op.cit. p.8). Phipps also (2007: 35) argues that the field of foreign languages has made a mistake in seeing languages in purely functionalist and employability terms rather than to embrace the insights of anthropological approaches to culture.

I will add here my own voice of critique to the instrumental paradigm, but my argument will not be based on a split between developing linguistic skills and developing cultural insights. This study focuses on contributing to a pedagogy in the context of a language class as part of a modern languages degree, which aims to 'embrace the insights of anthropological approaches to culture' to which Phipps refers.

Whilst I am not aiming to analyse the 'languages in crisis' situation, I do suggest that the problems with language at university is located in the lack of status it has had and still has at university. I will turn to this below.

The position of language teaching at university

When I started this study there was a large variety of pedagogies in language teaching provision in British universities, ranging from the traditional literary-based modern languages degree, modern languages degrees with an emphasis on Area Studies and non-linguistic degrees with language as an extra module, the latter usually provided through a Language Centre. Language teaching as part of a modern languages degree, whether provided by the departments themselves or by a Language Centre, took place as a separate educational activity with a different set of aims from the rest of the degree and carrying much less prestige. This lack of prestige was borne out particularly by staffing levels, terms of employment and hours allocated to language teaching within the curriculum as a whole. In 1992 Scott et. al. pointed already to the fact that the majority of language teachers were part-time and hourly-paid, and on insecure contracts. This situation does not seem to have changed. Teachers in Language Centres are still frequently on vulnerable contracts (Worton, 2009:31). Whilst, in comparison with a decade ago, there is a tendency in departments to employ specialised language teachers, they are not part of the 'academic staff', and as Worton says (p.26), are seen to provide 'service teaching'. Moreover, in many departments the tradition still persists of (junior) lecturers with specialisms other than language and no specific qualification or experience in language teaching, teaching language classes in order to fulfil their share in the teaching load of the department. It illustrates the view that is still common at some institutions that language teaching can be carried out by any intelligent native speaker with some sensitivity towards the language. When this is seen against the situation for other subjects, the likelihood of appointing non-specialist staff to teach for instance a literature class, would be an extremely unlikely occurrence.

Whereas the curriculum for modern language degrees as a whole is changing –with the traditional literary degrees (although they still exist) giving way to contemporary cultural studies, including contemporary literature, film studies and Area Studies (Worton, 2009:25), language teaching still remains separated from the rest of the degree in status and content. This separation is even starker now that instrumental approaches have been adopted because language teaching cannot be seen separate from the philosophies and historical changes in university education as a whole. It is to this that I will now turn.

Classical liberalism versus instrumentalism

Until the shake-up of the Higher Education system in Britain, which started in the sixties with the expansion of higher education and which culminated in the early 1990s in the transformation of the former Polytechnics into universities, the educational aim at universities had been firmly rooted within a liberal philosophy of education. The key pillars of this philosophy are the pursuit of knowledge and rational autonomy; the development of the individual student towards independence of mind applied within the confines of a body of knowledge established as ‘truth’ in order to advance the discipline. These classical Enlightenment ideals were emancipatory - both for the individual in his striving for betterment, and for society, although this emancipation served particularly the emerging middle classes in the 19th century where the discourse of rational argument and cultural discourse were developed in the coffee-houses in England as part of an oppositional stance to the absolutism of a hierarchical society (Eagleton, 1984:9-12). The traditional liberal paradigm, with its notion of ‘promoting the general powers of the mind’ (Robbins (1963), quoted by Dearing, 1997:71), has come under attack from several angles. One of these criticisms relates to the exclusivity of higher education towards certain groups in society. This is an issue of concern addressed by Dearing (1997) in his report. However

criticisms have also been directed at the philosophical underpinnings of the paradigm. Its notion of emphasising individuality, rather than seeing individuals as being rooted in society, and its notion of pursuit of 'truth' have been criticised by communitarian and post-modern philosophers alike. Jonathan (1995: 75-91) points out that modern liberalism has become free from the social baggage and the emancipatory idiom of its classical origins and argues for an examination of the ontological and ethical questions which are central to the development of consciousness and to the relation between the individual and the social. She points to the theoretical inadequacies of a paradigm which aims to develop maximal individual autonomy of each, for the eventual social benefit of all. The causal connection between these (individual autonomy and a socially better world) remain unexplained within liberalism and do not provide a theoretical position to reconcile the 'twin contemporary pulls of illegitimate value imposition and incoherent relativism'. She argues for reconstructing the theory of liberal education within a social theory; reconstructing the concept of autonomy as a socially located value. The key issue which Jonathan points out regarding the apparent conflict of the development of the individual within the social, is one that is also relevant for language teachers. A concern with the individual finds resonance in a new development within language teaching where pedagogies are shifting attention from a fixed authoritative curriculum to a focus on learners' identities (cf. Phipps, 2007; Fenhoulhet and Ros i Solé, forthcoming).

As Apple (1990) points out, theories, policies and practices involved in education are inherently political in nature. Changes within the educational system thus rarely, if ever, come only from philosophical considerations, but are politically motivated. This was certainly the case in the eighties when a huge paradigm shift occurred in education. At many universities education came to be seen in terms of a market philosophy, education as responding to economic needs. Education at the start of the 21st century is now not

solely described in terms of the development of the individual and rational autonomy. Instead, the need to fit in with the demands of a fast changing world and the importance of the global economy have started to define curricula. Dearing (1997) emphasised the need to extend the - what he saw as still relevant - liberal aim of 'training the power of the mind' to include the needs of the world at large.

The paradigm shift from a liberal towards an instrumental view of education has been particularly pronounced within language teaching at universities. The rationale for language teaching has therefore changed from a view of increasing knowledge *about* a culture and developing one's critical and analytical ability, to one which is couched in a discourse which emulates such values as the need to regain a competitive edge, overcoming a shortage of skills, not losing business to competitors abroad and so on. The impact of the instrumental philosophy on language teaching has been phenomenal, but not always in a very beneficial way. In the next section I discuss the language teaching approaches at university within the two paradigms and evaluate their contribution to the educational aim of developing critical language users. I will look at their strengths and weaknesses and suggest that the implementation of communicative approaches -in their extreme form - have contributed to the lack of status of language teaching. I discuss the approaches in their most 'pure' form, although naturally one could expect that teachers 'borrow' from either paradigm.

The liberal tradition

Within the liberal tradition the aim of modern language teaching at university level was - and still is - both cultural and intellectual. Bailey (1994:41) formulates it as instilling 'an appreciation of foreign literature and language through a scholarly analysis of their content and structure'. This is achieved

through the study of 'esteemed' canonical literary texts of the past as well as a historical approach to linguistics.

Language teaching itself, within this tradition, has been modelled on the teaching of the 'dead languages', as the classics were seen as the highest expression of the liberal philosophy (Bailey, *ibid.*). The rationale for teaching language was to contribute to its two important aims of developing the cultural and intellectual capabilities and sensibilities of students. Whereas language learning has never been seen as an important intellectual activity in its own right (outside the subject of philology or linguistics), there was a recognised academic element in the learning of grammar. The cognitive powers of the students were challenged by exercises in sentence parsing and translation of de-contextualised sentences - even if this resulted in artificial language use - in order to apply the rules of logic and show a thorough understanding of the underlying grammatical intricacies. The emphasis was strongly on grammar and the development of written skills - an oral element to language teaching was either non-existent or incidental. This is because communication had no role to play in the traditional liberal humanistic language curriculum; its rationale for language teaching is the teaching of logical thinking skills and a certain way of describing reality. Interestingly, as Cope and Kalantzis (1993:3) point out, this traditional curriculum of prescriptive grammar has mistaken, even deceptive, pretensions to the timelessness of the classics. In ancient Greece and Rome the use of grammar was applied to the social context, forming an integral part of the teaching of dialectic or rhetoric. The classical language curriculum thus has a pragmatic origin and a communicative function, which was never followed up on and which diametrically opposes the methodologies based on teaching a 'dead language'.

The second aim which informed the teaching of language was the access it provided to cultural products by exposing the student to 'good' language

use and developing an aesthetic appreciation of language, through the study of a canonical body of literary work. This embodied the liberal humanist principle of language as striving for human perfection and beauty based on the Enlightenment ideas about the interpretation of the concept of culture and a wider epistemology. 'Culture' within this tradition encompasses elements of aesthetic and spiritual development (Williams, 1976, 1983: 90) which are enshrined in the valued canonical body of artistic - mainly literary - products of that society. This view pays homage to Matthew Arnold's (1869, 2006: 40) definition of culture, and its emancipatory idea of striving for betterment: 'culture is [.....] a study of perfection. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion of doing good'. In addition, this epistemology contains within it a belief in the rational autonomous subject who can use language to control meaning. Language offers endless opportunities to describe a reality which is located *outside* language itself. There is a belief in the 'true' and 'real' self and the universality of language. I will discuss this further in chapter 2.

One will not find Arnold's view of culture and its moral good quoted in departmental aims and objectives at universities. Nevertheless, the tradition of literary degrees espouses the core of these values, which were up until recently widely accepted at many universities and still inform departmental courses, although this is more likely to be the case at pre-1992 Russell Group universities. At many of these institutions students study a canonical body of works to 'sustain a moral criticism of the world' and to recognise the 'little knots of significance' in order to make sense of the world out there and to make 'distinctions of worth' (Inglis, 1992:220). These liberal values are also reflected in the approach taken in studying canonical works, approached from a strong belief in the authority of the writer, rather than the post-structuralist emphasis on reader interpretation.

It follows that language teaching has a somewhat diminished role within this

paradigm as far as language *production* is concerned. The aim of language teaching is to instil a sense of *appreciation* for the language and to recognise language as it functions and gives meaning to the 'individual' voice of the author. Language teaching is not geared around developing a language proficiency or communicative ability. Everyday language is of no academic interest. Only literary language and the voice of the author are worthy of study and so literature classes are generally taught in English and the discourse of literary criticism will take place in English rather than through the target language. Language learning and teaching achieve intellectual worth, as mentioned before, only through the study of grammar and translation, supplemented by *précis* and essay writing.

The traditional methodology has been heavily criticised and is seen as being thoroughly outdated, precisely because of its lack of placing language in relation to its immediate context or related to wider social and cultural forces which may influence language utterances. Students will have knowledge *about* the language, but will not be able to speak it. Cook (1989:127,128) points to the fact that the traditional approach to language learning does not take account of how meaning is created through a unified stretch of text. In short, grammar-translation approaches do not stand up to scrutiny within applied linguistic theories as the sole method of teaching language *proficiency*. Whilst this approach may be used at university language teaching at some of the traditional institutions, it will indeed not be used in language courses which teach at ab-initio level. Ab initio courses, and indeed increasingly language courses at all levels, generally are influenced by the instrumental paradigm, which I will discuss below.

The instrumental paradigm

Aims and practice

At the other end of the spectrum to the traditional liberal language degrees are language courses which are informed by instrumental values. As with language provision in general, there is a rich variety in the practices in business and pragmatically oriented language classrooms, so any attempt to describe these is by nature doomed to be a gross generalization. Yet, there are certain characteristics which can be recognised as being fairly representative of language classes influenced by instrumental considerations. Because the aim of language classes of this kind is to provide students with the 'real-world' skills which are valuable to employers, language classes are aimed at developing a communicative competence. This would include an emphasis on speaking and interpersonal skills over writing because employers do not necessarily expect graduates to have written competence in the foreign language: "...they want people who can have everyday conversations and state of the art conversations- in other words they know the French for computer or keyboard" (quoted in Scott et. al., 1992:18). These instrumental approaches, which at the time of starting this study may have been haphazard, have become systematically part of language teaching at universities, since the Common European Framework (CEF, 2001) has been published.

The CEF is a guideline document and does not suggest particular teaching methodologies, but instead provides an extremely detailed taxonomy of the competences, skills and knowledge that learners should possess at certain levels of study. The general aims and principles which are formulated emphasise both the functional aspect of language learning (learning to communicate in order to encourage collaboration, mobility and trade) as well as the moral aspect (respect and understanding for other cultures).

However, certainly when judged by course books in Dutch which are taking account of the CEF guidelines, the practice has developed on very instrumental lines, focusing on developing a competence that prepares the learners for the practical situations they may be expected to function in, language teaching often takes a pragmatic approach, concentrating on transactional tasks such as buying train tickets, filling in a form, writing letters or covering conversational interests on an easy interpersonal level such as talking about leisure pursuits etc.

Clearly the purely instrumental view of language teaching does not fit in well with the liberal ideal of critical thinking; language as an expression of individual thought and emotion. Inglis (1992:221), for instance, takes a traditional liberal view when he bemoans the relativist approaches in many language departments and the loss of a critical and aesthetic and value-based view towards language. He feels that 'to withdraw from the question of value making at the heart of language is,, to hand language over to technicism and the skills-mongers whose very function is to demoralise education in the name of its orderly management.'

Within this light it is understandable that with the advent of communicative language teaching, the discipline came even more to be seen as a non-intellectual subject at the traditional departments. One can legitimately question whether the needs of employers should inform curricula in such a narrow way. Employers are not pedagogues and cannot be expected to know what the best educational route to a final aim of communicative competence is. While communication skills are now very important in many professional domains, power and manipulation are exercised through language in increasingly subtle and implicit ways (Fairclough, 1992:3).

Developing communicative skills would therefore need to include an awareness of how power relations are structured through language, not

only for the learner to develop a strategic competence him or herself, but also to develop a critical ability which empowers the language user to choose whether to comply with those patterns of language use. Furthermore, the uncritical submitting to employers' needs when drawing up syllabi may train future graduates to fit in with the economic needs of society, but it denies them the development of capabilities aimed at effecting changes in society themselves. As Hoggart (1995:22) points to the political aspect of vocationalism; it trains people like robots to serve the needs of industry which is 'one way of avoiding [...] 'looking seriously at injustice which runs through the educational system' and 'indicates mistrust [...] of mind and imagination'. Moreover, the focus on market forces is a safe political position: it 'provides a piece of firm dry land for many of today's politicians, barren though that land may be intellectually and imaginatively' (op.cit: 25).

Underlying theories

Because of the instrumental aims, the immediate concerns in language classes within this paradigm are practical: developing skills and presenting learners with ready-made phrases or expressions for use in particular situations. The theoretical premises which underlie communicative language teaching (which generally informs instrumental approaches) are therefore often subsumed by practical concerns. These theoretical premises, however, differ starkly from those underlying the liberal tradition of language teaching in terms of the nature of language. Communicative approaches, with an emphasis on real communicative tasks, the use of authentic material in the syllabus and an emphasis on 'getting the message across', are based on pragmatic descriptions of language use derived from Hymes' notion of communicative competence (1972) and Speech Act theory (Austin, 1962).

These approaches generally start from a sociolinguistic description of how meaning is communicated in particular settings, situations and contexts and take account of a variety of parameters such as the intention to mean, the relationship between participants in the communicative act, the topic, the mode of communication and so forth. The view of language which is implicit in communicative syllabuses is thus a pragmatic one; language is seen in a functional goal-oriented sense. This contrasts with the classical liberal view which sees language on the one hand as a creative and aesthetic expression of individual thought and on the other hand as a system of formal rules. The two approaches are thus almost diametrically opposed in two of the areas which inform language teaching methodology: the view of what language is and the different educational aims. The liberal tradition aims to develop autonomous critical thinking and an aesthetic appreciation whereas language learning in the instrumental or communicative approach aims at developing the competence to be able to communicate in work and social environments.

It follows then that the pedagogical theories underlying these views also differ, but in the case of the liberal tradition of language teaching, even though based on clear educational values, there is no theory of *language learning* which informs teaching methodology. As we have seen, the approach was based on the way that the classical languages were taught. In the instrumental approach to language learning, I want to suggest that the problem is reversed. There is no concern with personal or educational development in many instrumentally based language classes, as the main concern is to develop skills in the learner which are useful on the job market. The language teaching itself within these classes, on the other hand is influenced by theories of language learning as an automatic process, which I briefly set out below.

Chomsky's research in mother tongue language acquisition in particular has

influenced early communicative approaches in foreign language teaching: as language learning is an automatic process, the argument goes, the role of the teacher is to provide language input of the right level and tasks and situations through which the learners can practise and absorb the use of the foreign language.

Chomsky relates the idea of language acquisition specifically to the grammatical rules. However, in communicative language teaching it has become a common sense notion that the social rules of a language (the appropriateness of utterances in relation to the context in which they are expressed) are acquired along similar lines as these grammatical structures. These social rules constitute what Hymes calls 'communicative competence' (1972).

What is problematic about the view of an automatic acquisition of communicative competence, is that it might explain how certain functional phrases or vocabulary items are acquired, but it allows no role for the wider social and cultural influences which shape communication and discourses. It is possible that these are acquired automatically as well. Children certainly seem to have an uncanny ability to switch their 'social voice', without explicitly having been taught how one speaks within certain social or cultural groups. This ability to 'switch codes' is likely to have been 'picked up' from the various discourses they are exposed to in their environment, notably through television. The question for language teachers, however, is not so much whether language, which is saturated with social or cultural values, *can be* acquired automatically, but whether it *should* be.

If we want students to understand how language creates both explicit and implicit cultural and social meanings, then they need not internalise linguistic items automatically. On the contrary, they need to look at language *consciously* both to understand texts as a social and cultural

construct, but also to be enabled to produce language utterances which are culturally and socially appropriate. This is an intellectual skill, which is not automatically achieved in a foreign language and would need to be addressed consciously.

In summary, the instrumental approach to language teaching, which views language particularly in terms of its pragmatic function is much more sophisticated than the liberal tradition in terms of learning to communicate in various settings and in terms of a view of language learning. But it is lacking in other ways. Firstly, the emphasis on context as shaping language utterances tends to be interpreted only in terms of the immediate parameters that define a communicative situation and often this is interpreted in fairly reductive terms in the choice of settings, dialogues and texts. This only takes account of the immediate social context, and not the wider cultural influences and the larger social constructs, which Halliday (1989), using Malinowski (1923), defined as being of importance in language use. Secondly, while the emphasis is on intention to mean, it assumes that language use is always explicit in its functions and aims, it does not allow for the more implicit social and cultural values which are embedded in texts. I will discuss this further in chapter 2.

A re-accentuation of elements of the liberal approach

Whilst the instrumental approach to language teaching may be unsatisfactory in terms of thinking more critically about language use, the failure of the traditional liberal approach to develop communicative competence may also be clear. Yet, even if the paradigm offers little towards a theory of learning, and towards creating social meaning, I do not want to denounce the liberal tradition outright. The actual methodology of grammar and translation is not as reviled as they were during the heyday of communicative language teaching. There is increasingly a general

recognition of the importance of explicit grammar teaching. Translation is also seen as a new area to increase textual and stylistic awareness, particularly from a cultural point of view. It can open up areas of cross-cultural study in examining how language mediates underlying cultural values through, for instance, its use of vocabulary and metaphor (Byram, 1997; Lantolf, 1997). In addition, activities such as précis writing coupled with the inclusion of 'serious content' contribute to the intellectual development of the student and echoes Cummins' (1979) notion of the need to develop a cognitive academic language proficiency as well as basic interpersonal communicative skills. However, grammar and translation are not the elements of language teaching I am concerned with.

The notions in the liberal paradigm which are worth exploring in greater depth for their possible potential in language teaching are located, I feel, in three areas: a) intellectual stimulus and criticality; b) the notion of the language user talking with an 'individual voice' to express her humanity (cf. Kramsch, 1993); and c) the notion of morality.

These elements combine easily and almost naturally in a language classroom because the content of the classes can be fluid and contain any topic from pragmatic transactions to intellectually challenging discussions on any cultural, social, political or any other issue which interest the students. It is precisely the intellectual engagement which is one of the strengths of the liberal paradigm in education, and which has been almost completely lacking in instrumental approaches which are focused on pragmatic and transactional elements only. This brings us to the second notion of 'expressing individual meaning'. It is through content-based discussions that an exchange of complex thought can take place and that room can be given to students to express their unique experiences and thoughts. This will contribute to students' rational development as they may come to think about issues in a different light or come to realisations and

ruminations, to experience perhaps the 'life-changing conversations' (Attinasi and Friedrich quoted by Kramsch, *ibid.* p. 29) taking place through the medium of the foreign language. However, the notion of expressing individual meaning needs to be problematised which I will do in the next chapter.

The third notion of morality in the classical liberal paradigm can be easily translated to a modern context for language teaching through its emphasis on the emancipatory role of education and its view of a morally and socially better world. This view is to some extent embedded in the concept of language teaching for 'European citizenship' (Byram, Zarate, Neuner, 1997). This requires, as Byram says, more than mainly pragmatic and functional language teaching, but is rooted in a more comprehensive concept of living together. In terms of language teaching this means emphasising attitudes of mutual tolerance and a readiness to exchange views. This idea has been developed by, amongst others, Starkey whose pedagogy of political education and human rights awareness through foreign language teaching aims for 'the development of democracy and active citizenship' (Starkey, 1999: 156). However, pedagogies taking such an explicit citizenship approach tend to focus on content as knowledge in the language class, which is located within national boundaries. I will discuss these concepts further in chapters 2 and 3. Whilst I feel there is room for the citizenship and knowledge agenda in language pedagogy, my approach is to a large extent text-based, as I will set out in greater detail in chapters 3 and 4. The emancipatory and moral element is less foregrounded and more implicit in my own pedagogy, but it is present through critical discussions about texts in class.

However, even though I have argued that particularly the intellectual aspect of the liberal humanist paradigm, as well as the notion of expressing individual meaning, warrant re-interpretation, the paradigm itself is unable to

provide the theoretical framework for this. Its notions of objectivity and language as neutral are counter to the idea of encouraging learners to see the complexity of language and culture. Below, I will explore how different critical perspectives can be brought to bear on the notion of providing intellectual stimulus in the classroom.

Problematising intellectual engagement

Intellectual stimulus is not only provided through interesting or challenging content of texts used in the classroom, but also through engaging with texts in a critical manner.

Both aspects, i.e. intellectual content and criticality, centre on an engagement of the learner. In the case of reading texts the learner engages with the text and with the environment in which the text is produced. In the case of speech acts, the learner engages with the other participant and the context the participant brings with her. This engagement consists of thinking and reflecting on the meaning of what is said or written; in other words an intellectual engagement is a critical engagement. Engaging with meaning, or expressing individual meaning is a very different activity than repeating set chunks of transactional oriented language with which the learner cannot engage, purely to get something done.

The concept of criticality needs some explanation. I am following Pennycook (2001:5) in describing three different approaches to criticality. The first approach that Pennycook identifies is the critical approach which is associated with the liberal educational paradigm which he calls 'critical thinking'. This approach develops 'questioning skills' in the learner and involves bringing 'rigorous analysis to problem solving or textual analysis'. The second approach Pennycook refers to as 'emancipatory modernism'. This approach is associated with the neo Marxist tradition and is based on

Critical Theory. The central concepts of this approach are social inequality and social transformation. In language teaching this approach is taken on by the Critical Language Awareness movement (cf. Wallace, 2003; Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough and Wodak, 1996).

The third approach is generally associated with the 'post' philosophies, such as feminism, post structuralism and post colonialism and queer theory. Pennycook refers to it as 'problematizing practice'. It aims to map discourses and asks questions about the social, cultural and historical locations of the speaker. It seeks a broader understanding of 'how multiple discourses may be at play at the same time' (Pennycook, 2001: 44).

In my own approach to pedagogy, I include all these levels of criticality. The first level of critical thinking is useful as a perspective on text to sharpen students' critical ability, to query and question what a text is about and whether its structure, presentation and argumentation will stand up to scrutiny. However, I conceive of this only as a first step towards the more sophisticated levels of critique which are embedded within the other two approaches: a critique of power differentials and ideology, and even more so the third level of critique, which involves the problematizing of meaning and texts by acknowledging complexity.

It could be argued that applying different levels of critique is combining incommensurable elements. The 'critical thinking' paradigm assumes a view of objectivity, which clashes with a problematizing practice of critique which asks questions, eschews simple straight forward answers and demands self reflection of the learner. Whilst this incommensurability indeed underpins my pedagogy to some extent, I believe that this incommensurability reflects the complexity of the linguistic, social and cultural world we are introducing the learners to; this is after all fluid, messy and full of contradictions and inconsistencies that students need to deal with in their everyday life.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have traced the two paradigms which have influenced language teaching at universities in Britain. I have argued that neither of these provides the framework for language teaching that takes account of our complex society and complex needs of learners. Since I started working on this thesis the instrumental paradigm has, as a response to the perceived crisis in language learning, grown still stronger and the liberal language classroom has become the 'dinosaur' of language learning. Clearly, instrumental aims are important, but even more important is, I feel, the emancipatory role of education which was adhered to in the liberal tradition. One of the key elements of the liberal paradigm which is worth building on and re-articulating is that of the intellectual and critical aspect of language learning. Whilst this intellectual aspect is traditionally seen as located in notions of an objective critical approach, I have argued that the re-accentuation could be located in an intellectual *engagement* with language. This engagement would not be occasioned through notions of objectivity, but through a problematising approach of 'mapping' discourses; the recognition of understanding the discursive histories of texts (and people) and reflecting on these in relation to one's own positioning.

Learning a foreign language is not just learning a useful skill; it has the potential to empower the students in enabling them to participate in a critical way in a foreign culture and to understand more about the nature and motives which lie behind communication.

I believe that largely uncritical approaches to language teaching lie at the heart of the uneasy position of language teaching within the university curriculum. Even though I do not want to make exaggerated intellectual claims for language learning, where this is not appropriate, I believe that language learning can contribute significantly to a general understanding of

the culture under scrutiny, but equally it can generate a greater understanding of the 'self' and an appreciation of the 'other'.

In order to address this question, I will look in the next chapter in greater detail at the relationship between language, meaning and culture and how these have impacted on language teaching.

CHAPTER 2

CULTURE IN THE UNIVERSITY FOREIGN LANGUAGE CURRICULUM: SOME THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

In the previous chapter I looked at the position of language teaching at universities in Britain and the way that language teaching within modern languages degrees is frequently seen to be a subject which enables learners to develop practical skills rather than having a role to play in the general educational, critical or cultural development of the students as the other 'subject' courses do. This separation became even more pronounced as an instrumental rationale and approach to language teaching was embraced. In practice, the instrumental approach is based on functional language teaching and frequently involved learning chunks of language in a limited context, as part of the extreme end of the 'communicative method'. I have argued that by adopting this instrumental rationale, language teaching itself became alienated from some of the early rationale for language learning such as encouraging an intellectual and critical attitude, expressing individual meaning, i.e. engaging in discussions and dialogues rather than repeating ready made phrases. This 'engaging' is similar, I believe, to what Phipps and Gonzalez (2004) refer to as 'linguaging', and is a key element in the language and culture class.

In this chapter I will consider some of the underlying issues of language and culture pedagogy. Whilst it is the basic tenet of this study that language and

culture need to be addressed in an integrated manner in language teaching, I will nevertheless discuss language and culture separately as two interlinking pedagogic areas. This way I can develop my argument for my take on the relationship between language and culture which has influenced my particular pedagogy. I will look more specifically at the notion of interculturality in language teaching in chapter 3.

In the first part of this chapter I look at views of culture which underpin culture pedagogy as part of modern language degrees, and I describe some of the current practices. The first one of these is an approach which gives explicit information about the culture and society of the foreign language area, and which generally goes by the name of *Landeskunde* or Area Studies. Area Studies constitutes subject areas which are generally taught as 'content' or 'subject' courses other than language teaching whether *Landeskunde* tends to be taught as part of language classes.

I argue that teaching culture as part of language classes may be better served by a cultural studies approach, which focuses on the processes and practices of culture and the construction of meaning and allows for a more complex idea of culture.

In the second part of this chapter I focus on views of language in relation to culture which have influenced language teaching approaches. In doing so I argue that a traditional structural view of language as stable still underpins some contemporary language courses, and that this view has taken on a common-sense understanding. I then describe social and cultural views of language, including those derived from linguistic relativity, critical language study and Hymes' notion of pragmatic language use.

I conclude the chapter by discussing how the two areas are interlinked in pedagogy and I will describe my own take on this.

TEACHING CULTURE

Views of culture

The word 'culture' is problematic. Raymond Williams is purported to have said he wished he had never heard 'the damned word'. As Williams points out, there are various overlapping categories of meaning: culture as a process, as a product and as a way of life of a particular community, but the meaning of the word shifts continuously (Williams, 1983 (1976)). Stuart Hall (1997:34-36) calls the word 'the new language of our time'; it is a catchword, used widely and frequently 'from politics to business, from life-style to media' to refer to the way people think, feel and behave. Frequently, the words 'social' and 'cultural' are used interchangeably, both in everyday use and in the literature on the subject. There are no agreed definitions on what separates the social from the cultural, although the word social is more often used when we talk about structures and systems of society and relations between people, whereas culture is often seen as encompassing anything social plus the wider notions of value and ideological systems.

In Williams' seminal book *Keywords* he lists the intricate and complex semantic transformations the term 'culture' has undergone since its early use in the 15th Century. In summary, modern usage of the term relates to three broad categories (1983 (1976): 90):

- 1) a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development. This usage captures the idea of culture as a natural process of human development in a linear way, the ultimate of which resulted in the European 'civilization' and culture of the Enlightenment;
- 2) a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group or humanity in general, in short, the anthropological view of culture. The use of the word 'culture' as 'a way of life' started in the 18th century with Herder (1782-1791)

who attacked the Eurocentric view of culture encompassed in the first definition. However, within cultural anthropology, there are different interpretations of how to study and consider culture as the way of life of a group;

- 3) the works and practices of intellectual and aesthetic activities, such as music, literature, painting and sculpture, often referred to as Culture with a capital C or 'high' culture. In daily contemporary usage this view of culture now also includes products and practices from popular ('low') culture, such as film, tv and media. Eagleton represents the view of 'high' and 'low' culture as the 'culture wars' (cf. Eagleton, 2000).

The latter definition, culture in the sense of aesthetic activities and products, is the view of culture which has been traditionally assumed in modern language degree programmes, at least in Britain. In the liberal humanist educational paradigm, culture was (and in certain institutions still is), mostly seen through the prism of the literary canon, the 'high' view of culture which combines the aesthetic view with the hierarchical view of culture as civilisation. This concords with Matthew Arnold's (1889:56) view of "the best knowledge and thought of the time". However, as I discussed in chapter 1, as a result of the expansion of university education in Britain and the political pressures towards vocational aims of language learning, literature courses have been increasingly replaced by courses focusing on 'contemporary cultural studies', as Worton referred to it (2009), bringing about a change in how 'culture' is interpreted. 'Contemporary cultural studies' in Worton's report refers to courses which combine the 'high' and 'low' view of culture; literature as well as film studies. But in addition, culture is part of the curriculum in its anthropological form through Area Studies. These courses tend to include a historical overview and cover the political and social structures of the target country.

When it comes to the view of culture as anthropology, there is, however, a range of practice in courses as part of a modern language degree. At the university where my study takes place, for instance, there is no reference to the term Area Studies. Non-literature courses tend to be taught in disciplinary areas, such as history, film studies, and occasionally as linguistics or socio-linguistics.

Since this thesis is only concerned with culture pedagogy as part of language teaching, I will not discuss Area Studies as a separate academic discipline. Instead, I focus on the cultural dimension of language teaching, which now almost universally focuses on the anthropological aspect of culture. The view of culture as a way of life of people in 'the' target country is known as the *Landeskunde* approach. I will turn to this next.

Landeskunde

The label *Landeskunde* is gradually disappearing (Risager, 2007:5) and being replaced by the term 'intercultural competence'. I will nevertheless continue to use the word, because its related term *kennis van land en volk* (knowledge of the country and its people), or more explicitly *Nederland- en Vlaanderenkunde* is still adhered to in the context of Dutch as a Second and as a Foreign Language. Moreover, with the term *Landeskunde* I refer to courses which take a certain approach to culture pedagogy, i.e. courses which focus on imparting knowledge of the target country. The anthropological view of culture in *Landeskunde* courses is generally based on Herder. This is the idea of a defined culture or 'cultures' (Williams, 1983 (1976):89), often, though not exclusively, in terms of its national borders, or, as Risager (2006:33) calls it, 'culture as a cohesive unit' that marks it off from other groups of people.

The subject generally concerns itself with three areas of interest. The most traditional focus concerns the history and social structures of the target country, providing factual information on, for instance, the party political, judicial, educational and healthcare systems, economics, media and historical events. In other words, a course that describes rather than analyses. These courses tend to provide a simplified picture of society in order to create a coherent overview. An example of a book which is used at universities abroad where Dutch is taught is *Nederland leren kennen* (Snoek, 2000,(1996)). This consists of chapters focusing on history, culture, recent social issues, economics and religion written in Dutch and functioning as reading texts in the language classroom. Another, well-respected, example is Shetter's *The Netherlands in Perspective: The Dutch way of Organizing a Society and its Setting* (2002 (1997)), an English language resource providing an in-depth historical, social and cultural 'coherent overview of the Dutch society in all its aspects' [my translation](Beheydt, 2003). Themes running through the chapters emphasise such characteristics as the consensual nature of Dutch society, the pragmatic approach of its citizens and institutions and, above all, the supposed insatiable need to 'organise'. The book demonstrates the problem with *Landeskunde*: for the sake of clarity a limited picture with generalisations is painted of the Netherlands as a coherent society.

The second area often touched on in *Landeskunde* courses is a more recent inclusion and stems from a vocational rationale: one cannot be an effective 'intercultural' or 'cross-cultural communicator' without having at least a basic understanding of the social patterns and values in society as these are reflected in the way that people communicate. It relates to culture as communication. For this reason sociolinguistic information is provided to develop an awareness of prevailing communication strategies and customs (shaking hands when greeting, degrees of directness in expressing intent

etc.). This is what Canale and Swain (1980:30,31) called 'sociolinguistic', 'strategic' and 'discourse' competence.

The Dutch applied linguist, Gerard Willems, developed a pedagogy for conversational proficiency in English for native speakers of Dutch aimed at enabling learners to develop these competences and practise these through roleplays. Hofstede's (1994) study of intercultural communication about patterns of communication in different cultures (using data collected from IBM employees in different countries) formed the theoretical basis for his pedagogy. Hofstede describes cultural attitudes in communication patterns along such dimensions as how people deal with phenomena such as power distance (e.g. the relations between managers and employees), uncertainty, and whether cultures are individualistically or collectively orientated. Willems (1994, p.220) selects examples of dialogues and roleplays to demonstrate to his students that 'utterances in language are direct utterances of our culture'.

Critique of *Landeskunde*

The danger of creating a clear and coherent picture of the foreign culture, as Brian Street (1993:35) warns, is one of ignoring the pluriformity of society and the historical and social processes which have informed cultural practices. As Cowan, quoted by Street, points out, defining culture in terms of its sharedness automatically silences questions such as – Is it actually shared? By whom? To what extent? How did it come to be so? The risk is thus one of ignoring certain groups or features in society; it leads to exclusion rather than acknowledging pluriformity and it bypasses the political question of why certain interpretations and meanings have become dominant.

Similarly, the linguistic focus, even if touches on relevant issues such as patterns in language use, is an oversimplification and generalization suggesting certain communicative features always happen when people of two specific cultural backgrounds meet. This approach on its own concentrates only on the 'what' and 'how' of communication, but ignores the 'why'. It ignores the fact that there are social groupings and individuals who will not conform to that picture of communication. Moreover it sees communication in very positive terms, as a cooperative act, and ignores the fact that other social forces such as power relations are often at play in communicative contexts. I will discuss this further in chapter 3.

Without a more critical analysis of contexts in which communication takes place and meaning is made, the understanding of the students will remain limited to the pragmatic elements alone. They need to grasp *why* these conventions are used and, by the same token, that they are not necessarily used by everyone all the time. An emphasis on convention should not be presented as a model of Dutch, Flemish or English communication, as this would be more suitable to a course which aims to *train* language skills for business, rather than for an *educational* context where language conventions are not seen as something to copy slavishly, but as choices which language users have in deciding whether to follow these conventions or not, and if so, to what extent.

In addition to overviews of history, culture and society, and socio-linguistic knowledge, there is a third area of *Landeskunde*, which focuses on everyday life, life conditions, interpersonal relations, important values and attitudes and social conventions and rituals. As this aspect has been included in the detailed taxonomy by the Common European Framework (CEF), I will discuss this as part of this initiative.

The Common European Framework

The Common European Framework of References for Languages (CEF for short) was commissioned by the Council of Europe and published in 2001. Even though it is to a large extent based on Byram's notion of intercultural communicative competence (which I will discuss in chapter 3), it cannot be completely attributed to him, as the CEF is a consensus document between the various member states of the EU. It provides guidelines for teaching, learning and assessment and does not suggest particular teaching methodologies. Instead, it consists of a taxonomy of the skills that learners should possess at certain levels of study. The CEF arose as a consequence of the mobility schemes which were set up by the Council of Europe and which followed the removal of trade restrictions in the European market. These mobility programmes encouraged exchanges between staff in areas of governmental and non-governmental organizations in health, social care, education and other professional domains. To facilitate this movement, the CEF was set up to encourage language learning, to provide parity in language provision across the EU to prepare people linguistically as well as mentally for the intercultural experiences that mobility would bring. It is an extremely comprehensive document which describes in detail what competences, skills and knowledges learners of a foreign language ought to possess at a particular level and in a particular domain. These competences include, in addition to linguistic and sociolinguistic competences, a cultural dimension which is referred to as 'intercultural awareness'.

An important aspect of this awareness is 'objective knowledge of the world' in respect of the country in which the language is spoken. This includes information about areas such as everyday living (e.g. food, hobbies, celebrations), living conditions (e.g. welfare arrangements), interpersonal relations (e.g. family structures, race relations, relations between genders), values, beliefs and attitudes, body language, social conventions (regarding,

for instance, punctuality, gift giving, dress, and taboos), and finally ritual behaviour regarding, for instance, religious celebrations, birth and death, festivals and so on (CEF, pp101-130).

Whilst the CEF acknowledges that intercultural awareness should be seen in a wider sense than the context of the L1 and L2 cultures, it also emphasises that learners should be aware of 'how each community appears from the perspective of the other, often in the form of national stereotypes' (CEF, p.103).

Even though the CEF document does not make reference to its particular perspective on culture, the view which emerges from the CEF seems to be partly based on a similar view of culture as underpinning *Landeskunde*: culture as knowledge. But its inclusion of attitudes and values with regards to a range of areas in daily life, suggests that Geertz's (1973) symbolic and interpretive view of culture as 'historically transmitted patterns of meaning [...] by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (Geertz 1973: 89) may also have informed the CEF.

The CEF has undoubtedly advanced the notion of culture pedagogy as part of language teaching by introducing a considered list of the wider aspects of cultural knowledge that it considered students should possess. In fact, the cultural dimension in most contemporary Dutch language courses (cf. *Contact*, 2010) is limited to a few reading texts about topics such as the geographical situation of Flanders, or information about everyday habits such as customs and conventions regarding food or celebrations. The rest of the course is solidly based on a functional approach to language teaching; arguably a more considered inclusion of the cultural dimension of the CEF would have been a step forward.

Nonetheless, its treatment of the cultural dimension of every day life is superficial. The CEF does not encourage reflection which goes beyond a superficial comparing of every day living practices with the learners' 'own' culture. As in *Landeskunde*, a strong national perspective of culture is taken, which links the foreign language to an essentialised idea of 'the' target culture and does not allow for a critical understanding of the complexities of cultural realities such as power inequalities, differences in role or status and the 'lived experience' occasioned by the complex cultural identities of people. It represents culture as homogenous and stable and reduces culture to a body of facts rather than encouraging the learner to engage with meaning or focus on the process through which meaning is made. This at best provides the student with some pragmatic and useful information, but at its worst reinforces or creates unchallenged stereotypical images.

Having said that, a focus on everyday life can bring in ethnographic elements, self reflexivity and an awareness of the political, cultural and social influences learners are subjected to themselves in their everyday experiences and realities. This is indeed the focus in my own pedagogy (see chapters 3 and 4).

Despite the influence it has on language teaching in Europe, Risager only mentions the CEF in passing in her overview of language and culture pedagogy (2007:143); 'its conception of the relationship between language and culture, and that between language teaching and culture teaching [in the CEF], is unclear and without theoretical foundation', she states.

Whilst I think an element of knowledge about the target country needs to be addressed in language pedagogy, it should not present culture in a bounded, stable and one-dimensional way, as that will not provide the

enabling of an intellectual critical development in the students. This brings us again to the issue of criticality.

Criticality and culture

In the previous chapter, I described three different levels of criticality identified by Pennycook (2001), which I believe can be applied to language and culture teaching. The first level, 'critical thinking' as Pennycook referred to it, concords with questioning skills; not accepting information and knowledge at face value, but reflecting on information and observations and querying common-sense interpretations and explanations. This level of critical thinking could be applied to the knowledge-based aspect of culture pedagogy. Students should have the analytical skills of querying the information given, as well as the taken for granted assumptions embedded in that information, or, as Findlay (1988: 44,45) phrased it, students should develop a critical understanding of culture which allows them to evaluate new events and developments in society. However, to apply the other two interpretations of criticality which Pennycook (2001:5) highlighted, respectively, critique as 'emancipatory modernism', querying power relations, and critique as 'problematizing practice', querying the discursive influences on culture in practice, a *Landeskunde* approach cannot suffice. A better option for the language and culture teacher would be to address culture in terms of its wider definition, and see cultural products and practices in relation to the processes and ideologies that inform them.

Guilherme developed a pedagogical and philosophical framework as a possible formulation of a critical approach to intercultural language learning. Being critical in this approach means 'questioning dominant cultural patterns and seeking the reasons which lead to these patterns being blindly accepted and unquestioned' (2002:19). Guilherme borrows from Giroux's (1992) notion of 'border pedagogy' in which critical reflection is an important

element. Referring to Barnett (1997), who saw reflection as 'meta-critique', she explains that in order to question dominant patterns one has to take a critical perspective towards one's own knowledge and social context, as well as being critical in trying to inhabit someone else's cognitive perspective. Critical reflection is then a vital element in developing critical cultural awareness as, when reflecting on cultural differences, it will help to make explicit how one justifies one's own beliefs and actions, as well as how these beliefs and actions might be perceived by the other, Guilherme states (2002:40). She continues: 'From this perspective, reflection-in-action allows for the coming into consciousness of factors that interact in a cross-cultural event such as the unconscious concepts and rules or routine responses that are taken for granted by each side as well as the emotional impetus that drives the intercultural encounter (ibid).' In her critical approach to intercultural language learning, Guilherme attempts to respond to the contemporary complex realities of border crossings, of multiculturalism and hybridity. Her 'border pedagogy' rejects a Eurocentric approach towards any culture and favours the inclusion of non-European cultures in curriculum content. It perceives the cultural subject as multifaceted, ever-changing, and in relation to a complex, also evolving society (Guilherme, 2002:43). Border pedagogy then does not only involve the acknowledgement of facts, that is, the input of geographical, historical, social or political information. 'It should focus on the complexity of hidden meanings, of underlying values, and how these articulate with the micro- and macrocontexts they integrate (ibid:45).' Guilherme looks towards Giroux again who states that the pedagogical goal is not to have students exercise rigorous analytical skills in order to arrive at the right answer but to have a better understanding of what the codes are that organise different meanings and interests in particular configurations of knowledge and power (Guilherme quoting Giroux, 2002: 46). By reflecting on these configurations, students studying a foreign culture should be able to translate them into their own contexts. 'The meanings and interests of the Other will echo their

own thoughts and feelings and, by becoming critically aware of them, students will identify and clarify their own struggles, points of view, predisposition which are likely to help them make more enlightened choices' (ibid). Later in this chapter I will come back to the issue of configuration of power and knowledge, but I will now turn to Cultural Studies as an alternative approach to culture pedagogy in the context of language teaching.

Cultural studies

The term cultural studies needs explaining as it is used in different ways in different contexts. In modern language degrees the term is often used to refer to academic subject courses with 'cultural content', such as literature, film studies or area studies. In language pedagogy literature the term has also been used. In his 1989 book Byram called the language and culture pedagogy for which he started to develop a theoretical basis 'Cultural Studies'. However, his use of the term is not the same as that of the Cultural Studies movement which I will discuss below. Byram has since dropped the term, as his overriding concept came to be the 'intercultural speaker', which I will discuss in chapter 3.

I will use the term cultural studies here in line with Turner (1992:9) to refer to an interdisciplinary area of study, rather than one particular approach, where various concerns and methods converge which have 'enabled us to understand phenomena and relationships that were not accessible through existing disciplines'. Its interest encompasses a very broad field of contemporary cultural practices, products and processes, although its main focus tends to be on 'popular' culture, as it rejects the notion of the 'canon'. Whereas a *Landeskunde* approach focuses on providing information and knowledge, a cultural studies approach allows students to engage with texts, to 'discover' information about cultural practices, values or processes

through reading and interpreting texts. These texts can come from a wide variety of areas of human life, including, or perhaps especially those, which touch on the mundane and everyday practices of 'lived experience'.

In chapters 3 and 4 I set out my particular take on how to include a cultural studies approach in a language class, but below I provide a short overview of some of the main ideas and concepts associated with cultural studies as an approach to culture pedagogy.

Overview of ideas of cultural studies in culture pedagogy

Cultural Studies developed initially in Britain. The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Study (CCCS), the first of its kind, was established in 1964 at the University of Birmingham. The birth of cultural studies marked a movement which took a very different view of culture than the traditional one, based on the literary canon, and regarded culture as a socially informed construct rather than purely the expression of an individual great mind. The distinction between high and low culture became irrelevant. Raymond Williams, generally considered to be the godfather of this movement, has been seminal in seeing culture as a process as well as 'concrete lived experience', and in analysing cultural products in relation to the institutions and social structures which produced them (Williams, 1961).

British Cultural Studies changed the way that people think about, study and teach culture, but as the approach developed beyond Britain, different interpretations underpinned by different theories, emerged. Much of British Cultural Studies was initially informed by a Marxist agenda, centring around issues such as power relations, particularly those determined by social class. Later academics, such as Stuart Hall extended the notion of inequality in society to incorporate areas of ethnicity and gender. An

important moment in cultural studies was the adoption of Gramsci's (1971) notion of 'hegemony', which views the cultural domination of a particular group as being achieved through persuasion or consent. Submission to the dominant ideas is then partly a consensual undertaking. People submit to dominant views because these views have developed a taken-for-granted perspective. Power is then exercised not so much by a dominant group or ruling class imposing its will on other groups or people, but instead power is the legitimisation of certain ideas in becoming the norm. As Van Dijk (1993) states, we speak of hegemony when subtle forms of 'dominance' seem to be so persistent that it seems natural and it is accepted, that those that are dominated act in the interest of the powerful. Behind this principle of hegemony, as Wallace points out (2003:30), is the view that people in general are not aware of the operation of power, especially as embedded in language. The idea that language practices and conventions are invested with power relations of which people are unaware, is also the focus of a strand of language pedagogy, Critical Language Awareness, which I will discuss later on in this chapter.

The issues in cultural studies are wide and varied but a consensus concerns the extent to which, and the processes through which, cultural meanings are made and accepted, are imposed upon or resisted by us. The central questions are therefore to do with ideology and power. The notion of ideology which is used in cultural studies is a complex one. The concept of 'ideology' is often traced back to a Marxist view which pertains to ideas of economic and cultural domination of the ruling class over the working class. As Wetherell (2001:286) says, 'Marxist work on ideology was concerned with testing ideas and statements for their truth value, or their accordance with reality'. However, this early view of ideology has become superseded in cultural studies by other views which are based on notions of reality which are more complex and subtle.

Stuart Hall (1983) uses the term 'ideology' to refer to a framework of ideas and concepts to make sense of the world. This view of ideology as a belief system is the one which is used most frequently in the 'common sense' understanding of the term. The notion of 'ideas' as encompassing a belief system is, I think, given more subtlety through the concept of 'discourses' as used by Foucault, which explains how ways of thinking about a particular topic or slice of the cultural or social world can become so dominant that it 'infiltrates' people's mind and takes on the aura of 'truth'. I will refer to this again later in this chapter, when I discuss social and cultural views of language.

What thus becomes relevant for study is not just what products or practices are part of a particular way of life, but the meanings attributed to them. Quite how we interpret cultural products and practices, whether we see them as forms of self-expression or socially enforced meanings, as acts of resistance or incorporation, depends on the theoretical paradigm and underlying epistemology from which we approach the texts we study.

Interpreting texts then, is not just a matter of seeing how meaning is encoded, but it is a process of *constructing* the meaning of signs which must take account of the wider context in which the texts are produced and in which they are read and received, or, how they are 'articulated' (Stuart Hall, 1985). Meaning is thus not fixed, as different meanings can be ascribed dependent on the position from which we approach the sign. Different people, in different contexts, with different ideological backgrounds and different individual histories, will interpret texts in different ways. The importance of looking at signs not merely from the viewpoint of text production but also of text reception is central to many contemporary cultural studies practices. One of the key issues in this respect is the notion of intertextuality. As Maaïke Meijer (1996) argues, this goes beyond traceable references to other texts and should be interpreted in its widest

sense as the whole of the social and cultural climate and conventions. The reader constructs the meaning of the texts through his/her knowledge of and experience with other texts and a whole network of conventions and discourses. In this way a text becomes what Meijer calls a *cultuurtekst*, a network of accepted ways of talking about a particular theme. Seeing a text as *cultuurtekst* necessitates looking at the cultural and social environment in which the text is produced. The intertexts also provide a wider context through the other cultural phenomena and practices to which the text refers and the discourse in which it is created. Intertexts provide the cohesive structure through which text and context can be studied in relation to one another.

Culture in Cultural Studies is not an aesthetic view of culture, but an anthropological one. This, as Risager (2006:49) says, is an extension of Geertz' interpretative view of culture as a system of meanings. Whereas for Geertz, she explains, an already existing meaning needs to be 'unearthed' from texts or practices, in a Cultural Studies approach the emphasis is on the creation, recreation and the attribution of meaning as part of a process of people in interaction or 'dialogue'. This, as well as the notion of *cultuurtekst* are key aspects in my own pedagogy which I will discuss further in chapters 3 and 4.

LANGUAGE IN RELATION TO CULTURE

Orientations towards language

In this section of this chapter I want to address some of the theoretical positions from which language is seen in relation to culture and how these theories have been reflected in language teaching. Looking at this relationship assumes that there is an intrinsic link between language and culture. Indeed, this link is now almost commonly accepted in the theoretical literature on language and culture pedagogy, even if, in practice, certainly in

the case of Dutch language teaching, the inclusion of culture in course books is very haphazard, and the pedagogic activities frequently display a view of language as stable and autonomous.

I will first discuss this approach to language as autonomous, which I discuss here as part of a traditional approach to language learning, before looking at social and cultural views of language.

Traditional approaches

I will start by briefly backtracking to the traditional approach to language teaching in university language degrees. This pertained to an Arnoldian concept of culture (part of which survives in traditional universities) and incorporated two views of language concurrently. On the one hand, language had a central role to play in the conceptualisation of 'high' culture, so that language was valued for its historical, literary and aesthetic dimensions. On the other hand, language teaching was divorced from these ideals and instead emphasised the structural properties of language, in accordance with methodologies derived from teaching Latin (Cope and Kalantzis, 1993:41-45).

As a result, language, as it was conceptualised in language teaching, became separate from its original anchoring in those traditional philological degrees. This split between an aesthetic and a formal view of language was occasioned, I believe, by the two conflicting trends of thought about language which were current at the time and which Vološinov¹ (1996 (1973):53) describes as 'individualistic subjectivism', rooted in historical views and concerned with human consciousness, and 'abstract objectivism', which considers language as 'completely independent of individual creative acts, intentions or motives'. The first trend emphasises the individual and

creative aspects of speech. Vossler, as quoted by Vološinov (op. cit. p. 51), formulates it like this: 'linguistic thought is essentially poetic thought; linguistic truth is artistic truth, is meaningful beauty'. The link with an Arnoldian view of culture is easy to recognise. The second trend, known especially for its Saussurean interpretations, looks at language as a system, and, as Vološinov (op. cit. pp. 67, 68) says, ignores the social function of language and fails to do justice to its changeable and adaptable nature.

These two opposing trends in linguistic thought remained separate within foreign language degree courses and offered a two-tier view of language within one and the same degree; on the one hand language as literature; on the other, language as grammar. Neither 'individual subjectivism', nor 'abstract objectivism' is easily married with the idea of a relationship between language and culture, if culture is interpreted as a meaning making process as part of the wider social environment and its value systems. Whilst a Saussurean view of language allows both for an individual as well as a social side of language, Saussure sees these two elements as separate. His view is complex, but I feel relevant to the language teacher as many of these concepts have taken on the aura of 'common-sense' assumptions (Kress, 1994:170,171), and have influenced views on foreign language teaching. Saussure's notion of *langue* as a system of forms represents the social aspect of language in the sense that the linguistic rules have been agreed upon by a speech community. *Parole* (the utterance) on the other hand, as the execution of speech, represents the individual choices the language user makes. In separating these two elements, Saussure (1973:11) says, we can at the same time 'separate 1) what is social from what is individual; and 2) what is essential from what is accessory and more or less accidental.' What is essential to Saussure is *langue*, the system passively internalised by the individual speaker. In this trend, as Vološinov (op. cit. pp. 52-54) explains, 'the individual acquires the

¹ The book is widely believed to have been written by Mikhael Bakhtin, using Volosinov's name.

system of language completely ready-made'. There is no room for individual creativity, because the linguistic system is fixed. A Saussurean view has no time for social values as reflected in texts or utterances, and is not interested in language as constructing social reality. Structuralism sees language in terms of its formal properties and not its use. This approach remained *de rigueur* in language teaching until the 1960s when it was gradually replaced by methodologies informed by contextual and communicative concerns.

However, a Saussurean-based view of language has influenced language teaching in more than its view of grammatical correctness as a major criterion in teaching. Saussure's notion of language as a system of signs encoding meaning also continued to inform language teaching approaches. For Saussure, the *sign* consists of the *signifier* (the outward stimulus) and the *signified* (the mental construct which the signifier conjures up). The problem with applying these notions directly to language teaching lies in the two assumptions embedded in this conceptualisation of the signifier and signified. One assumption is that the relationship between signifier and signified is arbitrary, that there is no inherent link between form and meaning, but that this relationship is established by convention alone. The other assumption is that language as a system is stable, fixed and bounded; meaning is tied to form and exists independently of context (Kress, 1994:171). In other words, language is seen as an autonomous system without any relationship to culture.

The point I would like to make is that if we do not think there is a motivated relation between words and meaning, then language users merely engage in recycling pre-existing meanings. Applying this notion to language teaching would lead to the conclusion that it is sufficient to teach these pre-existing meanings, whether as grammar, vocabulary or functional phrases, as has indeed been the case in functional approaches. Language teaching

becomes then in effect a mere re-labelling, sticking a different label to the same concept. How can we then express individual meaning? Or, looking at it from the pedagogic perspective of reading, the consequence of this view is that the text entails a definite meaning which the reader needs to extract. I will discuss this view of text further in chapter 3.

Even though the practice of using the language system as the main guiding principle in language teaching has largely been abandoned, the common-sense view of language and meaning as stable and based on convention still underpins many foreign language teaching practices. A notion of stability and convention is important to make the language accessible for pedagogic purposes and to learn the appropriacy rules of communication (cf Widdowson, 1981). However, it does not readily lead to an understanding of how and why particular meanings are created, or how and why social and cultural realities are reflected and constructed in texts.

The implication of a Saussurean view for language teaching is that semantics is restricted to surface meaning and does not extend to underlying meanings, or using Halliday's term, its 'potential to mean' (cf Halliday, 1978). Much of language teaching reflects this stable view in the tendency to look at texts and use them as exercises in testing comprehension of the explicit meaning presented. Yet it is by looking at implied meanings and at what texts do *not* say, the significant absences in texts, the reading between the lines, that students can access the social and cultural as well as individual meanings which are constructed in a text.

In short, if we return to views of language which were in operation in traditional language degrees, on the one hand language as expression of individual and creative thought and on the other hand language as a system of formal rules, neither would form a good basis from which to derive principles for language teaching. I will now turn to cultural and social views

of language and argue that these do not necessarily negate the potential to express individual meaning.

Social and cultural views of language

A strong culture-bound view which stems from a cultural anthropological perspective of language, is the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, first formulated by Whorf in 1940 (Whorf, 1956) which holds that language and culture are completely interwoven. The Whorfian hypothesis posits that language determines the way we think; the possibilities and limitations of our language structure our thought, so people see the world differently because of their language. This view borrows from the notion of culture promoted by Herder (1782-91); that there is a direct link between a particular language and the particular culture where the language is spoken. In the literature of Dutch language teaching, this close relationship is often stated. In her monograph, aimed at teachers of Dutch as a second language, Van der Toorn-Schutte (1997:9) suggests that the reason that foreign language learners of Dutch struggle with learning the language is because, not having grown up on the Netherlands, they perceive the world in a different way. Referring to etymology, as well as to pragmatics, she gives examples of words, expressions, linguistic as well as functional aspects of language, which are 'culturally determined'. Whilst van der Toorn-Schutte seems to hold on to a strong notion of the Whorfian hypothesis, Van Baalen (2003) and Van Kalsbeek (2003) who also both refer to Whorf, agree that language is culturally determined, although they see this in a weaker form; of language reflecting rather than determining culture. Nevertheless, they both hold on to the one language, one culture view. Van Kalsbeek particularly focuses on miscommunication to which she refers as 'culture bumps', whereas Van Baalen uses Wierzbicka's cross-cultural semantics to encourage students to look at the 'culturally determined norms and values embedded in words' [my translation] (op.cit, p 107). Examples of these are

words such as *vriend* (friend), *tolerant*, and the supposedly untranslatable word *gezellig* which refers to 'cosiness' as well as to 'having a good time in company'.

The problem with using the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis to inform pedagogy is the assumption of a direct relationship between one particular language and one particular culture. This does not allow for the complex social, linguistic and cultural reality of people's lives. Roger Andersen (1988:83) suggests that an influence of language on thought is indisputable. I agree that language has an influence on our perception of the world. However, I see this relationship not as being between 'a' language and 'a' culture, but rather to how we construct our world through discourses which are part of culture and which we encounter in our daily lives. I will discuss this later in this chapter.

Whilst Andersen (op.cit. p. 88) also critiques linguistic relativity because it ignores the fact that people have different experiences, both in social terms and in their relation to the natural world, he adds a critical angle to this. These different experiences of people, are not necessarily haphazard, he says, but based on inequality, as social and material knowledge are not distributed equally. For this reason, he suggests, issues of power relations need to come into the equation when looking at questions of language and thought. Interpreted this way, the issue becomes an ideological one and bears on similar concerns to the questions asked by cultural studies - to what degree are we free to create our own meaning, and can we resist the dominant 'taken-for-granted' interpretations of text? These questions reflect a critical approach to language and culture, as critiquing how power is reproduced through language. I will discuss this view of language below.

Critical Language Awareness

Critical Language Awareness (CLA) is not a view of language as such, but a pedagogic approach. I include it nevertheless in my discussion of social views of language, because its critical approach, derived from influences such as Critical Linguistics (cf. Kress and Hodge, 1979), Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1970), and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) (cf. Fairclough, 1989; Fairclough and Wodak, 1996) is part of a shift moving away from viewing language as autonomous, to a more “ideological” model with connections to media studies and a more grounded understanding of social processes’ (Pennycook, 2001:9). Its aim is emancipatory; to encourage social transformation through denaturalising ideologies that have become naturalised (op.cit. p.81). CDA studies focuses particularly on unequal relations as produced through conversations, e.g. doctor and patient interviews, such as who gets to speak about what and for how long (Fairclough, 1989:43-47).

CLA, as the pedagogic wing of CDA, aims to promote an awareness in learners of how power relations and inequalities are produced and reproduced through language. There are various practices of CLA, although there is a strong focus on the use of text and reading (cf. Wallace, 2003). CLA pedagogies encourage students to look at the way that power is reflected in the use of particular conventions, what the conditions and motivations were of the producers of a given text and how texts positions readers or listeners in terms of their role or identity. It raises awareness of how through the use of language people can maintain or change power relationships.

This pedagogy was developed in Britain and is used in some English Language Teaching contexts, but does not seem to have made much impact on foreign language teaching. One reason for this might be that a critical pedagogy of critical language awareness does not fit in easily with

the now dominant skills-based traditional approaches to foreign language teaching.

However, Critical Language Awareness approaches are also used to develop productive language skills, particularly writing. Romy Clark (1992:134-137) argues that in the case of academic writing, for instance, students should be aware of the prevailing conventions within the academic community and should be able to apply them. But equally important is, as she states, a critical attitude towards these conventions; by challenging dominant practices, students can learn to produce alternative discourses and inscribe their own meaning.

This last point, I feel, has potential for further development as a pedagogy in the foreign language classroom. It hinges on the dual aims of empowering the learner to recognise social meanings and to be able to employ these if needed, but also to allow for human agency to create individual meaning within established discourses.

My own pedagogy, which I set out in chapter 4, borrows from CLA in the sense that I ask learners to look at how people in texts are positioned and represented. However, my pedagogy deviates from CLA in the sense that it does not aim to 'unmask power', but to recognize the complexities of discourses and ideologies in texts. CLA takes account of context as the context of production and reception in relation to how power is produced. Working in a foreign language context and interested in language and culture pedagogy, I want students to focus also on other forms of contexts guiding communication. One of view of context is provided through Hymes' notion of 'communicative competence', to which I will now turn.

Hymes' theory of communicative competence

Hymes' view of communicative competence (cf. 1967; 1972) brought an anthropological understanding to language, as it provides a model for analysing a communicative event in its socio cultural context. His model is often set out as the mnemonic SPEAKING, to indicate the various parameters that govern communication in terms of what to say, when, to whom and how to say it, and with what intention:

S: setting and scene - the time, place (and possible meanings attached to that) where the communicative act takes place;

P: participants – the people involved in the speech act;

E: ends – the aim and outcome;

A: act sequence – the order or chronological structure of the event;

K: key – the tone which is used, i.e. humorous, aggressive, arrogant;

I: instrumentalities – the modes through which the communicative act is conducted, e.g. written or spoken and which registers;

N: Norm – the social rules that govern the communicative event;

G: genre – the type of text or speech act, e.g. a lecture or a conversation between friends.

This set of parameters in its pragmatic, goal-oriented and functional aspects has served as a guide for language teaching since the 1980s. It formed the basis of the functional approach to language teaching (cf Wilkinson, 1976) which was developed further in the Threshold Levels (Van Ek, 1991) of the Council of Europe, the precursor to the Common European Framework, which I discussed earlier in the chapter.

This approach focused on language functions in a few specific domains of language use such as shopping, travel, house and home, food and drink. Language teaching for communicative competence reduced Hymes' notion of communication to a limited and fixed set of situational topics, through which the learner would encounter and practise communicative acts such as giving a warning, inviting someone, asking for help within set domains

using set phrases. Its focus became a goal-oriented view of language where limited features of the situational context were the principal determinants of the linguistic choices to be made.

Reducing language teaching predominantly to the context of situation limits the learners' understanding of the role that our social and cultural environment has to play in our language use. Considering the context according to set parameters assumes that the rules for social communication used in one situation are the same in all situations of that kind. Like the Saussurean tradition, it assumes stability of meaning. It ignores the unpredictability of communicative events and the individual choices we might make in our utterances to respond to the context. It could be argued that learners would at least need to learn the conventions used in certain communicative settings, but even in situations governed largely by conventions we have the freedom to act in accordance with those conventions or not. As Kress (1994:176) argues, even a decision to conform is an act of choice, and as such involves a 'new production of the meaning of conformity'.

However, it is not only the limited interpretation of Hymes' (1967;1972) formulation of communicative competence view of language which is the problem. I believe that his model, whilst helping us to understand the very important role of the immediate context, or the context of situation, does not fully address the idea of the complexity of culture. Even though cultural conventions are addressed through the parameters of 'norm' (social rules) and 'genre' (arguably a social view of text), it does not question or consider the wider view of 'context of culture', which consists of wider societal influences and ideological forces (Halliday, 1985). Hymes did consider ideology in his later work, which I will refer to in the next chapter, but for the purposes of this discussion I will focus on the SPEAKING paradigm. In other words, I feel that language teaching based on an idea of

communication should address as the wider context, the context of culture, as well as the immediate context, or the context of situation as it is often referred to.

The two notions of context come from the anthropologist Malinowski (1884-1942). Kramsch glosses Malinowski's idea of 'context of situation' as the 'immediate physical, spatial, temporal and social environment in which verbal exchange takes place' (1998:126). Indeed, this is similar to Hymes' parameters governing communicative competence. But in order to understand meaning more fully, one also had to take account of the context of culture, Malinowski argued, which, as Kramsch quotes Malinowski, means taking account of 'tribal economics, social organisation, kinship patterns, fertility rites, seasonal rhythms, concepts of time and space' (op.cit. p. 26).

This idea of context of culture adheres to a traditional and structuralist anthropological view of culture. However, I extend the idea of context of culture in a similar way as Halliday, who also borrowed from Malinowski, as taking account of ideas and values at an ideological level. The context of culture, Halliday says, is the meanings and values that people attach to the speech events that take place in the context of situation (1989 (1985):46). I see the context of culture, then, as the wider cultural environment which *frames* the context of situation. I conceive of this wider cultural context particularly as discourses, characteristic ways of thinking which give rise to products, processes and behaviours in cultural groupings and environments. I will discuss below what I mean by discourse and its relationship to power.

Discourse and power

The term 'discourse' is central to many social sciences studies and takes on a range of meanings. Foucault offered a 'three dimensional' definition, as

Kumaravadivelu (2007:218) states. The first of these definitions relates to all language in use; i.e. all texts or utterances. The second one relates to 'specific formations of fields' such as the 'discourse of racism', or the 'discourse of feminism'. The third definition, Kumaravadivelu says, extends beyond language to the 'socio-political structures that create the conditions governing particular utterances or texts'. Discourse, then, relates to the entire conceptual world in which knowledge is produced and reproduced. From this perspective language is only one of the entities that construct discourse. Texts are generated by *discursive formations* or *discursive fields* of power and knowledge. These fields construct certain ways of understanding the world (within particular domains) which then take on the status of common sense assumptions. A discourse then provides a limited set of possibilities and structures of what can be said and how it can be said within certain domains.

The field of education may provide an example. Discourses prevalent when talking about Higher Education, for instance, are those located in the discursive field of liberal humanism or that of vocationalism. The former provides a way of thinking about education as well as a general shared understanding of society which prioritises the individual over the social, which focuses on the individual's development of rational and rigorous thinking, and which is seen as a 'moral' leading to a general improvement of a 'moral' society. We could also add, that this constitutes an understanding of education from a largely western perspective. The discursive field of vocationalism on the other hand, constructs the value of education as helping students on the career ladder. To do so students do not need critical thinking, but practical skills. The implicit values relate to prosperity, ambition, business, booming economies and financial security rather than an individual's development of the 'mind'. These discourses are reflected in prospectuses of HE institutions.

However, it is also clear that prospectuses would not be written using only one of these discursive fields. As Kress points out (1985:7,8), discourses do not exist in isolation, but in larger systems of sometimes opposing and contradictory, or just different, discourses. As discourses tend to, what Kress calls, 'colonise' areas, i.e. to account for increasingly wider areas outside the initial domain, texts attempt to reconcile these contradictions, mismatches, disjunctions and discontinuities to seamlessly interweave these different strands (op.cit.:10). A university prospectus may therefore reflect both discourses of liberal humanism and vocationalism in a seamless fabric, interwoven with other strands such as those emphasising the discourse of 'community of the university', as well as those referring to comfort and pleasure. Indeed, I draw on a range of discourses in the field of education myself in this thesis, and not always explicitly so. It is difficult for an individual to think outside these *discursive formations* which determine to a large extent what we can think and say in particular domains.

Discourses then seem to be deterministic: to reduce the role of human agency and the autonomous free-willed subject to step outside these discourses. After all, according to Foucault, discourse produces knowledge and meaning. As Stuart Hall explains: 'physical things and actions exist, but they only take on meaning and become objects of knowledge within discourse' (Hall, in Wetherell et. al. 2001:73). In other words, it would be difficult to see a particular situation or action from a different perspective or attach a different meaning to it, then the meaning which is, as it were, provided through discourse. Discourse then, determines how 'reality' is interpreted. Knowledge, as Hall (Hall, in Wetherell et. al. 2001:75) explains, is 'always inextricably enmeshed in relations of power because it was always being applied to the regulation of social conduct in practice.' In this sense 'discourse' comes close to ideology. It is this notion of ideology which I refer to in this thesis, but, I take the same view as Foucault, in rejecting the Marxist position which focuses mainly on class.

Instead, Foucault put forward the notion of 'regimes of truth', discursive formations which seem to become 'true' because 'knowledge once applied to the real world has real effects, and in that sense at least, 'becomes true' (Hall, in Wetherell et. al. 2001:76). Hall gives the example of single parenting. If everyone believes that single parenting inevitably leads to delinquency and crime, and single parents are being punished accordingly, 'this will have real consequences for both parents and children, and will become 'true' in terms of its real effects [...].'

However, I believe the individual can step outside discourses through the critical approach identified by Pennycook as 'discursive mapping', or 'problematizing practice', to understand how discourses operate in texts to produce this configuration of power and knowledge. This discursive mapping can consist of relating the text to one's own experiences, both in terms of other reading as well as in terms of one's own lived experience. I have applied this idea of critique to my framework for the analysis of texts - which I will discuss in chapter 4 - because it allows students to see culture not as a one to one relationship with language, but in relation to the cultural complexity of our contemporary globalised society.

Relationship language and culture: generic and differential

To conclude the discussion on the different views of how language relates to culture, I have argued there is a close relationship between language and culture; not as a direct link between a national language and a national culture, but rather through the ideas, values, knowledge and power structures of discursive formations which are expressed through language. Risager has theorised this distinction (2006:2-5) as the *generic* and *differential* levels at which language and culture relate. Language and culture in the generic sense are 'phenomena shared by all humanity';

phenomena which are part of social life. In this sense, language and culture cannot be separated. At the differential level, on the other hand, we talk about different 'languages', whether national, e.g. Dutch, French, German, or language varieties. At the generic level, language and culture are inseparable, Risager argues; at the differential level, however, they can be seen as separate, as 'a' culture does not necessarily conform to 'a' language.

This duality helps to conceptualise the complexity of the language and culture relationship. Pedagogically, I believe, the language class should address both these levels. On the one hand, we should address the critical understanding of ideologies in culture and society as reflected in and constructed through discourses – this is the generic level. On the other hand the main task of the modern language class is still to teach students to speak, write and understand 'a' language – in other words to teach, in my case Dutch, at the differential level. Whilst this would include teaching the standard variety of grammar, this should also include different language varieties, genres and voices. Teaching at the differential level does not necessarily mean teaching a stylised, standardised and sterile form of the language. But the complexity lies at the generic level, where I interpret the pedagogic activities to involve more awareness raising exercises and critiquing rather than actually teaching 'discourses', although, as I will discuss in chapter 4, part of my pedagogy is to get students to write for different purposes drawing on different discourses.

Discourses transcend the differential and national levels. In the contemporary world, many discourses are global, or at least extend across wide geographical areas. Examples are the discourses of 'terrorism', or 'environmentalism', or 'multiculturalism'. But, often these discourses have a national accentuation. With this I mean that due to social or cultural histories and experiences of nations, as part of their nationhood, ideologies

may be 'articulated' differently in different places and contexts. One of these contexts is a national one. With this I do not argue for an essentialised national discourse, but instead for, in my case, a Dutch, articulation, as one of the layers of meaning, which in itself is continuously changing, shifting and contested. In chapter 4 I describe my interpretation of the Dutch articulation of the text which I used for my classroom data and in chapter 5 I refer to this notion in more detail again.

Conclusion

Central to this chapter is the concept of 'culture'. I started with discussing the various views of culture in relation to language teaching at university, and conversely I discussed different views on language and how they relate to culture. I argued that *Landeskunde* does not provide insight into the complexity of culture, although when taught at an academic level, it can develop a critical understanding of the target country in terms of querying information given and understanding changing events in relation to the wider global and cultural situation.

I argued for a cultural studies approach to culture in language teaching, because it does allow for the cultural complexity and indeterminacies of contemporary life. The various views of language which I discussed, were on the one hand the idea that language is autonomous, and leaves no role for cultural or social context. This view, whilst widely considered to be outdated in modern language teaching, still, unwittingly, underpins language courses.

Social views of language, include the determinist Whorfian hypothesis, which is frequently quoted in the field of Dutch language teaching, to theorise the 'unrefuted' relationship between language and culture. Whilst, I believe there is indeed a strong relationship between the two, this is not at

the level of one particular language, which the Whorfian hypothesis supposes.

A more complex view of language and the social world underpins Critical Language Awareness approaches, which provide a critical stance and deepen learners' understanding of the processes of production of texts, and the ideological forces that have a bearing on this. CLA particularly focuses on how power is produced and reproduced through language. These approaches could be applied to modern language teaching, but I feel that the critical understanding which is occasioned through CLA approaches should be supplemented with an understanding of other cultural parameters, in addition to power.

Hymes' view of communicative competence provides such a view in considering a range of parameters, including time, place and social conventions. However, this view focuses primarily on the context of situation and does not allow enough space for the wider cultural ideas provided through the context of culture. Finally I looked at language as discourse, as it is viewed in Cultural Studies and in some CLA approaches. I argued that, if we consider language in its meaning making potential related to culture in a wider sense, we have to raise students awareness of discourses in order to develop a deeper understanding of the complexities of the cultural world in which the language under study is spoken. Risager's concepts of a generic and a differential level of language and culture help in considering how the notion of discourses can be conceptualised in relation to language teaching. I argued that both levels, the generic and the differential are part of language teaching, and the generic level avoids the narrow one-to-one relationship of the one language, one culture view. Nevertheless, I argued, we cannot deny particular national 'accentuations', even if these articulations themselves need to be understood in the context of the complexity as well and globalisation of culture. Considering language

learning at the range of levels I discussed; generic and differential, in relation to context of situation and context of culture; and in relation to the critical approach afforded by, what Pennycook referred to as 'discursive mapping', students can develop their critical awareness, which makes them think about the relations and interrelations which are part of the process of language and communicating in different cultural situations and realities, and ultimately practise them.

It is this aspect of intercultural communication, which has been implicit in this chapter, which I will discuss explicitly in chapter 3. I will look specifically at the idea of being intercultural through the use of texts.

CHAPTER 3

BEING INTERCULTURAL THROUGH TEXTS: THE STUDENT AS TEXT ETHNOGRAPHER

Introduction

In the previous chapter I looked at views of the nature of language and the nature of culture, particularly as applied to the context of language education. In this chapter I will focus on the intercultural aspect of language pedagogy and develop the idea of being intercultural through text. I argued in chapter 2 that the relationship between language and culture is very close on a generic level, but not at a differential level, i.e. there is not a direct and straightforward link between a particular language and a particular culture. At the generic level, language and culture come together through discourses. I use discourses in the way that Foucault uses these; discourses as discursive formations giving rise to certain routinised ways of talking and thinking about specific topics or areas of social life. I argued for an approach to language teaching which is akin to Cultural Studies, taking account of the notion that language is to a large extent a social construct which is influenced by its context of use. The complexity of the interrelationship between language and its context of use is reflected in discourses, voices and genres; language as 'styles for certain spheres of human communication' (Bakhtin, 1986:64).

For that reason, I wanted to extend the notion of context as used in language teaching beyond that of merely situational and immediate concerns, to include a 'context of culture' (Malinowski), as the area where meaning is constructed. Context is then not just formed by the situation in which the communicative event takes place, but also by what

the broader views, ideas, and taken for granted assumptions and meanings are in particular contexts of use.

My aim for my own pedagogic approach to teaching Dutch as a Foreign Language is to enable students to become critical intercultural language users. With this I mean that the students are able to understand the complexity which is formed by the context of production and the discourses and their ideological underpinnings which are part and parcel of a particular communicative event. Equally I mean that students should understand the role of their own context of reception that influences that interpretation.

Cultural studies as a discipline itself can be approached from at least two different angles, Turner (1992) says; a text-based or a context-based approach. With the former he refers to the study of texts from literature, film or popular media. With the latter he refers to Area Studies; courses which cover historical, social and political aspects. Arguably, the same applies to language teaching. I will refer to Kramsch's 1993 book, *Context and Culture in Language Teaching* and to Byram's notion of *Intercultural Communicative Competence* as the two dominant examples of respectively a text-based and a context-based approach, at the time when I started this study.

Both approaches have taken language teaching out of the mere functional concerns of communicative language teaching and have advanced language and culture pedagogy. I build on both these approaches for my own pedagogy. However, I believe we need to further problematise the nature of intercultural communication, and acknowledge its complexity, particularly in multicultural and global societies, without denying the existence of cultural patterns.

To do so I will look at Blommaert who, although not a language pedagogue, puts forward a view of intercultural communication which can be usefully applied to the debates about language and culture pedagogy. I make use of Blommaert's insights and relate these to various emerging views in the last few years of a new conceptualisation

of intercultural communication in language teaching. But, whilst intercultural communication and the inclusion of culture in the language curriculum is a much-debated issue at a theoretical level (cf Risager, 2007; Phipps and Guilherme, 2004; Starkey, 1999; Sercu, 2005; to name but a few) in practice, this is still haphazard in many course books, certainly in Dutch, and is even ignored in influential language exams.

My challenge then is to find a model of language teaching as part of a general language course that contributes to the development of the learner as a *critical intercultural language user*. In this chapter I build on the concepts discussed in the previous chapters which underpin such a pedagogy, and in chapters 5 and 6 I look at how students engaged with this pedagogy.

Intercultural communication in language teaching

Ideas about and practices in intercultural communication in language teaching

The notion of a pedagogy of intercultural communication as part of language and culture teaching was not formally theorized until the 1990s. Michael Byram in Britain (c.f. *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*, 1997) and Claire Kramsch in the US (*Context and Culture in Language Teaching*, 1993) have been the main reference points in this area. In the last few years particularly, the idea of intercultural communication as the area where language and culture meet in the classroom, has gained momentum and different strands and views are being developed. My intention here is not to give an overview of these developments; Risager (2007) offers a comprehensive overview and discussion of this field. Here I will set out to what extent Kramsch and Byram, as well as others, have influenced my perspective on language and culture teaching and to what extent I deviate from them.

As I said earlier, I suggest that a cultural studies oriented language and culture pedagogy can be approached from two different practical starting points; a text-based or a context-based approach. Kramersch uses the former, Byram the latter.

Both approaches rely on text as well as context in their pedagogy, but the differences lie in the main focus of the pedagogical tool; a text-based approach aims to develop an understanding of culture and language through analyzing texts, whereas a context-based approach focuses on the cultural situations in which language is used, as well as on a body of knowledge that is taught, discussed or 'discovered'. In a text-based approach the role of cultural knowledge is less foregrounded; knowledge is conceived of as the contextual knowledge needed in order to interpret the text. But knowledge is then also conceived of as meta-knowledge; knowledge of the interpretation process itself and the concepts needed to talk about the texts. Kramersch uses texts as the starting point of her pedagogy. Byram on the other hand, represents a social-oriented, especially an ethnographic, approach through making cultural knowledge an important part of his pedagogy, following on from the idea of Area Studies which I discussed in the previous chapter

1. A linguistic and text-based Bakhtinian approach: Kramersch

It may seem paradoxical to locate Kramersch in a text-based rather than a context-based pedagogy when her great contribution to language and culture pedagogy is her conceptualization of context as a complex structure. But here I refer to the pedagogical tools which Kramersch uses, which is looking at texts, in her case, specifically literary texts. This is not to say that she does not use other classroom activities: on the contrary, her follow up activities after reading a text could, for instance, include a role play trying to emulate the 'voices' in a text.

Kramersch's pedagogy has roots in the European liberal humanist philosophy of education with a text-based analytical approach and

concerns for developing the intellectual and critical ability of students. In contrast, Byram aligns himself more with instrumental and pragmatic goals of language and culture learning, as we will see later, although he takes a much less reductive approach than the strong vocational paradigm which I criticized in chapter one.

Working in the American context, Kramsch criticises the instrumentally-oriented action pedagogy, rather than a reflection-oriented one. Its sole concern to get students to talk and write as well and as fluently as possible has, she argues, trivialised language teaching. In such a syllabus the teaching of culture has become a controversial issue, as the argument is that depth and breadth of thought belong to other subjects (1993: 4).

This instrumental approach is also very dominant in teaching Dutch as a foreign language, as evidenced by course books and the examination which is taken worldwide by adult learners for Dutch as a foreign language, *Certificaat Nederlands als Vreemde Taal* (CNaVT). As I set out in chapter 1, the instrumental approach is also becoming more dominant in language teaching at universities in Britain, particularly since language teaching in the context of language degrees is increasingly taught through special provision in places such as Language Centres. This means language classes are separated from the so-called 'content' classes which are perceived to be intellectually superior.

I align myself with Kramsch's educational aims. As I argued in chapter 1, although the main aim of the general language class is to be able to *use* the foreign language, there is a developmental and intellectual aspect to language learning, over and above learning a *skill*. This aspect pertains to language learning in general, but even more so in the context of learning a language as part of a language degree.

These intellectual demands on students are posed to a large extent by the need to reflect on the interrelationship between text and context. Kramsch's pedagogy focuses on the interaction between linguistics and social structures: teachers should not teach either form or meaning but

the interaction between the two, she emphasises. Her approach to language and culture pedagogy was new in 1993, and still holds valuable insights. Kramsch's contribution, I feel, is that she provides a more fully conceptualised notion of context than that previously offered in the Threshold levels which saw context only in relation to set phrases tied to certain set situations which occur in typical everyday pragmatic exchanges of shopping, getting a coffee and so forth. But also, crucially, she considers a range of theoretical models from linguistics, ethnography of communication, and language philosophy to provide a view of context, not as a natural given, but as a social construct.

Context, she suggests, consists of linguistic, situational, cultural, interactional and intertextual dimensions. In describing context as being 'shaped by people in dialogue with one another in a variety of roles and statuses' (p 67), she marries Hymes's model of SPEAKING, Halliday's notions of context (1989), and Bakhtin's notion of dialogue. Context is then created by situations, including the classroom situation itself, previous 'cultural' knowledge, as well as the ongoing dialogue or interaction between people and their socio-cultural environment. Crucially, I think, she adds the dimension of intertextual context; the relation a text has to other texts, assumptions, and expectations. The notion of intertext comprises not just the other texts, assumptions and expectations a 'text' may refer to, but also, the assumptions, expectations and previous experiences of texts that readers themselves are imbued with.

Kramsch suggests that in an intercultural communicative event, the engagement between the language user's own cultural context and that of the cultural context of the interlocutor (or the text) creates a new or 'third culture' where the perceptions and knowledges of the interlocutors about their own and the 'other's' culture intermingle. This also happens, she suggests, in a classroom context, particularly in a multicultural one, where complex relationships take place between the students, the teacher, the foreign language, the 'target' culture and the culture of the learners themselves (op. cit. p13). In this 'third culture' or 'third place'

students can express their own meanings and discover their own identities in a foreign language without being bound by either their own or the target speech community's (op.cit. p 256). This third place then, I believe, may allow learners to engage with meaning, not regurgitate ready-made meanings. It can be a place for 'being intercultural', which means, Phipps and Gonzalez, say, 'to be beyond the captivities of culture' (2004:168). I interpret this 'third place' as a space for learning and dialoguing in class, where a 'dialogue' can take place between students themselves, between students and the teacher and between students and the text under discussion, in the sense that the text will be rewritten, reinterpreted, re-accentuated several times during the classroom discussions.

Even though in her 1993 book, Kramersch does not encompass the idea of 'being intercultural' in the same sense, her pedagogy, largely based on the use of (literary) texts, does give access to a range of speech communities, opens up areas for reflection and discussion and also allows students to recognise the multivoicedness in texts (1993:27).

Kramersch's contribution to language and culture pedagogy, as I said earlier, has been inspiring because of the conceptualisation of context as a complex social construct. Moreover, she distances herself from the national paradigm in language teaching. She criticises the link made in many language textbooks by which any speaker of the language is automatically representative of any national (i.e. German) speech community. It is rarely acknowledged in language teaching, she says, that even if learners share a common native language, 'they partake of a multiplicity of 'cultures' '(1993: 93). However, she does occasionally make references to 'target culture', and the quote above suggests that her view is close to Holliday's view of 'small cultures' as 'a cohesive social grouping with no necessary subordination to larger cultures' (Holliday, 2004: 63).

Risager criticises Kramersch for not systematically analysing the relationship between linguistic practice (as cultural practice) and cultural

context. Risager's criticism focuses particularly on Kramsch's radical social-constructivist position and the fact that Kramsch does not sufficiently distinguish between the relationship of language and culture at a *generic* or at a *differential* level (2007:108). Risager and I (see my argument in chapter 2) agree with Kramsch that language and culture relate at a generic level; the cultural meanings and connotations of language utterances which are reflected and refracted by participants in contexts of use. But, Risager suggests, Kramsch is close to suggesting that language as text, and cultural context are identical. Risager suggests instead to make a distinction between the 'aspects of the context that are directly created via the linguistic interaction, e.g. the immediate social relations, and the aspects of the context that exist in advance as objective facts and that constitute the historically specific setting' (2007:109). This reflects Risager's particular point of view regarding the relationship between language and culture as well as the inclusion of cultural knowledge in the curriculum.

My own criticism with regard to Kramsch's 1993 book is slightly different from Risager. For Kramsch cultural knowledge (which Risager refers to as 'objective facts that constitute the historically specific setting') relates to both the shared cultural knowledge in the context of production as well as in the context of reception. Kramsch does not see it as necessary that students need a coherent body of knowledge of the cultural context, i.e. the national context. Instead students will need to have the cultural knowledge needed in order to interpret the text at hand and to be able to relate the text to both the context of production as well as the context of reception in the target speech communities. I agree with Kramsch on this. I also like the fact she uses text in her pedagogy. After all, text is the mainstay of language teaching. However, her view of text does not take account of ideologies, power or 'discourses'. Moreover, the texts that Kramsch uses in the classroom tend to be from the literary genre only. And, despite the fact she mentions the word 'discourse' various times in her 1993 book, she actually refers to

discourse more in the sense of meaningful text, rather than to 'discursive formations' in the sense of discourses as Foucault does.

2. A social and context-based approach: Intercultural Communicative Competence

It is precisely the text-based approach that has attracted criticisms from other scholars in the field of language and culture teaching. Byram particularly takes issue with the text-based approach and its focus on literary texts. He is against the literary tradition in language teaching, because it does not deal with the real every day world in the target language countries. This view of culture, as I discussed in chapter 2, is the anthropological view of culture (cf Byram, 1989). In this context-based approach the 'real world' is the starting point for the pedagogy, whether in terms of factual knowledge, or communicative events. Whilst Kramsch and Byram agree on the need for reflection on the 'other; as well as the learner's 'own' culture, for Kramsch this reflection takes place through thinking and talking about texts, particularly in relation to how learners interpret the contexts of production and reception. For Byram this reflection takes place through focusing on and comparing information about 'the' culture, especially relating to everyday life. For Byram then, cultural *knowledge* is a very important part of the syllabus, whereas cultural knowledge for Kramsch is incidental; it is part and parcel of discussing the context of production. As mentioned above, for Kramsch it is not desirable that students learn a body of coherent cultural knowledge related to 'the' foreign or 'target' culture, whilst Byram feels there is a certain body of knowledge which can be described and prescribed that students learning a foreign language need to possess. Byram in this sense is in line with *Landeskunde* approaches.

Byram formulated the notion of *Intercultural Communicative Competence* (ICC for short) as a model for language teaching and assessment of language learners which focuses on acquiring linguistic *as well as* socio-cultural knowledge and discourse competence

(1997:73). Byram builds on Van Ek's notion of communicative competence which is focused on language rather than culture. To understand people of other national groups, Byram notes, we cannot only depend on 'communicative competence'; learners also 'need to acquire the ability to comprehend cultural differences and cultural relativity' (1992:165). Byram sees language and culture learning as clearly consisting of a language and a culture element, but these generally remain, unlike with Kramsch, separate. The culture element consists of a range of skills, attitudes and knowledges which are underpinned by the notion of reflection on the students' own and the 'other' culture.

One of the important new aspects of Intercultural Communicative Competence is that learners not only need to learn *about* the foreign culture, but that they also need to relate this to their own cultural experiences. Byram based the idea of Intercultural Communicative Competence on the concept of the *Intercultural Speaker* which he developed with Zarate as part of the work they undertook for the Council of Europe with the project *Language Learning for European Citizenship* (1997). The aim of language teaching is not for language learners to try and emulate 'the' native speaker, but to become 'intercultural speakers'. The notion of the *Intercultural Speaker* has become a widely accepted goal of language teaching and has replaced the previously used target aim of 'near-native competence' at most (except for the most traditional) of Higher Education Institutions. Intercultural speakers can establish relationships between their own and other cultures and are able to mediate between these, through understanding – and ultimately accepting - difference (Byram and Fleming, 1998: 8). The intercultural speaker is 'someone who has an ability to interact with 'others', to accept other perspectives and perceptions of the world, to mediate between different perspectives, to be conscious of their evaluations of difference.' (Byram et. al. 2001:5).

Intercultural communicative competence is to a large extent formulated as a set of competences. These are a range of skills and knowledges

that can be taught as well as assessed, which Byram called the 5 *savoirs*. The *savoirs* present a complex picture of the skills needed to be a competent intercultural speaker and Byram's model of intercultural communicative competence has undoubtedly developed a pedagogy of language in relation to culture. An important aspect is specific knowledge about the country where the language that is taught is spoken. This covers a wide area, including knowledge about social, political and economic institutions and systems, as well as knowledge about everyday life, such as food, customs, celebrations and so on.

In addition the *savoirs* include a focus on intercultural attitudes, so that the learner is prepared to relativise his/her own values, beliefs and behaviour, and is prepared to see things from the other's perspective.

Promisingly, the *savoirs* also include what Byram calls, 'critical cultural awareness' (*savoir s'engager*). With this Byram means that the learner needs to be able to relate the knowledge and skills acquired to his/her own knowledge and perceptions. The learner needs to be able to reflect on his own role in interpreting and how his own values influence this. In doing so the learner should become aware of his /her own (often unconscious) cultural assumptions; a meta-awareness, able to recognise and articulate these assumptions. This is the aspect which Kramsch also finds very important.

I agree with Byram's emphasis on the context of everyday culture and reflecting upon one's own preconceptions in cultural exchanges. This has developed into the inclusion of self-reflection activities and ethnography in language teaching (cf. Byram and Fleming, 1998) and preparing for student residencies abroad, such as the 'The Intercultural project' at Lancaster university (<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/users/interculture/subproj4.htm>) and the Ealing Ethnography Research Project developed at Thames Valley University (Roberts et.al. 2001). It is particularly the development of critical awareness and ethnography which I feel is very beneficial for language

learners, because the methodology of ethnography helps learners to become intercultural. I will discuss this in the next section.

To conclude then, the social knowledge context-based approach of ICC is not an adequate enough model to fully address areas of criticality and the complexity of intercultural communication. Whilst I feel that the Bakhtinian text-based approach of Kramsch goes a long way in helping students to understand the complexity of communication and the complexity of context, it does not address the discourses and power as they are used in everyday language events. I now want to make a slight detour from the discussion about how language and culture pedagogy can do justice to the complexity of this relationship and develop learners as critical intercultural speakers, and look at how intercultural communication has been conceptualized in the discipline of intercultural communication itself. I shall then draw on this for an application to language pedagogy.

Three views of the study of intercultural communication identified by Blommaert

The study of intercultural communication as a disciplinary study in its own right does not seem to have had a strong influence on language teaching. As I have set out in chapter 2, other theories have been brought to bear upon language teaching. However, I believe that it is worthwhile to take a brief look at different views in use in the discipline of 'intercultural communication', because this disciplinary area is focused on actual communication – 'what happens when people engage in an exchange of meaningful semiotic symbols' (Blommaert, 1998:1). There are various historical overviews of this area of study, but I will use a talk given by Blommaert (1998) which charts three views of intercultural communication with different ideological underpinnings. Whilst Blommaert charts these views, by his own admission, in a sketchy manner, it is relevant for my purpose, precisely because he takes an approach which concentrates on how 'culture' affects speech styles.

And, whilst my research is not about speech styles as such, it is about language and culture connecting in everyday speech in everyday communicative events.

1. The hypostasis of culture and difference

The first model which Blommaert highlights is a strongly essentialist one. He points to a large body of work which shares the theoretical premise that modern nations have dominant national character traits which can be revealed by measurable data. Cultures in this model are described as essential values and practices and are therefore seen in terms of their difference from one another. This model is particularly dominant in the area of ICC studies (intercultural communication) for business purposes (cf. Pinto, 1990; Hofstede, 1994). Culture in this model is seen only in terms of behaviour or as a set of fixed values and beliefs. Culture is then viewed as a problem that can lead to misunderstandings: culture as a problem to be overcome. As Hofstede says on his website (accessed 15 February 2010): 'cultural differences are a nuisance at best, and often a disaster'.

It is undoubtedly the case that in order to make sense of the multitude of ideas, impressions, and information that we experience in our everyday life, humans need to order these impressions into categories. To be fair to the body of work produced in the business related field, this work is not produced in the context of *education* with its developmental and intellectual aims that I argued for in chapter 1, but in the context of *training* with its instrumental aims. The aim is not to understand the complexities of the world, or to be critical but to understand behaviour which would otherwise be 'puzzling or unacceptable' (Verluyten, 2000:340) or lead to 'misunderstanding, miscommunication and mismanagement, of which damage to business and personal interest can be the result' (Pinto quoted by Blommaert, (1998:2). And with the increasing emphasis on instrumentalism in language teaching in Higher Education, it is prudent to be alert to these argumentations which are

borne out of commercial self-interest. The problem with the difference view of ICC is precisely that simplification of a complex social and cultural world to a coherent, manageable set of fixed ideas. As I argued in my previous chapter, language teaching should help students to recognize the complexity of the world and not focus on ideas that lead to stereotyping.

Blommaert strongly criticises the essentialised 'difference' model, not only because this model posits an essentialist and simplified notion of culture, but more problematic still, because this model draws a direct and simplified link between 'culture' and communication.

Kumaravadivelu (2007:213) quotes Hall, who developed the first courses in 'intercultural communication' for American diplomats, as having declared unequivocally that 'culture is communication and communication is culture' (Hall, 1959:186). The model assumes that the way that people communicate is related to 'their' culture, frequently interpreted as a national culture, rather than to a range of other social, political or individual factors. As referred to in chapter 2, seeing a national culture in terms of shared values and norms begs the question: are these values shared by everyone all the time? It also assumes that nationality and identity are natural givens, rather than constructions which are perpetuated through everyday conceptualizations of the nation, such as in weather reports, what Billig (1995) called 'banal nationalism'. Nationality does not dictate a particular communicative style. At the very most, people's nationality or ethnic identity may suggest tendencies; the '*possibility* of ethnic or cultural marking in communicative behaviour [...]. But it in no way imposes ethnic or cultural characteristics onto the communicative behaviour a priori.' (my emphasis). Moreover, presenting intercultural communication as dealing with the 'other' who has his/her own set of different values and behavioral styles that follow on from that, leads to a 'massive overestimation of the degree of and the nature of difference in speech styles' (Blommaert, 1998:5).

Whilst he criticises the essentialised model of difference as represented by intercultural consultants such as Pinto and Hofstede and numerous others, Blommaert also criticizes the cultural relativist idea of what he calls horizontal stratification. Differences in terms of differentials such as age, nationality, ethnicity, gender, class, are seen as just existing on an equal par with one another. We might like to think, Blommaert says, that all languages, cultures, all groups, in fact all people are equal, but in reality they are not. And it makes no sense to talk about cultural differences as if they are all equivalent. Vertical models of differences which look at power differentials are more in line with reality. An approach to ICC which has the potential to take account of the relevance of power differences in roles and status is that of ethnography.

2. Ethnographic approaches to communication

To illustrate this particular model of intercultural communication, Blommaert refers to work by Gumperz and Hymes. The importance of this model is 1) that it recognizes the complexity of the relationship between culture and communication, and that 2) differences in communication in this model are not marked by national culture, but, critically, by differences in the *context* in which communications take place. Nationality is only one of the factors in that context of situation. Gumperz' contribution to the study of intercultural communication, Blommaert says, is on the one hand that he highlights that it is not so much 'culture' in the sense of values and norms which has an effect on communication, but instead 'communicative repertoires', such as conventions, speech styles and narrative patterns. These repertoires are formed by 'traditions' such as those of class and ethnicity which have become part of the language; 'we don't just use 'a' national language, like Dutch or German, but instead we always use a variety of 'a' language; 'a genre, a speech style, a type of interaction'. People identify themselves on the basis of such speech styles, which often relate to social traditions of class, gender, ethnicity etc. An important aspect of

this is that these traditions and identities cannot be separated from issues of power. It makes a huge difference, for instance, who the dominant party is in a particular interaction, whether the interlocutor is the immigration officer or the asylum seeker for instance.

The all important role of context means we cannot predict what will happen in an intercultural exchange purely based on someone's 'culture', whether national or otherwise, as the horizontal difference view holds. There are too many factors in different contexts at play. Moreover, we cannot predict what will happen in such an exchange; people might mutually adapt to one another's speech styles, both or either participant may sacrifice or exaggerate cultural conventions. In fact, more often than not, Blommaert says, 'ethnically' or 'culturally' marked aspects of communication are influenced by emotional factors such as feelings of frustration, anger or powerlessness. In other words, there is no fixed link between certain speech conventions and certain cultural groups; the reality of communication is too complex.

Paradoxically, the model of ethnography of communication was the main inspiration for communicative language teaching, but it was interpreted in a reductive manner, as I discussed in previous chapters, so that the principles of this model, which Blommaert describes as allowing for nuanced analyses of communicative events, were almost completely lost.

Incidentally, even though Gumperz carried out important work in this context by showing that a range of social factors influence communicative styles, including the power difference between interlocutors, when Gumperz applied his work pedagogically in a *training* context in 'Crosstalk' (1979), he largely ignored the notion of power. In Crosstalk Gumperz does exactly what Blommaert criticizes; he makes the trainees aware of the direct link between particular cultures and particular speech conventions. This highlights the issue of the training context, where pedagogy is more neatly organized and focuses

on a limited, clearly defined area, where there generally is no room for reflection and complexity.

Whilst Gumperz, as Blommaert said, noted the role of power between participants in a communicative exchange, Hymes (1996) showed another aspect of power in intercultural relations; language varieties themselves are not neutrally valued, as some of these varieties are seen to be 'better' than others. Particular language varieties or even languages tend to be associated with certain attributes, particularly status which immediately imposes a power structure on the interaction. A language or language variety is always associated with a particular social group. The importance of Hymes's work, according to Blommaert is that the relevant question becomes: 'whose culture is being used in intercultural communication?' The differences which occur between participants from different cultural backgrounds are not neutral. The many intercultural communication courses in a business context convey a very specific global form of intercultural communication where the language of interaction is almost always English and the participants are generally highly educated. But where intercultural communication involves a meeting of people who are members of different social groups such as in immigration contexts, these meetings take place in contexts where one interlocutor has more status and power than the other. Another factor then is the larger context of interethnic relations in that area or at that historical point of time and, I would suggest, the discourses which are in operation around otherness which would inform the assumptions and stereotypes which are held.

What is relevant to the foreign language teacher in this work is the notion that in intercultural communication we do not just deal with a national language, but that if we want to prepare our students for real intercultural exchanges we must make our students aware of language varieties, discourses, register, genre which, as Bakhtin showed, reference socially charged contexts. And as Blommaert shows, it is not just being aware of the existence of these varieties, but also the value or status which they are afforded in certain contexts and in relation to other

language varieties or genres. But intercultural communication is still more complex than that and, as Blommaert points out, 'difference is not always there, can appear in one context one time and not another time, and is also 'caught in patterns of social evaluation' (1998:11).

3. Crossing ethno-linguistic boundaries

The third view that Blommaert identifies in the study of intercultural communication allows for difference and complexity in a much greater sense. Intercultural communication cannot be seen *without* taking account of the social dynamics amongst people within communicative events. Blommaert uses Rampton's (1995) study as the prime example of this view and argues that this could be a way forward to studying examples of intercultural communication. Rampton showed how young adolescents in urban areas in Britain, did not stick to clear ethnic boundaries, when using language associated with a particular ethnic descent. Instead they performed regular 'language crossing', switching in and out of ethnically marked varieties of English when communicating with friends from different ethnic groups or in different social settings. Ethnic identities were being manipulated and negotiated; the study showed 'how identities can be picked up, dropped, altered, combined and so on, in ways that defeat any form of simplism or singularity'. Rampton also concluded that the different speech varieties were not associated with one specific context of use, but were sometimes used for even conflicting purposes, whether as a sign of resistance, an expression of solidarity, or showing a recognition of prestige. Culture for these adolescents then, Blommaert says, serves as a set of resources which partly operates automatically, but can also be strategically activated in different circumstances and for different purposes.

This view of intercultural communication which Blommaert suggests here as a step forward in thinking about interculturality, is a marked change from the 'difference' view; not only does it not primarily focus on a national culture, it also emphasizes that people move in and out of

various forms of cultural symbolic behaviour (such as using different language varieties or genres). Moreover, it also shows that the same behaviour or language can be utilized for completely different purposes. The idea of context is made much more complex precisely because it allows for the use of conflicting discourses and indeterminacies.

Significance of boundary crossing model for language teaching for intercultural communication.

The strength of Blommaert's model, or view on intercultural communication, is that it acknowledges that context is complex and there is not a straightforward link between one particular context and particular speech styles. The model is a useful way of thinking about intercultural communication in the context of language teaching. Even though I will not use the concept of code switching in a linguistic sense for this study, the idea of culture as a set of resources (linguistic and otherwise) that people can pick and choose from to utilise, resist and create new meanings, I think is very relevant for critical intercultural communication in language teaching. Blommaert's model does not give us the answers we need in terms of pedagogy and whether we should opt for a context or text based approach, or what to include in a language teaching syllabus. Moreover, Blommaert seems to refer specifically to speech. We cannot, in short, apply his views directly to language teaching, but his models provide a way of thinking about intercultural communication which is important for us as teachers.

The fact that choosing from these resources operates, not just on an unconscious, but also on a strategic level, is an important point. If people use these resources partly strategically on an every day basis, it becomes more easily available for conscious reflection, which can be used in the language class.

The notion of switching and mixing language styles and varieties depending on a range of complex factors with regard to the social

context (as well as factors outside the social arena such as emotions) can be made central, I think, to language and culture pedagogy. Such a pedagogy would focus on difference in terms of styles and discourses and look at the embedded ideologies and values, see context as influenced by a complex set of factors, focus on making learners take account of who they address and direct their communications specifically to their audience. This addressivity - 'the quality of turning to someone', as Bakhtin (1996 (1986):99) so aptly calls it, comes into play particularly in writing, as students have more time for reflection on their language output. But an awareness of varieties of styles and discourses, and indeed how the reader is addressed, also helps students to delve deeper into text and go beyond the content of the text.

Cultural meanings are then created through discourses; structures of meaning which also hold in Bakhtin's words a 'stylistic aura' which reflect the ideology pertaining to that discourse. But these cultural meanings are often global. Areas of human activity are after all not limited to a particular national culture. For the language teacher who frequently is expected to teach the national paradigm, the question is how to teach language for intercultural communication that recognizes that the idea of a national culture is constructed, as well as how it is experienced by people at an everyday level.

Dilemmas of intercultural communication in the language classroom

One of the dilemmas of intercultural communication for the language teacher is that on the one hand we want to emphasise the complexity and diversity of cultural environments that we are looking at in the classroom, and at the same time we cannot deny that certain tendencies and cultural patterns exist. Conceptualising culture within a pluriform society, with different sets of values, lifestyles, gender, political views and so on, can also easily fall prey to a similar essentialising of, what Holliday calls, 'small cultures' (2004:63); describing such subcultures as

consisting of people sharing a set of collective characteristics. This could still lead to learners thinking of culture or subculture as a fixed and bounded entity. It would be futile to think there are no differences between the way people live or make sense of their world, whether between different countries or groups within a country. But the most important thing is to recognise these patterns as tendencies which may be hard to pin down; with vague and fluid boundaries. As Blommaert said: the world is indeed full of differences, but these differences are not always there, or are not always the same, and they are partly determined by unequal power relations (1998:11).

As I set out in the previous chapter, foreign language teaching has had a take on culture (and on language) using somewhat stereotypical and stable notions of a national cultural. This is understandable to a degree, since books which take a comical look at a national culture and focus on stable notions of a culture, e.g 'The Undutchables' (White and Boucke, 2006), are so popular and seductive precisely because the information they contain is so easily recognisable; we tend to recognise what we already know as it slots so easily into our existing mental schema. Coleman (1996) pointed out that students of German who spent time in Germany as part of their Residence Abroad scheme came back with all their ideas and stereotypes of Germany and the Germans confirmed!

In a recent survey of Dutch language teachers at Institutions for Higher Education worldwide, it was found that many teachers recognised the dilemma of not wanting to stereotype, yet felt that cultural information as part of language teaching is frequently about behaviour as part of a national culture. Teachers opted for giving cultural information accompanied with the warning: this is a generalisation, but nevertheless there is a core of truth in it (Rossum and Vismans, 2006).

I would like to suggest that the 'kernel of truth' view can be just as limiting as the stereotypical view, as it pretends to recognise complexity, but still focuses on essential meanings. We need knowledge about another culture, but that knowledge must be looked at critically and must

be placed in context. The kernel of truth view is dangerous because it is so insidious.

I will now turn to the implications for the classroom.

Towards a new conceptualisation of interculturality in the language classroom

A more useful way of conceiving of interculturality in the classroom, which allows for complexity, power, a level of fluidity, functioning as an individual and recognising people in what they also share in terms of common humanity, as well as recognising patterns, is the notion of *being intercultural*, put forward by Phipps and Gonzalez (2004), where 'being' is emphasised over 'knowledge'. They argue that the central activity of modern languages degrees should be 'linguaging', 'being intercultural', and 'living with supercomplexity' (p 8). The key element in the process of being intercultural is that of 'linguaging'. In linguaging the emphasis is on 'real' communication and dialogue in the classroom rather than on artificial language tasks; it is 'living in and through the language' (p.111). 'Being intercultural' means understanding another world, which takes place through the process of dialoguing with others and being part of another cultural group. Crucially, this process can only take place from a position where students challenge their world and 'let it be enriched by others' (p. 27). The notion of 'intercultural being', as conceptualised by Phipps and Gonzalez, focuses on engaging with the other, on processes and on critical reflection. Being intercultural is more than an attitude of how you feel towards other countries as Byram's notion of ICC holds. 'It is more profoundly about how one lives with and responds to difference and diversity. [...] It is about living out the network of diverse human relationships – not just abroad, but down the road as well' (p.115).

'Being intercultural' is not about getting information *about* the other culture, but it is about engaging *with* it, both from 'within' to get a sense of what the other thinks, feels and does, and from a position of real

critical understanding. Phipps and Gonzalez argue for not just the insertion of *critical reflection* as part of the language curriculum (p 92), but the active engagement which they call 'critical being'. Learning is about 'testing and exploring ideas in and against reality, and then reflecting upon the process' (p124). This combination of the experiential and intellectual is found in the practice of ethnography as a way of understanding the cultural and social practices of a (cultural) group. But, Phipps and Gonzalez argue, ethnography is more than a tool to enable learners to develop into intercultural beings. It is about 'people meeting in human encounter and in ways which may change the way they see the world' (p.125).

I interpret the notion of 'being intercultural' as taking the learner conceptually out of the classroom, and into the real world. It is an intellectual engagement with the real world. It may consist of 'real' dialogues with fellow students, or even other speakers of the language, but I think the notion can also be extended to engaging with written texts as if in 'dialogue'; relating what is read explicitly to one's own experiences and understandings and to keep on querying these. Indeed in chapter 5 I explore how students previous schema and testing their ideas against reality made them realise the positioning of the text we discussed.

Ethnography as a method of being intercultural

Ethnography for language learners, even though it hasn't yet made its way into many syllabi at university language departments, has nevertheless attracted increasing interest in the last few years, as an exciting way to combine the intellectual and experiential aspects of engaging with the other culture. The aim of ethnography is twofold: on the one hand it encourages the learner to recognise the cultural in his/her everyday life and ideas by 'making the familiar strange'. On the other hand the learner is encouraged to try and understand the 'strange' from within its own perspective. The learner will then start to recognise

that what previously seemed natural, was actually culturally determined. Of course, it is impossible ever to see things from the perspective of the other. We will always see the world through the filter of our own experiences. An important aspect of ethnography is to realise that what you see and observe, is coloured through your own experiences, your own cultural and social background, and ideas and assumptions, your own ethnocentricity. But, even with that knowledge, we can never truly know what phenomena, ideas, objects, customs, behaviour, everyday life events actually 'mean' for the 'other'. We cannot observe neutrally. Every observation will always have what Hermans (2007:147) calls a 'blind spot', because every observation can be interpreted only from the context of those that do the observation.

The main technique of ethnography is creating 'thick descriptions': by giving extremely detailed accounts of what can be observed students discover things which might otherwise have escaped their attention or would have been taken for granted. But thick descriptions involve reflection on one's own observation and response to what is observed at the same time. Doing ethnography then is to question the sources of evidence presented to them and thereby challenge assumptions and stereotypes (Barro et.al., 1998:76-97).

Probably the first ethnographic project of its kind for language learners was the Ealing Project in which students first made the familiar strange through writing 'home ethnographies' before applying this to a closely observed ethnographic project during their year abroad (Roberts, et.al., 2001 et. al.). This project, though undertaken by language learners in the context of their modern languages degree and as preparation for their residency abroad, is not an actual language class, but more a cultural studies class.

Because its focus is on 'lived experience' and 'culture as practice' ethnography is very suitable for study abroad. Indeed, I adopted and adapted the Ealing Project in a similar way and incorporated it in a cultural studies course, which prepares student for doing their

ethnographic year abroad project. But, ethnographic projects have also been used in the language classroom itself. Morgan and Cain (2000), for example, undertook a collaborative project between two schools; a French class at a school in England and an English class at a school in France. The aim of the project was to let pupils think about their own culture as well as that of the other group, seen from the 'other's' perspective. To this aim students were asked to represent aspects of their 'own culture' around the theme of 'Law and Order'. Students from each class worked in small groups to create cultural material for the partner class. In doing so they had to be aware of what was specifically English or French about the topic, but more importantly, they had to think about the communicative needs of the partner class, both in content and language use. By looking at the material the partner class produced, students could discuss and compare the similarities and differences. Whilst it may be said that this approach still did not encourage a non-essentialist attitude to the other culture, students were aware of the perspective of the other.

Phipps and Gonzalez take integrating ethnography in the classroom probably furthest. One of the projects that Phipps worked on with her students was a project about 'rubbish' (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004:126). Students collected data and interviewed Germans living in Glasgow about environmentalism. This integrated project work outside, in the 'real world' with language work inside the classroom. This is an exciting initiative which includes project work as part of classroom work and makes a direct, experiential link between everyday experienced culture. Moreover, by interviewing Germans living in Scotland, a narrow national focus is avoided. I feel that projects such as these point the way forward to more ethnographic real world experiences, and should be explored further in language teaching. However, in my own pedagogy I adopted not a project approach, but I aimed to include ethnography as part of the general pedagogic activities in the classroom. This became a text-based approach using principles of ethnography. I will set this out below.

Text Ethnography

Ethnography is well suited to an intercultural approach to language teaching because of the opportunities it affords for being reflexive about one's own cultural environments and the focus on querying the 'taken for granted', as well as 'stepping into the shoes of others'. But ethnography can be integrated further in the language classroom, I believe, than just being the focus of separate projects, as in the Morgan and Cain study. Ethnography could also be usefully applied to looking at texts, thereby integrating text and context. Texts are after all a natural focus for the language and culture classroom. Moreover language always happens as text (Kress, 1985), and texts reflect and reconstruct specific instances of culture.

An ethnographic approach to text helps students to recognise how culture underpins texts, to query the taken for granted and to see how language and culture interrelate. This is similar to a cultural studies approach. However, an ethnographic approach also looks at the role students have to play in their interpretation. Looking in an ethnographic way at texts then, allows us to make the 'familiar strange', and the strange familiar. Being intercultural through text then can be a pedagogy of an integrated look at language and culture which takes account of the complexity of context, interculturality and criticality. But, before we can discuss what it means to be intercultural through texts, we first need to look at what we mean by 'text', which I will do below. These views of text are similar, but not the same, as the views of language which I discussed in the previous chapter; views of the liberal humanist perspective; of a structuralist perspective; and text as a semiotic encounter where text and reader 'meet' to create meaning.

TEXTS

Ways that text has been conceptualised

For the purposes of this study, I am looking at texts as 'written' texts. Whereas my pedagogy sees text in a wider range as 'transmitters of meaning' which could also be visual and/or aural texts, I focus particularly on written text in the empirical part of this study. During the lessons which form the empirical part of this study (see chapter 5), I tried to alert the class, when discussing a particular text, to the extra layer of meaning added by the illustrations and page layout. However, this discussion did not generate illuminating data, and I do not include the multimodality of text in my discussion below.

Historically, the concept of text has been conceived in different ways within language teaching. I will briefly set out traditional views of text, before focusing on the conceptualization of text which is the core of my pedagogy, i.e. that of *cultuurtekst*.

In the liberal humanist educational tradition, which I discussed in chapter 1, text itself was not an issue for theorizing itself. Text is a written *product*, and not a *process* of communication. A product, moreover, which was the result of intellectual thought and ideas. The most important attribute of a text is the content which, in 'a good text' is generated through solid thinking and expressed in good writing. The quality of these thoughts was reflected in the actual quality of the language, the structure of the text and the strength of the argumentation. As the 19th century educationalist Blair said, the aim was for writers to produce products of moral superiority and rationality: 'embarrassed, obscure and feeble sentences are generally, if not always, the result of embarrassed, obscure and feeble thought' (Emig, 1983:7).

Texts in this traditional view are wholly the responsibility of the individual writer, regardless of whether anyone else, such as an editor could have had a role to play in the writing. The writer is thus unproblematised. The reader on the other hand has no role to play in the interpretation of the

text, except, perhaps, to appreciate (and imitate in the case of learning to write) the quality of the text. The assumption then is that quality is not subjective, but objective, there is an agreed notion of 'the good text'. Moreover, it is a product which contains a stable meaning.

This view of text is now generally no longer held in the academic world, but it survives as a 'common sense' assumption amongst many people, as evidenced by newspaper discussions bemoaning the declining quality of writing of school pupils in the subject of English. As a result the notion of a 'good text' has an enduring appeal with (some) students, as I find out when collecting my data (see chapter 6).

A different view of text is the structuralist views of text. This view, whilst less concerned with the idea of 'the good text', does also emphasise the autonomy of the text. But in contrast with a liberal humanist educational view, the emphasis shifts towards a more prominent role for the reader in 'extracting' meaning from texts (Wallace, 2003:15). This view correlates with the view of communication put forward by de Saussure, the 'speech-circuit', which as Daniel Chandler says (2002:176) can be seen as an early form of the transmission model of communication; the Shannon-Weaver model (1949), which sees communication as the sending a message from person A (the sender) to person B (the addressee) as if it were a package. I would suggest that, again, this is the common sense idea of communication that most people, including our students would hold. This idea of communication as 'sending a message' is subsumed in much of (Dutch) language teaching practice, both in reading and writing tasks. Reading in foreign language classes then frequently consists mainly of comprehension tasks and activities, which typically include multiple choice tasks, or comprehension questions regarding writer intention or the meaning contained in the text as if these were unproblematic constructs.

Later versions of the structuralist model allow for a more complex idea of communication and crucially include the notion of context. This model also allows for a wider view of text beyond the written product alone. The

text can thus be anything that 'sends a message', whether a conversation, a visual image or even a form of behaviour of dress, as such this model allows not only for a much broader view of text, but also it would seem the emphasis in communication has shifted from the producer of text to the text itself.

A more interactional version of the structuralist encoding and decoding view of communication, is that espoused by Widdowson (and others) in relation to language teaching, which allows for a greater role for the reader and for the role of context than the traditional views based on the Shannon-Weaver model. For Widdowson reading is not just a matter of transferring information from the author to the reader, but is instead a process of communication; the reader is active in the decoding process, engaging his or her prior knowledge, experiences and ideas. Encoding, or writing, is not just a formulation of messages, says Widdowson (1979:175), but also giving pointers to the reader to help him or her along in the process of decoding. The responsibility of the text still lies with the writer in the sense that he needs to take account of the reader in writing a text. A writer must therefore see writing as a cooperative activity. The writer provides directions to the reader and anticipates the questions an imaginary and critical reader might ask; questions such as: Oh yes? How do you know? In that sense Widdowson's view of text may also seem to be reminiscent of the liberal view of 'the good text', because the text needs to adhere to certain criteria. But these criteria are not necessarily located in the clarity of thought of the writer, but in the way the writer directs him/herself to the audience.

This is the same addressivity that Kramersch emphasizes in her approach, where she borrows the term from Bakhtin. However, Kramersch (and Bakhtin) see this reader-oriented writing as a social aspect; the writer imagines the reader and what his/her previous knowledge, interests, objections to the text and so on, can be. Widdowson's structuralist position towards writing, on the other hand, is not dissimilar, I would suggest, from the maxims that guide the conversational Cooperative Principle put forward by Grice - communication is understood as being

guided by the 'rules' of 'being truthful', 'being clear', 'being honest' and 'being relevant'.

Widdowson's view, I think, allows for a stronger role for the reader than either liberal or structural views generally take on board, as the writer relies on the active participation of the reader in order to comprehend the text by understanding the pointers the writer gives, but it also sees communication more as something taking place between individuals, rather than as a social process.

The third view of texts which takes the interactional element much further still is that explicated by Halliday, who sees texts as *both* product and process. The text is a product in the sense that it is an artefact, it is there in physical sense and we can read it. But at the same time, text is also an interactive process, 'a semiotic encounter' where participants (the writer and reader) meet to create meaning in a particular situational context. Wallace uses Halliday's conceptual framework of text as a starting point in her critical pedagogy of reading where she sees reading and writing as closely interrelated (2003:12). Her pedagogy encourages learners to deconstruct texts to critique the ideology embedded in them; analyzing linguistic features in the text raises students' awareness of how the discourses privilege those with power. Wallace takes a view of reading where text interpretation is partly guided through analyzing the social interaction between the participants, the social situation and the language used. This is not a completely fluid and open interpretation of the text where it is up to the individual reader to recreate his or her meaning. Following Eco she says that texts do carry meaning in and for themselves 'apart from writer intention (and indeed apart from reader interpretation) at a number of levels signaled, in complex ways, by the nature and combining of the formal features selected' (op.cit. p.13). Wallace's plea for text meaning is particularly in response to views such as those of Rorty who insist that we should not be concerned with finding out 'what the text is really like', but to use it merely for our own purposes (cited by Wallace, p. 13).

My own view is in line with Wallace, in the sense that in text interpretation, at least in the context of language education, we can look for 'preferred readings' (op.cit. p. 16) which students can access by considering specific linguistic features and contexts. Indeed, my framework for analyses of texts which I describe in chapter 4, assumes that text interpretation does not allow unlimited readings. But, as I argued earlier, students re-write the text; they imbue it with their own meaning, derived from their experiences and discourses to which they have been exposed. I will discuss this further below.

Moreover, I noted from my own observations of students' text responses that they did *use* texts for their own purposes, as I observed in my data (see chapter 5). In reading texts, students employ their own interests and motivations, and do not always employ the analysis of referring to specific language used. This is of course in line with socio-cultural educational theory, but it is noteworthy because these students themselves see texts in terms of 'a good text' or not, and take it for granted that in looking at texts, we are trying to find out authorial intent.

I have borrowed from Wallace in her close reading pedagogy, interpreting texts through referring to the linguistic choices made, and by looking at the context of production and power relations. But, as my concern in the foreign language classroom is also with culture, and not just with power and ideology, I am using a different view of text to allow for culture in the language classroom. For this reason, whilst I borrow from CLA, I am focusing on models of text which are more suited for being intercultural through text, as explained earlier in this chapter.

Bakhtin offers a good starting point.

Being intercultural through texts: dialogism and addressivity

Text, or utterance, according to Bakhtin, is about a dialogue with an other. Text then, does not exist in its own context, but is always directed to someone else, and as such his model of text can function also as a

model of communication. Text can therefore be seen not just as a product in its own right, but it is always produced *for* someone else: a reader, interpreter, listener, which makes it relevant for intercultural learning, both in reading and writing.

This 'addressivity' goes further than just helping the reader or listener along through using structural markers in the text or writing in a reader-friendly manner, such as writing with the use of discourse questions in mind, as I discussed above in relation to Widdowson's view of texts with regards to writing. Instead, Bakhtin's notion of addressivity or 'dialogism' means taking account of the reader or listener in a more substantial way and considering what the possible reader or listener's previous knowledge and expectations and possible responses to the text might be. A reader's responses to a text are based on his/her cultural and social experience and history, particularly in relation to previous reading experiences, but also in relation to the addressee's conceptual world, which is made up partly of conventions of communication in certain areas of life (e.g. genres such as academic articles, law reports etc.), as well as his or her own ideological positions, or at least the discursive formations the addressee is familiar with.

But text and communication are not just addressed towards a (future) reader who has a past and cultural baggage; texts (utterances) are also addressed to past language or communication. Language, Bakhtin says, is always a response to a greater or lesser extent to other utterances (1996(1986):91,92). This applies to communication in real time, e.g. a response to a previous utterance in a conversation, or a text which has been written in response to another text or a request or any other intertextual references.

If we apply this notion of engaging with the other to 'being intercultural', the intercultural learner is not just responding or engaging with the other culture, but also with another past. Words, like texts, are not neutral. There may be neutral dictionary meanings of words which ensure that speakers of a given language understand one another, Bakhtin says,

but in live speech communication words are always contextual (1996 (1986):88). Language in use is not neutral because the context of the whole utterance gives the word 'colour' or 'sense'. Furthermore, as speakers we are not the first people to use words. What we say is not just addressed to the object, the topic we speak about, but to what others have said about it. A text is a 'link in the chain of speech communication' (op. cit. p94) and it cannot be seen separate from this chain. A text, or an utterance, carries echoes with the past, or as the playwright Dennis Potter says it more succinctly: the problem with words is that you don't know whose mouths they have been in (quoted by Maybin, 2001:68).

This is of particular relevance to the foreign language learner, who has not been socialised in the foreign language discourse communities and indeed might not be able to relate any discourses to particular people, events or cultural and ideological views, at least not in the foreign language context. To understand a text then, you can never only take the thematic content into account, because the text also responds to what others have said about the same topic. A text is then not just about its content, but it is a representation of something in relation to the other texts to whom it (perhaps unwittingly) refers: texts are filled with 'dialogic overtones' Bakhtin, op. cit., p.92).

But texts do not just exist as 'echoes of the past', texts themselves are not just written within one voice or discourse. As Kress showed, frequently there are various, even conflicting, discourses in a text, and it is these clashing discourses which give rise to the text itself (1985:82). This heteroglossia consists of the seemingly endless voices and discourses in which social and ideological positions are embedded.

It is the notion of dialogism- being in dialogue with past, present, future and the other, which, I believe, constitutes the *inter* in intercultural. The *inter* in this interpretation is not a direct relationship between two cultures, but it is more complex. In the next section I explain what the

cultural in intercultural is when we adopt a Bakhtinian version of texts, as a way of communicating with the other.

***Cultuurtekst* as discourse and representation**

In the previous chapter I already pointed to the notion of *cultuurtekst*, coined by Maaïke Meijer, a Dutch feminist literary theorist. She developed this notion of text into a theory of text interpretation or reading, mainly for literary analysis purposes. She focuses particularly (following Kristeva, 1966) on the notion of intertextuality contained in Bakhtin's view of language being 'echoes of the past', but, in literary analysis, she maintains, recognising intertextuality is a limitless task. Often it cannot even be determined exactly how or where a text is borrowing from other texts. In order to create a framework for literary interpretations outside the notion of literary intertextuality, it makes more sense, she suggests, to recognise the *discourses* (in a Foucauldian sense) in a text. Texts, in line with Bakhtin, are not created as fresh and new meanings, but are a reworking of old notions and ideas and conventionalised historically accepted ways of talking about certain things. This 'culturally routinised way of talking', Meijer calls *cultuurtekst*.

Culture then, in *cultuurtekst* is the 'conglomerate of accepted and recurrent motifs and ways of representation around a theme, which is organising itself again and again in new texts, whether literary, journalistic scientific or otherwise' (my translation) (Meijer, 1996:33). It is meaning-making in relation to the whole cultural space; 'the scenarios' which are provided by the surrounding culture. Each individual text is a retake of those scenarios, she says. *Cultuurtekst* encourages us to look at how a text rewrites and reproduces the available scenario. Or, in other words, how a text re-articulates the commonly accepted meanings, values and attitudes.

Meijer's view of *cultuurtekst* is not a completely open-ended framework. It is not about a text having a single meaning, but about not having infinite meanings either. Groups of readers who have been socialised in

similar ways, will 'smell', as Meijer calls it, similar discourses. They recognize the underpinning ideologies and values without being able to quite 'put their finger on it', as students have explained this sense of vague recognition to me.

Meijer's notion of *cultuurtekst* is close to Foucault's notion of *discourse*, but it differs from it in that her notion encompasses both that of text itself as well as that of discourses within a text. She preferred the term *cultuurtekst* in order to distinguish between individual and concrete texts and the 'invisible' or implicit *cultuurteksten* (discursive formations) which are operating within those texts. (1996:33-35). This notion is useful for language teaching, as we are not just dealing with discourses, but also with text itself at a 'textual level'.

Using the notion of *cultuurtekst* also gives us the advantage of seeing culture in more pluriform terms: not a formulation of features specific to a national culture, but as a mapping and critiquing of discourses.

Seeing text as *cultuurtekst* then also brings to the fore the multiple discourses, to which Kress refers (1985:7) and which are current in any context. Bakhtin calls this 'polyphony' (multivoicedness). Any context, except the most stable one, contains a range of 'voices'. I take 'voice' here to be similar to discourse. Bakhtin refers to different ideologies and discursive forces being inherent in all words and forms: 'Each word tastes of the context and contexts in which it has lived its socially charged life: all words and forms are populated by intentions.' (1981:293).

The idea of *cultuurtekst* then gives us access to the idea of culture as a complex, fluid and dialogic construct, which whilst containing patterns of meaning and behaviour, also recognises that these patterns change and merge and submerge in (sometimes unpredictable) ways.

An added advantage of applying the model of 'cultuurtekst' to language teaching, is that it gives language classes more intellectual content, even if discussing trivial texts or everyday topics. It helps learners to

think about language at a more theoretical level, and as well as touching on the notion of addressivity, and political and ideological issues.

Finally, the idea of cultuurtekst works not only as a mode for interpreting texts, but, when combined with the notion of 'addressivity' is also very useful as an awareness tool for writing texts. I have incorporated this into the syllabus of my general language class (see chapter 4 for an overview). My emphasis in the fourth year language class under study was particularly, but not exclusively, on reading and writing, as an intellectual dialogue.

Implications for teaching

The need to conceptualise text in social ways in terms of the context of production and reception is fairly widely accepted these days. However, as indicated before, in the practice of language teaching an uncomplicated view of text is still prevalent. Texts are frequently used as vehicles for grammar and vocabulary work, for translation, or for comprehension exercises on the content level only. Questions of text generally are aimed to 'check' whether the learner has passively understood the surface messages contained in the text. In language teaching, text is still frequently seen as a written product; a carefully constructed framework with a clearly demarcated beginning and end which constitutes an intelligible, cohesive piece of writing, and any language work relating to texts frequently separates the activities of reading and writing. But, what we do with texts as learners whether, in reading or writing, is not straightforward, as chapters 5 and 6 show. Learners on the one hand, conceive of text frequently in evaluative terms: whether a text is 'a good text' or not, and whether the author represents 'reality' in a 'correct' way, and whether the text contains a well constructed argument. Students see text as a bounded entity; with a clear beginning and end, and a clear message. And if that message is not clear, the text is not 'a good text'.

As a result of these assumptions students hold about text, students struggle to recognize the complexity of texts in terms of varied voices and multiple discourses. Yet on the other hand, students also engage with a text as social and cultural beings; their responses to the text are based on their own experiences, ideas and assumptions. This is what I turn to next.

Personal schemata

Schema theory (cf Bartlett, 1932) holds that readers relate the incoming data they receive from the text to existing mental representations of situations or events. These are, as Widdowson (1983: 34) points out, primarily cognitive constructs which aid the organization of information.

However, information is always located within a social context (Wallace, 2003: 22). This is the context of reception, the context in which the information is received, which is located within the wider context of culture, i.e. the views, ideas, knowledges and discourses which the reader is surrounded with or has encountered.

The previous knowledges and experiences which readers use to interpret the text relate to areas of academic as well as social experience; what they have read, learnt or heard about the topic, whether in formal education or through the media or everyday life. Moreover, readers also relate the text they read to their 'lived experience' of their relationships and encounters with other people which include power relationships. In short, we interpret texts by relating them, frequently unconsciously, to the discourses we have been exposed to ourselves. These unconscious understandings take on a taken for granted assumption of the world.

The resonances people hear are relevant and indeed give meaning to the text, but interpretations are never complete. They are dependent on the frameworks people use, the situation they are in, their experiences and interests. In short we see texts from our own ethnocentricity. We

also have, as said before, our own 'blindspots'. In order to deal with these and to try and take a position 'outside' the text, Meijer argues, readers need to be reflexive about their own position.

As most discourses cross national boundaries, readers in a foreign language classroom will come across discourses in a text they know and are familiar with, but they would not be conscious of these discourses, as they are likely to take them for granted. We can only access the cultural meaning, the value, the discourse, if we make these strange. In chapter 6 Claire, one of the students on the course, makes exactly this point; she is less likely to recognise the discourses in an English text than in a Dutch text. However, she relates these discourses as being located within a national culture rather than in the wider ideological context.

Asking students to 'map' the discourses in a text, as I do in my cultuurtekst pedagogy, brings to the fore, two things: firstly, you need to take a position outside its discourses in order to critique a text, otherwise the discourses will seem 'natural'. Discourses are, after all, resistant to internal criticism, as Gee has said (2009 (1990):161). Conversely, students, may not be familiar with the discursive fields that gave rise to the text, as they would not share the knowledge inherent to which the text implicitly refers, in which case it may also be hard for them to 'problematise' the text or they may be half conscious of the ideological fields, but cannot quite 'put their finger on it'. To access the cultural meanings through discourses on which the texts draws then, we can, I suggest take the position of an ethnographer; an ethnographer of text, which includes the notion of reflexivity. I will turn to this next.

Being intercultural through text: reading as text ethnographer

An ethnographer looks at cultural difference from both an inside and an outside perspective. Taking an inside (emic) perspective is trying to see the world as the 'other' experiences it, i.e. 'trying to stand in the shoes of

the other' through being as much part of the experience as possible, by talking to people and being a participant observer. Of course an ethnographer can never completely understand the inside perspective; it can only ever be an interpretation. At the same time ethnographers try and take an outside (etic) perspective by trying to be aware of their own assumptions which influence their interpretation of what they see. This is the outside perspective 'making the familiar strange' through creating 'thick descriptions'.

I consider the text ethnographer to go through similar processes in reading a text. An inside perspective of text cannot be the same raw everyday experience of the ethnographic observation or interview. The text is itself already a mediated artefact of the social and cultural world. However, by reading a text from an inside perspective, the text ethnographer is not so much trying to understand the writer of the text, but the environment the writer is describing in real life. This means the reader tries to understand the content of the text in relation to the wider cultural environment to which the writer wittingly or unwittingly refers. But, importantly, the reader can only understand the content and context in relation to her own experiences. So trying to understand the text from an inside perspective, i.e. trying to understand what the text might mean for the audience for whom it is intended, the reader will have to make use of her own experiences. These experiences could be those of empathy with the ideas or participants in the text, or these experiences could be brought to bear in relating and exploring the ideas and descriptions in the text against the reader's own reality. This is an 'engaging with'. It is not quite the same as the 'linguaging' concept from Phipps and Gonzalez, because it does not involve 'real' face-to-face engagement in the language, but taking an emic perspective as a text ethnographer, can, I believe, be an engagement with otherness and relating it to oneself. Even if it is not a 'raw' ethnography in its experiential form, it is an intellectual engagement through relating the text to one's own experience and ideas and making it 'real'. In the classes which I used for data collection, there were some almost 'raw'

experiences as students emotions became part of the very personal responses to that text, as I will show in chapter 5 in relation to a particular instant.

But, the inside perspective needs to be accompanied by an outside perspective, i.e. reflecting on the taken for granted interpretations the reader makes herself. By being reflexive about his or her own interpretation, the reader engages in a process which queries the taken for granted realities and interpretations which reflect his or her own assumptions which are part and parcel of his/her ethnocentricity.

Again, the outside perspective I am describing is not quite the same as an etic perspective, as it does not involve making 'thick descriptions', but it can be a way of 'making the familiar strange'.

Summary and conclusion

This chapter set out more specifically the underpinning ideas of my pedagogy. I drew on Byram and on Kramsch's early work aligning myself with Byram's focus on 'the everyday' aspects of culture, and with Kramsch's notion of context as complex and multilayered, her focus on text and her notion of a 'third place' as a space for learning and dialoguing in class. I interpret this dialogue as taking place between students themselves as well as in relation to the teacher and the text under discussion, including the multiple discourses which occupy the cultural spaces which exist and open up in such dialogues.

Whereas language and culture in language teaching has been frequently seen as relating to information about the target country, and what to say in what situation, intercultural communication as a discipline, developed initially for diplomacy and applied to business contexts, focuses exclusively on interpersonal relations, seeing a direct link between 'a' communicative style and 'a' culture. I argued, drawing on Blommaert, that language and culture teaching should not focus on this perceived link, because even though there are patterns of communication in

specific, including national, groups, language teaching should take account of linguistic and cultural complexity.

One way of conceptualizing a new way of thinking about intercultural communication is that put forward by Phipps and Gonzalez of 'being intercultural'; an actual engagement with 'the other' in and through language. Ethnography is an excellent tool to encourage interculturality, as it encourages students to observe, participate in, engage with, and reflect about the 'other' in relation to themselves and their own complex cultural environment. Even though ethnography is about engaging with 'real' situations, I argue that the idea can be applied to looking at text as well.

I set out different views of text which have prevailed in education, but the view of text which allows for a critical, an ethnographic, and a dialogic reading is that of 'cultuurtekst', as this view of text combines the idea of text a product, and text in relation to the context of culture as shifting, complex and reflecting multiple discourses. The idea of 'cultuurtekst' then underpins my pedagogy.

My research questions for this thesis are to see how students engage with the cultuurtekst pedagogy, and whether and how they made the journey from 'text' to 'cultuurtekst'.

In the next chapter, I will discuss my research methodology and the research philosophy that underpins this study. I will also set out the context in which this study took place, discuss the text I used for this study and I will introduce the framework for analysis which I used with the students.

CHAPTER 4

CONTEXT OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter links the first three conceptual chapters of this thesis with the two data chapters which follow and in which I analyse the classroom data (chapter 5) and triangulate this with the student interviews (chapter 6). In this current chapter I will set out both the methodological concerns of this thesis, as well as the context of this study in increasingly specific ways.

In order to answer my overall research question “How do students engage with the cultuurtekst approach?”, I collected data of lesson transcripts, of which I chose two lessons for analysis, as well as two sets of student interviews. The data was collected early on during this study, but the exploratory nature of this thesis determined that the concepts which were underpinning my course and approach to cultuurtekst were continuously modified through ongoing processes of analysing data, reflection and further theoretical study. This thesis then is organic in nature, even if the conventional structure of this thesis suggests chronological and neat progress from literature review to data collection to final analysis.

I begin this chapter by giving a background to the study for the reader to gain an understanding of my work context as well as the context of

contemporary language teaching practices against which this study takes place. Next, I will describe the nature of this enquiry, its research ethos and research focus and how the regular reflection on the data, theories and my continuing practice influenced the evolving conceptualisation of the ideas underpinning this study. I then briefly explain the course itself and the two lessons from which I took my data before moving on to discuss the text (an article from *Mens' Health*) and the framework of text analysis I used for these lessons. I will then describe in more detail the process of analysing and coding the data. I will finish this chapter by introducing the students who are the informants of this study.

Background to the study

When I started this study in the late 1990s, language teaching at most language departments at the university where I worked was, in line with language teaching at other 'traditional' universities, still largely grammar and translation based. The underlying educational principles in language departments were rooted in the liberal Arts and Humanities with their emphasis on critical and rigorous thinking, objectivity and the notion of 'high' culture. The texts which were used for reading and translation in language teaching were challenging in their intellectual content, but the actual pedagogy did not contribute to students' ability to communicate in the foreign language in real life situations.

As I set out in chapter 1, outside the institutions adhering to liberal education, the grammar-translation approach was, justifiably in my opinion, recognised as outdated. A contrasting approach was favoured at universities with less traditional language departments or at Language Centres attached to universities. This approach is often described with the overall term of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). The content of these courses was originally developed with exchanges in typical tourist situations in mind, but this was soon incorporated into the

new educational paradigm of vocationalism which was gaining significance in HE.

Contemporary published language teaching materials for Dutch, such as *Code Nederlands* (1992) strictly followed the principles of the functional-notional syllabus with its bite-size approach to memorising phrases to perform language functions such as asking for directions, or ordering in a restaurant. Unlike the grammar translation approach, the pedagogy of CLT was informed by general theories of language acquisition and learning. The strength of this approach was clearly that students learned to communicate in every day situations and were familiar with appropriate phrases in a range of contexts. Students would be more likely to use 'authentic' language expressions within these set contexts. However, as a language teacher, I felt equally dissatisfied with this approach because of its lack of structure and linguistic underpinning on the one hand, and the reductive content focusing on pragmatic language exchanges only, on the other.

It would seem an obvious solution to integrate the positive aspects of each of these approaches into one syllabus, i.e. integrating the learning of grammatical structures in relation to communicative language functions, and, in addition, adding more interesting 'cultural' content. Indeed before embarking on this thesis, I had developed the second and fourth year language courses at the department where I taught. The principles that influenced these courses were informed by, amongst others, Wilkins' notion of the semantico-grammatical category¹ (1976), Hawkin's (1984) notion of language awareness as a meta-linguistic construct, and views of language as 'discourse' in the sense of the units of language which contribute to coherent texts, i.e. the traditional applied linguistics view of discourse. I wanted students to develop their language competence and skills both at the level of social interpersonal communication as well as at the level of academic and cognitive

language use; the areas that Cummins (1979) refers to as BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills) and CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency).

In practice this meant that in my courses I focused on the integration of form, function, text structure, text coherence and cohesion. But in addition, I also introduced an element of critical thinking in the courses, particularly in the fourth year language course. At that time I considered critical thinking to mean scrutinising argumentation and logical structure in texts and being able to write logical and cogent arguments. In the initial syllabus for the fourth year language course then, I included a range of language activities focusing on 'heavyweight' topics such as the political and ethical principles of the various Dutch media or the political ideals and historical influences which were embedded in the current arts policy of the Dutch government.

The initial results of this course (developed in the mid-1990s) suggested that students' language and writing skills improved in the sense that they showed a greater competence in writing cohesive and coherent texts than was previously the case. They also showed an awareness of the reader (albeit a universal one) in writing reader-friendly prose². Yet, I was still not satisfied with the course and its learning outcomes; the students' writing lacked authenticity and engagement. I realised that this was due to the fact that they were not able to understand, and certainly not produce, the subtle and connotative cultural meanings in language use. Students were quite capable of comprehending the surface meaning of texts and recognising stylistic points such as the degree of formality or informality of a text, but they tended not to respond to more subtle or specific cultural meanings in texts. Nor were they able to

¹ The semantico-grammatical category is one of the four principles underpinning the functional-notional syllabus. The category holds that particular meanings are embedded in grammar.

² Student feedback was generally positive about the improvement of their language competence. The most pleasing comment (for me) on one student questionnaire was that the course had been 'very thought provoking'. On the other hand it needs to be said that my impression was that only the more academically motivated students engaged enthusiastically with the texts, whereas others treated the texts and activities as just another language exercise.

produce language themselves incorporating these subtle or cultural meanings. Moreover, the texts that I exposed students to covered - due to the nature of the topics, mainly one register: that of the quality newspaper or popular academic article. I realised that in my desire to provide a high standard university course encompassing critical thinking, I had unwittingly interpreted the notion of content and culture as couched in the liberal humanist ideology: culture as the 'better' products of intellectual thinking. And in having done so, students received a one-sided and value-based view of language and text as needing to adhere to certain standards.

Research challenge

The challenge for me became to develop principles for language teaching and learning for a general language course in the context of a language degree, which would conceptualise communication as not only taking place in a *context of situation*, but also in a *context of culture* (see chapter 2). The course would need to develop students' general communicative and critical language skills and relate these to the immediate context (which I had focused on in my original course), as well as relate it to the wider cultural context of ideas and values. Whilst I had not fully conceptualised what I actually meant by culture or communication in language teaching, by 'critical' I meant an awareness of how language works as a communicative event in different contexts in relation to grammar and style, cognitive language skills (CALP), and in relation to scrutinising argumentation for its logical interplay of ideas. My intention was to develop these principles through re-designing my fourth year language course, and to reflect on my pedagogy and the students' responses to see how the course 'worked' in practice. This course is taken by students when they return from their Residency Abroad - a period of a year or half a year, spent at a university in the Netherlands or Flanders.

My initial intention with this study was to develop principles for good practice in language and culture teaching. As my study progressed along dialogic lines, i.e. a continuous reflection on practice in relation to theory, new concepts started to emerge. The research focus changed a number of times as part of this reflective process. Early on in the study, I articulated the initial aim further as 'developing principles for a pedagogy that would enable students to see text as cultuurtekst within a general language course'. Later on my research focus shifted from *developing* principles of good pedagogy, to *understanding* what happens in the classroom, and how students engaged with the concept of cultuurtekst, which had become the focus of my pedagogy.

It was the juggling and problematising of the initial and emerging concepts which posed the challenge of this thesis. In the process I followed various angles and themes, later abandoned them, resurrected some, picked up new ones, only to abandon some again. I will describe below which concepts in the end informed the thesis and how they changed over time. However, first I will set out the nature of the enquiry and the particular methodological features of this study.

The nature of the inquiry

This study makes use of qualitative research methodology, and employs a range of research styles: action research, ethnography and grounded theory.

In line with much current practice in qualitative research, I do not take a positivistic approach because the central tenets of positivism (a scientific experimental methodology; an intention to discover or apply universal laws; its assumption of objective neutrality) do not lend themselves to understanding the complexity and indeterminacy of students' engagement with texts, which is the focus of my study.

Positivist approaches are often contrasted with 'naturalistic' approaches to social study. A naturalist approach is premised on the notion that the social world should, as far as possible, be studied in its 'natural' state, i.e. not through artificial experiments, and should not concern itself with discovering universal laws regarding social events or human behaviour. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995 (1983):8) point out, naturalists hold that in order to understand people's behaviour, researchers must use an approach that gives them access to the *meanings* that guide that behaviour (my emphasis). However, a naturalistic perspective has also come under criticism because, like positivism, it attempts 'to understand social phenomena as objects existing independently of the researcher' (ibid, 1995:10). In other words, a naturalist perspective does not take into account that a researcher herself is also part of the social world she studies and as such influences the products of that participation, i.e. the data she collects. The naturalist response to this has been to limit these influences and to strive for value neutrality (ibid, p. 14).

In my own study I follow what Cohen et. al. refer to as an 'interpretive' model of research, rather than the 'normative' model which characterises positivist as well as naturalist approaches. The central concern of the 'interpretative' model is 'to understand the subjectivity of human experience' (Cohen et.al., 2007:21). Interpretive researchers begin to understand individuals and situations through emerging theories. Theory does not precede the research, but follows it. An interpretative perspective then will not lead to a generalisable theory; instead, it will show 'multifaceted images of human behaviour as varied as the situations and contexts supporting them' (ibid, p 22).

Moreover, I apply the principles of reflexivity to my study. Reflexivity implies that the researcher acknowledges her own values, beliefs and histories, and effects of this on the data; the way that the people in the study respond. But, rather than trying to minimise this effect and aiming for neutrality, the reflexive researcher acknowledges the limits to the

study. As I said in chapter 3, 'every observation has a blind spot' (Hermans, 2007:147). The problem for the researcher is that she of course does not know where the blind spot is, but acknowledging that there is one, as well as acknowledging any political or other agendas the researcher may have, are necessary steps in being a reflexive researcher.

Notion of subjectivity and objectivity.

My research was not disinterested. I had an agenda for this study which arose out of my dissatisfaction with the learning outcomes of my own classes and dissatisfaction with contemporary language and culture teaching materials and models. This agenda then was initially, as I explained earlier, to consider and develop ways of teaching for the particular aim that I felt was important, i.e. an understanding of the cultural values embedded in language use. This agenda affected my study in at least two ways. One of these is inherent in research studies where the teacher researches her own practice. As I was aiming to develop principles for language teaching, a close scrutiny of my own role and course material is likely to constitute a Face Threatening Act, Goffman, (1967), if the approach were to be rejected by students, or did not lead to the desired results. I was indeed in my early analyses trying to find a range of explanations for certain difficulties that arose during the classes. These related to my own didactic role; whether I had prepared students sufficiently, and to the students' role and what their own expectations were of a language class. It was not until later, that I realised that whether I had taught the classes well or not, or whether it fitted in with students' expectations was not an interesting point of departure. Instead, I needed to understand how the students had given meaning to my course (i.e. what it actually *meant* to them, how they *experienced* it), and conversely, what my role had been in that, not from a didactic perspective, but from a researcher perspective. How had I guided the students to certain interpretations?; How had I, as a teacher, responded to certain students' comments and followed these up?

Clearly, my aim was to gain critical distance from my data, to treat my data with integrity both towards my students as well as towards my own role, but as this study discusses only a very small sampling of a much larger body of data, my selection of samples was guided wittingly and unwittingly my own expectations, presuppositions and 'common-sense' understandings of the situation.

However, it is the acknowledgment of the researcher's own role as the designer of the data collection, and consequently the impact her own presence has on disturbing the 'surface of the culture she is investigating', which places the 'postmodern researcher [...] in a position to dig deeper and reveal the hidden and the counter', as Holliday indicates (2007: 19).

This study then acknowledges my own role and the changing discourses and voices I carry within me through reading and experience, which, for instance, led me to re-interpret my data, as I explain below. But the messy moments I encounter and the multiple voices I hear, and also carry within me, need to be countered through constant reflection, going over data, rephrasing the research question and referring back to theoretical reading. I do not claim to have achieved objectivity, but by a rigorous process of self-reflection and dialogue with the data I have attempted to gain some critical distance.

Methodology and features of the study

During the process of this study I engaged in different research orientations: that of action research, ethnography and grounded theory, which I set out below.

Action research

Cohen et.al. point to the all-encompassing definition of action research highlighting a number of defining features: 1) it is a form of collective self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations; 2) it

aims to improve social or educational practices, as well as the understanding of these practices; 3) it is achieved through the critically examined action of individuals (Cohen et.al., 2007:298).

This study constitutes action research as it complies with a number of these features, but it departs from action research in other ones. I am reflecting on my own practice and that of other participants in the situation – my students. Frequently, action research requires the collaboration of a group of other researchers. This was not the case in my study as I was the sole researcher. But, even though my students were strictly speaking the ‘objects’ of my study, that is to say, they are the people who I studied, they did play an important participatory role. They were aware of the purpose of my study and together with two exchange students from the Netherlands, who joined one of the classes I used for data collection, they collaborated in this study through interviews. Students were aware of the purpose of my study; they knew I was researching our classroom practice, and they participated readily in the interviews reflecting on their experiences and views.

My study, as I set out earlier, is aimed at improving pedagogical practice, and complies with traditions of action research in that sense. However, this study aims to be more than a ‘procedure designed to deal with a concrete problem’ (Cohen and Manion, 1985: 223); it seeks to understand how students responded to my particular approach and to see what would emerge from my classes in terms of student learning and engagement.

Finally, this study also complied with the tradition of action research in the sense that it constitutes ‘critically examined action’. This action took place in the form of critical reflection along the principles of grounded theory, as I set out below. There are dangers and disadvantages associated with researching one’s own practice. It is difficult to combine the role of teacher and researcher at the same time. Firstly, it is difficult to remain an observer, when one’s main focus is with the progression of

the class. In my study, I did indeed find that at times this 'double identity' stood in the way of giving my full attention to the didactic aspect of the class, as in the back of my mind I wondered whether anything significant was emerging from a particular teaching or learning moment during the class. The classroom interventions I made were not always occasioned by immediate pedagogic concerns, but also by a concern with creating the ideal circumstances for particular data, particular responses which I hoped to elicit. Moreover, as I indicated earlier, scrutinising one's own practice cannot be completely disinterested; there is a distinct possibility of losing face.

Another danger, associated with my particular study is that there were clear power differentials between myself as researcher and the students as participants. As the teacher I was also responsible for marking and grading students. At the start of each of the interviews I encouraged students to be critical and as open and frank as possible, as I was not concerned with getting a positive evaluation of the course, or indeed of myself as a teacher. Nevertheless, the power differentials will almost certainly have influenced some students' responses. They may have given me information which they assumed I might like to hear. However, as chapter 6 will show, this power differential did not necessarily deter students from giving critical comments. One student in particular was openly critical of my course, and indeed of me.

Ethnography

Ethnography is an approach to understanding the 'richness, complexity, connectedness, conjunctions and disjunctions' of the social world (Cohen et.al., 2007:167). It particularly studies the meanings (a group of) people attach to a particular phenomenon. In its most characteristic form ethnography involves the researcher collecting data through observations, listening to what people say, asking questions, and generally participating as a participant observer in people's lives, often for an extended period of time. An ethnographic study does not have a

hypothesis or even a clear research question before the start of the study. Instead it starts with a 'foreshadowed problem', a general idea of what the research focus might be. The data which is gathered in this way, is analysed, reflected upon, a summary interpretation might be formed, more data will be collected and analysed in the light of the initial interpretation and so on in an ongoing cycle of data collection and analysis.

Ethnography has been a feature of social science research through most of the twentieth century, and has become prominent in many social and educational studies, yet it 'escapes ready summary definitions' (Atkinson et. al. 2007: 1). It is often classed as naturalistic research, with its methodological emphasis on first-hand exploration of the research setting, with hypotheses, instruments for analysis, questionnaires, coding systems and so on, all arising from the fieldwork. However, as Hammersley and Atkinson point out, there is a tension between the naturalism characteristic of the methodological thinking of ethnographers, and the fact that ethnographers 'portray people as *constructing* the social world' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 11). Atkinson et.al. (2007 (2001):3-5) set out the debates amongst ethnographers in relation to the underpinning philosophical differences within the field which are said (cf. Denzin and Lincoln, 1994) to be divided along chronological lines by traditional naturalistic perspectives within a framework of objectivism which sees the ethnographic product of field notes as a closed, completed and final text, and a postmodern orientation influenced by the linguistic, or interpretative *turn*. The latter orientation looks upon the discipline as characterised by difference and diversity and a series of tensions ethnographers and the people they study both engage in. Denzin and Lincoln capture this orientation by describing the present that ethnographers look at as 'a messy moment, multiple voices, experimental texts, breaks, ruptures, crises of legitimation and representation, self-critique, new moral discourses, and technologies' (quoted by Atkinson et.al., 2007(2001):3).

Whilst the characterisation between these two orientations may have been too sharply drawn, as Atkinson et. al. believe, the relevance of this discussion for my study is that it highlights the tensions within an ethnographic study, which indeed are also reflected within my own study. On the one hand, I am using 'traditional' ethnographic methods. One of these is that I do not start out with a clear research question, but a 'foreshadowed problem' which was formulated in different themes and topics as the study progressed. Another of the 'traditional' methods I used, was that of participant observation, although my role here was, as I pointed out before, not clear cut. I am also using in-depth ethnographic style interviews. And finally, I am 'making inferences' of what the observations and interview data mean. Yet, on the other hand, I am also acknowledging that my understanding is limited and influenced by my own experiences, knowledge and assumptions.

However, even though I make use of some ethnographic methodologies, my study cannot be said to be an ethnographic study as such. As indicated, my role as a participant observer is ambiguous. Also, I am not making use of 'thick descriptions' (cf. Geertz, 1973). Even though I made notes for myself during the course when problems occurred, I had at this time not conceived of my study as a fully fledged ethnographic study, so I did not systematically write field notes. Yet, as a few years after data collection I developed an ethnographically oriented course for second year students (see chapter 3), I was aware of ethnographic methodologies during the data analysis stages of my study. This enhanced my awareness of 'making the familiar strange', and as a result I queried my earlier interpretations, made 'thick descriptions' in my analysis of the data, and I developed a theoretical sensitivity, which is also part of another methodology, i.e. grounded theory, that influenced this study and to which I turn next.

Grounded theory

Finally, my study borrows from grounded theory. Grounded theory, developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), is a qualitative research approach which aims to develop a theory about the phenomena studied by 'grounding' the theory in observation. This then is similar to some ethnographic approaches, which indeed build on Glaser and Strauss's ideas (Holliday, 2007: 17). Rather than having a clear hypothesis at the start of the study to explain certain phenomena, research using a grounded theory approach aims to understand these phenomena through the data. Concepts and categories of explanation are 'discovered' through careful analysis of the data, as well as through reference to and reflection on theoretical literature. The tentative categories and concepts which emerge can be tested over and over again, against new data in a continuous cycle. The researcher needs to develop what is called 'theoretical sensitivity'; the ability to relate the data to concepts and to make links with existing theories and categories and to develop new ones rooted in the data.

The process of developing categories and concepts is carried out through 'coding'; reading and re-reading the data and going through these to see what categories emerge.

My study carries elements of grounded theory, in the sense that theoretical categories emerged in the course of my study. My study was very much a process of gradually understanding what happens – and also what did not happen - when students read and discuss text as cultuurtekst. Whilst my study is not in a fully developed sense grounded theory, it aimed to be theory building rather than theory confirming.

Messiness

As I have indicated at several points in this and other chapters, my data seemed messy and contradictory. The realities of the classroom and the students' experiences seemed at times ambiguous, elusive and slippery. However, it is in reflection that I can conclude that this indistinctiveness

is an inherent part of research method which seeks not to reduce or simplify the complexity of social reality. As Blommaert (2010:11) states, social activities are 'not linear and coherent, but multiple, layered, chequered and unstable.' By refusing to impose ordered methods to complicated and kaleidoscopic realities, ethnography becomes critique, Blommaert suggests (ibid.). Reddy (in Faubion and Marcus, 2004:111) also resists chronology and ordering in method. She employs the metaphor of the rhizome as described by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to explain that fieldwork is disjointed. It does not work with straight and linear connections, but with 'lines of flight'.

John Law makes the same points as Reddy and Blommaert. Standard ethnographic and other social science methodologies do not capture the ephemeral, the slippery, the emotional, the diffuse, and the indistinct realities of the world (2004:2). We need to use different methods to deal with 'mess' and to understand a networked and fluid world. Method, and method's practices, he argues, do not only *describe* reality, but also *produce* it (ibid:5). In this sense research has political implications.

It can be said that in my own study I used the standard social science approaches of observations and interviewing. Similarly, in the initial stages of the data analysis I followed the 'mechanical' approach which is inherent in that standard methodology. Nevertheless, my intellectual engagement with the data, as well as with the 'project' as a whole, has embraced ways of thinking about method which sees messiness not as an unavoidable disadvantage, but as a 'way of working' and a 'way of being' (Law, 2004:10).

The concepts which informed the study

In developing my approach to language and culture teaching, I conceived of context of situation and context of culture as consisting at two levels: context of situation as the basic level that students would need to understand, and the context of culture as the level which would

allow students to become intercultural – to understand where the text or the speakers were ‘coming from’ at an ideological level. Both levels are necessary to discuss and understand text, and indeed to become a competent language user and intercultural speaker. The second level, the context of culture, addressed the relationship between language and culture at the *generic*³ level; how values and ways of thinking are articulated and refracted in language through discourses. Following a range of other concepts, such as a Foucauldian notion of discourse, Bakthin’s notion of multivoicedness and dialogue, Kress’s notion of conflicting discourses and Maaïke Meijer’s idea of cultuurtekst, I applied these ideas to my language teaching courses, in what I came to call the cultuurtekst principle of language teaching. As I set out in previous chapters, this principle holds that seeing text as cultuurtekst helps students to become aware of the discourses and values which underpin our every day communications and which are often taken for granted. I wanted to make students aware of this through reading texts, and also to apply, or at least be aware of it in their own communications.

The notion of cultuurtekst also helped me to address the tension that exists in the relationship between language and culture at the *differential* level, i.e. ‘a’ language related to ‘a’ specific culture. As I set out in chapter 3, we cannot hold to a view of a direct relationship between a language and ‘the’ culture with which it is associated. Yet, at the same time we cannot ignore that there are cultural patterns which relate to or, at least, are experienced by people as a national or localised entity (cf. Holliday, forthcoming). Many of the discourses that learners come across, however, are global and cross many different national borders, e.g. the discourses of ‘terrorism’ or ‘environmentalism’, but these ‘global’ discourses can be articulated differently in different contexts, including national ones. I have called this in relation to the text we discussed in class a ‘Dutch articulation’.

³ In chapter 3, following Risager, I discuss the notion of the relationship between language and culture at a generic and a differential level.

In the process of conducting my study and analysing data, making tentative inferences and recognising categories, new concepts emerged. Whereas earlier on in the study I had worked with the notions of context of situation, context of culture, and different views of criticality, which then led me to the idea of 'cultuurtekst', the analysis of the data brought new categories to the fore. One of these new categories was particularly the importance of students' previous experience and ways of making sense of the world in interpreting texts. Also, I realised that the view that students had of 'text' became an important part of their response to the text. The 'partial' or 'half' understandings (as I saw them), I recognised later to be an important part of the 'struggle to mean' and to gain a deeper understanding of these complex issues. As I realised, the 'rich' learning moments in the lessons had been where students engaged with and related the text to their own experiences.

Students did not just approach the text in an intellectual way, but also in an experiential way. That is to say, they read text in relation to their own experiences. I came to think of this way of intellectually and experientially engaging with text as 'seeing text as a text ethnographer', which I describe in chapter 3.

It was only retrospectively, after the process of analysing, further reflection and further theorising on the course that I came to see how reading text as an ethnographer is a way of engaging with the other, and being intercultural through texts, so it was not part of my pedagogy at the time of data collection. However, in the conclusion I will suggest ways of engaging with this notion more systematically.

This study analyses two lessons in the fourth year language course. However, in order for the reader to understand where these lessons fitted in, I will give a short overview of the course, its aims and the distinctiveness of my approach.

The course

The course, which I am using as the basis for this study, is a fourth year Dutch language class. The reason for focusing on this year group was partly pragmatic, in that this was the only language year group I was teaching at that point. However, more importantly, I felt that for researching the understanding of the cultural locatedness of texts, the fourth year class would be the best starting point as the students have just returned from the Netherlands or Flanders on their Year Abroad, and would therefore have already experienced various cultural practices and values; in other words they have already participated and have been socialised in the 'shared cultural knowledge' that the Dutch readership for the texts we are using would have. The fourth year students would therefore be more likely to recognise the discourses in the texts in relation to the context of production. They also would be more likely to engage with and discuss the cultural values in the text because their language competence would be that much greater than in the first or second years.

Whilst the course takes a cultuurtekst approach, which borrows concepts from cultural studies, it is important to emphasise that this study took place as part of a general language class and not a cultural studies class per se. This means that students were not just engaged in reading, discussion and interpretation, but also in other practical language tasks which included all the four traditional language skills. However, as the students on this course have just spent a substantial time in a Dutch-speaking environment, they are confident communicators at the interpersonal social skills level (cf. Cummins), and are confident intercultural speakers. For that reason, the course focuses more on

cognitive language skills. It is largely centred around texts (including oral and visual ones, although the latter was only touched upon), discussed in class and with a range of follow up writing activities.

At the time of data collection I had articulated the overall aim of the course at a practical level as enabling students to function and communicate at a professional, social and academic level in a Dutch-speaking environment within a wide range of social and cultural contexts. Apart from advancing students' actual language skills, this functioning particularly requires the students to develop an awareness of how language, communication and culture relate to one another. As I mentioned earlier the students would need to be able to engage with communicative instances at the level of context of culture situation as well as context of culture. Both levels would demand a particular level of criticality. Students would need to be critical intercultural language users; able to recognise values in text, being able to address the reader taking into account the communicative demands set by both levels of contexts.

Distinctiveness of the approach

As set out in previous chapters, the course differed from other Dutch language courses in its focus on awareness raising of 'culture in language'. In my previous chapters I criticised the instrumental approaches to language learning which are informed by the guidelines of the Council of Europe. Particularly in the Netherlands there is a strong instrumental focus in language teaching. My criticism of instrumentalism is directed at its limited and reductive approach to the social and cultural world. Frequently in instrumentally oriented textbooks examples of 'language in use' are presented as if the language users all share the same context and speak with the same voice. The notion of a universal (native) speaker is strong in instrumentally focused courses.

That does not mean that I believe preparing students for the world of work is irrelevant, but I believe that the 'world of work' is part of the

complex wider cultural context. We cannot predict what particular linguistic and cultural contexts our graduates will encounter. What we can predict, however, is that these situations will be complex and differ each time, will be challenging, consist of many indeterminacies and will, quite likely, be intercultural.

As well as linguistic skills, students should develop intellectual skills which go over and beyond the cognitive academic language proficiency of writing cogent arguments in order to understand and become aware of language and its uses in the cultural world. These would not just be skills for functional and pragmatic purposes, but also for ideological purposes: recognising on the one hand how ideas and values are reflected and constructed in texts, how power relations are reproduced and how the reader is positioned in certain texts.

With these factors in mind, I designed the course so that students were gradually made aware of the wider cultural context of the text and how this is reflected and constructed in the language used. I had 'packaged' this approach to students in the more pragmatically formulated notion of 'style'. After all students' expectations and their own objectives for this course would have been primarily to improve their language skills, not to learn how to analyse texts. The importance of looking at cultural values in texts, I explained, was partly to recognise as a reader where a text is 'coming from', but also, it would help them in their practical writing skills by being able to write stylistically appropriately for different aims and purposes.

Overview of the syllabus

The course of 20 weeks is split into two parts. In practice the material that I wanted to cover in the first part took approximately 12 weeks, with 8 weeks left for the remaining part of the course. The table below shows a schematic overview of the course. However, the course, did not progress as neatly as the overview suggests. As well as discussing texts

and doing writing activities, we also did grammatical exercises where appropriate. In addition a number of lessons were spent on translating texts⁴.

The first part of the course consisted of two blocks. The first block of this part introduces the notion of 'style' in relation to the aim and audience of a text before looking at how language in its stylistic choice of structures and lexis can reflect particular ideological positions in texts. In order to help students to query the seemingly natural positions in texts, I introduced most texts in 'pairings' so that students could see how else the topic could be talked about. I also structured the ideas in a gradual way, moving from ideas of situational context to context of culture. Paired texts cover the same topic, but would be either written for different purposes, for different audiences, or would consist of different genres or draw on different discourses.

The second block in term 1 applied these conceptual ideas to a more 'traditional' area of advanced language teaching; that of argumentation and text structure. In looking at structure and argumentation we initially focused on the 'textual' and 'product' level of the text, I introduced students first to the academic, rhetorical and linguistic aspects of these areas, e.g. how arguments and texts are constructed, cohesion and coherence in texts. Then we looked at these texts in their situational and cultural contexts. It is in this block that I introduce the notion of cultuurtekst using the *Men's Health* text which is the focus of this study. I will discuss these lessons in more detail below.

The second term of the course aimed to put the framework and the new understandings of cultuurtekst into practice in more practically and professionally oriented situations and contexts, such as report and letter

⁴ Translation in this course, was an inheritance and I had not yet removed its requirement from the internal course forms/procedures. Yet, I also felt that translation was an important way to discuss the cultural aspects of text. Particularly in translating texts from popular media, the notion of representations did occur. However, as a non-native speaker of English, and little knowledge of translation theory, I did remove that element of the course in later years.

writing and giving oral presentations. I ask students to look at addressivity and at positioning of the texts, as well as to write for different contexts, and drawing on different discourses. My main aim in this second part of the course with moving from 'cultuurtekst' to instrumental and goal oriented areas of language teaching was to encourage students to apply their critical awareness of discourses to communicative events which may seem even more natural than those of popular media texts, but are also filled with different voices, discourses and ideologies.

Course overview

TERM 1 Language and Culture Block 1	Aim: to introduce the concepts in progressive fashion
Topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Representations of Dutch (and English) culture and society in the Dutch media ▪ Comparing discourses ▪ The multi-cultural society ▪ A current debate, e.g. euthanasia ▪ Gender roles and representations 	
Texts used include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two newspaper reports from different newspapers reporting on an attempted prisoner break-out'. Newspapers: <i>Telegraaf</i> and <i>Volkskrant</i>. ▪ Two interviews conducted by a female journalist in a series of interviews with 'experts' about their views on Dutch identity. One was an ex-diplomat, the other a young female parliamentarian of Turkish descent. Newspaper: <i>Volkskrant</i>. ▪ Two informative texts about Dutch identity: 1) textbook for social studies at secondary school; 2) the first two pages of an article from a popular academic monograph <i>Het nut van Nederland</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Texts from same genre, but different audiences and orientations are compared for different representation of the same event in terms of information focused on or left out; grammar, lexis and their effect. ▪ Texts from same genre are looked at critically and used for discussion of content and are compared for different positioning from journalist and interviewee and the other way round, through language used. ▪ Text from text book is looked at critically for essentialist representation of an aspect of Dutch culture, and scrutinised for how the language used and its 'breezy style' help to 'convince'. Text from academic monograph is used to compare its style: its structure and stylistic strategies (e.g. repetition

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Three texts representing regional identities: 1) article from Dutch newspaper, <i>Volkskrant</i>, about the Cotswolds; 2) column in newspaper, <i>Trouw</i>, by Dutch novelist about his experiences of and views on London. 3) a texts from popular media, <i>One</i>, a magazine aimed at young women, 'exoticification' and essentialising particular travel destinations. A set of texts to make the differences clear between aim, audience, style and genre of text. Topic: self development courses. Texts: 1) PR material from personal development/vocational training company; 2) a section from a popular weekly publication for young women (<i>Viva</i>) giving 'vignettes' of people talking about courses they have taken and how this helped them to develop personal skills; 3) course description from the website of a publication aimed at professional staff, <i>Intermediair Loopbaantrainingen</i>. 	<p>and contrast) also help to 'convince'.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The travel texts are used to further talk about representation of identity, and how the language and style used aids respectively 1) its nostalgic impression of the Cotswolds through romantic literary language, 3) its exoticising and directing at audience through fitting in with expectations of genre, using techniques of rhyming and repetition and focusing on senses. We analysed the texts for genre, purpose, audience and style. This led talking about different values about work and personal development which were reflected in some of the texts. <p>Tasks and assessment: Activities included discussion about and analysis of the texts. Writing tasks are in preparation for the assessment task which is to write two contrasting pieces: a fairly essentialised description of a country or region or town in a 'closed' style as well as a more nuanced version about the same place in a popular academic style.</p>
<p>Block 2 Argumentation</p>	<p>Aim: to apply the concepts to a larger range of genres relating to arguments, debates and discussions. Introduce the concept of cultuurtekst more explicitly.</p>
<p>Texts and materials used include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text book for native speakers about argumentation structures <i>Ons drugsbeleid mag er zijn</i>. Rationale for drug policy written by Dutch Health Secretary (published in <i>NRC</i> newspaper.) Three texts about a new euthanasia law in the Netherlands: 1 and 2) two newspaper editorials from <i>Trouw</i> and <i>Volkskrant</i> respectively. 3) An emotive interview with a mother whose child died through euthanasia. Three texts: 1) <i>Het multiculturele debat</i>, Paul Scheffer, <i>NRC</i>. This text became later a key text in the discussion surrounding multiculturalism in the Netherlands. 2) A criticism on this article and 3) Scheffer's response to that. Three texts about gender roles and 	<p>Focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text in context of situation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Text purpose - Audience Text as product: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Argumentation structures - Argumentation types/genres - Cohesion and coherence Text as context of culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Genre - Intertexts - Implicit argumentation/values - Cultuurtekst <p>Tasks and assessment: Activities included discussion about and analysis of the texts. Writing tasks were in preparation for the Assessment</p>

<p>representation:1) a polemical text: 'De man als dinosaurus', Liesbeth Wytzes, <i>Volkskrant</i>. 2) An argued response to this text;</p> <p>3) <i>Men's Health</i> text: 'Pas op. Er word op je gejaagd'.</p> <p>NB The discussion of this particular text forms the focus of and is the entry point of my study.</p>	<p>task which was to write an argument about the same topic and more or less the same viewpoint, but for different audiences and purposes and hence drawing on different discourses.</p>

TERM 2 Practical skills	<p>Aim: Apply the concepts introduced in the first half to communicative situations often encountered in work-related contexts</p>
<p>Oral presentations Materials used: Textbook on communication Authentic presentations as part of debate about whether Dutch language is in danger of disappearing</p>	<p>Authentic contexts We look critically at text book examples. It is useful to gain new language expressions, but we critique its lack of authenticity. We talk about different styles and audience needs and contexts. Addressivity and audience. We listen to two authentic presentations to see how it is structured and what techniques are used, such as repetition.</p> <p>Tasks and assessment Students work on sample presentations for different contexts. This is recorded on film and discussed individually with students for pointers on style and manner etc. Oral presentation: students use the same topic as their year abroad research project and choose an appropriate and authentic context, and determine what role they themselves and the audience need to play. Students are assessed on relevance</p>

	and appropriacy of content and style within the chosen context.
Report writing Materials used: Authentic reports of institutions and companies	Identity We look at these reports partly in terms of product, the kind of conventions within report writing and expressions and representations of statistical information, but we particularly look at these in terms of context of culture: what corporate or public identity is the institution/company representing through its language used and information focused on (i.e. traditional and trustworthy, or dynamic, market leader, environmentally aware, successful, etc.). Tasks and assessment: Activities included discussion about and analysis of the texts. Writing tasks were in preparation for the Assessment task which was to conduct a simple study, i.e. in local swimming club or amongst students regarding eating habits, and to write two reports using more or less the same information but for different audiences and purposes.
Letter writing Text book for a few examples Many authentic letters: asking for donations, newsletter, letters from school to parents, invitation to a leaving party of a colleague at work, invitation to project meeting and many others.	Addressivity We look at text book examples critically. It is useful for some language expressions, but we critique its lack of authenticity. Talk about different styles and audience needs and contexts. Addressivity and audience. Use a framework I made for analysing letters. Focus on interpersonal relations and positioning and power relations and how this is embedded in language. Tasks and assessments: Tasks included writing a range of letters for different purposes and audiences and 'relationships' including power roles This task is assessed during the exam where students have to write two letters about the same topic using different roles and purposes and positioning. E.g. provost sending letter to students advising not to go on strike, union sending letter to students urging them to go on strike.
Summary	Context In the last couple of lessons we focus on the importance of context in writing a summary. Depending on why you

	want to write a summary and for whom you will focus on different aspects and formulate it differently.
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The lessons I focus on for data collection

The two lessons I focus on in this study represent the point in the course where I introduce the notion of cultuurtekst explicitly to the students. Even though we have looked at underpinning values in texts at earlier points in the course, I had always done this in an implicit manner.

Initially the focus of my research was to develop principles for language and culture learning and I wanted to focus on the course as a whole, including reading, writing and the assessment tasks students had produced to see what happened in class. However, as the data became too large and unwieldy, I decided to focus on the two lessons where I introduced the particular framework for analysis which I had developed and which I will set out in more detail later in this chapter.

These two particular lessons fitted into a series of lessons within the block on argumentation, which had as its starting point gender roles and representations. Prior to discussing the *Men's Health* text (see appendix), the class discussed a polemical article, '*De man als dinosaurus*', ('The male as dinosaur'), by a female journalist, and a critical response to that. The students looked at this text particularly to see how the linguistic representation through grammar and style enhances the impression of the strong successful female and the weak disempowered male. I then introduced the text which forms the focus of this study; the text from *Men's Health*.

The reason for discussing this text was that it provided a range of different and contrasting discourses with the previous texts. Whereas the first two texts came from a quality newspaper (*de Volkskrant*), the *Men's Health* text is a different genre text from a popular life style 'glossy' for

men. However, due to practical circumstances, (including time tabling for the oral presentations) there was a gap of two weeks between the particular two lessons I am focusing on and the previous lessons on the topic of gender representations.

The rationale for using a text from the popular media is that discourses are more exaggerated and easily recognisable. Moreover, as Wallace citing Luke et. al. (2001:113) states, these texts may seem innocuous, neutral and requiring just a simple response, 'cumulatively they document and shape social and cultural life' (Wallace, (2003:1). This particular *Men's Health* text, I felt, would easily yield a discussion around cultural values and discourses, as it showed a range of conflicting discourses. Moreover, I thought there was a Dutch articulation in the text, as I will explain below.

Framework and how it relates to the two classes

The framework I have developed (see below) does not follow an accepted one for discourse analysis, such as a Hallidayan analysis, a Critical Discourse analysis or an analysis carried out as ethnography of communication. However, all these elements have informed, somewhat loosely, my particular framework.

My framework is not a theoretical one and is based on pedagogical considerations and is at once more and less than a 'proper' theoretical framework for analysis. It is 'less' in the sense that the framework is not meant to lead to an in-depth written analysis which has to justify its theoretical premises. The framework is a tool, a guideline to facilitate the dialogue in class, to provide the 'fuel' in the process of collaborating in making sense of the text.

My framework is also 'more' than a theoretical framework for text analysis, in that it is not merely a discourse analysis in its own right, but is also intended to function as an 'awareness raiser' for students in producing text themselves.

The framework is intended for students to focus on text at a textual level, as a product, and to look at it in relation to both the context of situation and the context of culture. I based the level of context of situation on Hymes' speaking model, even though strictly speaking this model also encompasses cultural and social contexts as part of some of the speech categories such as norm and genre, but, these, I would say, are distinct from the context of culture, as they do not explicitly consider values embedded in language use. For this framework then I conceptualised the context of situation in a slightly more 'pared' down manner than Hymes' model, focusing particularly on the where, to whom, when, why and how. Or as I have phrased it in my framework, the text audience, the text function, the text structure.

English translation of framework:

Framework for analysing and understanding texts

1 – Content: what (or who) is the text about?

- what is the main point?
- maybe also: what are the subsidiary points?
- what is exactly said about those points?
- **Relating to your own expectations and knowledge**
- to what extent do you recognise the theme of the text?
- in what kind of situations have you come across this before (having read or heard about it)?
- and in what way?

2 Immediate context:

- aim/function

- what does the text 'do'? (what does the text want to achieve?)
examples of functions are: *to inform, to analyse a problem, to suggest a solution for a problem, to amuse, to give an opinion, to convince the reader of a particular argument, to explain something, to try and convince the reader to take to change his/her behaviour, etc.*
- Describe the function in relation to the content of the text. For example: *this text provides an overview of the different saving accounts available at this bank. Or: this text tries to convince the readers that the product of this company is the best on the market.*
- Which (strategic) means are used to achieve that aim?
For example: *Engage the reader by appealing to making the theme recognisable, or engage the reader through grammatical structures, e.g. use of imperfect tense. Or: Convince the reader by referring to sources*

of authority, or by making comparisons, or by referring to a generally accepted 'rule' or convention, etc.

- target audience: who is the text aimed at?

- is the text written for a certain situation or a certain publication?
- and what do you know about that situation?
- if you don't know that situation or publication, are there clues in the text which could help you to find out what kind of audience the text is aimed at? (for example: *is the reader expected to have certain prior knowledge, the way the reader is addressed (or not), the kind of arguments which are used, kind of sources which are used, complexity, liveliness, formality, and use of grammar: use of passives, complex sentence structures, use of verbs, nouns, adjectives etc.*)

-3 genre

- What kind of text is it? (for example: *a business letter, a personal letter, an invitation for a party, a news report, an opinion article in a newspaper, an essay, a report, an academic article, a conversation, a joke, an informative article in a women's glossy, dietary advice etc.*)

4 text as text

- structure

- How is the text structured?
- What is the effect?

- cohesion

- How are the sentences and sentence parts connected? (for example: *formal markers, use of ellipsis, repetitions, through word order, synonyms, bridging sentences which indicate explicitly the links etc.*)
- What is the effect?

5 text as 'cultuurtekst'

- How does the text talk about the topic and the 'participants'? Show this by referring to specific words and expressions. (For example: *written from perspective of the 'participants'; distant; critical; ambiguous; knowledgeable; angry; sympathetically; with empathy; with disdain; from a power position; as truth; cautiously etc.*)
- How is the reader addressed? (*as equal, patronisingly; as a 'student', from the assumption reader shares the same ideas and values; with (dis)respect; etc.*)
- Which values do you recognise in the text? (for example: *feministic; new age; religious; social-democratic; humanistic; conservative; capitalistic; individualistic; collaboratively; environmentally aware; nationalistic; etc.*)
- Which different 'discourses' and 'intertexts' do you recognise in the text? (*see above, and discourses reminiscent of law, text books, advertising, financial world etc.*)
- Are these values conflicting in anyway?

6 evaluation

- Why is this text written?
- If you would write it for a different target group what and how would you adapt it?
- What other ways could you write about this topic (think about aim, audience, values and intertexts)?
- Is it an acceptable text if you look at it from a liberal view of text structure (in terms of argument, structure, clarity and 'honesty')?
- How do you respond yourself to the text now? Compare with your own expectations you had written down at point 1.

I introduced this framework at the point of the lessons where we looked at the *Men's Health* text. The questions in the framework were not specifically geared to this particular text. So, even though one aspect of the second lesson related to Dutch articulation, the framework itself does not cover this aspect. The notion of Dutch articulation was not a general point to be discussed for each text we read, but seemed pertinent to this *Men's Health* text.

The first point in the framework serves to invoke students' previous experience and expectations of the text in order to make them aware of their possible preconceptions they may have. This is not a pre-reading activity per se, because normally the students would already have read the text as homework in preparation for the class. However, the first reading of text as homework is primarily meant for students to read at a content level, in order to look up any vocabulary they do not understand. Point 1 in the framework then, is to ensure there were not misunderstandings which arose from unfamiliarity with the vocabulary or with certain (cultural) references to the text. Under the heading of what the text was about, I also included the recognising of main and subsidiary points in the text. This was because the aim of my lessons was partly to develop cognitive language skills.

The second point was designed to make students think more carefully about the immediate context of the text; the context of situation. This

involved moving from the surface content of the text (which is discussed under point 1) to recognising what the text 'does'; what its aim or function is, and the way of bringing that about, such as the use of various argumentation schemas. Another aspect of this part of the analysis refers to the target group: who is the text aimed at and how can you tell? This awareness was also aimed at raising students' awareness of addressivity in order to help not only with reading, but also with writing.

Point 3 of the framework, the notion of genre, bridges the notion of context of situation, i.e. social setting, and context of culture. I have given this a separate heading as it needs some special consideration, both in terms of reading as well as writing of text. In developing writing skills, it is crucial for the students to consider conventions of certain social contexts (Bakhtin, 1986; Fairclough, 1992). As far as reading a text is concerned, the issue of genre helps students to recognise the conventions associated with specific types of text and to consider why a text may deviate from these conventions and expectations.

The fourth point of this framework, text as text (i.e. text as a product), is designed to alert students to the textual aspect of text, which I see here as a more traditional, structuralist approach to text in language teaching. In this framework I am contrasting the notion of text with the notion of cultuurtekst. Under this heading students look at text in terms of cohesion and argumentation. The rationale for this was not only to develop cognitive language skills, but also to guide students towards the interpretation of text as cultuurtekst. I felt that, together with point 3 of genre, looking at the *effect* of the overall structure and cohesion of a text, would alert the reader to style as a social language use, which would pave the way for seeing text as cultuurtekst.

The most important point for my purposes is point 5, that of cultuurtekst. In this section I want students to look at that aspect of cultuurtekst which recognises and maps the discourses and the voices in the text, and to see if the discourses are consistent with one another, or conflicting. The

conflicting discourses are the most significant ones. For this aspect I borrowed from Wallace's Hallidayan text analytical framework (Wallace, 2003: 39) which focuses on how the topic and participants in the text are represented. I am encouraging students to recognise discourses by engaging their knowledge of previous texts, of intertexts, by asking: where have you come across this kind of 'talk' before?

The final point in the framework is an overall 'evaluation'. I use evaluation here, partly in line with Halliday (cf 1985) in attributing meaning to the text. However, it also has a more pedagogical rationale in the sense that it functions to summarise the points mentioned under 5, cultuurtekst, which can then be compared with the questions and answers which were given in the earlier parts of the framework. I followed Wallace's aforementioned Hallidayan framework with questions such as 'Why has this text been written?' which serves to make students aware that as well as text function, as part of immediate context discussed under point 2, there are ideological underpinnings to a text. Finally, I ask the students to look at the text from the liberal humanist perspective of text: Is it a clear, well argued piece of text?, before asking them to give their own response to the text. By comparing their answers under point 6 with earlier answers, I hope to alert students to the value or importance of analysing a text from different perspectives.

The text and my analysis

The original text and my English translation are in appendix 1 and 2. I will offer a summary here.

The title of the text is: '*Huwbare mannen gevraagd*' (Marriageable men wanted) with as subtitle: '*Pas op. Er wordt op je gejaagd*'. (Take care. You are being hunted'. The text comes from a monthly publication called *Men's Health*. The publication is an international one, but the Dutch version carries the same English name. As far as I can tell, the texts are not translated from English, but written by Dutch authors for a Dutch audience. The particular issue (1999) which carried the text I was

using for these classes, used the following editorial categories within the table of contents: 'Fitness and sport'; 'Relationships' (the category in which the article under discussion appeared); 'Psychology' (an article about stress); 'Nutrition'; 'Sex' ('How to keep going for longer'); 'Health'; 'Career'; 'Adventure'; and 'Fashion'. In addition there are a number of columns which all reflect the topics in the sections just mentioned. The categories and topics would suggest that the target group of *Men's Health* are ambitious, health and body conscious, fairly youngish men. The notion of 'success' is emphasised in many of the articles and columns.

Content and context

As described in the introductory paragraph of the text, the article is about single career women between 35 and 54 whose 'biological clock is ticking'. As the title states: 'Marriageable men wanted'. The women are represented on the one hand as aggressive young women who go out in the evenings to engage in '*mannen vernielen*' ('male-bashing'), and on the other hand as women who have a problem and need help, as they are incapable of maintaining a healthy relationship with a man, and are thus risking missing out on having a baby.

The text could on the surface be construed as advice or as a warning to men. In the last line of the introductory paragraph this is made explicit as the (male) reader is directly addressed in this warning:

'Kijk uit, er wordt op je gejaagd',
 'Look out, they're after you' (literally: Look out, you're being hunted).

Equally, there is a whole paragraph with the heading: 'The career woman: instructions for use', in which advice is given. It starts with the following sentence:

'Wat doe je wanneer je verstrikt raakt in een relatie met een vrouw die gehard is in de top van het bedrijfsleven?'
 ('What do you do when you get trapped in a relationship with a career woman who has been hardened in a top position in the business world?').

There are some linguistic, as well as visual features of the text which suggest a half-serious as well as a half amusing undertone in discussing the particular 'social phenomenon' of the single career woman.

Particularly the descriptions in the first few paragraphs, which describe some of the women in their 'male-bashing' exploits seem geared to getting some laughs:

Allen zijn ze op hun eigen manier even succesvol én even single. Nou ja, de meiden komen wel aan hun trekken hoor, dat is het niet. Dorien – 34, topbaan bij een bank – heeft al een paar jaar een relatie met een getrouwde vent. José – 36, manager bij een hotel in Utrecht- heeft een onmogelijke verhouding met een vage schilder met een alcoholprobleem.

(All are in their own way equally successful and equally single. Well, the girls don't go without, you know. Dorien – 34, top job at a bank – has had a relationship with a married bloke for a few years. José – 36, hotel manager in Utrecht- has an impossible relationship with some vague artist with an alcohol problem.)

Similarly, the inset box with a quiz about 'how to recognise a desperada' clearly is not meant to be taken seriously, e.g.:

- Ze heeft geen kinderen maar soms al wel de kinderopvang geregeld - 25 pt.
- Ze citeert moeiteloos enkele strofen uit Het dagboek van Bridget Jones, 59 kilo -10 pt.
- Zeven van de tien zinnen die ze uitspreekt, begint met één van de drie volgende woorden: onafhankelijkheid, ruimte of respect - 20 pt. etc.
- (She hasn't got any children, but has sometimes already arranged child care 25 points.
- She quotes with ease whole paragraphs from the diary of Bridget Jones, 59 kilos -10 points.
- Seven out of her 10 sentences start with one of the three following words: independence, space or respect - 20 points.)

On the other hand the thrust of the rest of the article seems fairly serious and informative. There certainly is a semblance of seriousness in its references to other sources. The dominant information source is that of the female psychologist, Labrijn, who has carried out 'exhaustive research' (*uitputtend onderzoek*) into this phenomenon. She has written a book on the subject and gives therapy to women with 'this problem'.

Furthermore a documentary film by a Dutch female film maker set in New York is cited as proof that this problem is universal.

Representations and discourses

The first paragraph sets the scene and gives the impression that 'the issue' of single career women is wide spread. They are characterised as a homogeneous group:

Ze verdienen geld als water en hebben alles wat hun hart begeert, behalve een man. Steeds meer hoogopgeleide carrière-vrouwen tussen de 35 en 54 raken in paniek omdat zich maar geen potentiële vader voor hun kind aandient. Ze zijn soms cynisch, vaak hard en altijd veeleisend....

(They earn money like water and have everything to their heart's desire, except a man. More and more well-educated women between 35 and 54 are starting to panic because a potential father for their child has not yet turned up. They are sometimes cynical, often hard nosed, and always demanding).

The group characteristics are defined as:

Leuke, goed geklede, vlot gebekte meiden zijn het en ze hebben het helemaal voor elkaar.

(Great, well-dressed girls they are, with the gift of the gab and they've really made it.)

What it means to have 'really made it' is further defined in terms of possessions and appearances:

Designkleren, dakterras of balkon, vlot karretje onder de cellulitis-vrij getrainde billen, make-up van Clarins en Roc, koelkast met zalm en champagne en natuurlijk die job met uitdagende perspectieven.

(Designer clothes, roof garden, nice trendy car under their cellulite-free trained buttocks, make-up from Clarins en Roc, fridge with salmon and champagne and of course that job with challenging prospects....)

Moreover this group of women is represented as sexually aggressive:

Als de meiden uitgaan is zij [Suzanne] die roept 'Kom vanavond gaan we mannen vernielen!', een kreet die een gevleugeld begrip is geworden in het groepje. Sarren, flirten, beetje zoenen, en net als hij denkt dat-ie jou heeft, toch weer afwijzen – aan veel meer komen ze niet toe.

(When the girls go out, [Suzanne] is the one who shouts 'Come, tonight we're going to destroy men!', which has become a battle cry in their little group. Provoking, flirting, bit of snogging and just when he thinks he has got it in the bag, drop him. Much more than that they don't get around to.)

Initiating sexual advances seems to be the male prerogative.

Welke man heeft er geen avonden gespendeerd aan vrouwen waarin je een vermogen aan aandacht, humor en dineetjes investeert met nul komma nul aan (seksueel) rendement?

(What man has not spent evenings with women, investing a fortune in attentiveness, humour and dinners with zero point zero (sexual) gain [profit]?).

The expected conventions of behaviour, it is clear, is for the man to take the woman out to dinner and bestow his attention and charm on her, with a clear expectation that this favour will be returned in sexual kind. The discourses on which the text draws are very similar to the ones which the *Men's Health* publication displays; discourses of success and status defined through possessions, job, a toned body and money. The latter is important; the quote above is located within a capitalist discourse, e.g. 'investing', 'fortune' and 'profit'.

These discourses of success take on a natural common sense assumption when applied to men. However, when applied to women, these discourses take on a negative connotation; it seems subversive and abnormal for women to have 'a top position in the business world'. Indeed the rest of the article makes clear that success is not a natural state of affairs, but it is a 'problem' for women. The first example of this is in the form of a woman in a documentary film, Laura Slutsky, who as a single career woman has 'developed strategies for being successful', which had led her to be 'confrontational and critical' in her relationships. Laura was told by her psychiatrist that 'her game was power'. She might win the battle with this, but she would lose the war.' Again, power and success are highlighted as problems. By describing Laura in relation to her psychiatrist, her desire to be powerful and successful is constructed in terms of an 'illness' or 'madness' (cf. Foucault, 1965). Moreover, the unnatural and aggressive aspect of this is emphasised by locating power in a yet a different strand of meaning: that of fighting and war.

Another shift in tone then takes place. A discourse of psychological analysis is constructed as the female psychologist, Labriijn, is quoted

explaining that women's desire for success is occasioned through their '*jeugdervaringen*' (childhood experiences). Frequently, the father was absent, and because of this fatherly neglect women overcompensated by building 'a strong male ego' for themselves in terms of 'wanting to achieve a successful position in society'. But building up this strong outer protective layer

snijdt haar ook af van haar zachte kant. Haar creativiteit, haar vermogen evenwichtige relaties met mannen aan te gaan.

(has cut her off from her soft side, her creativity, her ability to have equal relationships with men.)

Labriijn continues:

Afhankelijk kunnen zijn is het taboe van de succesvolle vrouw.
(Being able to be dependent is the taboo of the successful career woman').

Softness, creativity, being dependent are then constructed as 'natural' characteristics of women.

Another shift of personal self development takes place as the psychologist describes therapy sessions in which women are trained in 'alternative behaviour'. Together with her clients she explores the behaviour that women themselves want to change. Moreover, Labriijn gives some practical tips to men who are in a relationship with a career woman. These reflect the discourse of self-development; on the one hand the shared responsibility is emphasised, and on the other, the importance of the man to protect himself and his own individuality:

Zoek en vecht samen uit wat wel en niet goed voelt in de relatie, ook als je voor jezelf geen pasklare antwoorden hebt. En blijf bij jezelf.

(Work out together what does and doesn't feel good in the relationship, even if you have no ready made answers. And stick to your own convictions.

The final paragraph represents yet a different strand of discourse, which seems to be almost diametrically opposite to the discourses of the independent successful career woman. Instead, an intensely traditional image is presented; evidence of the successful results of the therapy sessions is given in the form of the marriage and birth announcements,

Labrijn receives from her ex-clients. Moreover, she herself points to how happy she is now since she has been in a 'really good relationship' in the past 5 years. Moreover, she also had her first child, she says *beaming*. The last few sentences set the article within a wider context. Labrijn explains women of her age have been part of the generation which was conscious of feminism, and even though, she said, this was a phase that was necessary, it had led to a particular attitude towards men:

In die tweede feministische golf werden mannen individueel verantwoordelijk gemaakt voor allerlei maatschappelijke misstanden, voor de ongelijkheid. Dat heeft de attitude van je afzetten tegen mannen bevorderd en onze generatie heeft daar last van. Ik denk dat er nu wel ruimte is voor een andere houding.

(During the second feminist wave men were held individually responsible for all kinds of social injustice, for inequalities. That encouraged the attitude of contempt for men, and our generation does have that problem. I think now the time is right for a different attitude)

Feminism is represented here for its contempt against men. It would seem then, that the final discourse which emerges is that of anti-feminism. This final discourse, allows us, I would suggest to read the whole article in the light of an anti-feminist perspective, or at least a perspective of fear of successful women, as success seems to be a male attribute.

The women in the text are represented in many different and conflicting ways. Through the range of representations and different discourses a picture is created where the discourses of power, success and sexual aggression are 'natural' for men, but unnatural for women, to the point they are seen as 'ill' or at least as 'unhappy' when they display these male characteristics. What is natural for women is to be soft, creative and dependent, and to find happiness in a stable relationship and motherhood.

A discourse of self-development, both in terms of changing one's behaviour, gaining insight into oneself is also reflected in the text. Part of this discourse is that of shared responsibility, ('work out together what

does and doesn't work') and a discourse of individuality, at least when it applies to the male: 'stick with your own convictions'.

Dutch articulation

I feel this text also displays a 'Dutch articulation', a notion to which I referred in chapter 2. The topic of the text is clearly a global, or at least a western one, indeed students made intertextual connections, as chapter 5 will show, with American and English soaps and films. My own interpretation of this text is that particularly the gender based discourse of women only finding fulfilment in motherhood was more likely to have occurred in the Netherlands. Whilst I realise I am treading on dangerous ground here, keen as I am to underline the pluriformity and multicultural aspects of society and avoid an essentialist interpretation, there are nevertheless cultural and social specificities in society as a result of, at least in part, historical development. Certainly, in her history on Dutch women's writings between 1919 and 1970 Fenoulhet (2007:1) highlights the 'extreme emphasis on the nuclear family'.

Another Dutch discourse, as I saw it, was that of the semi-therapeutic one, which was quite prevalent in life style publications in the Netherlands at the time (1999) it was published. On the other hand we could surmise that 'therapy talk', and the discourse of 'personal development' is part of many life-style magazines in the west. It has become so ingrained and become part of the discourse of society that we cannot even step outside it easily; it has become taken for granted to such an extent, that, even in a men's magazine, it does not seem out of place (at least not to me). However, I felt that a discourse, which sometimes is referred to as 'touchy-feely', - the word already indicates a critical attitude - would be out of place in an English men's magazine. I also interpreted this particular discourse as an indication that strongly negative stereotyping of women and brazen sexism, as expressed in the first part of the article, was not acceptable, even in a glossy male magazine (which quite likely is also read by women), and needed to be toned down and wrapped up in a semi-serious therapeutic tone. Of

course, the underlying sexism is still there, even, or maybe especially in the 'therapy-part' of the article, but that discourse seems to make it more acceptable because of the tone of concern and caring the article adopts for the women being discussed, even using a literal female voice.

Using the framework in the classroom

In the first lesson students had not received the framework for analysis which I discussed above. I felt that it might make the class too formal and I wanted them to 'engage' with the text. For most of the other texts we had discussed in the course up to that point, I had given them questions specifically geared towards that particular text. In quite a few instances I found that following the questions one by one formed a hindrance to the flow of the discussion in class. In this particular lesson, then, the framework was intended to be more a guide for myself.

However, as I will show in chapter 5, in reality, it was very difficult to follow the framework. Whilst it had been designed to take student through the text progressively, the students themselves did not make that strict separation. Frequently, in answering one of my questions, they would bring in issues that related to one of the other points in the framework. Initially, I did say on a couple of occasions; 'this will come later in the lesson', but as that frequently had the effect of stopping the flow of communication, I tried to steer students back to the point under discussion – and not always with success. Cooke and Wallace call this students 'not staying on task' (2004: 109). This happened even more frequently in the second lesson, as the students rather than pre-empting the next questions, used the text for their own purposes to 'talk *around* the text' (ibid), as I will show in the next chapter. As a result the framework was followed only in a very loose sense during both classes.

To prepare students for the second lesson, the cultuurtekst part of the framework, I gave students a copy of the framework and asked them to answer the questions related to point 5 as a homework task.

Classroom data collection and ethical considerations

At the time of data collection there were no formal requirements regarding the ethical aspect of data collection, and I had not considered getting written permission from students. I was of course aware of the need to be sensitive with the data, and the need to ask permission beforehand, making sure that students would not feel pressurised into participating in the study. I decided to start recording the lessons on a cassette recorder in the fourth week of the course. In the week prior to this I had told students about my research and I asked them if they would mind if I recorded the classes from then onwards. I explained that I would not look at the way they used the Dutch language, but that my interest was primarily in the relationship between language and culture and communication and how that would come across in the classroom. Students asked questions about my research and seemed happy to give their consent. Eve asked enthusiastically whether they would get famous, and I said, no unfortunately not. I explained that, even if I were to publish the research, I would alter their names and make sure that they could not be recognised in any way.

At the start of the first lesson after I had asked students' permission, I brought a small cassette recorder, and asked students to confirm whether they were happy to be recorded. If not, I said, they should feel free to say so, at any time during the course. From that week onwards, I recorded all the lessons, apart from the classes where students were assessed for their oral presentations. I also did not record the classes where we did translation or listening activities. After the two classes which eventually became the focus of this study – the classes in which we discussed the *Men's Health* text, my recording became more irregular, as I had by then decided that these two particular lessons would form the core of my study.

I used a simple recorder with a separate small unobtrusive microphone which I placed in the middle of the table. I had the impression that students completely forgot about the recording, and were only occasionally reminded of this by the click of the cassette recorder when a cassette was full.

I only transcribed the two lessons on which I eventually decided to focus this study. As the lessons were conducted in Dutch, I translated the sections which I had selected as significant data and have included them in chapter 5. The translations were checked by a colleague.

I conducted the student interviews for triangulation purposes. My aim was to conduct two interviews with each of the students. The first interview took place in the two weeks following the class in which we discussed the text as cultuurtekst and was intended to find out what sense students had made of the text as 'cultuurtekst'. The second interview (the exchange students from the Netherlands did not take part in this) took place after the course was finished and revisited the notion of cultuurtekst. This interview was intended to see what sense students had made of the 'cultuurtekst approach' in general and how this tallied with the course as a whole.

Again, I was aware of the need to ask students' permission, but the permissions were again given verbally rather than in written form. I had mentioned during one of the classes that I would like to conduct interviews, but that students should not feel under any obligation to agree to this. It could be argued that students might have felt under pressure to comply, not wanting to appear uncooperative. However, as I had to make appointments with each individual student for both interviews, students had the opportunity to refuse. Moreover, in each of my communications with students, I reminded them that I would not hold it against them if they would prefer not to be interviewed. I also emphasised that they should say what they felt and thought, as my aim

with the interviews was not to hear that the course had been good or enjoyable.

In the end all students were interviewed twice, apart from one student (Andy) who I was unable to interview the second time as he had already left London. I also did not interview the Dutch exchange students a second time as that interview pertained to the course as a whole. All interviews were fully transcribed, as I wanted to see what themes would emerge in general, rather than base my analysis on limited data.

Below, I describe the process of analysing the data; which categories initially emerged and how these changed, and fine-tuned the research question from its initial conception.

The process of analysing the data

Initially, I wanted to look at the data in order to evaluate my pedagogy to see what students felt they had learnt from this way of language and culture teaching, and to see what other themes would emerge about how that process had taken place. When I went through the classroom and interview data for the first time, what struck me most were the tensions and conflicts and apparent contradictions students seemed to make. I analysed the classroom and interview data several times to see in what areas these contradictions seemed to be located, taking particular note of the areas on which my pedagogy focused.

Two main themes came to the fore; one was to do with the interpretation of the text, which I list below in the table under the heading 'Text and Meaning', and the other theme related to the learning that had taken place. The latter theme naturally emerged more explicitly in the interviews. After this, I decided to colour code the themes in the data itself to get a clear overview. I went through this process with the classroom data, and identified sub-themes and colour coded these themes as they appeared in words, phrases or whole sections on the

hard copy. Frequently, it was impossible to code a section under one theme only: in these cases I used various codes simultaneously.

The themes which I had identified were:

Table of categories which emerged after analysis

Text and Meaning	Colour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ text as cultuurtekst; ▪ multi-voicedness and addressivity; ▪ content versus representation; ▪ notable dialogic happenings or references to those; ▪ text as seen in liberal humanist tradition versus text seen as social; ▪ Dutch articulation or cultural specificity; ▪ role of motivation or interest of student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Purple orange brown yellow grey ochre
Learning	Colour
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ resistance to this approach; ▪ acknowledging learning; ▪ effect on Dutch language skills; ▪ effect on English/other languages; ▪ partial learning/contradictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dark blue light blue bright green dark green black

My initial interpretation was that students had not quite come to grips with the ideas of representation and cultuurtekst. Whereas initially I viewed this as a failing of my pedagogy, which needed to be rectified, further reflection made me realise that students had actually benefitted from this approach; there were emerging insights. Moreover, I realised that the concepts which I had wanted students to engage with were very complex, and it would not be realistic to expect students to have understood the ideas without any difficulties. Moreover, in retrospect it was not surprising that contradictions seemed to surface in the data, as

these contradictions are inherent in my own framework; viewing text as 'text' as well as 'cultuurtekst'.

Consequently, I decided that instead of focusing on evaluating the pedagogy as a whole, I would make the contradictions the focus of my analysis, as it seemed that these would give me an insight into the process of students' engagement with the text. I decided to analyse the classroom data separately from the interview data as the latter gave me insight into how students had constructed the experience, whereas the classroom data gave me insight into how students approached the pedagogical tasks in the lessons and particularly how they read the text at the different levels. As each of the two classes focused on a different interpretation of context, I also decided to analyse the two lessons separately.

I created categories for analysis which highlighted the oppositions in the data in the following areas:

- Understanding text in relation to its (surface) content or in relation to its meaning and representations (i.e. cultuurtekst).
- Understanding the text as single-voiced or multi-voiced (i.e. multiple discourses).

Furthermore there were two other areas for analysis on which I wanted to focus, which were significant enough to warrant a special category of analysis:

- Understanding the text as Dutch articulation, since that was one of the features of the specific text we had discussed in class.
- Understanding the text in relation to one's own experiences and knowledge, since I had noticed from the data that students' interpretation seemed to be guided often through their experiences, ideas and knowledge.

I selected significant sections of data where these themes and contradictions seemed to present themselves. However, as I started to

analyse the data further, the categories I had created did not work well. I realised that by imposing clear-cut categories on data which was 'messy' and contradictory in itself, I had imported an artificial reality on the data. Even though tensions and conflicting understandings were significant in the data, these could not always be pinpointed, they did not always occur, and frequently the data were contradictory.

I resolved this issue by analysing the first lesson according to the main topics of the framework we discussed in class, i.e. the topics that constitute the immediate context of the text. The data for the second lesson focused on the emerging understandings of students discussing text as *cultuurtekst*.

As part of the process of reflection on the data as well as further theoretical reflection, I fine-tuned my overall research question to be: 'How do students engage with the *cultuurtekst* approach?' The sub question I attempt to answer in chapter 5 is: 'What different ways of reading do the perspectives of text as 'text' and text as '*cultuurtekst*' yield?'

More particularly, I wanted to see whether the *cultuurtekst* layer of reading would enable students to take an intercultural stance, whether they recognised the range of (conflicting) discourses in the text, and whether reading the text at a textual level in the first lesson would, pedagogically speaking, support the reading of text as *cultuurtekst* in the second lesson. Finally I ask how students engaged with the notion of Dutch articulation.

I approached the analysis of the interview data in a similar way as the classroom data. Having analysed all the interview data carefully, I initially decided to focus particularly on the interviews of Andy, Emma, Sarah and Claire as well as those of the Dutch exchange students. In each of these sets of interviews I highlighted significant themes, which supported the creation of the initial categories I referred to above. I had decided to

present the interviews under the heading of each student, as not all interviews were easily comparable. In some interviews certain themes were emphasised over others. However, towards the later phase of my study I decided to focus on only two of the students, Claire and Sarah, in order to be able to go in greater depth with each of their data. I will look at both these students separately in chapter 6.

The main question I attempt to answer in chapter 6 is: 'Did students make the journey from 'text' to 'cultuurtekst'?' In attempting to answer that question, I consider whether the cultuurtekst approach has led students to be critical intercultural language users. And, as in chapter 5, I also consider whether the notion of Dutch articulation was significant for students.

I will now introduce the students who took part in the classes and interviews.

The students

There are six students on this course, two male, four female. Five of the students have followed the whole programme in the department which included a language course in the first and second year and a year or a half year (varying between 3 to 8 months) spent in the Netherlands as part of the Year Abroad. The sixth student was a mature student, Chris, who was in his sixties and who followed an MA course at the department. All students have had experience of foreign language learning at an advanced level (i.e. at A-level or comparable) before they started this degree course. All students except one (Emma) started the degree course without any prior knowledge of Dutch. Students followed a variety of degree options which were either BA Dutch or a combination of Dutch with another modern foreign language.

All students are white, three are mature students (Chris, Emma and Eve), the other three either started their degree straight from school or after a

gap year. All students were British, but students had a variety of background experiences. In addition there were two exchange students from the Netherlands, Marijke and Yasmin, who I had invited to take part in one of the classes which I use for data collection. I will describe the individual students below.

Emma

Emma was a mature student in her late twenties. She had lived and worked for a number of years in the Netherlands before she came to study at our department. She was the only student in the group who when she started her degree already had a high competence in Dutch. She was taking the BA Dutch programme.

Claire

Claire had studied in France for a couple of years doing a Baccalaureate, but had lived in Britain prior to that. She did not speak any Dutch when she started her study. She was taking the BA Dutch and French programme.

Andy

Andy had taken A-levels at a British school. He did not speak any Dutch before starting his study. Like Claire, he was taking the BA Dutch and French programme.

Sarah

Sarah had taken A-levels at a British school. She also started Dutch completely from scratch. She was studying BA Dutch and German.

Eve

Eve was in her mid-twenties which classified her as a mature student. She had lived for a brief period in Amsterdam working in a bar. She had a smattering of Dutch when she started her BA Dutch programme.

Chris

Chris was a mature student in his sixties. He had worked for many years in a white collar capacity. He took an MA course at the Dutch department. He had learned Dutch many years ago and wanted to catch up on his language skills. His Dutch competence was particularly grammar-based and his writing style tended to be very formal.

Marijke

Marijke was an exchange student from the Netherlands. She was studying literature at the University of Groningen. She also undertook some work practice while she was at the department. In this capacity she did vocabulary work with students in a literature class.

Yasmin

Yasmin was an exchange student from the Netherlands. She was studying at the University of Amsterdam and was of Turkish descent.

In chapter 5, I use classroom data mainly, but not exclusively, relating to Claire, Emma, Sarah and Marijke, because their responses tended to provide the richest segments of data. In chapter 6 I use the interview data relating to Claire and Sarah. I decided to focus on these two students because of their contrasting approaches to the cultuurtekst pedagogy. One of the students, Claire, could be said to be a 'model student', as she engaged well with this pedagogy. Claire has also, together with Emma and Marijke, contributed more than the other students to the classroom discussions. I selected Sarah for this study, because the data relating to her are significant: she resisted my pedagogy throughout the course and she was very open and frank about this.

Conclusion

In this chapter I located this study within the context of teaching and learning in which it took place. I also looked at the course from which the data for this study is taken, the framework for text analysis I had

developed, and the text I used for the classroom data. I briefly set out the concepts which underpin the course again, and looked at how these concepts related to one another and came together in the course. I explained the research methodology I used in order to answer the main question of 'How did students engage with this pedagogy?' I also set out the specific questions which I attempt to answer in the next two chapters. I explained that the study is organic in nature and there was a constant interplay between data, theory and reflection in order to understand how students engaged with the text.

In the next chapter I look at the classroom data of the two lessons in which the students read the *Men's Health* text using my framework.

CHAPTER 5

CLASSROOM DATA

Introduction

The first three chapters discussed the theoretical considerations of my approach to language teaching as the cultuurtekst approach, based on a view of intercultural communication, such as that of Blommaert (1998) which takes account of the linguistic and cultural complexities of language and culture. For developing my pedagogical approach, I drew on Kress's notion of conflicting discourses and Meijer's notion of cultuurtekst, and the notions of context of situation and context of culture (cf Malinowski, 1923) to develop my framework for analysing texts as part of this pedagogy. This pedagogy holds, building on Phipps and Gonzalez (2004), that 'being intercultural' is engaging with texts, with new ideas and relating these to our own ideas and experiences. Learning a language then, or reading texts, becomes an intercultural experience through intellectual engagement with ideas through reflecting on our own experiences and considering the ideas and values in text as well as critiquing these. I call this level of engagement with texts: being a text ethnographer.

In this chapter I analyse the classroom data consisting of the two lessons in which we looked at the *Men's Health* text using the framework for analysis which I described in chapter 4. During the first lesson we discussed the text as 'text' and looked at it from the perspective of the immediate context, or the context of situation, which as I described in

chapter 4, I had conceived of as a pared down version of Hymes' model of communicative competence.

During the second lesson we looked at the text as a 'cultuurtekst', i.e. we looked at it at the level of the context of culture. For the second lesson I had invited two exchange students from the Netherlands to enhance the intercultural aspect of looking at text as cultuurtekst. I have explained in chapter 4 how these two lessons fitted in with the syllabus as a whole.

I had conceptualised both lessons to be distinct from one another with lesson 1, focusing on the situational context, pedagogically speaking supporting the second, cultural and intercultural, layer of reading. Both levels of reading would require students to approach the text from a critical perspective, but I had envisaged students taking a critical approach to the text from an outside seemingly objective stance in lesson 1 and a critical approach of critiquing the ideological stance in lesson 2.

To be able to answer the overall question of this thesis 'How do students engage with the cultuurtekst-pedagogy?' I focus in this chapter on what different ways of reading my focus in these two lessons yielded.

More particularly, I wanted to see whether the cultuurtekst layer of reading would enable students to 'be intercultural', whether they recognise the range of (conflicting) discourses in the text, and whether reading the text at a textual level in the first lesson would pedagogically speaking support the reading of text as cultuurtekst in the second lesson. Finally I look at whether the notion of Dutch articulation is a fruitful one to pursue as part of a cultuurtekst approach reading.

Below I will first analyse the data of the first lesson, before looking at the second lesson. I will start by describing the progress of the first lesson and I will analyse the data around some of the textual topics we discussed as part of the framework; text content, text function and text structure.

LESSON 1: THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT OF THE TEXT

The progress of lesson 1

This first lesson took place with all six students in the group, 2 male, 4 female. The students had read the text as homework and I had asked them to underline and look up the words and expressions they did not know. At the start of the lesson we quickly went through any queries students still had at a semantic level. I had not given students a copy of my framework for analysis, so the discussion was to a large extent teacher-led.

Whilst lesson 1 was geared towards looking particularly at the level of 'text' as a product and in relation to the immediate context of the aim, audience, function and structure of the text, students did start to deconstruct the text and issues of representation and voice also surfaced. I followed the structure of my framework for analysis loosely. The first 20 minutes or so of the lesson were taken up by me explaining the task, i.e. that we would look at the text twice over the course of two different lessons, that in each session we would look at it in slightly different ways, and that Dutch students would be joining us for the second session. I also explained briefly what these two different ways of looking at text were and that in the second session we would focus on text as 'cultuurtekst', i.e. looking at discourses and possible intertextual references. Students had heard of the terms 'discourse' and 'intertext', as they had been mentioned in other classes, but it seems fair to say that the understanding of these concepts was still somewhat vague. I only explained these in a cursory manner, and said that they did not have to worry about these terms too much.

Next, I started to elicit personal responses from the students to the text and asked what it seemed to be about (in effect identifying the main point or theme of the text), then moving to the aim of the text, the intended reader and the structure and arguments.

Moving through these questions was not a straightforward process as the discussion at times tended to stray from the point. Students had on the whole a strong response to the text and wanted to make this clear. Frequently they did not stay 'on task', but steered the topic back towards the aspect of the text they wanted to talk about. Some of the students were not interested in doing the analyses, particularly not in terms of the more traditional textual aspects such as looking at the structure of the text, but wanted to talk about the questions that the text threw up for them, whether in terms of their opinion about the text or the author or whether the text's representation accorded with the reality of their own experiences. Certainly, the comments made in the first lesson covered a large spectrum of responses (often conflicting ones) to the text. In the first stage of the lesson students tended to answer in separate statements in response to my questions, but later on more of a dialogue between students occurred as they responded to one another's comments.

The level of participation of individual students in this lesson was more or less on a par with that of other lessons during the year. Noteworthy is that the male students did not contribute very much to the lessons, though this was partly reflected in all lessons as the female students tended to be very articulate and eager to engage in classroom discussions. Both male students signalled signs of resistance towards this particular text. Chris, particularly disliked the text and said several times it was a very 'bad' (*slechte*) text. He commented once that the writer was probably drunk when he wrote it. Andy participated more than Chris, but tended mainly to contribute only when being addressed directly. Andy commented that he had not much to say about the text, because it did not relate to him. Both Andy and Chris rejected the triviality of the text. Andy commented later in his interview that he felt the topic would have been better discussed using a 'better' text. The female students in the class on the other hand clearly were all invoking personal experiences and intertextual references, even in this first lesson. In my discussion of the data of this first lesson I am guided by the topics of the

framework: content, function and text structure. A more specific selection of data was guided in the different ways of reading the text. I will now turn to the discussion of the first point in the framework; that of 'content'.

1 Discussing text content

Aligning with or going beyond the text

In line with my framework, the first point I wanted students to engage with was the surface content of the text. My aim with this question was to elicit an awareness of the surface content of the text, what the text seemed to be about, at a first reading. Even though in my framework I had formulated other questions relating to content, particularly whether students recognised the theme of the topic and in what situations they might have heard or read about it, it turned out to be difficult to follow this format as the discussion tended to stray from the point at times.

My own interpretation of the surface content of the article (see appendix) was guided by the introductory paragraph in the text, as well as by recognising a particular rhetorical structure, often referred to in the Dutch mother tongue writing pedagogy as the 'problem-solution' structure (cf. Steehouder, 2006 (1979)). (We had discussed these rhetorical structures in texts a few weeks earlier.) Applying this structure to text, the 'problem' would then relate to a 'certain type' of women (single successful career women between 35 and 54) whose 'problem' is that they are not capable of loving and lasting relationships and were thus lacking a partner to have a baby with.

The question of what the text is about is of course very open and ambiguous. In effect I am asking students to give a concise summary in one sentence. And as we had not at this stage looked at the text in terms of its textual structure, the students responded from first impressions. Moreover, as I explained in chapter 3, readers bring their own experiences to bear upon interpreting text, so a wide range of interpretations is to be expected. This highlights the issue that summarising out of context – a standard pedagogical task in much of

language teaching – is not a disinterested activity. We can only summarise a text if we know what the reason for the summary is and from which perspective we need to summarise.

The students gave indeed a range of different answers:

- Eve: *dat dat soort vrouwen nu bestaan en een beetje gevaarlijk zijn voor mannen [...]*
vrouwen die op jacht willen en jonge mannen willen pakken. [...] ja niet gevaarlijk, maar
hoe zeg je dat nou? opletten
 G: *ja een waarschuwing voor mannen*
 [...that these kind of women now exist and are a bit dangerous for men [...] women who want to hunt and catch/ grab young men [...] well, not dangerous, but how do you say that: 'take care']
 G: yes, a warning to men]
 (transcript p9)

Andy: *het gaat over dat sommige vrouwen nu een mannelijke identiteit hebben*
 G: *Wat is het mannelijke daaraan? Wat is het mannelijke aan hun identiteit?*
 Andy: *Dat ze hard zijn geworden..*
 [Andy: It's about the fact that some women now have a male identity
 G: What is male about it? What is male about their identity?]
 Andy: That they have become hard..
 (transcript 10)

- Sarah: *eh... ik vond het een beetje grappig. Het gaat over hoe mannen ook gebruikt kunnen worden*
 G: *Als hoofdpunt of als bijpunt?*
 Sarah: *.... er zitten een heleboel tips in over hoe je deze situatie kunt vermijden.*
 Sarah: I found it a bit amusing. It's about how men also (can be used?)
 G: as main point or as subsidiary point?
 Sarah: ... there are lots of tips in the article about how to avoid this situation.]
 (transcript p10)

- Claire: *Kijk voor mij is dit de ideale vrouw die de ideale man wilt.*
 [It's about the ideal woman who wants the ideal man]
 (transcript p5)

- Emma: *Ik denk dat het echt gaat om vrouwen die echt denken dat ze niet zonder een man kan; dat ze echt een man nodig hebben.*
 [I think it really is about women who really think they can't live without a man, that they really need a man.]
 (Transcript p8)

The question of what the text was about was made even more difficult, because of the range of conflicting discourses and the various textual elements in the text (e.g. the visual page lay-out of the text which included different headings, photographs and various text boxes). The students' interpretation about the text content showed that rather than

trying to weigh up the different text elements together and to decide what the main thrust or point would be, they focused on only one aspect of the text. In doing so, students' answers depended on what they had selected as a significant aspect of the article.

Even though my question was intended to be one of surface content, students did go beyond that already, and tried to analyse the content in relation to an aim or an underlying meaning; they gave an 'evaluation' of the text, as Halliday (cf. 1985) calls it. Wallace (2003:43), referring to Wells (1991), points out that it is inherent in readers, even very young ones, to discuss the implications of the text.

All students presented their answer with a confident voice and took the question to be a standard pedagogical one needing a definite answer. They did not query the ambiguity of the question, nor the ambiguity of the article.

Below I will analyse the students' responses according to whether they 'stayed close to' the text, or 'went beyond' the text. The aim of my question had indeed been to 'stay close to' the surface content of the text. However, even if students stayed close to the text, there were still significant differences in their responses.

Text alignment: discourse of hard and aggressive women

Eve applied a common reading strategy to determine what the text was about. She looked at the first paragraph, where frequently the main point is introduced. In this introductory paragraph the text explicitly addresses the presumed male audience and says: 'take care: you're being hunted'. In her interpretation Eve is aligning herself with the text's presentation of what the main issue is; namely to say that 'these' women exist and men should be warned against them. She is interpreting what the text is about from a text functional perspective; the text aims to achieve something, and that aim is to warn men against these women. In seeing the content of the text as related to its function, she is in line with Hymes'

paradigm where text function or aim is one of the features guiding communication.

However, in describing the women in the text as 'scary', Eve also evaluated the text. She presumably referred to the paragraph in which the women were described as enjoying 'male-bashing' when going out with friends in the evening. In focusing on this particular representation, rather than on any of the other various representations of women in the text, Eve saw the main point of the text as embodied in that particular discourse. Eve is confident in her interpretation of the text; she does not add qualifiers or modal particles.

Andy, on the other hand, does not look at the function of the text. Yet, similarly to Eve, he feels the text is about a certain type of women, but he pinpoints a different representation as the main point. By saying that they have a male identity, Andy may be referring to the part of the article which is written in a therapeutic discourse, where the male characteristics that women have taken on are explained as a response to their perceived lack of paternal contact. Andy does not elaborate on this, nor does he say the article *represents* the women as having a male identity. Instead he states that the text is about the *fact* that some women have a male identity. And as such he is staying with the thrust of the article. He says this in a seemingly objective voice by presenting his view as factual statement and by not adding a qualifier such as: 'according to me'. The meta-communication that Andy uses is in line with traditional educational discourse where the teacher asks a questions and the student responds. A qualifier in such cases is not necessarily a convention that needs to be followed.

Sarah's answer is interesting, because on the one hand she seems to align herself with the text position, yet on the other hand she is looking outside the text to interpret the main issue of the article. Sarah, like Eve and Andy, also uses a confident voice and uses no qualifiers such as 'I think', so she seems to be confident about her interpretation. However,

she is also explicit about her own response to the article; she thought it was a bit amusing. Sarah is also evaluating the text; she is assigning meaning to it. Like Eve, she also sees the article in terms of its discourse of women who are 'dangerous' for men, but Sarah transforms that discourse into one of 'exploitation'; the text is about the fact that men can also be 'used'. So, Sarah sees the main focus of the article not so much in terms of 'the fact' that 'these kind of women' exist, but instead, she focuses on the *effect* these women have on men. Whereas Eve and Andy saw the article in the light of women, Sarah is seeing the text in relation to men. However, Sarah also evokes her knowledge of society to attribute meaning to the text. By using the modifier 'ook' (*also*) Sarah transposes the issue of women being used (by men) to men being put in the same role. Being used is not just happening to women, Sarah seems to be saying. Moreover, Sarah, like Eve also assigns a functional meaning to the text. By stating that 'there are lots of tips in the article about how to avoid this situation' (of being used by women), Sarah sees the aim of the text also as informative for men, which could have a real impact on the readers' lives (avoiding a particular situation).

Even though the three students above, Eve, Sarah and Andy all hinted at the particular discourse of 'aggressive women', their answers still showed considerable differences, showing the complexity and ambiguity of the question of what the text is about. Eve stayed closest to the text by focusing specifically on the introductory paragraph, whereas Andy and Sarah were already 'evaluating' the text. All three students had interpreted the task as a traditional language classroom task, and followed the academic discourse for that. They gave their answers in a seemingly objective voice. They also stayed on task in seeing text in relation to the immediate context.

However, two other students, Emma and Claire, did not just stay close to the text position of the discourse of 'hard' women as Eve, Andy and Sarah had done. They both allowed a greater role for cultural context in

their interpretations. But, each of them drew on a different discourse in the article, as I will show below.

Going beyond the text: different discourses

Claire took on a position of critique from the start. Her first comment had been about the fact the text was stereotypical (transcript p 8). By saying that the text was about the ideal woman wanting the ideal man in the set of data above, Claire is not only evaluating the text, in relation to its immediate context, she is relating it already to a context of culture. It is not clear how she has come to this interpretation, or indeed what she means by 'ideal', although in making this statement, Claire is, like Sarah, clearly referring to the text producing environment. She comes back to this interpretation later on in the lesson when she seems to refer to the pressure women are under to conform to certain life style characteristics (e.g. have a great body, wear great clothes, have a great car etc.). In making this connection, she is also evoking her schemata of the world, in this case, her knowledge of media discourses and sees the text in the light of these previously encountered discourses. She comes back to this text fragment several times in the lesson. In contrast to the other students, Claire makes clear that she is not just stating what the content of the article is, but what *she thinks* the text is about; *Kijk voor mij is dit...* [Look for me this is about...]

Emma has yet another response to the question of what the text is about. Like Claire, she is not aligning herself with the position of the hard and aggressive women, and she brings her own evaluation and interpretation to bear on the text. She, like Claire, is explicit in stating she is giving her own interpretation (*ik denk dat het echt gaat om...*, I think that it is really about...). Her interpretation centres on one of the aspects of the article which focuses on women who are unsuccessful in their relationships, as represented through the therapeutic discourse of women who go into therapy to help them to have 'stable and mature' relationships. That she feels strongly about her interpretation is shown

by the fact that she used and repeated the word '*echt*' (really) several times. She did not explain her interpretation nor why she specifically focused on only this particular discourse.

In summary, in the individual answers as to what the text is about, students focused on the various content aspects of the text, which represented a range of discourses; aggressive women (who are 'bad' for men), women who have a male identity, pressures on women to be perfect, and women who feel they are incomplete without a man. In doing so, they discuss the text at a range of levels: functional, cultural (identity and representations) and intertextual (implicit references to other media representations). So even if the question of content was intended to focus students' awareness on the superficial text level, students interpreted the task as an invitation to go beyond the text, to evaluate the text and critique the ideas implicit in it. However, even in the answers, which stayed closest to the text, and indeed the intended task, students evaluated the text in relation to what could lie behind it.

However the contrast in these representations, the aggressive woman versus the image of fulfilled motherhood was not seized upon by any of the students at this stage, and in fact never became a point of focus in either of the two lessons, despite my efforts to draw students' attention to it. Each student saw the text only in the light of *one* discourse, i.e. single-voiced discourse.

2. Discussing text function

Different positions of critique

From the initial statements about the content of the texts, students gradually started to collaborate to make sense of the text around the questions which focused more specifically on the pragmatic aspect of the text (audience/aim) as well as structure and argument. My intention had been to focus specifically on this immediate context of text

production, but students continued to relate the text further to its wider context.

In my own answer to the question of what the text was aiming to achieve (see appendix), I indicated that there were two sections in the article where the reader was addressed directly; in the first paragraph this consisted of a warning (as Eve had indeed noticed earlier), and further on in the article, as Sarah had noted above, the reader was presented with advice on 'what to do when trapped in a relationship with a career woman'. However, apart from these paragraphs which indicated a warning and advice, the article as a whole seemed to present itself as an informative article setting out the phenomenon of 'single career women' and its 'associated problems'.

Claire focused on the latter notion in saying that the function of the text was (in part) a commentary. However, as the data below show, Claire's position shifted immediately from taking part in the classroom exercise of looking at what the text was aiming to achieve, to critiquing the text itself for its positioning. She used both levels of criticality I referred to in chapter 4; on the one hand she criticised the text for not achieving its aim, and on the other hand she critiqued the text (albeit implicitly) for its ideological view:

Claire: Ik denk dat er zijn een paar serieuze commentaren want je denkt, ja... er zijn vrouwen die hebben problemen, maar ja sorry hoor, dit is niet normaal. er zijn veel vrouwen die ik ken, maar ik ken geen stereotiep... Dit is een heel streng stereotiep.

G: welk stereotiep?

Claire: de eerste, op het begin.... 'leuke goed gebekte meiden, zalm in de koelkast' ...ja

Emma: ik weet niet wat hij hiermee wil zeggen. Hij noemt een aantal vrouwen op die een bepaalde leeftijd zijn en een bepaalde levensstijl, maar wat wil hij daarmee zeggen? Is dat een probleem van alle vrouwen? Of van de vrouwen die hij toevallig is tegengekomen?

G: Ja, maar Claire zegt hij heeft het over een bepaald verschijnsel en jullie zeggen ook je herkent dit verschijnsel, zo van de succ...

Claire and Emma: de succesvolle carrièrevrouw

Emma: maar gaat dit altijd hand in hand met dit [gedrag]?

Claire: ja precies, precies

[Claire: I think there are a few serious comments because you think, yes...there are women who have problems, but sorry, this is ridiculous. I know many women, but I don't know a stereotype[ical one]... this is a very strong stereotype.

G: which stereotype?

Claire: the first... at the beginning... 'good looking girls with the gift of the gab, salmon in the fridge' ...yes...

Emma: I don't know what he intends to say with that. He talks about a few women of a certain age and leading a certain lifestyle, but what does he want to say with that? Is that a problem of all women? Or just the women he has happened to have met?

G: Yes, but Claire said you recognise the phenomenon, that of the succ...

Claire and Emma: of the successful career woman

Emma: Yes, but is that always accompanied by this [behaviour]?

Claire: yes, exactly, exactly

(Transcript p12, 13)

Rather than staying with the task of identifying the text function, which Claire brushes off with the comment that it could be seen to be a commentary about problems that women have, she immediately turns to the implication of the text by relating it to her own experiences and evaluating it in accordance with those.

Claire makes use of her personal experiences at two levels. In stating that the text aims to be a serious commentary she legitimises the topic, it seems, and confirms that 'women who have problems' do exist. So she does not dismiss the text as ludicrous or not worthy of discussion outright (although which 'problems' Claire is referring to is again not clear: women who are 'hunting', women not having successful relationships, women harassing men, women feeling the biological clock?).

But, Claire also makes use of her personal knowledge of the world to critique the text. She looks not just at the text, but she uses – implicitly - the context of her own experiences as a reality check against which to gauge her own response to the text; there isn't anyone she knows who is like this. Claire is moving on from 'text' to comment on its representation. This contrasts with, for instance, Eve's approach, who commented on the women described in the text as '*Zij is echt een takkenwif ...*' ('She is a real bitch', transcript lesson 1, p.6) and who was happy to align herself with the representation of women as bitches.

By asking students to look at the text at a textual level in relation to immediate context, I had assumed students would take on an 'outside'

position (i.e. looking at the text for its textual intricacies and specificity at a seemingly objective level). This outside perspective is surrounded by its own conventions of 'educational talk', where in class students usually employ an 'analytical voice'. However, as Claire is taking on a position of critique and using her personal schemata to look at text at a cultural level, she, in contrast with the convention of this approach, switches to using a 'personal' voice: 'well, I'm sorry, but this [stereotype] is ridiculous'.

Emma then contributes to Claire's analysis and critique by trying to link the excerpt quoted by Claire with the motivation or intention of the author. Emma is also critical of the text in different ways. On the one hand she criticises the author's lack of clear purpose and his lack of intellectual rigour in using stereotypes. But, at the same time she also takes a more critical cultural perspective on board; she starts to consider that the excerpt is a generalisation which suggests all women display the same life-style characteristics. Both Claire and Emma are starting to relate the text to social and cultural perspectives and knowledge, Claire critiquing the text for not according with reality, Emma for its generalisation.

Text alignment in order to understand the male perspective

Sarah on the other hand, provided a very different take on the idea of what the text aimed to achieve. Since the students had brought the discussion on to a cultural level, I wanted to build on this by focussing their attention on what these particular stereotypes might signify. The stereotypes to which Claire above had referred, were a set of life style characteristics that successful career women displayed, such as having a house with a balcony, luxury food, snazzy car and so on. But when I ask, in response to Claire's statement in the set of data above, why the author might have chosen those particular clichés, Sarah interpreted my question not as an invitation to refer to the social world or other schemata she may have had. Instead she brought the discussion back

to the textual level referring to the aim of the text, which was indeed the aim of this pedagogical activity in the first place. In doing so, Sarah also introduced the notion of the intended reader:

Sarah: Ik denk dat hij zo begint om ze zo aan te trekken, ze zijn daarin geïnteresseerd.. als je aan een leuke goed geklede mooie vrouw denkt, dan als je als man dat artikel leest dan denk je van 'he mmmm' interessant en dan wat is het, hoe gaat het verder, dus het is eigenlijk.. het trekt precies de mannen aan.. dus het werkt alsof het zo'n vrouw is, 't zegt: hier is een groepje mooie vrouwen en we gaan hun houding bespreken en dat .. dus het brengt de man die de tekst leest, in, zeg maar, om eh om het verder te gaan lezen en aan het eind is het zo andersom dat eigenlijk eh dan willen ze niet meer .. dan zijn ze niet meer in deze vrouwen geïnteresseerd want ze zijn eigenlijk een beetje kinderachtig [...]

Sarah: ja maar volgens het artikel ..dus aan het eind dan is dan wordt de mannen vrijgelaten, zeg maar, van de vrouwen in de tekst g: hoe wordt hij daardoor vrijgelaten ..?

Sarah: omdat gewoon hoe het aan het eind is dan zou hij niet meer geïnteresseerd zijn in de vrouw want het lijkt alsof ze een beetje stom is en nergens naartoe gaat.

g: waar zie je dit precies? aan het eind he, ja 't eind is interessant he, Claire noemde het eind ook al...

Sarah: ja ik denk niet dat het oppervlakkig is want 't gaat over de relatie met hun vader. Als je kijkt daarnaar dan zie je dat het is een sociologische en psychologische analyse over wat er in hun hoofden zitten. Dus eigenlijk denk je: ze zijn een beetje gek, het is eigenlijk.. ze weten niet wat ze willen. Ze willen gewoon alles wat ze denken te kunnen krijgen. Dus eh 't gaat eigenlijk over de manier waarop mannen oppervlakkig in deze vrouwen geïnteresseerd zijn, maar de doel van de tekst is eigenlijk te zeggen: nou deze vrouwen zijn niet goed voor je want ze kunnen niet goed met je praten, want ze kunnen alleen maar over hun praten en ..

G: ja ze zijn niet goed voor je en ze zijn alleen maar met zichzelf bezig.

Sarah: ja

Sarah: I think that he starts like that to attract them. [To draw the male readers into the article] They are interested in that... if you think about a nice well-dressed beautiful woman, then when you read the article as a man then you think: mmmm interesting and then:.... what is it? How does it continue? So really. It attracts exactly the men... so it works as if it is one of those women, it says: here is a group of beautiful women and we are going to talk about their attitude and that .. so it brings the man who is reading the text in, as it were, to eh to read further and at the end it is the other way round that actually eh then they don't want them anymore..then they are not interested in these women anymore, because really they are a bit childish [...]

Sarah: yes, but according to the article ... so at the end the men are released as it were from the women in the text

G: how is he released by that?

Sarah: Because, well just how at the end he is not interested anymore in the woman because it seems as if she is stupid and going nowhere.

G: where do you see that exactly? The end is interesting isn't it, Claire also mentioned the end..

Sarah: yes, I don't think that it is superficial because it is about the relationship with their father. If you look at that then you see that it is a sociological and psychological analysis about what is in their heads. So actually you think ... they are a bit mad, it is really.. they don't know what they want. They really want everything what they think they can get. So eh it is really about the way these men are superficially interested in these women, but the aim of the text is really to say: these women are no good for you because they can't really talk with you, because they can only talk about themselves and

G: yes, they are not good for you as they are only concerned with themselves
 Sarah: yes
 (Transcript p 15)

Sarah is constructing a different context in which to interpret the aim of the text by referring to the intended reader. In explaining why these stereotypes were mentioned in the text, Sarah focuses on the rhetorical structure of the text. She sees a parallel between the way that the text is structured as if it were a metaphor for the women themselves; the quote which Claire called stereotypical, (the description of women in terms of lifestyle characteristics) Sarah regards as a rhetorical effect: the male reader would be attracted to these women because they are good looking, and so would be inclined to read further. But, further on in the article, the male reader would realise these women are 'stupid'. With her interpretation Sarah brings the discussion back again to the textual level; both in term of how the text is constructed which leads her to conclude that the aim of the text is to say to the reader: 'these women are not good for you'. The text function is then, as Eve had suggested in the first set of data, a warning to men.

Assigning a function to a text, takes account of a social context; the immediate context in which the text functions as a communicative act. Sarah did indeed consider a social context; that of the male reader who needs to be warned against 'these' women. By describing this text function from the perspective of how a male reader might approach this text, it might seem that Sarah is trying to read the text interculturally; she is trying to understand the 'other'; the 'other' being the male author as well as the male reader for whom the text is intended. It would seem that Sarah is trying to relate the text to the context of reception, but as she is not referring to previous knowledge, or experiences of the context of the intended readers of the text, she is taking her cue from the text itself. So by explaining how a male reader might read the text, she is actually 'imagining' this context.

Like Emma and Claire, Sarah focuses just on one of the discourses in the article; but unlike Claire and Emma, she does not see the article to be about women who are out to hunt or hurt men, but women who are 'stupid' and 'a little bit mad'. She seems to refer to the part of the text which describes women in therapy in order to deal with their inability to have long-term relationships. She does not see the text as representing women as such, but as a description of how women 'are'.

Sarah, like Emma and to a lesser extent Claire, also feels sure about her interpretation is the 'correct' one. In her interview (see chapter 6) she states that she really doesn't see how you can interpret the article any other way.

3. Discussing text structure

Conflicting discourses

My intention with focusing on textual structure was to encourage students to recognise the different ways in which the women in the text were portrayed. This would then prepare the way for seeing the text as cultuurtekst and the multiple and contrasting discourses embedded in it. In the course of the discussions so far, students had located their comments regarding the text always within one particular representation of the women, one particular discourse. Students were not necessarily aware that they saw the text in terms of a *representation*. In this lesson, I did not use the meta-language of the cultural studies oriented analysis, which makes up the cultuurtekst part of the framework we would discuss in the next lesson. Students seemed to regard their interpretation as 'obvious'. As I had said before, students felt confident about their interpretation, and at no point did they seize on the conflicting answers that each student seemed to give in terms of what they thought the main point or aim of the text was. Students then read the text as, what Kramsch (1993:27) calls after Bakhtin, a 'single-voiced discourse'.

Only Claire had voiced her concern with the conflicting discourses.

When I asked earlier in the lesson whether there was an argument in the article, she said:

Claire: maar ik denk dat het begint met een idee en dat het eind niet met hetzelfde idee, of in het midden is er een...there's wires crossed

Claire: but I think that it starts with an idea and it does not end with the same idea, or in the middle there is eh.. wires crossed.

(Transcript pp 10,11)

In the data below, I am trying to focus students' attention to the contrast of the discourses in the beginning and end of the article; what Claire described as 'having its wires crossed'. The set of data below starts with me asking how women are represented at the end of the article (i.e. in terms of fulfilled motherhood) in comparison to the beginning, where women were first described in terms of 'ladette' behaviour out to 'destroy men', and in the paragraph following that, where they are represented in terms of their consumerist lifestyle. Claire and Emma disagree in their interpretation:

G: ... je zei eerder het is een vreemd eind van de tekst heel anders... de vrouw wordt aan het eind totaal anders beschreven dan aan het begin. Hoe wordt ze anders beschreven?

Emma: een beetje zielig

G: wordt ze als zielig beschreven? Vanuit wie gezien? Vind jij dat ze zielig is of vindt de schrijver dat?

Sarah: wat betekent zielig?

G: pitiful, iemand waar je medelijden mee zou hebben

Claire: maar de vrouw op het eind zegt ... eeh ja, 'mijn relatie gaat nu al vijf jaar hartstikke goed: dat is echt heerlijk'. Maar het iswennen...'zeker voor vrouwen van mijn generatie'. Dus voor haar, zij is een andere vrouw, ze heeft geleerd en nu ...alles gaat goed, nu heeft zij een man en een kind en zij heeftja...

[Claire and Emma talk at the same time, but I think Emma say]:

Emma: dus hij heeft toch eigenlijk wel bereikt wat het doel was waar al die vrouwen naar streven.

g: ja maar dat is de psychologe dus...

Emma: ja,, maar dat is dus het man en kind verhaal.

(Transcript pp16,17)

G: ... You said before that the text has a strange end... very different... the woman is described very differently than in the beginning. How is she portrayed differently?

Emma: a bit 'zielig' [pitiful]

G: is she described as pitiful? From whose perspective? Do you think she is pitiful or does the author think that?

Sarah: What does 'zielig' mean?

G: pitiful, someone whom you would pity

Claire: but the woman says at the end: ... eeh [she quotes] 'yes, my relationship has been going really well now for 5 years and that is really wonderful', but it is ...getting used to... 'for women of my generation'. So for her, she is another woman, she has

learned and now... everything is going well, she has a man and a baby and she has ...yes...

[Claire and Emma talk at the same time, but I think Emma says]:

Emma: so he has achieved what the aim was of all those women

g: yes, but she is a psychologist so ...

Emma: yes, but that is the husband and child narrative.

Emma does not take my question as an invitation to describe what that particular representation was, but she momentarily steps outside the classroom discourse of text analysis, and uses a personal voice by making a value statement: the women (as described at the end of the text) are to be pitied. Claire disagrees with that particular value judgement; after all, she says, the woman in the text describes herself as happy. She has learnt [from her therapy, GQ] and now everything goes well. Claire further quotes from the text itself, saying that women of her (i.e. the female psychologist's) generation have 'had to learn', but now 'everything is going well'. Claire is trying to find evidence in the article to describe this particular discourse, but Emma responds to Claire by switching the focus from the text and the portrayal of women in that last section, to the author: 'he has achieved what the aim was for all those women' and she concludes by saying: 'that is the 'husband and child narrative'', which she explained earlier as the way that women are seen as reaching fulfilment only through motherhood. So Emma seems to suggest that since the article finished with this particular representation, this shows that the representation of women as fulfilled by their relationship and 'happy motherhood' is the 'solution' or most important discourse of the article: he [the author] achieved what all those women want. Emma looks at the text from a critical ideological perspective; she critiques the intensely traditional view of women finding happiness only in marriage and motherhood, but in this critique she is not considering any of the other discourses and representations. The discourse or representation of women as taking on the 'male' characteristics of achievement and success, she did not mention.

Claire is much more prepared to see the text in its complexities of conflicting discourses, and is still struggling to make sense of the text. Emma is not. She is sure of her interpretation.

Conclusion lesson 1

The focus of this first lesson was to look at text on a textual level and in relation to the immediate context. What emerged was that even at this level of looking at text, many different interpretations are possible. The range of answers students gave to the first question about the content of the text, showed how complex and ambiguous such a question is. Indeed, I take a view that text interpretation is a process in which readers use their experiences and schemata to *give meaning* to the text, not to *extract* pre-existing meaning (see chapter 3). However, I also do not hold to a view that we should allow for a limitless number of interpretations in pedagogical activities, and I believe, along with Wallace (2003:16) that we can talk about a range of 'preferred readings' of text. The answers to the question about content, showed that students do not look at text in a disinterested way. Even if students try and stay close to the text in their answers, they still inscribe meaning, they 'evaluate' the text, and see it in relation to its context in relation to its effect on the world; e.g. the text is about women who have a male identity, the pressure to be 'perfect', or about how women 'use' man, or in total contrast that women only gain happiness through having stable relationship and a child, what one student called the 'husband and child narrative'.

This may show that seeing text as stable, which is in effect, the assumption underlying questions such as what the text is about, is an artificial and ambiguous task.

Another significant aspect to emerge from the data of this first lesson is, that in ascribing meaning to the text, students tend to focus on only one of the discourses within the text, rather than seeing the text in its entirety and with a complexity of multiple discourses.

LESSON 2: CULTUURTEKST

Of the group of 6 regular students Sarah and Andy were not present in this lesson, but two exchange students from the Netherlands, Yasmin and Marijke joined this class. I had invited them to introduce an intercultural element in the lesson because one of the focus on cultuurtekst in this lesson and the idea of a possible Dutch articulation in the text. To ensure the Dutch students were prepared for this class I had given them a few articles we had discussed during this block on gender, and the framework for analysis that guided our discussions. I had also briefly discussed with the Dutch students the issue of cultuurtekst and I had given them a photocopied handout of a few pages from a book by Maaïke Meijer, in which she discusses the notion of cultuurtekst. This meant that the Dutch students were more explicitly prepared for this class on theoretical level than the regular students of the class. As I explained in chapter 4, I had not been explicit throughout the course about its underpinning theories, as I had assumed, partly based on previous experiences in other classes, that students would not appreciate theoretical discussion or information as part of a language class.

To prepare the regular English students for this particular class I had asked them to complete a homework task. This task was to write down their answers to the cultuurtekst section under point 5 of the analysis for framework we used (see appendix). These questions were designed to get students to recognise which discourses underpinned the text, and asked how the topic and subjects in the text were talked about; how the reader seems to be addressed; which values students recognised in the text; which discourses or intertexts they recognised, and whether these were in any way conflicting with one another. All of these questions asked for specific references to linguistic points of vocabulary or grammar to explain their answer. Sarah was the only student who had not carried out this piece of homework. Emma had given her own

interpretation to the task and rather than treating it as an academic and analytical exercise she wrote a spoof on the original text as if it was an article in a glossy women's magazine.

The progress of lesson 2

The aim of the second lesson was to discuss the text in relation to the context of culture; to discuss the text as cultuurtekst. The issues of representation had surfaced in the first lesson, but I wanted students to recognise the cultural locatedness of the text; the different discourses and values and to see whether the range of different discourses added an extra layer of meaning to the text. My main aim at the time was to see text as a cultural construct. The lesson moved from eliciting some initial responses from the Dutch students, to discussing issues of representation: how maleness and femaleness was constructed and what particular values, intertexts and discourses were recognisable. Finally we moved to the question whether this issue is talked about differently in England and Holland; on other words was there a Dutch articulation?

After the short discussion around the initial responses of the Dutch students, I had asked students to do an exercise in pairs to look specifically at how men and women were represented in the text and to make a list of words and expressions which showed that. The aim of the exercise was to encourage students to see these different ideologically underpinned discourses through looking at the language used. As I described in chapter 3, I conceive of the relationship between language and culture at the level of discourse. By doing the exercise I hoped to make the (conflicting) discourses visible. After this exercise we looked at the text in sections by which I hoped that the students would recognise the different voices with which women were represented. In the first lesson the task of looking at the structure of the text, which aimed to highlight these representations did not yield anything. So far in lesson 1 only Claire had picked up the issue of the different representations.

In this lesson, students were 'dialoguing' more with one another and responding to one another's comments than in the previous lesson. I let students talk and only tended to lead the discussion more when I felt the discussion was straying too far from the issue of looking specifically at the discourses. Because I had my own interpretation of the text, I noticed from the data that it unwittingly was pushing students to my interpretation of the text.

On the whole the Dutch students took a fairly equal part and the English students were not particularly more interested in what the Dutch students had to say in comparison to themselves. The Dutch students were perhaps a little reticent and less likely to respond as this was a new group and also a new way of looking at texts. The English students felt very comfortable in their comments about how things were 'done' in the Netherlands; as they had lived there during the year abroad, they felt their observations were valid.

My role during this lesson was less fore-grounded than in the first lesson. Whereas I asked questions to initiate discussions, responded to students' answers, and asked students to elaborate on certain points, on the whole I took a background role. Students were dialoguing and engaged in the discussions, frequently without any prompting from me.

Even though I did not use the questions on the framework explicitly, there was a progress in the lesson as the notion of discourses and values in the text were gradually made more explicit by the students. This process however, did not take place neatly in a linear way, and also led to misunderstandings amongst students as they sometimes were more interested in discussing the issues which were thrown up as a result of having highlighted the discourses, rather than seeing the text as the micro cosmos in which these discourses were reflected and recreated. It turned out that the presence of the Dutch students helped to make the discussion more focussed. I will start with the latter point below, and then move on to discuss how students engaged with the text

and its underpinning values in an increasingly intercultural and ethnographic manner.

Role of the Dutch students: towards an understanding of the socio-cultural context.

My expectations of the role of the Dutch students had been that the English students would be more to the point in their answers, because they had experience of discussing texts in previous classes, albeit not using an explicit framework. As it turned out, it worked the other way round. The inclusion of the Dutch students in the lesson immediately raised the level of discussion, as their responses prompted more dialogic responses from the other students.

In giving their first responses to the text, both Dutch students straight away took an evaluative stance to the text and considered, without being prompted, what might lie behind the stereotypical representation of women in the text:

G: Wat is jullie eerste reactie op de tekst... puur persoonlijk en waar ging de tekst over naar jouw gevoel?

Yasmin: heel herkenbaar, ja als je naar programma's kijkt als 'Sex in the city' en Ally McBeal dan gaat het echt daarover. En dit artikel, ja dat was niet iets nieuws..... ik herkende alles.

G: Je herkende, wat precies?

Yasmin: Nou zeg maar die hoger opgeleide vrouwen die een man wil om haar leven, zeg maar, compleet te maken en dat lees je ook in tijdschriften als Cosmopolitan en normale kranten ook en dergelijke, voorgekauwd spul was dit.... ja dat heb ik heel vaak gelezen

(Transcript pp1, 2)

G: What is your first reaction to the text... pure personal reaction and what was the text about, you feel?

Yasmin: very recognisable, yes when you look at programmes as 'Sex in the city' and 'Ally McBeal' then it is really about that. And this article, yes it was nothing new... I recognised everything.

G: You recognised what exactly?

Yasmin: Well, those well-educated women who want a man to make their life, well, complete. You read that also in magazines as 'Cosmopolitan' and also normal newspapers, hackneyed stuff this was, yes I have read this often.

The dialogue continues:

Marijke: Dat was mijn reactie ook wel. Om nou te zeggen... ja ik herken het natuurlijk ook wel, ik heb ook artikelen gelezen dat je ook over al die series op tv over vrouwen ...

Claire: ja dat stereotiepe ook

Marijke: ja en als ik dan denk van... ja ik herken het omdat ik er vaker over heb gelezen, ik herken het niet als verschijnsel in de maatschappij... ik heb dit soort vrouwen nog nooit gezien. Ja, eigenlijk vind ik het een beetje belachelijk dat mannen vernielen, ik vind dat heeeeel kinderachtig. Zijn er echt vrouwen.. is er een hele beweging van vrouwen die dat soort dingen serieus doen?

Yasmin: ja, je leest er wel verhalen over, maar gebeurt het ook op grote schaal? Ik ken persoonlijk niemand die zo is.

(transcript pp 1,2)

Marijke: That was my reaction as well. Well ...yes, I recognise it of course, I have also read articles like that and all those series on tv about women...

Claire: yes, the stereotypes...

Marijke: yes and when I think... yes I recognise it because I have read about it more often, but I don't recognise it as a phenomenon in society... I have never seen these women. Yes, actually I think it is a bit ridiculous . . . that 'destroying men' thing, I find it veeeery childish. Are there really women... is there really a whole movement of women who are really doing that kind of thing?

Yasmin first responds by saying she recognised the issue of highly educated women who want a man to make their life complete. But she immediately made explicit that she recognised the *ideas*, by having read about them in glossy magazines as well as in 'normal' newspapers. So Yasmin located the article in an intertextual relationship with global media discourses. The Dutch students were not just criticising the article for using stereotypes (although they did that too), but they were at the same time relating the article to the wider issue that these stereotypes indeed existed and were not only recognisable, but were hackneyed (Yasmin). This was a collaboration: Yasmin initially felt that the article portrayed something very recognisable, but Marijke takes her point further; she recognises the stereotypes because she has read about them so often, but she considers that these stereotypes do not relate to reality. Marijke, then, separated the 'cultuurtekst' (the underlying ideas in the text) from actual reality.

During the next exchange Emma considered what could be behind the creation of such stereotypes in the media, considering they do not relate to reality. And again in the ensuing dialogue, a collaboration takes place between Emma and one of the Dutch students, Marijke, who helped to make a more explicit link with the cultural context of the article:

Emma: Misschien dat soort benoelingen dan, van mannen of vrouwen vernielers, misschien is dat ooit een keer gezegd als grapje, en is dat gewoon opgenomen in de maatschappij en is dat opgenomen door mannen, of ja, door wie, en misschien van daar is het een verschijnsel in de geschreven.... eh pers geworden, want ja, ik denk, ja, er zijn vaak genoeg vrouwen inderdaad die toch gewoon gelukkig zijn om alleen te zijn en die inderdaad op een beetje fun uit zijn, die wel eens een man versieren. 't Is niet zozeer dat ze een man willen vernielen, maar net als mannen, die willen verder niks.... (onverstaanbaar) ... ja, en daar houdt het dan mee op.

Marijke: Ja 't kan ook best wel dat je.... want het is natuurlijk een heel interessant onderwerp, iets zoals dit, dus als je er ook maar een klein beetje aan ruikt of iets opvangt wat een beetje in die trant zit van vrouwen die een man gaan vernielen, dat klinkt heel interessant en dan kun je daar ook een prachtig artikel over schrijven wat al die mannen ook als een gek gaan zitten te lezen ... ik bedoel 't blijft gewoon een ontzettend interessant onderwerp man versus vrouwen.

Emma: ja precies, kijk wat een man doet, als een man uitgaat en een vrouw versiert, nou dat is gewoon normaal, niemand kijkt daar van op, maar als een vrouw dat doet dat wordt nog steeds gewoon beoordeeld.

Marijke: misschien is dat dan wel de waarde of het beeld dat je eruit kunt halen, he, dat 't van vrouwen niet... dat 't niet bij ons beeld van vrouwen past om uit te gaan en mannen te versieren,

(Transcript pp1, 2)

Emma: Maybe that those kind of labels: 'destroying men/male bashing' or women, maybe that has been said once as a joke and that label has just been taken over in society and taken over by men or yes, and maybe from there it became a phenomenon in the press, because yes, I think there are often enough women who are indeed just happy to be on their own and who indeed are out to have some fun, who would like to get it off with a man, not that they want to destroy a man, but who just like men ... and who do not want anything more than that (inaudible) and ... well that's all there is to it.

Marijke: Yes, it is also possible that you ... because it is of course a really interesting topic, something like this, so if you sniff at it only a little or if you catch something in the sense of women who are going to destroy a man, that sounds very interesting and then you can write a wonderful article about it which all those men are going to read like mad... I mean it remains such an interesting topic: men versus women.

Emma: Yes, exactly, look what a man does ... when a man goes out and gets it off with a woman that is just normal, it is expected. But when a woman is doing that it is still being criticised.

Marijke: Maybe that is the value or the image you can recognise, that it doesn't fit in the image we have of women to go out and pick up a man.

Emma's initial suggestion that the description of women as 'mannenvernielers' ('destroyers of men/'male-bashers') had come into use purely by accident; through a joke that then became part of an accepted notion in society, does not consider in any way its social or cultural origins, ideologies or power relations. Emma's suggestion does not really refer to any previous knowledge or experience either, it seems. It is an attempt at explaining an existing and recognisable discourse as not located within a particular sociocultural context, but as a chance happening. Marijke then takes Emma's suggestion on board, but instead

she does locate it within the text-producing environment, which is formed by a commercial need for a magazine to attract readers, and gender relations constitute a very interesting topic.

Emma builds further on this and this time she does make a link with the socio cultural context. She relates the representation of women as being sexually aggressive to cultural conventions: what is 'normal' behaviour for a man seems not acceptable in a woman. It is Marijke who makes this even more explicit and brings this back to what the text then might signify as a whole; that 'chasing men' is not part of the acceptable image of women in our society. Marijke is already referring to discourse here; the implicit conventions and assumptions of how women should behave.

So Emma, even though she thought she was agreeing with Marijke, approaches the text initially from a perspective outside society. Marijke tries to formulate it from a socio cultural perspective and tries to engage with the values underpinning the text straight away, which Emma then responds to. The students then are starting to engage with the notion of how gender is constructed in the article; they have started to 'map' the discourses. In the set of data I will discuss below, Claire takes the mapping of discourses further still.

Reading from inside or outside perspectives

The fairly heated exchange below shows the very different approaches between Emma and Claire in terms of conceptualising of text and context. Claire was discussing the particular fragment in the text¹ (which Emma and Claire had also disagreed over in lesson 1), which she said was being stereotypical. Claire had just mentioned that she thought

¹ 'Designer clothes, roof garden, nice trendy car under their cellulite-free trained buttocks, make-up of Clarins en Roc, fridge with salmon and champagne and of course that job with challenging prospects....'

these stereotypes consisted of women being represented as having masculine traits:

G: en jij vindt dat mannelijk. Wat is er mannelijk aan?

Claire: Ik vind dat mannelijk want de vraag die ik citeer over seksueel rendement ...voor mij is dat heel mannelijk, want ik vind dat dat is hetzelfde als de vrouwen in het eerste voorbeeld en dus voor mij is dat eh hij doet een eh 't franse woord 'rapprochement' eh ja..

laughter

Claire: wat is dat in het Nederlands of Engels? 't brengt dat eh..

Marijke: toenadering

Claire: ja,

g: hij brengt die twee dingen bij elkaar

Claire: ja

G; maar hoe..wat is er nou precies ...hoe komt dat dat dat op elkaar lijkt.. het feit dat vrouwen eerst worden beschreven met wat ze dragen... designer clothes, cellulitis vrij. . getrainde billen..

laughter

G: je zou kunnen zeggen dat daar een soort...

Claire: op zich is dat mannelijk want

Emma: neeeee! Waarom?

Claire: ja dat hele ...

Emma: als je succesvol bent, bent je dan mannelijk als vrouw?

Claire: nee, maar..

Emma: maar dat zeg je dan

Claire: nee ik vind dat als je dat vind belangrijk, ja ik vind dat een beetje mannelijk

Emma: dus jij wil gewoon onderdanig blijven aan een man en met geld....

G: Emma, Claire zegt volgens mij niet dat dat mannelijk is, maar dat dat de schrijver het presenteert als mannelijk, dat de maatschappij dat zo vindt.

Door elkaar praten and laughter

Claire: maar wanneer je een lijst maakt met alle dingen.. ik

Emma: hij beschouwt het als mannelijk

Claire: ja als je geen namen hebt, als je zegt dat hij eh Maarten en zijn drie vriendin eh vrienden, dan voor mij is dat misschien niet zo, ja, misschien niet die billen

laughter

G: Nou die billen zijn wel belangrijk natuurlijk. waarom zijn die ..

Claire: seksueel

G: omdat hij toch de vrouw daardoor als seksueel aantrekkelijk neerzet.

Emma: dus als ze dan dit allemaal hadden maar toch die cellulitis dan was er toch niet zo...

[onverstaanbaar door het door elkaar praten]

Claire: luister....dakterras of balkon, ja vlot karretje, ja niet die cellulitis, hoe zeg je dat voor mannen is dat eh... hoe zeg je..

sommige studenten: sixpack

Marijke en Yasmin: wasbord

Claire: wasbord, ja make-up niet, maar koelkast met zalm en champagne en die job met uitdagende perspectieven, ja voor mij dat kan mannelijk ook..

Eve: typisch zo'n bachelor..

[...]

G: dus het is ...de vrouw wordt beschreven in die succesvolle..economisch succesvolle termen en het prestatatiegerichte...eh hij zegt ook op een gegeven moment eh...hij definieert het mannelijk zijn als eh prestaties verrichten ..op blz. ik weet niet zo gauw.

Marijke: ja op blz. 49 aan het einde.. 'zo bouwen ze een door het leveren van bepaalde prestaties'

g: ja inderdaad, [ik herhaal het]..is een mannelijke identiteit, ja dus met andere woorden, prestaties leveren is een mannelijke eh karaktertrek.

Emma: ja dan ben ik het met je eens dat het inderdaad zo gepresenteerd is, maar

Claire; ja, ja

Emma: maar
 g: ja je bent het niet eens met wat ie zegt.
 Emma: nee

(Transcript pp 5.6)

G: and you find that male? What is male about it?
 Claire: I think that it is male because the question which I'm citing about sexual gain for me that is very male. I think that that is the same as the women in the first example and this for me he is doing.. , eh the French word is 'rapprochement' eh yes.. laughter
 Claire: What is that in Dutch or English? It brings that
 Marijke: approach
 Claire: yes
 G: he brings those things together
 Claire: yes
 G; but how. . what exactly ... how come that that looks like one another.. the fact that women are first described by what they wear.. . designer clothes, cellulite free trained buttocks
 laughter
 G: you could say that there is a kind of
 Claire: in a way that is male
 Emma: noooo... why?
 Claire: well the whole.....
 Emma: when you are successful as a woman you are being male?
 Claire: no, but.....
 Emma: but that's what you then are saying
 Claire: no, I think that if you find that [kind of thing] important ..., yes I think that is bit male..
 Emma: so you want to remain submissive to a man and with money.....
 G: Emma, I don't think that Claire is saying that it is male, but that the author presents it as male, that society thinks it is male.
 [Various people talking and laughing]
 Claire: but when you make a list of all those things ... I
 Emma: he thinks of it as male
 Claire: yes, when there wouldn't be any names given..... eh Maarten and his three friends, then for me [it could be about men] ...well perhaps not those buttocks
 laughter
 G: well those buttocks are important of course.. why would they be im...
 Claire: sexual
 G: because he is portraying the women still as being sexually attractive
 [....]
 Claire: listen.. roof terrace or balcony... yes, trendy little car, well not the cellulite, how do you say that for men...?
 Marijke and Yasmin: six-pack
 Claire: six-pack, yes not the make-up, but the fridge with salmon and champagne and the job with prospects ... yes for me that can be male
 Eve: a typical bachelor...
 [....]
 G; so the women are described in those successful Economically successful terms and focused on achievement ...eh .. he also says somewhere ...eh... he defines being male as eh.. achieving ... at page... I don't know...
 Marijke: yes on page 49 at the end: 'that's how they build aby achieving things'
 G: yes, indeed. Achieving ...is part of the male identity, yes, so in other words ...[...] is a male characteristic.
 Emma: Yes, then I agree with you that indeed that is how it is presented, but Claire; yes, yes
 Emma: but ..

G: yes, you don't agree with him
 Emma: no

Claire and Emma had discussed the same text fragment (the one about designer clothes etc.) in the first lesson, and they had both agreed that it represented a negative view of women, but they had each interpreted it differently. Emma had seen this fragment as representing women as superficial, being only interested in clothes and make-up, whereas Claire had seen it in terms of the representation of an 'ideal' that women would need to live up to. Those interpretations were forgotten now, and both Emma and Claire seem to agree that in this fragment women are described as being successful, having achieved a certain status due to these materialist possessions.

Claire notes that this particular representation of describing women in terms of success is gendered; success is represented as a male characteristic. But, Emma does not seem to recognise that Claire is making a statement about a representation in the text and she assumes that it is Claire's own opinion that success constitutes a male characteristic. Emma steps outside the meta-communicative style of the classroom discussion and seems to forget we are engaging in the pedagogic activity of analysing a text. She feels so strongly about this that she almost launches a personal attack on Claire: '*Dus jij wilt gewoon onderdanig blijven aan een man en met geld ...?*' (So you want to stay submissive to a man and with money..?).

When I am trying to build on Claire's point that the way that the women are presented is almost in male terms and when I try and articulate that in terms of economic success and a focus on achievement (which the author later in article explicitly defines as being a male characteristic), only Marijke latches on by pointing out where in the text this is said. Only then does Emma agree that, yes, this is an issue of representation, but states yet again, she doesn't agree with it (with the fact that success could be seen as a male characteristic).

The Dutch students stayed out of the heated exchange, perhaps because it was too passionate. They were both new and temporary members in the classroom community. Both Dutch students commented in their interviews on the passion with which the debates were conducted.

Emma then firmly remained outside the article, not trying to understand what the underlying cultural value was, but responding to the statement, almost as an item for debate. Claire, on the other hand was trying to understand the text fragment in the context of the article itself and link it to its socio cultural environment. By doing so, Claire is moving away from looking at the 'text' as a product, and is starting to see the text as cultuurtekst; the discourses which underpin the text. Claire made use of her socio-cultural knowledge, her schemata to come to this analysis and took on a position of critique. But, paradoxically, Emma's strong criticism of the text from her personal schemata, formed a hindrance to a position of critique as she saw the text in relation to a discussion about content, not a discussion about discourses. Claire saw this fragment in terms of culturally located ways of presenting male and femaleness, Emma saw this as a statement of truth, and she drew the discussion on to personal terms. This might suggest that a *strong* emphasis on personal schemata can be detrimental to being critical and even be stereotype confirming.

However, as a result of the interplay between theory, data and my own reflection, I realised in the later stages of this study that Emma's response to the text cannot be solely explained by her taking a position outside the text. It was precisely her emotional response to Claire's pinpointing of the particular discursive forces in society which represents success and independence as the prerogative of men, which alerted me to the fact that Emma was engaging with the text, and more so with Claire's responses to the text, in a critical way. Her emotional response was directed at these particular discursive understandings, even if she mistakenly believed that Claire represented that particular view. Through

her response of querying Claire whether she would like to remain dependent on a man and his money, Emma brought both the personal *and* political domain into the classroom. Since I felt uncomfortable with the emotional and passionate tone of the discussion, I intervened, without giving this personal political element a chance to develop. However, the next set of data shows a moment in the class where that did happen. It shows that students' engagement with their personal schemata can indeed be a step towards a critical engagement with the discursive forces of the text-producing environment.

Personal schemata: being an intercultural reader

The fragment below shows that instead of being a hindrance to engaging with text meaning, using personal schemata could indeed aid the process of being critical and intercultural. The personal and cultural can combine to aid students to become intercultural readers. When the exchange below took part in the lesson, I felt at the time, that the discussion had moved away from the text and that students used the text merely as a vehicle for a discussion about the topic. My aim throughout the lesson had been to get students to focus on the text and to point to the language in the fragment to prove their points, so I was initially disappointed that discussions like the one below developed, even though I recognised the value of having debates like this. Looking at the exchange now, I think it shows that students did have a meaningful and intercultural dialogue, where they collaborated in their interpretative discussion and successfully made use of personal schemata in order to be intercultural and were critical from an inside as well as outside perspective. They were both intercultural in the sense of understanding the complexity of culture (cf. Blommaert, 1998; Holliday et.al, 2004) and they were 'being intercultural' (Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004) in trying to understand the 'other', in this case 'the male', in relation to their own experiences. Students tried to understand the text and its underpinning discourses; they also critiqued, as a group, these discourses, which in turn led them to look at their own situation in a different light again.

Claire: maar we zeggen één ding en we denken een ander ding. Ik denk dat ik heb hetzelfde probleem, ik zeg altijd ik kan doen wat ik wil, ik kan carrière hebben of niet, wat ik wil, maar ook in mijn gezin [mijn eigen familie, G.Q], ze zegt altijd, wanneer is het huwelijk, wanneer komt de kinderen en dat is een heel, ja ik vind het heel moeilijk en ik denk dat dat is een normaal probleem van vrouwen in deze tijd, ja de ... hoe zeg je dat?

G: ja de rol, de veranderende rol..

Claire: ja, de rol, je kan alles zijn of niks zijn, maar het is moeilijk om een balans te vinden.

Marijke: ja blijkbaar vinden mannen dat ook heel moeilijk dat ze niet goed weten wat ze nou van een vrouw moeten verwachten en dat daarom zo'n artikel ook gepubliceerd wordt omdat dat daarop in gaat van wat voorwat willen vrouwen nou eigenlijk en hoe zitten ze in elkaar ...

G: en wat willen ze zelf?.

Emma: en wat willen mannen?

G: ja precies dat bedoel ik

Emma: willen ze een hoer hebben of een moeder

G: een hoer en een madonna

Claire: ja een hoer in de slaapkamer en een moeder in...

Marijke: (lacht) ja in de huiskamer of zo...

door elkaar praten

ss: in de keuken

G: ja, inderdaad. zit er ook iets in van jaloezie?

dat de vrouw ...

Claire: alles kan hebben

G: ...een bedreiging vormt? de man is nu zijn positie kwijt als degene die presteert, mannelijke identiteit is het leveren van bepaalde prestaties..

Claire: dat is het feministenidee dat ik heb de laatste tijd ook met mijn professor zo gepraat zij zegt dat sinds het begin van de tijd, mannen hebben een probleem, want vrouwen kunnen de kinderen hebben en mannen niet en dus mannen hebben vrouwen eh 'repressed'? ..

Marijke: onderdrukt

Claire: ..onderdrukt ... enne nu vrouwen kunnen een carrière hebben en een huis en een baan en ze kunnen alleen wonen als we wilt, ja we kunnen alles doen en dat is een grote probleem voor mannen en ze weten niet wat ze willen en ze moeten denken...

Marijke: maar dan zou je kunnen zeggen dat dit artikel.. juist die nadruk op de carrièrevrouw die, zeg maar, helemaal de plank mislaat, een bescherming is van he, het is altijd van ons geweest om een carrière te hebben en om te presteren en nu doen die vrouwen het ook, maar kijk eens naar ze, ze kunnen er niks van, 't gaat helemaal mis met ze, dus om dat ook een beetje te beschermen van 'ja maar het is toch ook een beetje van ons', want, ja, al kunnen ze het wel ... toch niet zo goed als wij.

G: ja, dus wat spreekt daar dan..., als we dat dan bijvoorbeeld vergelijken met Liesbeth Wietzes artikel van de man als dinosaurus, de mannen hebben hun positie verloren, ze zijn meelijwekkende wezens geworden, eh het was een heel extreme visie van haar, ze bracht het heel extreem, omdat het polemisch bedoeld was, maar herken je dat niet misschien iets in, zeg je, ja er is een bepaald maatschappelijk verschijnsel niet zozeer het maatschappelijk verschijnsel zo als hij het beschrijft over die agressieve jonge vrouwen, maar is er een maatschappelijk verschijnsel dat mannen, of vrouwen ook, in de war zijn, niet meer precieszoeken zoeken naar..een andere vorm...

Emma: ja ik weet het niet, het is heel moeilijk, maar ik ben niet in de war, als vrouw zijnde heb ik geen probleem dat ik ook een carrière wil en desnoods kinderen en getrouwd zijn..

Marijke: maar denk je dat dat gaat lukken ook als je dat allemaal wil?

Emma: dat weet ik niet en als het niet lukt ok daar heb ik ook geen probleem mee.

Claire: Maar ik denk ook dat de vrouw niet kan accepteren dat het ok is om geen man te hebben. Er is een

Emma: vrouwen kunnen dat niet accepteren?

Claire: nee de maatschappelijke mensen ja vrouwen, ik denk dat het misschien is het....het is dom, want ik weet dat zonder man kan ik gewoon functioneren op een normale wijze..

Marijke: ja..

Claire: ja er is misschien een soort idee en ..

Marijke: maar er is toch ook een soort restant van dat hele traditionele dat je toch ook een, dat je toch het idee hebt dat je een man nodig hebt en als je dan ook kijkt naar Ally Mc Beal en al die series, je zit er toch ook op te wachten dat ze eigenlijk een vriendje krijgt?

Emma: Maar is het ook niet zo tegenwoordig dat er voor mannen een beetje een nieuw concept is dat zij gewoon een vrouw nodig hebben voor eh eh 'companionship'?

Ss: gezelschap..

Emma: gezelschap want mensen als wezens, ik denk zijn niet bedoeld om alleen te zijn, man of vrouw, 't maakt niet uit. Misschien is het dan voor mannen, misschien moeten ze een hoofd er ...

Claire: get their head around it

Emma: ja, het idee dat die mogen ook kwetsbaar zijn, die mogen ook zeggen, ja eigenlijk wil ik best wel een vrouw.

G: ja en denk je dat dat hier ook enigszins naar voren komt?

Emma: nee

laughter

(pp16,17,18)

Translation:

Claire: But we say one thing and we think another thing. I think I have the same problem, I always say I can do what I want, I can have a career if I want and what I want. But also in my family, they always say, when is the wedding, when will you have children, and that is, yes, I think that is very difficult, and I think that that is a problem of women these days, yes, the ... how do you say that?

G: yes, the role, the changing role

Claire: yes, the role, you can be anything or nothing, but it is difficult to find a balance.

Marijke: Yes, apparently men also find that difficult that they don't know what to expect from a woman, and that that is why an article like this is published because that discusses what kind ... what women actually want and what makes them tick.

G: and what they want themselves?

Emma: and what do men want?

G: yes, exactly that is what I mean.

Emma: do they want a whore or a mother?

G: a whore and a madonna

Claire: yes, a whore for in the bedroom and a mother in

Marijke: (laughs) yes, in the living room

[Talking and laughing. Someone says:]

In the kitchen

G: yes, indeed. Do you think there's an element of jealousy? That the woman

Claire: can have everything

G: ...forms a threat? The man has lost his position as the one who achieves success; male identity is [seen as] achieving success.

Claire: That is the feminist idea. I also talked about that with my French lecturer. She says that since the beginning of time men have a problem because women can have children and men can't. That's why they have repressed? women

Marijke: oppressed

Claire: ...oppressed ... and eh ... women now can have a career and a house and a job and they can live on their own if they want. Yes, we can do anything we want and that is a big problem for men and they don't know what they want and they have to think ...

Marijke: ... But you could say that of this article ... especially the emphasis on the career woman who has got at all wrong [in her private life] is a protection of ..eh.. this has always been our [domain] to have a career, to achieve and now women do it as well, but look at them, they go to pieces, so to protect that a bit as well, yes, this is also ours .. because even though they can do it, they can't do it as well as we can.

G: Yes, so what can we if we compare that for instance with the article of Liesbeth Wietzes² that article 'the man as dinosaur', men have lost their position in society, they have become sad creatures ... it was an extreme view ... she presented it in a very extreme way because it was intended to be polemical, but do you perhaps recognise something that there is a phenomenon in society, or no not a phenomenon the way he describes it about aggressive women, but a phenomenon that men, and women as well, are confused, don't know exactly ... are looking for new ways ...

Emma: well, I don't know, it is very difficult, but I am not confused, as a woman, I have no problem with the fact that I want a career and possibly children, and be married

Marijke: But do you think that you will manage that, if you want all of that?

Emma: I don't know, and if I won't manage it, then that would be fine too.

Claire: but I also think that the woman can't accept the fact that it is ok not to have a man.

Emma: women can't accept that?

Claire: no the society... people, yes, women, I think that ... maybe it is it is silly, because I know that I can function normally without a man...

Marijke: yes ...

Clair: yes, maybe there is a kind of idea and

Marijke: but there is still a remnant of that very traditional, that you still have the idea that you need a man and also when you look at Ally Mc Beal and those TV series... you are waiting for them to finally get a boyfriend?

Emma: but, is it also not the case that there is a new concept for men that they need a woman for eh eh [she says in English] companionship?

Ss: gezelschap³

Emma: companionship, because people as beings, I don't think they are meant to be on their own, man or woman, it doesn't matter. Maybe it is then for men, they need to get their head ...⁴

Claire: get their head around it

Emma: yes, the idea that they can be vulnerable as well, that they can also say: actually, I would quite like to have a woman [female partner GQ].

G: Yes, and do you think that this comes across in any way in the text?

Emma: no.

laughter

(pp16,17,18)

Analysis of this set of data:

The classroom exchange above occurred at the point in the lesson straight after I had guided students through the different representations of women in the article. I had wanted them to consider how these different and conflicting representations created a different layer to the text. Claire answered by relating these different representations to herself, and suggesting that women may think or say they have the freedom to be what and who they like to be, but that in reality they are under pressure to conform. She expresses her point by referring explicitly to her own personal situation. So she implies that whilst women

² An article read by the group in a previous lesson relating to the same topic (see chapter 4).

³ Other students provide the Dutch word Emma was looking for.

⁴ Emma is trying to translate the English expression 'to get their head around' in Dutch and gets stuck. Claire gives the expression in English, perhaps to clarify that this is indeed what Emma meant.

might think they have all they want, they are nevertheless strongly influenced by expectations of society, that is to say the discourses, the ideas in society which are enacted by their friends and family. It is difficult to gain a balance between those discourses, she seems to say. Claire was thus reflexive in her answer.

Marijke then made an explicit link with the article suggesting that men clearly find it difficult to balance these various changing expectations women themselves and society have. Emma then turns the discussion towards men: they don't know what they want; a whore or a mother. I think she elegantly (and perhaps unwittingly) brings two discourses in the article together; that of the sexual representation of women in one of the early representations in the article and the end of the article, which could indeed be termed the madonna-discourse; the traditional mother. The discussion amongst the students then becomes political: (suppression of women throughout history), and psychological (envy of women's reproduction abilities) before it turns personal again about whether students themselves think they can combine the different roles of being a career woman with that of being a mother. Finally, Emma talks about relationships between men and women.

At this stage in the lesson, students were not any longer trying to make sense of the text. They had made the text their own and were collaboratively creating meaning, in trying to relate the text to their own reality and their own experiences. As I said, my initial feeling during this exchange in the lesson itself was that they were almost 'high jacking' the text. Cook and Wallace refer to this as 'talking around a text' when a text carries '*too much* meaning in a personal experiential way' for the students to maintain the required distance to stay 'on task'. Students wish to 'make meaning in different ways' than the questions asked by the teacher (2004:109). But looking at the data, students are doing more than merely talking around the text. They are discussing the issues which arose from the text as a critique of society and highlighting the power differentials that women still face. The style of meta

communication had indeed changed from analytical talk of standing outside the text, to a dialogue and collaborative style of talking, referring to personal experiences, as well as discourses in society. In fact, students are even quite explicitly referring to the issue of discourses. Claire calls it *een soort idee* (a kind of idea), which Marijke specifies as *een soort restant van dat hele traditionele...* (a remnant of that very traditional ...). In this discussion, then, students are using the insights gained through the text analysis, taking these further in a discussion using both the ideas that were gained through the classroom activity of the text analysis, relating these to their own experiences, before applying these ideas which had been gained through a more personalised discussion, back to the text. This way they were seeing the text as cultuurtekst, the values current in society underpinning the text, and students were seeing the article in terms of its conflicting and multiple discourses; the expectations of being successful and independent versus the expectations to be married and have children, which Claire highlighted as being part of everyday reality of women. They also saw the conflicting discourses of 'the whore and the madonna', as Emma phrased the expectations of men towards women, which indeed highlighted the way the article had represented women.

Students were 'linguaging' and 'dialoguing' (cf. Phipps and Gonzalez, 2004), and engaging, using the article as a starting point, but then conversely relating their discussion again to the article. They used a range of personal schemata to engage with the text, from giving examples of their own experience, to relating the discussion to other academic discussions (e.g. Claire referring to a literature class in French), and students talking about their expectations for their own future.

The personal here helped to engage students and make them see the cultural and social significance of the article. Marijke particularly brings the discussion back to the article. She also queries Emma in her confident statement that she will have no problems integrating being a

woman with having a career. She makes it personal and at the same time queries underlying assumptions, both in the text, but also in the attitude of the students themselves.

By standing both inside and outside the text and through dialoguing students were able to use the personal to be intercultural. They were intercultural at a generic level: recognised the cultural values embedded in the text and the complexity of society of which this text as a product. However, the lesson also addressed being intercultural at a more specific level and local level. I conceived of this as Dutch discourses, and I turn to this next.

Dutch articulations

As mentioned, part of the aim of the lesson was to see if there were any Dutch articulations in the text. The topic of the text clearly is a globalised, or at least a western one; students had indeed recognised the intertextual references to American and English soaps and films. I asked students whether they felt that this issue would have been written about in a similar way in an English magazine aimed at men. As I describe in more detail in chapter 4, my own interpretation had been that the extreme traditional positioning of women as needing to find fulfilment through motherhood, would not have been acceptable in an English publication, not even in a man's one. I also felt that this discourse was made more acceptable by a discourse which I also felt to carry a Dutch flavour: that of therapy and self development, which, I thought, would equally have been out of place in an English magazine aimed at men.

In the fragment below I am trying to bring this discussion into the foreground. The exchange student, Marijke, responded as I had expected, saying that this kind of discourse certainly does not surprise her, but the regular students of the class did not seem to want to pursue this line of analysis. As in the previous set of data, they 'talked around the text' and focused on the difference in conventions in how people talk about relationships: what can you say and what not? The students are

relating it to previous knowledge and experience gained when living in the Netherlands. Marijke took on the role of 'learner' about English culture. The discussion which I had hoped to kick-start on whether there was Dutch articulation to some of the discourses employed, became a content-oriented one, away from text analysis towards analysis based on personal experience, or at least what they had inferred and observed about differences in relationships in England and the Netherlands:

Claire: Ja, maar ik moet zeggen ik heb in MH in Engeland gekijkt wanneer ik was in Waterstone's en MH in Engeland is niks te doen, of er is een klein artikel over seks maar al andere artikelen zijn over sport en health hoe je kan een betere sixpack hebben

g: ja wasbord dus

Marijke: laughs

Claire: ja en een betere ... 'deze schoenen voor voetbal'..

G: niets over relaties

Claire: nee niets over relaties

[.....]

Marijke: Maar denk ... dan wat je ook zei dat over MH dat het alleen maar over sport gaat, dat praten over relaties, dat dat niet helemaal kan dat dat te open is?

Claire: in Engeland het kan niet ja ik denk dat in Engeland je kan het niet publiceren in een Engelse mannelijke publicatie..

G: en dan met name het vrij serieuze over relaties en het therapeutische gedeelte..?

Claire: nee, nee want ik denk dat in Engeland we praten niet over deze soort dingen, want ik denk mannen, maar ook vrouwen praten niet in dezelfde manier over seks,

Emma: nee

Claire: in Nederland is het heel... je hebt 6 mannen en 6 vrouwen die woont bij elkaar en misschien ik weet het niet praat je over seks en dat soort dingen..

Marijke: laughs

Claire: maar je praat over relaties

Marijke: ja dat gaat

Claire: maar ik denk in Engeland ik praat niet met mijn vrienden over mijn relatie behalve dan in een meer generale manier

(Transcript p 20, 21)

Translation

[Claire: Yes, but I have to say, when I was in Waterstone's I had a look, and MH in England there is nothing, or just a small article about sex, and all other articles are about sport and health... how you can have a better 'sixpack' ...

G: yes 'wasbord'

Marijke: laughs

Claire: yes, and a better these shoes for football

G: nothing about relationships

Claire: no, nothing about relationships

[....]

Marijke: But do you think, that what you said, that MH is only about sport, that talking about relationships that that is not possible/acceptable, that that is too open?

Claire: In England you can't do it, yes, I think that in England you can't publish it in an English publication for men.

G: And then particularly the fairly serious tone about relationships, that therapeutic part?
 Claire: No, because I think in England we don't talk about these kind of things, because I think men, but also women, don't talk in the same way about sex
 Emma: No
 Claire: In the Netherlands it is very you have 6 men and 6 women who live together and maybe, I don't know, you talk about sex and that kind of thing...
 Marijke: laughs
 Claire: but you talk about relationships
 Marijke: yes, that is ...
 Claire: but I think in England I don't talk with my friends about my relationship except in a more general way.]

Claire had taken an intercultural stance by looking at an English version of *Men's Health* for comparison. Her analysis, that it did not contain anything about relationships, was taken further by Marijke. She was interested to what degree you could infer whether there is more of a taboo on talking about relationships in England than in the Netherlands. The exchange is perhaps a little essentialist and conducted at a very general level, but I had encouraged that by my initial questioning about Dutchness. Whilst the dialogue was not leading to the values in Dutch society regarding women, that I had scaffolded the discussion towards, the dialogue was nevertheless intercultural. An interesting side effect was that the intercultural dialogue was taking place in both directions: the statements about English society made by Claire, led Marijke to ask further questions. Interesting is that the English students were more confident in their observations about cultural difference. Marijke did not focus on cultural differences, and in her interview she said she had no idea what the Dutch values were, as she, as a native speaker, had never thought about it in those terms.

The students may have taken on an intercultural stance in the sense that they were thinking about the issue of the wider cultural context in the Netherlands and Britain, but they were not approaching the analysis from a position of critique. Nevertheless, the students were reflecting; Claire used both the evidence of what she had inferred from the article, and something which Marijke had said earlier on in the discussion and then related it to her own experience. On the other hand, the discussion

did not rise above the level of stereotypes, and students were not aware of the fact that they were colluding in stereotypes.

I then aim to bring the discussion back from the 'talk around the text' to the pedagogical task at hand, i.e. looking at the underpinning values in the text and whether these could be said to constitute a Dutch articulation. I want to find out from Marijke whether she feels the underpinning values in the text are in any way 'recognisable' to her:

G (question directed at Marijke): wat vindt jij heb je het gevoel dat komt dit op jou vrij herkenbaar over dat je deze waarden in een tijdschrift hebt of vind je dat ook vreemd, als je tenminste in ogenschouw neemt dat dit tijdschrift op mannen is gericht?

Marijke: ik vind het niet vreemd dat ze iets zoals dit publiceren. Ik heb niet het idee dat dit heel erg buiten de toon valt van wat er verder in Nederland te lezen is, nee

Claire: dit is een normaal artikel in MH in Nederland

Marijke: ja niet dat ik MH lees, maar..(laughs)

[.....]

Eve: er is veel meer vrijheid in Nederland om te schrijven wat jij bedoelen wat jou mening is, veel Nederlanders geven hun mening zoveel makkelijker aan dan Engelse mensen. Het is meer sociaal acceptabeler om te zeggen wat je voelen over hoe het dan is want dat is jouw mening

Claire: je hoeft niet te vragen over hun mening want ze zegt het door elkaar praten

Emma: maar dat [Nederlandse, GQ] mannen makkelijker over gevoelens praten of makkelijker dan Engelse mannen over gevoelens praten dat kan ik je wel vertellen. 't is echt tanden trekken soms

[...]

[door elkaar praten]

Claire: ...over seks ik denk dat seks is niet zo problematisch en een soort idee. In Nederland er is meer sex education op school, je bent jonger 't is meer ..

Emma: het is gewoon in Nederland

Claire: 't is normaal, het is topical

Eve: de Engelsen vinden het zo moeilijk om over seks te praten

g: actueel

Claire: ja actueel en in Engeland het is taboe.

Emma: het is alledaags bijna in Nederland, niet dat iedereen de hele dag over seks praat, maar

door elkaar praten

G: ... maar hier in deze tijdschriften kom je dat toch ook tegen in Engeland, in Cosmopolitan heb je toch ook een heleboel seks

Emma: ja maar dat is ...

Claire: dat is niet..

Eve and Emma: dat is voor vrouwen..

Claire: ook het is over goede seks..

Emma: ja maar dat is ook echt niet ..

[Tape came to an end.

Continued on next tape.]

Claire: ze zegt dat seks is niet altijd perfect en het gaat niet altijd goed en dat in relaties zijn er momenten dat je hebt problemen maar in Engeland is het altijd ja je moet, hoe zeg je 'orgasm' in het Nederlands

Emma: orgasme

Eve: *het is elke keer ja je moet een multiple orgasm ..*
 Claire: *ja precies*
laughter en door elkaar praten
 Emma(*onverstaanbaar*)*seksueel*
 Claire: *ja ze moeten over seks praten in een soort closed of ja het is een soort perfect idee, ja en je praat over dit perfecte idee, maar het is alleen maar*
 Eve: *alleen maar de beautiful people*
 Claire: *ja en je bent niet in hetzelfde soort...*
 Marijke: *het is niet persoonlijk?*
 Claire: *ja precies, het is een soort ideaal*
 [Transcript p 22, 23]

Translation

[G: (question directed at Marijke): What do you think? Do you have the feeling that ... does this come across as fairly recognisable... that you find these values in a magazine, or do you find that strange as well, considering this magazine is aimed at men?
 Marijke: I don't find it unusual that they publish something like this. I don't think this is very different from other things you can read in the Netherlands. No.
 Claire: this is a normal article in *Men's Health* in the Netherlands?
 Marijke: yes, well not that I read *Men's Health*, but
 [...]
 Eve: There is more freedom in the Netherlands to write what you think, what your opinion is, so many Dutch people give their opinion so much easier than English people, it is more socially acceptable to say what you feel, to say how it is because that is your opinion.
 Claire: you don't have to ask their opinion, because they say it
 [Students all talk at once]
 Emma; but [Dutch, GQ] men talk more easily about their own feelings than English men talk about their feelings, that much I can tell you. Sometimes you really have to pull it out of them)
 [...]
 [Students all talk at once]
 Claire: ..about sex I think that sex is not so problematic and a kind of idea in the Netherlands, there is more sex education at school. You are younger, it is more ..
 Emma; it is normal in the Netherlands
 Eve: the English find it so difficult to talk about sex
 Claire: [...] and in England it is taboo
 Emma: it is almost everyday in the Netherlands, not that everyone talks about sex all day, but ...
 G: but in the magazines here in England, in *Cosmopolitan* there is also a lot of sex.
 Emma; yes, but that is not ..
 Claire: that is not ..
 Eve and Emma: that is for women...
 Claire: and it is about good sex ..
 Emma; yes, but that is not really ...

 [The tape came to an end.
 Continued on next tape.]

 Claire: She says that sex is not always perfect and it doesn't always go well, and that there are moments in relationships that you have problems, but in England, it is always, yes, you have got to ... how do you say 'orgasm' in Dutch?
 Emma: 'orgasme'
 Eve: it is everytime, yes, you must [have] a multiple orgasm
 Claire: yes, exactly
 [laughter and everyone talks at same time]
 Emma; yes it is very extreme [not audible]
 Eve: [not audible] ... sexual

Claire: yes, they have to talk about sex in a kind of closed, or yes, it is a kind of idea about perfection, yes, and you talk about this 'perfect-idea', but it is only ...

Eve: only beautiful people

Claire: and you are not in the same [league?]

Marijke: it is not personal?

Claire: yes exactly, it is a kind of ideal.

Analysis of this set of data

Marijke indeed feels the values reflected in the article are similar to those in other publications in the Netherlands, which might suggest there may be a Dutch articulation to some aspects of the text. However, the students did not follow up on this notion, and they continued the theme of comparing attitudes of 'openness' in attitudes and communication between the Netherlands and England. Eve's general observation that Dutch people have a direct style of communication is applied by Emma to different communicative behaviours between English and Dutch men when it comes to talking about feelings. She seems to make use of her own personal experiences by emphasising: 'that much I can tell you'. From that point the discussion starts to focus on sex, but Claire relates this to her cultural knowledge of the Netherlands. She suggests that because there is sex education at schools, it is easier for people to talk about sex. However, rather than just making an observation, using her cognitive schemata, she touches on a more complex point; she says that talking about sex is 'a kind of idea' (*een soort idee*). Claire seems to suggest that because sex is talked about from a younger age at school, it becomes part of culture, almost like a discourse. The other students do not pursue the more complex point Claire is making, but they confirm the fact that talking about sex is just more common in the Netherlands.

When Eve focuses on the comparative element ('the English find it so difficult to talk about sex') both Emma and Claire confirm this, but I feel that the students are colluding in a stereotype. I want them to query this further and I counter their comments by stating that there is a lot of talk about sex in English magazines. This leads students to consider the way Dutch magazines write about sex compared to English publications, such as *Cosmopolitan*. It is Claire again who considers these differences

and she suggests that Dutch magazines will write about sex in the context of relationships and that they would also focus on the fact that sex is not always perfect. English magazines (i.e. *Cosmopolitan*), on the other hand, write in a 'closed way' about sex; as if sex should be perfect all the time, it is not about personal experiences, but an 'ideal' to live up to (Eve: 'multiple orgasms'). Again Claire comes close to suggesting that there are different discourses surrounding sex; conventions in talking about sex and the assumptions and expectations which surround it. Also interestingly, Claire focused again on the pressure that glossy magazines exert to conform to the image of an 'idealised' lifestyle, which Claire mentioned a few times in relation to the article in *Men's Health*.

Whilst I had wanted to focus on Dutch articulation and discourses in the *Men's Health* text, students changed that focus to a comparative one, looking at the differences in the Netherlands and England in communicative styles in the way people talk about feelings and about sex. Whilst partly I felt students were colluding in stereotypes, they also, Claire in particular, attempted to relate both their personal experience and their cognitive and social schemata to reflect on these differences. I felt slightly uncomfortable about discussing issues comparatively, as this so easily leads to an unproblematic confirming of national stereotypes. Of course, I had encouraged the comparative stance in trying to make students consider the idea of a Dutch articulation, but articulation focuses on discourses, rather than on the 'facts' of people's behaviour, which is how the discussion was developing. On the other hand, students were reflecting on their own experiences when they had been in the Netherlands during their residency abroad. Whilst I think students were in danger of over essentialising their experiences, Claire points towards a way in which topics like these could be debated in a more constructive and intercultural way, with students reflecting critically on their own experiences. She hints at the fact that there are discourses surrounding sex, which may differ from country to country (or indeed from social group to social group), because of historically developed attitudes, or indeed, as Claire suggests, because of the educational

curriculum, which is a powerful conductor of values and discourses. Focusing on discourses rather than the 'facts' of people's behaviour, allows for a more comprehensive and problematised view of the notion of a possible national articulation.

Conclusion

Over the two lessons, the discussion in class became more 'dialogic' as the lessons progressed, both in relation to the text - students engaged with the text at various levels, but also in terms of class discussion - students initially answered my questions directly to me, but soon started to respond to one another and collaborated (or clashed with one another on a couple of occasions) in interpreting the text. On the whole, it could be said that students' understanding of the text gradually moved from the level of text as product, to text as cultuurtekst, recognising underlying values. However, this was not a neat and linear progress. There were significant learning moments, but students' understanding of the discourses in the text seemed to remain embryonic and was frequently at an implicit level. At times, it also felt that students had negated their earlier understanding of the text. Students used a variety of approaches, to interpret the text and these approaches also differed from student to student.

In the first lesson, as was the intention, students on the whole referred to the text at a content and text functional level. Yet, even at this level, students attributed a particular meaning to the text; they 'evaluated' the text. There were significant differences between students as to what they felt the text was about or what the function of the text was. These differences were located both in the fact that students tended to see the text in the light of one particular discourse, but also in the degree to which students aligned themselves with the text and were trying to stay close to what they perceived the author's intent to be. Each student tended to focus on only one of a number of possible discourses, and these contrasting views did not form a point of discussion or debate amongst the students. They seemed to accept one another's

interpretation, as a part of this analytical classroom activity. Students themselves were not necessarily aware they were interpreting the content or function of text in the light of a particular discourse, and they certainly did not make this explicit. I did not include the data for this in this chapter, but where students did focus on conflicting discourses, which Claire called, the text 'having its wires crossed', students tended to see this as a poorly constructed argument.

Students' responses, then, tended to see text as stable, which was occasioned, it would seem, by my focus on text at the textual level in this lesson. Yet, at the same time, some students did go beyond the text and they started to focus on what the text would mean in its context of production, as well as how the text would function in its context of reception. Generally speaking, students interpreted the task in the first lesson as a fairly traditional language task using a distant and objective style of classroom talk, and they were frequently confident of their interpretation. The position taken towards the text was one of standing outside the text, but at the same time some students started to make use of their personal schemata.

The second lesson focused more specifically on the second layer of text, the cultuurtekst, and was aimed at seeing the text in relation to its wider cultural context of production as well as its multivoicedness shown through the various, some conflicting, discourses. During the second lesson students were engaging more with the text and on occasion took on an intercultural stance. They created meaning in the text by engaging with the ideas and experiences to which the text referred and relating this to their own experiences and reality as they saw it. Whilst these personal schemata were often not explicitly used, there was a tendency for students to be more aware of these. These personal schemata consisted partly of students' own experiences, their knowledge and understanding of the world, but also of expectations of what a good text or a classroom discussion should consist of.

There were occasions where the students were intercultural in their attempts to understand the text from the inside, i.e. engaging with the cultural meaning of the text in relation to their own lived experiences. They also tried to understand and critique the values contained in the text. In that sense students were ethnographic and engaging, however, students did not reflect on their own interpretation of the text, so as such they did not make their own reality 'strange'. This was not surprising, as I had not invited students to be reflexive. I only conceptualised the notion of text ethnography and its reflexive aspect as a result of this data analysis. Students did, however, take a position of critique as they reflected on the ideological underpinnings of the text and its representation of normalising the discourse of women being soft, gentle, caring and dependent.

Interestingly, the deeper insights by students occurred when they moved away from the exercise of text analysis and made the discussion their own. The 'talking around the text' became the most dialogic, insightful and, even academic, discussions of the two lessons, where students recognised the power structures that regulate women's personal life choices in terms of career and motherhood.

The notion of Dutch articulation did not lead to any insights or, even considered discussions. The Dutch student, Marijke, did acknowledge that the discourses in the text were recognisable in terms of what was published in the Netherlands, but this point was not taken up further by anyone. I think in retrospect, the notion of articulation would need to be developed further as it is at a very subtle level, that this takes place. The evidence from the classroom discussion suggests that the idea of a national articulation leads to uncritical comparisons and feeds in to confirming stereotypes. However, one student did introduce an interesting notion, by implying that ways of talking about a topic, such as sex, can be nationally articulated to a degree, depending on to what degree it is included and how it is talked about in education.

Nevertheless, I believe the tendency to confirm stereotypes shows how careful we need to be in focusing on national patterns. Even if my own interpretation of Dutch articulation would be recognisable by many different people and 'accord with reality', it would still only be a particular tendency at a particular time and in a particular environment. Such a discourse is only one of various other discourses, and as students had difficulty recognising or making sense of the multiple discourses, and had a tendency to interpret the text only in the light of one of these, focusing on a 'national' articulation carries with it the risks of confirming or creating new stereotypes which should probably not be tackled until students have a fuller and more balanced understanding of the complexities of national identity.

In the next chapter I will discuss how students look back upon these two lessons in class and on the course as whole, and whether the 'intercultural moments', as I call them, had been recognised, or even consolidated by students in their own recollection of the text as well as their approach to communicating in general.

The main question I am attempting to answer in chapter 6 is whether students have made the journey from 'text' to 'cultuurtekst', or in other words, whether the cultuurtekst approach has led students to be critical intercultural language users.

CHAPTER 6

INTERVIEW DATA

Introduction

The focus of this chapter is the learning experience. The main question I attempt to answer is whether students have made the journey from 'text' to 'cultuurtekst'. I use the data from this chapter, partly to triangulate the findings from chapter 5 and in doing so, the underlying aspects I look at are similar to those I looked at in that chapter; whether students recognized the complexity of the discourses embedded in the text, what critical approaches students used in reading the text, and encompassed within that, whether students engaged in 'being a text ethnographer', and finally whether students recognized any Dutch articulation in the text. I will discuss these aspects across a range of different categories, which I will set out below.

In the previous chapter I looked at how students engaged with the *Men's Health* text in the two lessons I have used for data analysis. What emerged from that chapter was that the way students had conceived of the text and engaged with it did not follow clear patterns, were sometimes contradictory, but that an understanding of discourses seemed to be emerging, at least for some students. The most significant moments turned out to be the ones where students 'talked around the text', where they made the text their own, and were engaged in an 'intercultural' manner – that is to say, they engaged with one another, with the text and with ideas surrounding culture.

There was still a tendency to interpret the text in one dominant voice only; students had difficulties recognising the multiple discourses, except

as involving a badly constructed article, and critical dialogic thinking was still tentative, but started to emerge in the second lesson. My aim of making students aware of how cultural values are reflected in texts, i.e. moving from reading as text to cultuurtekst, was only partly met, but an awareness was starting to build up.

There were some intercultural moments during the second lesson in which we discussed the text at the level of cultuurtekst. This lesson was also focused on intercultural 'dialogue'. This dialogue took place in the class itself, due to the presence of the two Dutch exchange students, but it also took place through students' engagement with a text for which they were not the intended audience. Equally, students were only partly familiar with the wider context of the text producing environment. The most significant intercultural moments were those where classroom dialogue was informed by students' own experiences and context.

As explained in chapter 4 I interviewed the students twice. The first set of interviews took place soon after the second lesson in which the Dutch exchange students also took part. This first interview was particularly meant to focus on what students had made of the approach to discussing text as cultuurtekst. The second set of interviews took place approximately three months later, at the end of the course as a whole. My aim with the second interview was to see how students looked upon their experience three months later in relation to the course as a whole. The interviews followed a broadly ethnographic approach with only broad themes adhered to and were partly interviewee-led. Because of this, I cannot necessarily claim any real sense of comparison between the interviews.

The interviews took place in English and were held in my office. There were occasional interruptions by the telephone, someone knocking on my door or by the tape coming to an end, necessitating me to change over the cassette. All interviews were fully transcribed. The transcription shows words and phrases according to speech patterns. Where sentences are interrupted by another speaker, the full stop at the end of

the line is omitted. Interrupted speech follows on as indicated by use of a lower-case letter at the start of the next line of speech. Uncertain words or phrases are indicated by the code '()'. The fictitious name of the student is given and my own speech is indicated by the letter 'G'.

In selecting fragments of data for analysis, which would help me to answer my overall question of how students had engaged with this approach, and in particular whether students had made the journey from text to cultuurtekst, the following categories emerged:

- how students had constructed the notions of culture and of cultuurtekst;
- whether students recognize the cultural complexity of texts as situated in multiple discourses;
- whether students' conceptualization of addressivity (as directing communication towards the other) led to being intercultural;
- whether students' reference to personal schemata aided in the process of reading the text in an intercultural or ethnographic manner;
- how students positioned themselves towards the text and how they constructed this (in relation to identity);
- whether the notion of Dutch articulation helped in understanding cultural specificity;
- the views on communication and text that students implicitly held which influenced how they perceived the text, the notion of cultuurtekst and indeed their own learning.

However, due to the ethnographic nature of the interviews, which led to some interviews providing more data about certain themes than others, some of these categories above, were not transferrable to the data of all students equally. As a result some categories applied to one student only.

As I had too much data to allow a closer look at the way that individual students had constructed their experiences with my cultuurtekst pedagogy, I focused in the interview data on only two students for

analysis. I chose these two students, Claire and Sarah, because of their contrasting views. Out of all the students Claire had engaged most with the conflicting discourses in the *Men's Health* text and with the cultuurtekst pedagogy. Even though Sarah had not been present during the second lesson which was part of the analysis of the previous chapter, I still opted to use the data of Sarah's interviews for this chapter, because she had been quite resistant to my approach and so offered valuable insights into her learning experiences in relation to my cultuurtekst approach.

The categories which I will discuss for each student in relation the first interview are:

- *How does she construct the notion of cultuurtekst?*
- *How does she position herself vis-à-vis the text?*
- *Recognising multiple discourses and cultural complexity*

For Claire I inserted an extra category where she is reflecting on text:

- *Reflecting on text*

In the second interview different categories emerged for each student. The only category which is similar is that of:

- *Dutch articulation*

Because Claire and Sarah interpreted the notion of addressivity in very different ways; as 'showing responsibility towards the other', and as 'manipulation', respectively, I accounted for this in the categories of discussion:

- *Relationship between the notion of addressivity and being intercultural,*
and as: *Relationship between the notion of addressivity and manipulation.*

For Sarah I included three extra categories:

- *Personal schemata*

- *Sarah's view of communication*
- *Sarah's reflection on the course*

I will discuss both students separately in relation to their first and their second interviews, starting with Claire below.

CLAIRE

The interview with Claire was to a large extent led by Claire herself; even though I asked some questions and responded to what Claire said, Claire talked for long stretches at a time. She is a fast talker and I found it hard to get enough time to think and respond to what she said.

During the classes, Claire seemed to have engaged most of all the students with the notion of the conflicting discourses. Early on in the first lesson she already commented on the text having 'its wires crossed'. In the second lesson also, she engaged strongly with the representations in the text rather than just looking at the surface content level. Yet, the interviews show that Claire is still struggling with the concept of cultuurtekst and struggling to some extent to make sense of the *Men's Health* text.

Claire conceptualized the process of reading at a meta-level; she was trying to engage with different views of text and reading. In doing so, she was very reflexive. Below, I will first discuss data from Claire's first interview, focusing on how she constructed the notion of cultuurtekst, how she positioned herself towards the text, to what degree she recognized the cultural complexity in the text and her reflections on the text, before discussing the second interview.

First interview with Claire

How does she construct the notion of culture and of cultuurtekst?

When I started the interview and told Claire that I wanted to find out whether students had come to grips with the notion of cultuurtekst, she responded:

Claire: I still find the concept difficult to understand and I think what was difficult to get my head round at first was the very fact that when we looked at the articles first, it was () and you said look at it as a cultuurtekst, and I was like, eh, is it necessarily a cultuurtekst, but that's because I think I had a different idea of what it meant, in a sense that every text can be cultuurtekst as long as there are certain truths in it and, you know, what it represents, it represents a certain type of culture

G: Right

Claire: and just because I don't recognise the culture doesn't necessarily make

G: Yeah keep going

Claire: doesn't necessarily make it, doesn't make it not a cultuurtekst.

(6 February, p1)

Despite the fact that Claire states she found cultuurtekst a difficult concept, she is trying to make sense of it and relates the notion of cultuurtekst to two issues. Firstly, she reflects on her own conceptualisation of the notion of cultuurtekst. Secondly, she recognises that cultuurtekst is a *representation* of a culture. A culture, moreover, which she sees not at a national level, but at a smaller, local level, 'a certain type of culture'.

Her response suggests though that Claire views the notion of cultuurtekst as well as the notion of culture itself as stable; she talks of the text representing certain 'truths' about 'a' culture. Yet, Claire does realise that the word 'truths' does not reflect what she wanted to express. When she refers specifically to the *Men's Health* text as

cultuurtekst, she realises that 'a' culture as she phrased it earlier, relates to ideological positions:

Claire: And we talked about intertexts as well and things like that that he makes reference to, I mean we talked about Ali McBeal for instance, things like that, em, which I suppose stereotypically implies a certain type of person, so I, I was trying to explain that it's, em, he represents certain em well I call them truths but it's not truths but values.

(6 February, p.4)

Referring to the American soap Ali McBeal, as an intertextual influence on the text, Claire is close to suggesting that this soap draws on similar *discourses* as the *Men's Health* text, a discourse which relates to a stereotypical representation of a 'particular type' of woman. Even if she does not articulate it as such, Claire seems to see culture in cultuurtekst as discourses. However, she is still struggling with these ideas. In the data below she sheds more light on this struggle.

How does she position herself vis-à-vis the text?

Claire explains the different processes of how she read the *Men's Health* text. She does not refer to the classroom discussions, but the reading of the text outside the classroom:

Claire: When I did the, well, what I tried to do was read it for the vocabulary so that I understood it fully because it was annoying to leave () and then I read it again on the train without writing anything, and without having read your [framework], and that was when I started to see the kind of, I find it very patronizing, em, there are lots of sentences that I don't like, the whole cliché cliché thing and the way he is so mocking about women and, you know, oh her true love left her for a younger woman, well, you know, that's quite a horrible thing to have to deal with, you know, you don't have to be patronizing about it, but then, when I read it with, what I did was when I needed to write out the text that you wanted for the cultuurtekst question, I wrote down all the questions that were asked and then I read it each time so I went through it thinking, how are women portrayed here or how are the people in this story portrayed, and then kind of underlining a word and using some of the things that I saw, and the more I read it, the more I realised that it's not a very, well that the argument isn't very good because it sort of skips

from one thing to the others, and it never actually says anything, it kind of moves around and around this point but it never makes any statement about, you know, or conclusion.

(6 February, p.4)

Claire describes the process of reading as taking place in three clearly defined stages. Whilst in reality it is unlikely that these stages are as clearly delineated as Claire suggests, her account does give an insight into how she approached reading the *Men's Health* text and how she positions herself in regards to it. First of all she reads the text as a language learner; her first reading was aimed at making sure she understood all the words. Earlier in the interview she had described how she would first approach a Dutch language text by underlining the words she doesn't know and looking them up. This level of reading accords with a stable view of text as language being neutral: the meaning can be accessed by looking at a dictionary.

Secondly, she read the text for its content and without the framework questions I had given. Her response to the text in this phase of reading was one of both critical and personal engagement. On the one hand, she critiques the stereotypical, patronising and mocking approach of the text. But at the same time she responds from a personal perspective; she relates the text to her own knowledge or experiences of situations like the one the text describes, and talks with a voice of empathy with the women who are being dumped by their lover for a younger woman.

Claire's third and final reading stage relates to the homework task of reading at cultuurtekst level; looking specifically at the different ways in which women are portrayed. This is where Claire finds the article confusing. During the lesson she had described these different representations of women as the text 'having its wires crossed', which would suggest she recognised the conflicting discourses. In the interview fragment above however, she interprets these different representations as not adding up to a good argument; the text lacks a clear conclusion.

Claire then reads texts at different levels which accord with different views of language and communication: from a stable position which involves *accessing meaning* through a dictionary to *attributing meaning* by reflecting on the text.

In reading at these different levels, Claire critiques the text in terms of its ideological representation when she reads and engages with the text at a *personal level*, which I interpret to be a first step to engaging with the text at an intercultural level. But she sees reading at cultuurtekst-level as an *academic exercise*; answering the questions about representations. Rather than this resulting in a critique of discourses, it led her to critique the text from a more traditional perspective of reading. It seems then that her view of cultuurtekst carries within it a traditional view of text as containing stable meaning and text as a product. This dual view of text could be the result of giving students a framework which carries within it these two views. On the other hand it could also be the case that Claire feels uncertain about a text critique from a cultuurtekst perspective. Indeed at another point in the interview she expressed her worry about feeling she had to say the right thing when talking about texts, whether in the language class or in her literature classes. Claire's emerging awareness of the cultural discourses in the text, are then hampered by reading the text at a stable level at the same time as trying to engage with its meaning. Claire's attempt to attribute cultural meaning to the text in relation to her personal schema, are further hampered by her recognition of the multiple discourses in the text, which do not give the text a clear direction, as the data below show.

Recognising multiple discourses and cultural complexity

Claire does feel uncomfortable about the multiple discourses in the text. She expresses this even more clearly in the following excerpt:

Claire: yeah values that are very male I suppose and there isn't really a word for that, there is male chauvinistic, kind of, this idea that this is what women are like, and also that he categorises all the women that he feels that you can, you know, he doesn't feel that like well possibly there are all different kinds of women and you can't really say what one type is

like, you can't put them all in a box, just because they're women doesn't mean to say they all go in one box, so I found it yeah, the two things that were most kind of that left their mark on me most from doing the cultuurtekst exercise I suppose were, yeah, the way they were portrayed, so all those words which I think I probably would have

G: That's what we did yesterday, yeah

Claire: yeah, and then also the whole looking at the truths and how them I suppose what influenced him to write the article, you the em, because I found that, I don't know, it could've been, you could've given it a different title the article, you could've said oh, it was an interview with a psychologist who had an unhappy love life and then suddenly found a husband and had a child, because it wasn't really about, it was just about her talking and using other women as a kind of example for how she was behaving or what she was doing, so I don't know, I found it, I found it quite an unusual text I suppose.

(6 February, p4)

Claire critiques the article for its strong underlying male chauvinistic discourse. She recognises the conflicting portrayals of women and the crude stereotypical classifications. She is critical of this labelling of women in clear essentialised categories or 'types' of women: 'you can't really say what one type is like'.

Claire looks beyond these representations by not merely criticising the author, but also acknowledging that he was influenced by discourses or values: looking at the 'truths' and how they influenced him to write the article'. With the word 'truths', we saw earlier, Claire appears to mean 'values'. Claire mentions how the writer presents women from a male chauvinistic perspective when he describes women as if they were 'types'. She seems to feel that the title of the article (Look out you're being hunted) which focuses on only one of the types of women the article describes, could just as easily have reflected the 'husband-and-child discourse. Again, Claire feels uncomfortable about these conflicting discourses and suggests the article has no consistent argument. A clash of discourses is, as Kress says, a condition of all texts; the task of the writer is to 'produce a plausible, coherent reading position (Kress, 1985:35). In this particular text the contrasting discourses of 'aggressive

women as hunters' on the one hand, and the 'fulfilled mother and wife' on the other were resolved through the therapy women would need to undergo to solve their relationship problems. So whilst on the one hand Claire's critique relates to the crude stereotypes and chauvinism, and she critiques the text for its ideology (i.e. she sees it as cultuurtekst), on the other hand she sees the text as a product; it is 'unusual'. It is this duality of text as a product on the one hand, and text as cultuurtekst which lead Claire to struggle with the text. Looking at the text as a product in terms of the text being well argued or structured, seems to interfere with recognising how the different values and ideas surrounding the concepts of the role of women and gender relations, were seemingly being unified in the text. It seems then that Claire stopped short of making the next learning step of seeing the text in relation to a cultural reality as she may have experienced, or discovers through the text. In the next fragment, however, it seems she is almost making this step.

Reflecting on text

Below Claire makes the distinction between text and cultuurtekst more clearly:

Claire: [...] because we talked about it as a cultuurtekst not just necessarily as an article, because as an article you can take it apart.

G: Right

Claire: You know, but as a cultuurtekst it's very interesting, because it, you know, it talks about a cultural phenomenon, which you know, and I found the way it used, you know, because if you think, you know, I don't read many things by men, so I think that's quite interesting and, you know, yeah. No, I found it a very, I thought yesterday was really good fun, I really enjoyed it, because it was, you know, especially as you're talking about something which is actually quite interesting for someone my age, you know, talking about politics or economics is something that is not so relevant to me now, em, but social values, sex, things like that, is quite a sort of, that is something I would realistically discuss with a friend, you know, you're not kind of making a you know, fake situation.

G: Well, it's very much part of life and society.

Claire: Exactly

(6 February, p. 7)

Claire is making an interesting distinction between cultuurtekst and text. She sees text as a product you can analyse; looking at it as text, or article as she refers to it, 'you can take it apart'. She juxtaposes this with reading or discussing the text as cultuurtekst, which she interprets now as 'talking about a cultural phenomenon' you can relate to and engage with as you would in your everyday life; 'it's something I would realistically discuss with a friend'.

Reading as cultuurtekst then is about reading as an 'experience'; relating the text to one's own (or other people's) experiences. Whilst Claire does not mention it in this fragment above, this experience becomes intercultural if the text is produced in an environment and is about a group the reader is not familiar with. By relating the text to everyday lived experience and reflecting on that, Claire is reading, at least to some extent, as a text ethnographer. We also have already seen in the first set of data in this chapter that Claire distinguishes between reading the text as 'reader', engaging with the meaning of the text, and reading as an intellectual exercise.

In summary, Claire is still struggling with the concepts of 'culture' and 'cultuurtekst', but there is an emerging awareness, as she is engaging with the text, even though this engagement is partly at a textual level. But she is not yet reflecting on how her own experiences relate to the text, and vice versa. This is an aspect that I could focus on more specifically in further developing this pedagogy, as I will discuss in the next chapter.

Second interview with Claire

In the data relating to the second interview I look more specifically at interculturality. First I discuss whether Claire constructed the idea of addressing another (addressivity) as part of an intercultural experience,

and secondly, I look at how Claire conceived of the idea of a Dutch articulation.

Relationship between the notion of addressivity and being intercultural

Claire liked the idea of empowerment she gained from this way of looking at texts and writing:

Claire: [...] the great thing about what we've done this year is that em I suppose, it's a bit of, it's a bit like mind-control. It's the way, it's a way of writing something and you have things that you want to put in your text, you can present them in any way that you like, but if you interpret, if you know the way that you want them to be interpreted, you can change what you write so that they affect a person in a certain way.

G: Yeah

Claire: it's like, it's sort of suggestion as it were you know.

(26 April, p. 4)

Whilst the use of the word 'mind-control' suggests the notion of manipulation, Claire nevertheless puts a positive value on the way the course has focused on critical analysis, as she transfers this awareness to her own writing. She is aware of the political and ideological connotations of language. When I ask whether there are any negative aspects to transferring this to writing as this means an empowerment to manipulate people as well, she says, yes definitely, this is like politics: 'you can make [words] sound like good or bad by using the same information just by changing the sentence structure or the grammar or the type of verb' (interview Claire, 26 April, p.5). As an example she quotes David Blunkett's use of the word 'flooding'.¹

But in transferring the critical awareness of language she gained through reading to writing, Claire suggests that the awareness of power and addressing an audience can be employed to take a responsible attitude

¹ Claire means Blunkett's use of the term 'swamping' in relation to immigrants in Britain, April, 2002.

to the reader. She uses this addressivity to make sure that her audience understands what she means. Claire gives an example of how she applied this in her English writing when she was asked at the school where she works to write a 'round robin email' to all staff to report on decisions made in a staff meeting. She looked at what she had written again, and decided to change the way she had formulated her email to make it sound 'less severe', making her sentences longer and 'softening the blow' (26 April, p. 3).

As well as applying this knowledge to her communications in English, Claire also sees the intercultural aspects of the notion of addressivity. She is very much aware of the fact that she is not the intended audience of a Dutch language text and that that necessitates a different way of reading:

Claire: But I do think that it's a, it's an interesting way of looking at a piece, especially if for instance, I mean it's always interesting to look at other cultures, but to look at your own culture, to look at an English text written by an English person for an English audience, and to look at the analysis, you know, look at the way it's written, em, I do, I tend to do that a lot more than I look at the actual culture and the discourses behind it and the, it's affected by other things, em, I don't tend to look at the culture because it just seems natural to me

G: Yes.

Claire: and I suppose one of the things that I've learnt in the last year is that, to look at it from someone else's point of view, in a way, and so when I write I try and think about other people, but also when I read I try and think about well gosh, how are people going to interpret that or how are they going to understand it.

(26 April, p.7)

Claire explains that when reading English texts she does not look at 'the culture' or discourses because it seems natural to her, whereas, she seems to suggest, she does that with Dutch texts; 'it is interesting to look at other cultures'. She then explains that what she learnt from the course is writing from a reader's perspective. By linking these statements, Claire seems to be saying that her awareness of discourses and culture is helpful in addressing people from different cultural groups. So Claire sees her responsibility towards her own readers then also in intercultural

terms, it seems, in the sense that when she writes, or even when she reads, she almost tries to 'step into the shoes of the other', by imagining how they will interpret the text.

Dutch articulation

Below Claire explains how she tries to understand texts from the context in which they are produced:

Claire: and that is always going to be problematic and I suppose in a way I'm much more aware of Dutch texts and the cultuurtekst behind them because I actually have to research and I have to read it with my eyes very very open and see all the different things and I think to myself, well, I don't understand that, is that because that's a cultural thing, is that a cultural difference or is it just because I don't get the grammar or whatever, whereas in French and English I don't tend to think about that.

(26 April, p.7)

Claire is aware of her position as a culturally located reader. Being an intercultural reader, i.e. not being the intended audience, actually helps in understanding the cultural articulations of a text, Claire suggests, as it forces her 'to read with her eyes very very open'. As a bilingual speaker of English and French she does not have to think in the same way when reading a text in those languages than when she is reading a Dutch text. When reading in Dutch, she stops and thinks when she does not understand something and wonders if this would be due to a linguistic problem or a cultural one.

Reading Dutch texts, helped her to consider certain aspects of Dutch culture. I have to point out here that my question was leading and Claire may have expressed her opinion in a more essentialised manner as she may have felt that was what I wanted to hear:

G: And what about, because you talk about this kind of naturalness of a text and [that] it seems so obvious, em, and with the Dutch [texts] being slightly different because of Dutch, you know, a Dutch articulation which is a the jargon-y word for it, but, em, do you feel that, by looking at texts like this, have you em in some way come to understand a little bit more about certain aspects of Dutch culture

Claire: Oh definitely.

G: or recognize the Dutchness.

Claire: Definitely. Well, yeah, I mean lots of the things we've done em, like, okay the one that sticks in my mind is the Men's Health text because I mean I can see that article being written in England in a British magazine or whatever, but the way we talked about it and the fact that we talked about it with some Dutch girls who sort of talked about their interpretation of it and what they saw, I was quite surprised by how unsurprised they were, as it were.

(26 April, p.8)

During the lessons, students felt the *Mens' Health* text did not reflect any Dutch articulation as the topic and ways it was talked about were not specifically Dutch. Students had referred to intertextual influences from popular American and British culture, such as Ali McBeal, Sex in the City and Bridget Jones. Claire expresses this same idea above; the text could just as easily have been written in Britain. However, Claire did think that the way the Dutch girls talked about the text was different. Unfortunately, Claire does not explain what particular interpretation of the Dutch girls had struck her, but I assume she referred to the fact that the first responses of the Dutch students had been, that they had come across this topic and ways of talking about women quite often before: Yasmin had called it 'hackneyed stuff', and Marijke had said that the discourses were quite recognizable, even though she also doubted that women, as described in the text, actually existed.

However, Claire's recollection and interpretation of the point Yasmin and Marijke made was not that the *discourses* surrounding gender were recognizable, but that instead they had made a statement of fact:

Claire: [...] and, that's something that I learned from looking at these texts because I, my interpretation would be, my gosh! I didn't realise there were women like this in the world. But in fact the way those two Dutch girls interpreted it made me think well gosh in fact in Holland it's probably quite common, and therefore a bit of a cultural phenomenon, and I mean there are other things as well, in other texts that we've looked at, I mean especially like Emma pointed out a few things, em, through, from the texts that we've read, and the things, em, like when we did the em, the [text about] foreigners coming to Holland to live and you know their interpretation of what it was like to live there, and my

perception of Holland is always, it's so liberal, it's so open, it's so, you know, and actually when they talked about the problems that they've had you realise that it's not nearly as liberal and as open as you thought, and that perhaps in comparison to Great Britain it is, but it isn't necessarily as liberal as the Dutch people would like to think it is, do you know what I mean?

(26 April, p.9)

Claire's idea that the text described an existing cultural phenomenon of the behaviour of particular women, contrasts starkly with her own earlier conceptualization of culture and cultuurtekst as complex and being a representation of values and ideas, rather than describing an actual reality. Her apparent acceptance of the article as describing an existing phenomenon also contrasts with the critique of its crude and stereotypical representations which she voiced earlier in the interview. This could be due to the time lapse between the lessons in which the article was discussed and this second interview. It could also be due to the fact, Claire might have wanted to please me. My question could easily have been interpreted as a request for a confirmation of an essentialised Dutch culture being reflected in the article. But Claire also could simply have meant that reading the *Men's Health* text was part of an experience that helped her to break through some of the stereotypical ideas she used to have of the Netherlands. As she said, other texts we had looked at in the course, together with the comments that other students had made, had helped her to realise, for instance, that the Netherlands was not nearly as liberal as she had thought.

Claire: in summary

Claire made a distinction between 'text' and 'cultuurtekst', even if the two concepts were at times not clearly distinguished from one another. Claire also showed that she has a complex understanding of culture and cultuurtekst by recognizing that texts are influenced by their cultural context, which she described as 'values that influenced the author'. She

is aware that texts are representations of 'a particular kind of culture', which she saw as sub-cultures. Claire is starting to think about cultural aspects in texts in a critical way; she critiqued the stereotypical portrayal of the different kinds of women. She related this explicitly to her own knowledge and experiences. Claire had experienced 'intercultural being', as Phipps and Gonzalez conceptualise this as engaging with otherness: 'how one lives with and responds to difference and diversity' (2004:115) by discussing the texts and the assumptions and connections that it brought up in the class with the Dutch students. She also saw writing in an intercultural way as needing to take responsibility for 'the others' who is addressed to ensure they will understand.

However, Claire's understanding of these complex issues is still being formed. She seems to understand culture more in terms of a shared cultural context (both national and small cultures) rather than discourses, although she is starting to get an inkling of these. Her seeming contradictions may all be part of the learning process. After all learning is not necessarily linear.

Claire certainly has made a learning journey. She has started to understand text as cultuurtekst. She has learned to read texts critically 'with her eyes very very open'. She particularly has learnt to apply her reflective awareness to her own writing and to take responsibility for her reader's understanding. However, this understanding is still patchy and Claire is not reflexive on her own cultural position which impacts on her particular responses to text. Whilst Claire recognizes the cultural context of text and was engaging with its cultural aspects, Sarah in contrast took a very different view and seems to see text as an expression of individuality.

SARAH

I need to point out at this stage that Sarah had shown considerable resistance to the course from the start. A few weeks into the course Sarah had approached me to ask whether she could be excused from

attending the classes and just take the course on a self-study basis. She did not like the classes because of the focus on 'style' in relation to the audience and purpose of the text. It has to be remembered here that, as I mentioned in chapter 4, I had often used the term 'style' in order to refer to 'routinised ways of talking' about certain topics, as that seemed a more acceptable notion to students because of its more obvious link with the idea of improving one's language skills in the class, than the term 'discourses'. But, the idea of people adapting their language use in different situations, had had a profound effect on Sarah, as she suddenly felt that she could not communicate anymore with people because she was worrying and wondering about what to say and how to say it, whereas before that would have come automatically. In the second interview with Sarah this issue surfaces again.

We managed to resolve the conflict between us by agreeing that Sarah would attend classes and do her homework, but that she did not have to participate in class discussions if she did not want to. After a few lessons, Sarah started to participate fully in class, but it always remained clear that she remained resistant to this approach.

It might also be worthwhile pointing out that Emma had at some stage early on in the course made the same point that she felt the emphasis on the different voices and ways of approaching communicative writing tasks had made her feel insecure as thinking about something that she does automatically anyway, made her query what she was saying and then she did not know what to do anymore.

In Sarah's case, the idea that people use different kinds of languages in different situations; that people 'switch codes' was very unsettling in a psychological way – it made her feel that on the one hand she could not trust people anymore to say exactly what they meant, and that on the other hand, it made her very self conscious about her own use of language in English, both in writing and speech. Sarah seems to feel that the way people use language is related to their personality and individuality, rather than social context. Sarah's strong response to the

fact that the context changes how and what people say, seems to be located in her view of language as individual, rather than social. During both interviews this notion arose several times.

First interview with Sarah

This first interview focuses on the notion of cultuurtekst. Sarah, unfortunately had not been able to attend the lesson in which we discussed the *Men's Health* text from a cultuurtekst perspective. She did express during this interview that she would have found it interesting to discuss the text with the Dutch students. Yet, Sarah had received the framework for analysis with the questions relating to cultuurtekst. She had, however, not completed the homework task which had asked students to answer the cultuurtekst questions of the framework. During the course I had not continued to mention the concept of cultuurtekst explicitly on a regular basis, but I had included it at a much more implicit level in the lessons.

How does she construct the notion of culture and of cultuurtekst?

Sarah thinks of cultuurtekst as a particular genre:

It's a bit general I think, but it has to do with lifestyle, doesn't it?

(26 February, p.1)

She explains this further:

Sarah: Yeah it is quite clearly a typical text that's ()

G: Right right, so do you find that a useful notion to look at texts, and texts, em to

Sarah: Put them into a cultural context.

G; yeah

Sarah: I think em you would do that subconsciously em if you were em if you were the 'doelgroep' or target group, it's a bit more difficult to realise that but

G: right

Sarah: I don't actually buy lifestyle magazines or even read newspapers

G: mm

Sarah: or anything that's sold like em, because they have a specific 'doelgroep' [target group, GQ] and I think the more of them that you read, the more sucked in you get and the more em difficult it is to notice that em it's em manipulated

G: Right

Sarah: so I don't, so for me it's em it's quite clear when I read an article in a newspaper or a or a em whatever piece in a lifestyle magazine that it's that it's just em that it's quite well manipulated for a particular audience to try and appeal to a certain type of em frame of mind

G: Mm

Sarah: and I don't I don't like the idea of em of em being so manipulated so I'd rather not read them.

(26 February, p.2)

Sarah associates cultuurtekst with the genre of lifestyle magazines. She realises these texts are created within a cultural context by which she means the target audience. In my own framework for analysis, I had conceived of target audience to be part of the immediate context, similar to Hymes' notion of Participants, rather than the context of culture. Sarah does understand the cultural significance of target audience but it is unclear whether Sarah refers to the necessity of the reader sharing cultural knowledge to which the text implicitly refers, or whether she refers to the target audience as a larger group which shares certain characteristics.

Rather than explaining further what she means, Sarah introduces a new topic by stating that she does not buy either life style magazines or newspapers. She makes a clear statement that she distances herself from this particular genre, or 'cultuurteksts' as she perceives of them, because they are written specifically and manipulated for a particular audience with whom she does not identify herself. Sarah positions herself as a particular kind of reader; she would never choose to read these kind of texts of her own accord, because it would go against what

she believes in or who she is. Claire had also referred to not being the target audience but she had found it interesting to read texts which she would 'not normally read herself' (transcript interview 6 February, p. 7). Sarah may think of cultuurtekst then as linked to 'low' culture; the popular media, trivial weekly publications, which may contradict Sarah's own sense of culture and identity.

What is interesting, however, is that Sarah considers lifestyle publications as the same genre as newspapers. During the course I had also given students newspaper articles from quality newspapers, some of which were in-depth analyses of current debates in the Netherlands, such as the debate about the multicultural policy of the Dutch government. Sarah does not seem to differentiate between a lifestyle glossy and quality newspaper as both are, for her, 'manipulated' for a specific purpose and audience, as she makes clear below.

How does she position herself vis-à-vis the text?

Sarah does not position herself to this particular text, but to the all the texts that we have read in class. She states why she does not read newspapers and life-style magazines:

Sarah: Yeah, so I don't buy magazines, I don't buy newspapers

G: No

Sarah: I don't buy anything to read

G: Oh right

Sarah: I only read books, I don't read newspapers or em or lifestyle magazines, like if I want to find out what's going on in the world I listen to the radio just because it's more em well it's more spontaneous I think even if they have got a script they eh they actually have to convey it and em so it's more active in the sense that em it's spoken rather than written so there's less room for manipulation I think and also if you em if you have news just in, so em if you listen to a em news, a news radio station, then you have news just in, they haven't really had time to to write a whole manipulative article on it and give any particular stand, point of view, em they just literally read what happens [...]

(26 February, p. 2)

Sarah juxtaposes both lifestyle publication and newspapers with books. Sarah has clearly thought about the notion of communication. It is particularly written communication which she finds invites manipulation. This is less so in oral communication because it is more spontaneous. Indeed, the mode of communication is a contextual factor, like Hymes' 'Instrumentalities', that influences how something is said. But Sarah attaches a hierarchical value to this with speaking seen to be less manipulated and considered. She seems to suggest (without saying it explicitly) that there is also a 'pure' and honest and value free way of communicating.

Sarah may indeed make the distinction between a popular and honest or 'high' culture. She says one reason why she doesn't read newspapers or magazines is that she is 'just really not interested, because it is too predictable'. Instead she says, what she looks for in reading is:

*Sarah: and so I just () have accepted fountains of knowledge.
(p.3)*

Although I did not query Sarah what she meant by accepting 'fountains of knowledge', the expression suggests that Sarah refers to an established literary or academic canon- the 'best' which is thought or said in a given time or place. We could surmise that Sarah locates herself very strongly in the traditional humanistic view of education. When I ask Sarah what kind of texts she would have liked to have read in class, she said she would have liked to have read about different topics, particular historical topics. She would have liked to have learnt more about Dutch culture in the canonical sense and found out more about people like Erasmus for instance:

Sarah: but that's just my personal interest, I would like to know about Erasmus and em (), I would be interested to learn about that

G: Right

Sarah: so, I'd rather learn about that

G: Yeah yeah

Sarah: than these cultuurteksts.

(26 February, p. 11)

It is clear then that Sarah places her own interests and identity in opposition to the texts , 'cultuurteksts' as Sarah referred to them, that we discussed in the course.

I am trying to find out whether Sarah does indeed disagree that cultural values can be reflected in a text. I mention that when we analysed the text in class we had discussed the notion of there being a traditional male perspective in the text. Sarah responded quite forcefully to me:

G: But any of those people in that within that group of people may be part of another, will be part of you know lots of other different groups or forms of identity.

Sarah: So yeah so that so that article doesn't actually reflect any culture maybe em well there's not much difference between culture and lifestyle, so it's a lifestyle magazine and it would appeal to certain people

G: Mm

Sarah: but it doesn't say anything about them.

G: Right, Okay. So you do feel

Sarah: The traditional male perspective, what are you talking about, I don't think that that came across, that wasn't the main point of the article it was em it was more em it was more to say these are, women who sort of like em are successful blah blah blah and that they are that they just they, it will come to a point where they want to have kids and get married you know watch out, is she actually interested in you or is it just the me is it just the achievement of being married and having kids.

(26 February, p.5)

Sarah strongly denied the text reflected a particular discourse related to a traditional male perspective: 'the traditional male perspective, what are you talking about?' She explains the main aim of the article was to

function as a content narrative rather than as a representation. She does add an interpretation that had not been mentioned in the discussions of the article: that women would want to marry and have kids because they would see it as an 'achievement'. Sarah's disagreement with me might be because we talk at cross purposes. Sarah is talking about text as a product; its content and audience, whereas I am talking about the text as cultuurtekst.

Recognizing multiple discourses and cultural complexity

Sarah also disagreed when I suggested that some of the values in the article were conflicting. She thought the article just described 'two very different types of women':

Sarah: and that's that doesn't contradict. So I am saying on the one hand you've got two different women, one actually loves you and wants kids with you, because you're so special to her, and the other one, em, the other one I just em well she's got loads of money and em she's got everything else now why doesn't she have kids and a husband

G: Mm

Sarah: so he's, there's, the article it's just saying that there are two there are two different types of women

G: mm

Sarah: and be careful which one you choose, I mean it's not saying that em

G: Right. Do you think that it that's what it was that it was about two different types of woman?

Sarah: Yeah rather than

G: mm

Sarah: em yeah, I don't see how you can interpret it any other way.

26 February, p. 6)

Sarah's point is understandable; on one level the article could be seen as describing different 'types' of women. This is also how Claire

described it. However, Claire had related these descriptions of women to representations which were not value-free. Representations that drew on particular ideological ideas about women.

Sarah speaks very confidently and seems sure of her interpretation, in fact she feels it is the only correct interpretation. Her view of text is as containing stable meaning; there is only one 'correct' interpretation.

Second interview with Sarah

In the second interview Sarah focused to a large extent on the problems she had had with this course.

Relationship between addressivity and manipulation

Sarah took me somewhat by surprise at the start of the interview by saying that she thought it has actually been quite a good course, from which she benefitted:

Sarah: yeah actually when I get the stuff out to look up for the exam I realised that it's it's probably been quite a successful course

G: Mm

Sarah: yeah I have benefitted from it but I'm not sure if I sort of enjoyed it but

G: No

Sarah: em but yeah it was a good course

(7 May, p.1)

But she did not enjoy the course because:

Sarah: [the course] made me realise that em that language is actually em it's really easy to manipulate

G: right

Sarah: but I just wasn't convinced that people would do that but then I guess they do. Em, different articles, and em and I think sometimes it's more obvious than others but em yeah I guess everything's really manipulated (p.1)

The course had increased Sarah's critical awareness of language. She said she had thought initially that writing was automatic, but it seems to her now that it is '*actually really em thought through*'. That was particularly the case with the texts we had read as part of the course, she thought, as these were written by people who write professionally, either in a newspaper or for an organization which meant that the language was always carefully chosen. But whilst this helped her with her writing, it became a philosophical as well as a psychological issue:

Sarah: [...] but then actually it made me think well, it's not just, so if I wrote a letter to somebody, instead of I would em instead of just saying what I think em for example I would try and work out how I'm actually getting my message across

G: Right

Sarah: whereas I wouldn't have done that before

G: right

Sarah: so I suppose it has improved my awareness of language. But I don't like it

G: right

Sarah: because it makes you less able to em to actually trust anything written down or even spoken so when you're having a conversation with somebody how do you know they're not really trying to manipulate what they want to say, and try and change things to suit and try and, I don't know it just makes me more, more worried. (p2)

Her increased language awareness has made her distrustful of what people say and write as it might have been manipulated to suit their purposes. Communication, therefore, is often not disinterested, which Sarah finds an unsettling idea.

I would like Sarah to consider whether she does not do this herself as well. Would she not adapt the way she talks or writes depending on the context of situation?:

G: Ah right okay. Maybe because of, the specific example, because I mean could you imagine being in a work situation for instance, that there you will communicate differently with you know maybe the person in charge or not?

Sarah: Well, I think I'd be aware of there being an office mode, but I don't like that because if everyone's just in office mode then I just won't feel comfortable

G: right

Sarah: it's just if they are not talking properly, if they're just talking office mode, so I mean I don't really have enough experience of offices to be able to say

G: Right

Sarah: but I just, I don't like the idea of there being, because I think that em, because obviously I've seen when my parents come back from work and I just get, I feel like that, maybe not so much my dad, but my mum goes from office mode to mother mode, to whatever mode.

G: Ah okay, and then you feel that it's a role that people play?

Sarah: Yeah and I really, I don't like it at all because then, I don't feel like I, I don't feel comfortable with that at all. (p.3)

My question was aimed at getting Sarah to consider whether she would speak differently to participants in different hierarchical positions, but Sarah interpreted the question as relating to whether a particular 'language' was spoken in a particular work environment; a 'work mode', Sarah calls it. She recognizes that people speak differently in different environments but she sees this as a language domain that would be distinct from the norm or standard. Speaking in 'office mode' means people would not be speaking 'properly'. She relates this further to her own experiences at home, with her mother switching from 'work mode' to 'mother mode'. She felt uncomfortable with this because, Sarah seems to imply (although I make this explicit to her) that people who switch 'modes' are playing a role, rather than being themselves.

Sarah touched on the important point of code or style switching which Blommaert had quoted as an example of the complexity of intercultural communication, referring to Rampton's study of teenagers, which I alluded to in chapter 3. That complexity was formed precisely by the fact that people do switch their communicative styles either subconsciously or strategically, to express notions of inclusion or exclusion. The psychological implications are unsettling to Sarah, because if people don't speak the 'proper way' she would not know whether to trust them.

She seems to adhere to a view that there is a universal and standard form of using language in an honest way. I will discuss this in greater detail below.

Sarah's view of communication

Despite Sarah's view of language as being neutral and stable, she understands reading to be a complex process in which the reader has a role to play in interpreting. However, her view of the role of the reader accords with the structuralist text view (which I discussed in chapter 3) in which the reader has to interpret the text or speech in the 'correct' way; the way in which it was intended by the speaker or writer:

Sarah: so you can, so you can, not only does the writer make choices and so structure a text that is says what he wants to say, but also a reader by interpreting it in different ways understand it differently, so that's why the whole idea of, that's why I think you get lost, anything you read or you listen to or anything, any kind of communication, there's such a lot of room for error, just because em if you are going to interpret it one way or another and you mean it one way or another

G: yeah yeah

Sarah: there's so much potential to em confusion

G: yeah

Sarah: despite it being what you might call a better communication, it doesn't mean, I don't know a good communication has got to do with listeners as well as speakers or readers as well as writers

G: Yes yeah

Sarah: and you can't, and so to, so you have to rely on your audience and so that's why if you're going to, if you think you can manipulate them, well if they can't rely on you, em I suppose () so I think the whole trust thing is that you read a, it would be nice to be able to read a text and em for them not to be playing with you and it depends on genre so if you, I don't know, if you're like criticizing things and don't mind reading crap then you can quite happily read different things that I wouldn't be able to read because I, I don't know, I don't like that so

G: Right okay

Sarah: Does that make any sense?

(7 May, p.8)

Various points emerge from the above data. Sarah is struggling to make sense of very complex ideas about communication and to express her thoughts which the course has made her think about. Firstly, she is very much aware of the complexity of the process of a communicative event and the important role the reader has in interpreting a text. Secondly, she contrasts what she knows is happening in communicative events with what she feels *ought* to happen.

To start with the first point, Sarah realizes that in communicating, not only does the writer need to make linguistic choices, the reader also has to be able to decode those. Whereas in earlier comments, Sarah seemed to hold on to a view of text as stable and universal; here she is introducing the importance of the reader's interpretation. However, Sarah sees the reader's role as a potential problem; there is such a large potential for error and misunderstanding. Sarah assumes that the writer has a particular meaning which the reader must interpret 'correctly'. This fits with Sarah's interpretation of the *Men's Health* text in class where she tried to align herself with the author (as I described in chapter 5). Sarah's view of communication accords with that of the structuralist model - a view of communication which many students hold subconsciously; that in sending a message in a communicative event the message has to arrive exactly as the sender had intended it.

Adhering to the model of Sender-Receiver, as Sarah does, indeed validates Sarah's concern about there being 'much potential for confusion' in communicating. However, as Halliday says, rather than frequent confusion, it is surprising, given the complexity of modern cultures, how often people do understand one another successfully. The reason for this is that people make predictions about what the other person is going to say. These predictions, which are made below the level of awareness, are due to both participants in the communicative event sharing the context of situation (Halliday, 1985, 1989: 9). In other words participants can communicate successfully because they

unconsciously take account of the context of situation and adapt their language and the stylistic features to the context. Sarah had interpreted the notion of context particularly as 'manipulation', rather than a collaboration of sharing of context.

Sarah sees the relationship between audience and writer or speaker as a trust one. As the reader you need to be able to trust the writer that he is not going to manipulate you. Sarah seems to hold to a view of communication which is similar to one of the maxims of Grice's cooperative principles: that of being truthful.

The role of personal schemata

However, Sarah's recognition of the role of the reader may not be solely focused on one correct interpretation. She does recognize the role people's background or experiences play in their interpretations:

Sarah: but I realise that, well, it's a course with a clear aim and a clear method so follow up, but at first I found it difficult because I don't like, I don't like it

G: Right well tell me a bit more about

Sarah: so if you read the specific, anything, any kind of specific text we looked at, em, say I don't know, it maybe depends on generation or em background or anything like so different people will read the same text in a different way. It could be a way of finding out about the person I suppose by their interpretation of it, I suppose you can't really get away from that can you?

G: Yeah no

Sarah: So em unless it's a subject that really doesn't affect you personally, then you can't really leave your own background or ideas behind. And so although you, although you're just discussing one text, if you read it with different people like we did, you'll see that it meant different things to different people, say em that text about [London] or something, em, we did quite near the end [...]

G: Oh right yes

Sarah: yes, so that said something different to, I suppose we looked at it all in different ways, Andy, Emma, and I suppose our class was quite

good because, for this course, because you couldn't get probably six more different people, all next to each other in the same class

G: Did you find that useful? Did you feel that em there was a dialogue going on between you as a class, and was that beneficial? Was that useful?

Sarah: Well, I did think that em it's quite interesting, because if you just forget the texts but look at the class, I think that em for whatever reasons, in the end people identified with each other differently than at the beginning.

G: Was that with one another or with the texts?

Sarah: Yeah, with one another, and I actually think it might have to do with probably to do with the course because it was so much based on discussion and interpretation [...]

(7 May, p. 11)

By referring to aspects such as background and age as playing a role in people's interpretation of texts, Sarah recognizes the role of social schemata. Her experience in class of discussing texts with the other students showed her that the texts meant different things to different people. We saw earlier in this chapter that she has a strong notion of correct interpretation. She for instance disagreed with one of my interpretations saying that she did not see how you could interpret the text in any other way than she had done. But what Sarah finds significant here is not whether people's different interpretations are valid, but that people's interpretations say something about who they are. The way you interpret the text says something about your identity. Sarah turns it around: not only does your identity inform your interpretations, conversely it also reveals who you are.

As Sarah makes this point in the context of citing an example of what she did not like about the course, we can surmise that Sarah feels uncomfortable about the idea of revealing something about herself. Reading a text the way we did in the class, has a challenging aspect because it forces students to engage and show something of their personality and experience with other people. Sarah may be worried about giving too much of herself away by interpreting a text. Even though I found this notion initially surprising, Sarah is quite perceptive. It

is fair to say that I did start making inferences in my first reflections on my data about the students' personal schemata, their backgrounds and experiences, as well as their personality, depending on how they responded. As teachers, we probably make these kinds of assumptions regularly at a subconscious level.

An interesting notion emerges from this. Whereas the previous sets of data pointed towards the fact Sarah holds a stable view of communication, by making a link between interpreting a text and what it reveals about someone's personality, Sarah comes closer to a social view of language and communication.

Dutch articulation

Sarah interprets the idea of Dutch articulation as a text talking about Dutch culture as a 'way of doing things':

G: [...] that there are certain different ways of talking about something, writing about something, thinking about something, in Holland as compared to England? And I don't mean in an essentialist kind of way.

Sarah: Yeah em

G: Or is that not important, would you say that's not important, when we look at texts like this, it's sort of a general way of understanding texts and understanding values and ideologies? And it doesn't matter that it's specifically Dutch?

Sarah: Well, I think em because we sort of mentioned that before, haven't we, and that what I said em em was that you can only talk about em a sort of certain way of doing things in one place or another if you compare two, so where you've got a text say for example the nostalgia text or the text [about London], for example, that's where you've got a Dutch person in an English context, so when you're comparing two, then it might be more obvious, where as if you are just looking at the text, so if it's like a Dutch text about, just in a Dutch, in Dutch society, say like the what was it, the any text, the Men's Health or other lifestyle magazine or whatever, it's not comparing Holland particularly with any other country

G: No

Sarah: So I don't really, I think it depends on the content of the thing, not in terms of what it's saying but em whether it's Holland as opposed to something else, if there's, if it's like comparing or there's two contexts,

but it did say, didn't it in the [London text] it was saying that this is different in Holland or something.

(7 May, p.14)

Sarah interpreted my question about recognizing a particular Dutch articulation in the text as asking whether we can learn anything about Dutch culture, i.e. 'Dutch ways' of doing things. She feels that any specific Dutch aspect will come through only if the text is *about* a Dutch person in an English context or vice versa like the texts, like some of the texts we discussed in class. So Sarah assumes that any understanding or insight into Dutch society from a text will relate to the *content* of the text, rather than the way the content is written reflecting the underpinning values and ideologies.

But as we continue to talk about this it becomes clear Sarah understands Dutch articulation to relate to idiomatic language use:

G: That's I think that is a matter of interpretation, you might think there's a slight Dutch articulation in it? I would have interpreted it, some things as a Dutch articulation.

Sarah: Maybe there are idioms that were used or something but then idioms they don't, they're used to express an idea but don't actually do it in any sort of proper way, not proper way but a way of using words that aren't part of a preconceived idea so you can fit that to what you mean but whether or not you're actually explaining that, em, isn't clear

G: No

Sarah: if you don't know the idiom and [are] sort of familiar with fluent use of it, so when we come across a new idiom, obviously it's different for you than it is for us.

G: Yeah yeah

Sarah: So I don't think that that was. Just because you can imagine the same text in England

(7 May, p. 14,15)

Sarah made the same point as Claire (and the other students) that there was nothing particularly Dutch about the *Men's Health* text, as she could just as easily imagine that the text had been written in England. But another significant point in relation to articulation arises from Sarah's comments. In bringing up the notion of idiom she seems to suggest that idiom has a cultural colour or connotation that you would have to be familiar with as a language user, otherwise you will not be able to access its meaning. By referring to the fact it would be different for me, as a native speaker of Dutch, she refers to the need to know idiomatic vocabulary when reading a text as a foreign language learner. Claire had made a similar point by emphasising that she needed to first look at a text as a language learner, making sure she understood the vocabulary and expressions at a neutral or dictionary level. However, Sarah also suggests that idioms are expressions, which are 'part of a preconceived idea'; they do not really express meaning, or at least do not express meaning in a 'proper' way. Sarah seems to be struggling to make a complex point here.

Firstly, in suggesting that idioms express pre-conceived ideas, she seems to come close to the view of language as discourse. Idioms, then, we could interpret Sarah to mean, are 'routinised ways of talking' about something, which carry taken for granted and 'natural' meanings in them. Sarah is critical of this, because these preconceived ideas, do not 'express an idea', or at least, they do not express this in a 'proper way'. And this 'proper way' is, conversely, not using preconceived ideas, but instead 'fitting' the words to what you mean. What Sarah values in communication is expressing ideas and meanings, which she seems to suggest are not ready-made meanings, but are struggled over, are the result of thinking processes as individual considerations. It is then not so much that Sarah does not understand the notion of discourses. On the contrary, she critiques language use which draws on discourses, particularly those that are seemingly obvious. Her view of language and communication are in line with liberal humanist views; language as an expression of individual meaning.

Sarah's reflection on the course

Even though Sarah said she had learnt a lot from the course [transcript, 7 May, p. 16), it had a negative impact on her English communication skills, she says, as she had applied the analytical approach to communication that the course had touched on to communicative events in her own life. She relates a personal event where she had felt unable to have an important discussion with someone because she was aware that there were different ways of saying things which could in turn be interpreted in different ways (Interview transcript 7 May, p. 18). This awareness has also made her more self-conscious, knowing that tone, pitch and body language can all influence how you come across.

So Sarah took the lessons very much to heart, and even though she had disliked the course, now that she had touched on an awareness of communication, questions had arisen she had wanted to know more about it:

Sarah: But we're talking about communication, communication is () so you could say it's endless, so yes, it's endless because em em there's superficial communication and there's all different types going on at the same time and so if you're talking about communication, to really talk about communication, you do have to ask all those big questions so and we haven't done that, so that's why well

G: Ah okay so you feel that's what you would've liked to address more.

Sarah: I suppose, okay I suppose, it didn't occur to me before but now we're talking, I suppose, there are other aspects of communication, em, that we haven't talked about at all, so

[...]

G: And what sort of questions are they? What sort of questions would you have liked to have addressed?

Sarah: Well. I suppose em if you're talking about communication, then yes, ways, genre are quite safe em types of text where you look at em a text and say where's it from and what is it called and all the, that's kind of safe, and when you go down into and then you can, then the problem is that that's when it gets personal and so if that hasn't occurred to other people then fine, so then if you really wanted to know about what

somebody is writing and why, and then you'd have to go sort of it would also become em em, it would have to do with individual personality and em yeah I don't know

(7 May, p.21)

So instead of not being happy that the course addressed notions of communication, Sarah feels the course should have gone deeper and further in addressing the 'big questions'. The course had stayed at a safe level, talking about 'superficial communication' and genres and ways of writing. These big questions, Sarah suggests, relate to the individual; they are about finding out what somebody is writing and why. Whereas I had designed the course to address those questions about what is communicated, how and why on an ideological and cultural text level, Sarah felt these questions should be explored at a psychological level; what influences an individual to communicate in a particular way and to what degree this is related to personality.

Sarah: in summary

The course had been aiming to raise students' critical awareness of language use, partly to empower students' in order to resist taken for granted meanings in texts, but also to apply this awareness to students' own writing or speaking by being more consciously directed to the addressee - the notion of addressivity. Sarah's assertion that the course had impeded her own communication in English had shocked me and led me to adapt my course in the following years, as I will set out in the next chapter.

Sarah's response to the course might seem to have been too literal, yet her views were complex and reflective and she was struggling to make sense of the notion of communication. Her views on communication had changed as a result of the course. In one of the earlier set of data in this chapter, Sarah states that she had assumed that people would not change the way they talk or write depending on what they wanted to achieve, in other words that people communicated as an expression of their core 'self'. The idea that communications are directed at 'another'

she found 'abhorrent', as she associated this with the idea of being manipulative. From this position, then, it may be difficult to 'be intercultural' as the 'other' in communicative acts is not especially considered. However, this does not mean that Sarah would not be able to 'be intercultural'. Using her stance towards communication as an exchange between individuals, assumes a context of communication where participants are equal, or at least should be equal, and share common universal principles. It could be argued that her view of communication shows a concern for the other, through her concern with honesty, trust and expressing considered ideas, rather than preconceived ones.

Whereas the intention of text as cultuurtekst had been partly to make students aware of the idea of power and ideology, Sarah had applied the notion of power differentials on a psychological level, rather than a social one (cf my discussion in chapter 3 regarding Gumperz). I believe it was particularly Sarah's view of language and communication as stable and as an expression of the individual which made her resistant to the course. She assumed there to be a 'correct' answer and interpretation of the text (see her comment that she didn't see how you could interpret the text any other way). She felt texts had to express considered ideas and carry individual meaning, and that texts should not use the idiomatic language of 'preconceived ideas'. In short, Sarah saw text as a product; she looked at its content and she disregarded the notion of the context of culture and cultuurtekst; the idea of a text reflecting particular values.

Sarah's disregard for the text, or rather the kind of texts that we read in class, also seemed to touch on Sarah's identity. Sarah positioned herself as someone who is interested in texts and topics from 'high' culture. Her view of culture seems similar to the liberal humanist tradition in language education as are her views on communication, such as her desire for objectivity, honesty and clarity of expression and her assumption of neutrality in language use.

However, even if Sarah ignored the notion of discourses, her view on communication is complex. Of all the students in the class, she had engaged most at a philosophical level with the notion of communication; she had reflected on this and applied these ideas to her everyday life, even if to her own detriment, as she saw it.

To conclude, Sarah is not approaching reading text as a critical intercultural language user in the sense that she did not acknowledge linguistic and cultural complexity and the indeterminacies of communication and texts. She also dismissed idea of conflicting discourses in the *Men's Health* text. Yet, she is starting to be aware of linguistic complexity and engages to some extent with the idea of social context in communication, even if she thinks of changing styles or codes as dishonest. Her reflexive approach to the course in considering her own experiences in communication can serve as a model of how to take the cultuurtekst approach further to develop 'intercultural being'. As Sarah herself indicated: she wished the course had covered more explicitly the concepts behind it. I will develop this point further in the next chapter

Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored the question of how students engaged with a pedagogy which takes cultuurtekst at its centre, and whether they made the journey from text to cultuurtekst. Through analyzing the interviews of two students, one who engaged with this approach during the lessons and one who was resistant to it, I have shown that both students had complex views. Both students struggled with the notion of cultuurtekst and its implications for communication.

Claire's view of culture, related on the hand to a national culture, but on the other hand took account of complexity, as she relates culture as part of cultuurtekst, both in relation to 'small cultures', but also in relation to ideological positions. Claire had made the journey from text as 'text' to

text as 'cultuurtekst' as she seemed to recognize discourses in texts, and recognized conflicting discourses in text as creating meaning, even if she was still struggling to articulate these ideas. She started to apply the notion of addressivity in an intercultural way: trying to see a text both in reading and writing from someone else's perspective. Furthermore she was engaging with the text in relation to her personal experiences, but she stopped short of being reflexive. In short, she had taken the first steps towards being a 'text ethnographer'.

Sarah had conceptualized culture particularly as content, and to a large extent as related to national culture, although she had in other parts in the interview also referred to the fact that cultures are not that different from one another, suggesting a view of culture as sharing universal characteristics. Sarah's notion of an ideal communication of honesty and clarity, can be seen to carry elements of the notion of intercultural communication.

She had, like the other students on the course (except one of the Dutch exchange students) not recognized the Dutch articulation with which I felt the text was coloured. This may be because the subject is too subtle and would need in-depth knowledge and experience before students can reflect on what the social and cultural conventions seem to be in a range of media and fields of communication. I will discuss this, as well as other conclusions in the next and final chapter.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

Introduction

This thesis has explored an approach to language and culture teaching as part of a general language class, which I called the 'cultuurtekst' approach. The first few chapters of this thesis set out the context and the underpinning ideas of my approach, whereas the two data chapters focus on the overall question of how students engaged with this particular approach. The sub question that I address in chapter 5 is what different ways of reading a cultuurtekst perspective yield. In chapter 6 I discuss the sub question of whether students made the journey from 'text' to 'cultuurtekst'. As part of both these sub questions I look at whether students recognized the complexity of the discourses at the cultuurtekst level of reading, what critical approaches students used, whether students recognised a Dutch articulation, and finally, whether reading text as cultuurtekst encouraged learners to take an intercultural stance towards the texts we read in class - what I called 'being a text ethnographer'.

Furthermore, in order to answer my overall question, in chapter 6 I look at how students had constructed the notion of 'cultuurtekst'. In addition, I discuss Sarah's view of language and communication, as this had emerged from the interviews to be an important point in Sarah's dislike of the cultuurtekst approach.

However, as I discussed in chapter 4, the process of this thesis was not a neat and linear one. As I collected my data fairly early on in this study, the

underpinning ideas to this pedagogy kept evolving. This was as a result of reflection on the analysis on my data, the everyday experience of teaching this particular language course and a range of other courses, and through further theoretical reading. The first three theoretical chapters, then, do not just set out the theory underpinning the data chapters, conversely the data chapters also underpin the theoretical chapters, as my notion of the cultuurtekst approach and how this contributes to learners' cultural and intercultural awareness became more refined.

The aim of this chapter is to reflect on the research findings in relation to the theoretical positions I outlined in the first three chapters. Furthermore, I will look at how this thesis contributes to knowledge in the field of language and culture teaching in general and to the field of Dutch as a Foreign Language specifically. In doing so, I will consider the strengths and limitations of this study. I will then discuss how this study has affected my pedagogy since the data collection and the first rounds of analysis. Finally, I will map out possibilities for future research. I will start below with summing up some of the concepts which have both underpinned and have arisen from this study.

Underpinning ideas to the cultuurtekst approach

The aim for developing my approach to language and culture pedagogy was to explore a method of language and culture teaching which would not only contribute to improving students' language skills, but also enable them to become critical intercultural language users. With this I mean that students would have an understanding of the complexities of culture, but also of how these complexities are reflected and refracted in language through discourses. Moreover, a critical intercultural language user would be able to understand that these discourses are not neutral, but carry ideological positions, which structure and maintain power relations. Encompassed within my idea of being a critical intercultural language user is the notion of criticality advocated by Pennycook (2001), as 'mapping discourses'. However, this particular conceptualization of criticality does not exclude, I feel, the idea of

'critical thinking', asking questions and scrutinizing arguments for logical structure and coherence.

Cultural complexity

The underpinning rationale for my cultuurtekst approach is that language and culture are complex, and that teaching language as if both language and culture are stable notions creates a contorted representation of the cultural and social reality of people's lives. Moreover, it is my contention, that awareness, of how language and culture relate will also benefit students' language skills, as they will learn to think about and consequently adapt their own language use as part of showing responsibility towards the other in communicative events. Even though this thesis centres mainly on text interpretation as part of my pedagogy, the pedagogy as a whole focuses on developing all skills which are part of language learning, as I set out in chapter 4.

It may be clear then that simple and reductive instrumental approaches to language learning cannot be sufficient to enable learners to become critical intercultural language users. I argued in chapter 1 for a re-accentuation of the liberal paradigm, not in its treatment and consideration of a canon of the best what has been produced, but as an intellectual stimulus to query as well as to intellectually engage with ideas, values, commonalities and otherness through the Dutch language, which also allows for agency – a role for the individual. This engagement, I contended, can happen at any level of text or topic, including, or maybe especially, trivial texts, as these carry many discourses in relation to every day life experiences. It is how we use these texts or materials in class which determine whether it can aid students' intellectual engagement.

Culture, is widely accepted to be an extremely complex notion. I have taken the view in this thesis that culture is in constant process, shifting, relating in many intricate ways to many areas of human life. I have also taken the view that thinking of culture as a national culture, is too limited, as national cultures,

even more so in an age of globalization, are not contained within fixed borders. There is a constant interplay between cultures, nations, different social groups, regions, ethnicities, and the multicultural realities of everyday life.

However, at the same time, it cannot be denied that people do experience nationality as part of their complex identity (cf Holliday, forthcoming). Patterns do exist, even if not always in predictable ways (cf. Blommaert, 1998). My pedagogy then allows for the idea of complexity without denying the existence of patterns. Consequently, my pedagogy does not focus on giving a supposedly coherent overview of a body of knowledge about the Netherlands or Flanders but, following Kramsch, provides or allows students to discover, contextual knowledge about the text producing environment. In my pedagogy I do not conceive of 'culture' as knowledge 'about', but instead as being embedded in language through the discourses, the values, the views and ideologies, as well as power relations.

Dutch articulation

Discursive practices, reflect largely transnational ideas, and certainly are not limited to particular nations. However, as I discussed in chapter 4, due to historical processes and structures in society, which are formed along national lines, such as governments and the educational system, globalised discourses may take on a national 'articulation'. This has nothing to do with how people behave and think as a group and what characteristics they have, but it relates to accentuations of discourses which are deemed to be more common or more acceptable in certain social and cultural environments, including national ones. Similar articulations could just as easily exist in other countries or cultural groups, but if these accentuations are validated through the media in one country and not, or less so, in another, maybe we can talk about a 'national' articulation. The idea of a 'Dutch articulation' then became part of the idea of 'culuurtekst'; as a nationally articulated 'flavour' or 'taste' of a particular globalised discourse.

An example of Dutch articulation, as I saw it, is found in the *Men's Health* text, which I used for the data collection lessons; it drew on a discourse of gender roles and domesticity which, in my view, would not have been acceptable in Britain, nor indeed now, 10 years later, in the Netherlands itself. This discourse was made acceptable through the way it was interwoven with other discourses into a 'seamless fabric' (cf Kress, 1985).

I know, I am treading on dangerous ground, as, keen as I am to emphasise complexities of culture, the idea of a Dutch articulation could be perceived to be an essentialist view. However, I do not see this notion as directly linked to 'a' national culture, but merely as shifting tendencies.

Intercultural communication

I see cultuurtekst, then, as a bridge between language and culture; it is the space where different worlds, cultures and views meet; a space where different meanings can be created and recreated. It reflects as well as constructs culture, the latter through discourses, and the notion can help students to understand what lies beyond language. This awareness can also help them in the process of taking an intercultural stance; i.e. engaging with ideas of otherness from a critical perspective and relating it to one's own experiences and knowledge of experienced cultural realities. I consider this view of intercultural communication to be different from the one which is more commonly taken in language teaching; that of a comparative stance between one's own and the other's culture. Through reflecting on discourses and relating it to lived realities, including those of power and ideologies, students go beyond the 'difference view' frequently underpinning comparative approaches, which tend to draw a direct link between 'a' culture and patterns of communication. Whilst it could be argued that the difference view is not dominant in contemporary European language teaching, as the Common European Framework takes a slightly more nuanced stance, some of the underpinning ideas of the difference view are stubborn and have implicitly taken a hold.

Hofstede (cf 1994), a Dutch anthropologist, one of the main proponents of the difference view of intercultural communication, exerts an influence on the language teaching community in the Netherlands and Flanders. Beheydt, as one of the influential voices in language teaching in Dutch as a Foreign or Second language at university level, frequently quotes Hofstede. Even though he warns against essentialist views on culture, he also emphasizes that a careful use of stereotypes can aid intercultural communication, as it prevents attributing negative characteristics, such as being authoritarian, to one individual, rather than understanding this as part of this person's culture (Beheydt, 2003:47). This is in sharp contrast to Blommaert (cf 1998), who warns exactly against explaining people's individual behavioural characteristics as the result of their culture. It is the latter view which has underpinned this thesis, because it assumes cultural complexity and also allows for human agency.

Now that I have come to the end of this study, I feel I should distance myself from the term intercultural communication, as this notion tends to be linked with the difference view. I think it would indeed be better to adopt the term 'transnational communication', as Risager (cf 2007) does, or 'transcultural communication', instead. However, for the purposes of this thesis I have borrowed the term 'being intercultural' from Phipps and Gonzalez (2004), as it reflects the process of engagement with otherness in relation to one self. Intercultural communication from this perspective then, is 'being interested' in the other, and taking responsibility towards the other in the process of communicating. It is not about 'exoticising', but engaging critically with ideas produced in a particular cultural environment. This process of communication, moreover takes place through reflection and reflexivity.

This process of critical engagement with the ideas in a text, as I have found through analysis of my data, is partly occasioned by students reflecting on their own experiences. I have called this process 'being a text ethnographer'.

Being a text ethnographer

Being a text ethnographer, I contended in chapter 3, is looking at text both from an inside and an outside perspective. However, I do not conceive the inside perspective as trying to understand the text from the perspective of the author or even of the intended audience. Helping students to engage with otherness in a text is more likely to come about in engaging with ideas within the text. Ideas, moreover, which do not have to be understood and agreed with, but can also be critiqued from their discursive and ideological perspectives. In this sense text ethnography seems to be similar to CLA approaches. However, my research findings showed that the richest moments of engaging with texts and the ideas embedded within it were those moments where students 'abandoned' the text temporarily and related the ideas to their own life; their experiences and their knowledge about society. It is this aspect of 'engaging with' which comes close to being a critical intercultural language user.

Context of situation and context of culture

The framework which I had developed for analyzing texts in the classroom, encompassed the cultuurtekst layer described so far, based on the notion of the context of culture (cf Malinowski, 1923), as well as on the context of situation, which I have interpreted in this framework as the 'textual' level of text, focusing on content, structure and immediate context. I used this framework only in the two classes I had decided to focus on for data collection. However, the idea of engaging with both the context of situation (which I conceived of as content, structure and immediate context), and the context of culture underpins the course as a whole, as I described in chapter 4.

The research findings

As mentioned earlier, the overall question I attempt to answer in my thesis is 'How do students engage with the cultuurtekst pedagogy?' The sub questions in relation to the two lessons in which the *Men's Health* text was discussed were: 'What different levels of reading do these two perspectives yield?', and in relation to the interview data: 'Do students make the journey from 'text' to 'cultuurtekst?' In answering both these questions I was particularly interested in whether students would recognize the complexity of the discourses at the cultuurtekst level of reading, whether these different levels of reading would also relate to different levels of criticality, including that of engaging with the text as a text ethnographer, and finally, whether students recognized any Dutch articulation in the text.

I discuss the findings of the two subquestions together below, then I look at how students engaged with criticality, and finally at what students seemed to have made of the idea of Dutch articulation.

Different ways of reading: the journey from text to cultuurtekst.

As I showed in chapter 5, students over the course of the two lessons, gradually moved from seeing the text as 'text' to seeing text as 'cultuurtekst'. However, this progress was not neat and linear, and there were considerable differences between students. Understanding of the text as a cultuurtekst level seemed to be embryonic, with occasional nuggets of insights which students would not necessarily build on later. It became clear that it is not easy to separate the different ways of reading as students move in and out of different positions towards the text. It also became clear that we cannot separate reading text for its content, structure and immediate context as a stable entity separate from cultuurtekst, because students invested the text with cultural and social meaning, even when reading the text at the textual level. However, despite attributing meaning to the text, at the textual level of reading, students did so in the light of only one of the discourses reflected in the text. During these discussions, some students stayed 'close to the text'

and 'aligned themselves' with the text or the author, but others 'went beyond' the text, and were indeed aware the text was showing 'representations', rather than 'facts'. Moreover, in the first lesson, students talked in a very confident manner about their analyses, as they seemed to interpret the task to be one of a traditional language classroom; that of assuming a 'correct answer' was required.

Discussing the text at cultuurtekst level in the second lesson, on the other hand, did seem to give students more insights; students became less confident in their voice as they interpreted the task as needing more careful consideration. It is the hesitancy with which students try out ideas as part of dialogic group discussions, which I considered to be important learning moments. Questions which assume a correct answer do not allow for any space for dialogue, engaging with other ideas, or for reflection. In the lesson focusing on the text as cultuurtekst, there was more 'discussion around the text', and students used these discussions to re-interpret the text in the light of what had been said. However, again there were considerable differences between students. There were occasions where students showed an intercultural stance in their attempts to understand the text from the inside, i.e. engaging with the cultural meaning of the text in relation to their own lived experiences. Interestingly, the deeper insights by students occurred when they moved away from the exercise of text analysis and made the discussion their own. The 'talking around the text' became the most dialogic, insightful and, even academic, discussions of the two lessons, where students critiqued the power structures embedded in the text, i.e. those that regulate women's personal life choices in terms of career and motherhood.

However, despite this engagement, students stopped short of reflecting on their own interpretation of the text and their own culturally located position as a reader. So as such they did not make their own reality 'strange'. This was not surprising as I had not invited students to engage with that level of reflexivity during the classes. In fact, I had only conceptualised text ethnography as a result of this data analysis. This notion of reflexivity as part of reading a text as a text ethnographer, is an area for further theoretical development, I believe.

The interviews showed that some of the learning of the cultuurtekst lesson had not necessarily been transferred. Claire, for instance, had during the lessons, shown most understanding of and engagement with the discourses in the text, including the conflicting ones, and had recognized these to be culturally significant. During one of her interviews, however, she took a different view; that these conflicting discourses showed a lack of clarity and poor argumentation. So in her retrospective engagement with the text, she employed a position of criticality akin to 'critical thinking', rather than the 'ideology critique', or 'mapping discourses' which tentatively took place during the second lesson. However, the interview also showed that Claire did start to engage with ideas of discourses; her struggle in expressing some of her responses to the text reflected her intellectual engagement with these complex ideas. Sarah, on the other hand, saw the text mainly at a 'textual' level and rejected the notion of cultuurtekst quite strongly.

Different levels of being critical

Students have shown criticality both at the level of 'critical thinking', which surfaced particularly at the textual level of reading, and as 'mapping discourses' and ideology critique. The latter two occurred particularly when the class was engaging with the text at cultuurtekst level, even if this did not happen in a consistent way. The fact that Claire, for instance, had during her interview reverted back to being critical of the surface level of the text, whereas during the lessons she had critiqued it for its traditional gendered discourses, may suggest that these complex ideas need more explicit and continuous emphasis in class, before students can employ these ideas and the accompanying terminologies more consistently and confidently. However, it may also show that the presence of the Dutch students and the general collaborative atmosphere which was created through the dialogic interactions during the class, opened up a space where critical learning was possible. Equally, the situation of the interview could have been perceived to be slightly daunting for Claire and she may have been worried about giving 'correct' answers.

Claire did recognise complexity of both language and culture. Her view of culture accords with the anthropological one, but she is still in the process of refining her ideas on this, it seems. She sees culture as social values, people and their behaviour, but she hovers between a stable view of this, in relation to nationality, and culture as pluriformity, 'a kind of culture', as she said.

Claire also showed a critical intercultural awareness through her notion of addressing the other in writing; she showed empathy with the reader, and gave an example of a real life communicative situation (albeit in English) where she focused her attention on the reader in order to 'soften the blow'. Claire is also aware of not being the intended reader and consequently the need for her to find out about the context of production.

Sarah, on the other hand, had been critical of the course as a whole, and its focus on language use in relation to the context of situation, but even more so in relation to the context of culture. As she said she had previously always thought that people were 'honest' in their communicative behaviours and stayed true to themselves by speaking the same way regardless of who one spoke to or what one wanted to achieve. She then had learnt a lot from this course, even if she felt very uncomfortable about it. Sarah's way of reading the text had been at a very stable level; she saw the text for its content and took that quite seriously – the text was giving a serious comment, she said. The question whether Sarah made the journey of text to cultuurtekst cannot be easily answered, because she did not take part in the second lesson. However, it was clear from all classes, that she rejected the notion of cultuurtekst because she saw that as 'manipulating' texts. She interpreted this manipulation to happen particularly in 'professional texts', by which she meant journalistic texts. She did not distinguish between serious journalism and the trivial texts such as the one we discussed in class, but she distinguished between journalistic texts and texts which showed clarity, honesty and an expression of (individual) meaning. Sarah's criticality towards texts then seems to be particularly located in 'critical thinking', scrutinising the text for clarity of structure and thought. She sees text as having a stable meaning, and she sees language as neutral.

However, it would seem that Sarah also critiques ideologies and power manifestations embedded in texts, as she expressed a strong dislike of 'manipulated texts'. However, she critiques this manipulation more for its lack of honesty rather than as being part of institutional ideologies or power structures. In fact, she had dismissed the discourses, which I and other students had identified in the text: 'Traditional male values? What are you talking about?', as I quoted her in chapter 6.

But, Sarah's stance towards text, language and communication, which is strongly located in the liberal humanist view, does not necessarily bar her from taking an intercultural stance. Instead, her view gives a very different slant to it. She sees communication as 'expressing ideas' between individuals; her view is one of 'ideal communication', similar to that of Grice's cooperative principles (1975), which assumes a relationship of equality between participants. It could of course be argued convincingly that this view does not accord with cultural realities where, particularly in instances of cross cultural communicative events, there are frequently power differentials between participants. Sarah does not deny the existence of power differentials. In fact, even though this is not included in the data, she was very much aware of some people having more power than others, but she attributed this to the individual characteristics of people, such as 'being loud', rather than due to social roles or status. Because she took on a view of communication as being located in individual psychologies, she felt that ideally in a course like this we should look at what motivates people in what they say and why they say it in that manner. Interestingly enough, that is exactly what the course looks at, but it looks at it at a social level. As I explained in chapter 6, I interpreted her to point to psychological realities of individuals, rather than cultural or social ones.

However, despite the fact that Sarah focuses on individual psychologies rather than cultural or social environments, her implied notion of being responsible towards your interlocutor in the sense of clarity of language used, and honesty in what is being said, may be a useful one to re-engage with, particularly since many views of intercultural communication carry within them a patronizing stance towards the other.

Sarah's deep reflection and reflexiveness on the course can point the way to dealing with the inconsistencies which this approach throws up, as I will discuss a little further below.

Dutch articulation

Students did not really recognize the Dutch articulation that I had identified in the article (notably the traditional gendered discourse and the discourse of therapeutic self-development), as they felt this text could have been written in the same way in an English publication. Students recognized the global intertextual references of British and American soaps and films. Marijke, one of the Dutch exchange students, was the only student who had been prepared to consider the notion of a Dutch discourse, although she phrased this very carefully. The text, she said, was not incongruous with other things published in the Netherlands in certain social environments. However, none of the other students pursued this notion of a Dutch articulation.

It is in retrospect not that surprising that students did not recognize the notion of a Dutch articulation. The concept of 'discourses' is complex enough for students to consider in its own right. The idea of a 'flavour' or articulation of a discourse is indeed very subtle, and for students to recognize this would require them to be enculturated in a range of discourses in various areas of social and cultural life current in both, and possibly other, countries. A possible solution could be to compare similar publications (e.g. English and Dutch versions of a publication such as *Men's Health*). That thought had actually occurred to me during the course itself, but at the time, I felt it was outside the remit of a language class to look at English language texts. Reflecting on this now, at the end of this study, I feel this may indeed be an interesting notion to pursue through further research, because its comparison of global discourses and national articulations can constitute a transnational pedagogy.

Learning that had taken place

Even though after initial data collection I felt students showed many half understandings, after consequent analyses, I found that students had engaged intellectually with the ideas thrown up by the discourses in the text. In addition, some students had engaged with the notion of communication at a meta-level, though none as in-depth as Sarah. It could even be argued that Sarah had made the biggest learning journey of all – even if she had not liked the course, it had made her think about communication at a philosophical level, something she had not done before, and indeed something, which the other students showed no sign of having done so at this depth.

In the interviews students all mentioned their language awareness had improved, both in terms of critical reading (as Claire mentioned in chapter 6, she reads with her eyes wide wide open), and in terms of writing; taking note of addressivity and style. A few students commented the course had not only improved their Dutch language skills, but also their English language skills, due to a greater awareness of writing in general.

Conclusion as a whole

The notions in this approach are complex and students clearly found it difficult. The embryonic understandings could have become more consolidated if I had been more explicit myself about the underpinning theoretical ideas. The Dutch students who had been so instrumental in recognising the discourses and discussing these in relation to the text had received some theoretical information from me in order to prepare them for this class, which I had not given to the regular students of the class. Making the notions more explicit would also help in encouraging students critiquing or 'mapping' discourses as well as being reflexive about their own role. Students attribute meaning already at a surface level of reading, but seem to be unconscious of the fact that they are doing so, as they assume they are recognising stable facts and truths in the text. Reflecting on their own

interpretation, students can become more intercultural and ethnographic in engaging with these ideas as they start querying their interpretation.

Contribution this thesis makes and strengths and weaknesses

By conceptualizing my particular approach, and reflecting on how students engaged with this, I have contributed to knowledge in the area of language and culture pedagogy through providing an example of an approach which integrates and brings together complex strands of educational philosophies, cultural and linguistic complexities based on a view of intercultural communication as 'engaging with', rather than a focus on difference or a direct relationship between language and culture at the differential level, i.e. a direct link between 'a' culture and how people in 'that' culture communicate. Particularly in the field of Dutch as a foreign language, where views of language as being stable, culture at a national level, and instrumental approaches are dominant, my approach offers a fresh outlook on language and culture pedagogy which allows learners to engage with ideas, to critique these to see these in relation to wider societal changes and patterns and ideologies.

This study also provides some insight into the complexity of attributing meaning in a text and the process of doing so, as students engage with and move in and out of looking at text both at a surface and at a cultuurtekst level. However, when encouraged to look deeper at the discourses embedded in texts, they engage intellectually with complex ideas, and relate the text to their own experienced realities as well as their schemata of the world.

This study also showed that students' view of language and communication, which in most students would be below the level of consciousness, affect how they approach a text and can indeed adversely affect how they would respond to an approach such as the cultuurtekst approach as it is very different from what they have encountered before.

The data suggest that this approach may tentatively help students to take on an intercultural stance, although for that to happen, the approach would need

to be more explicit to include theoretical support which they can apply to everyday communicative situations.

However, the most significant aspect for me as a researcher and as a teacher, was the fact that students stopped short of being reflexive on their own role in interpreting the text, as an ethnographer would be. I believe this is what a possible future study could focus on; how to occasion reflexivity in the classroom on one's role as a culturally located language learner in reading, or any other communicative activity in order to make students aware of the fact they have cultural 'blind spots' (cf Hermans, 2007).

In addition, the notions of a possible national articulation and the notion of text ethnographer are new and maybe worth exploring further.

The weaknesses of this study can be said to be located in two areas. First the theoretical complexity on which I draw. I have used some notions which can be said to be incommensurable. On the one hand I use a notion of context as relatively stable, which contrasts with the poststructuralist tendencies which underlie the idea of *cultuurtekst*. Moreover, my emphasis on cultural and linguistic complexity on the one hand and the idea of a possible 'national' articulation, on the other, also seem to be potentially located at different ends of the philosophical spectrum. However, in both these cases (text as text or as *cultuurtekst*; complexity and national articulation), I hope I have shown, we should not conceive of any of these ideas as opposites, but instead as different 'levels' of an approach each contributing to a particular understanding, as parts of the puzzle that make up a messy and complex whole.

Another weakness is perhaps inherent in the exploratory and reflective approach I have adopted in this thesis. In organic and reflexive studies like this, there is a fine line to be tread between continuously problematising the theories, data and tentative conclusions, and the need to impose clear and recognizable categories. In this thesis there may be moments where I have reflected upon and pursued emerging insights, which may not have been possible in a more 'traditionally' empirically focused study, and as a result, I may have sacrificed some clarity.

On the other hand, this level of reflection, also allowed me to consider the data in relation to emerging theoretical categories at an in-depth level. Even though I only focus on two students in considering the interview data, I do this in the context of having known these students for 4 years, and having engaged with them fairly intensively during this particular course. In addition the data of these two students is triangulated through my knowledge of the other students and the much larger set of data that I collected and analysed, even if not included explicitly in this thesis.

How I have adapted the course since data collection

As a result of this study, I have made my own professional journey, as my conceptualization of the concepts informing the course and how to apply these to my every day practice as a teacher continuously developed and evolved. Whereas soon after data collection, as a response to what I initially perceived to be a criticism of students and a failure of my pedagogy, I had adapted my course to take an even more implicit approach, now after more analysis and in-depth reflection, I have reached the opposite conclusion: the course ought to be more explicit about its intentions and scope.

As I have described in chapter 5, Sarah's admission that the course had made her insecure in her own personal communications had shocked me. My course was intended to improve students' language and communication skills by developing students' awareness, not to hinder this development. I also felt that the overt political stance could irritate students as their main aim for this course is to improve their language skills; they do not feel they need to learn how to analyse a text. As a result I had toned down my cultuurtekst approach in class, so that discussing texts in class are not seen as explicit 'text analysis', but instead as 'talking about the text', which is part and parcel of conversations building up linguistic skills. The course still looked at texts for its discourses, but I related these clearly to writing tasks and I emphasized the link between reading and looking critically at texts, and the insights this gives the students for writing, even more in relating reading to writing tasks for specific purposes and contexts. The notion of addressivity is crucial in this as

all writing tasks are directed at a particular audience, for a particular aim, and sometimes drawing on particular discourses, which I tend to refer to as the taken for granted ideas people may have about certain topics, and which would be reflected in the language you use. I also decided not to use the framework for analysis explicitly and I have incorporated these kinds of questions more fluidly within class discussions.

Student feedback over the years has been consistently positive, because they feel their writing skills improve significantly, they have an understanding of stylistic issues in relation to social contexts, and can employ these. They also generally like the idea of being able to be more critical about texts. Students still occasionally mention the positive effect it has had on their English (or their other foreign language) writing skills.

However, looking at my data again at a later stage, I was surprised to see that students had expressed in their interviews that the framework had not only been helpful, they also had enjoyed the activity of looking critically at texts.

Now that I have come to the end of this thesis, I can reflect in a more considered way on the implications of my study for adapting my cultuurtekst pedagogy. As I have discussed in chapters 5 and 6, one of the significant aspects to emerge from my data analysis was the importance of students' personal schemata in their engagement with the text and their interpretations. However, I felt that emerging 'intercultural moments' were not consolidated. For this to happen, students should take the reflections one step further and also reflect on their own interpretations, and how these would relate, not only to their particular set of experiences, but especially their understanding of these experiences in relation to discursive forces students are familiarized with. Doing this would necessitate being more explicit about the concepts which underlie the course, and ask students to use some ethnographic methodologies in the classroom, such as asking students to write a diary to reflect on their reading and writing in relation to their own and the other (culture's) context. By doing this, we would also allow for a greater role of the individual aspects of communication which Sarah had highlighted as a major consideration. As Sarah implied, if you touch on issues of communication,

'real communication' as she said, you can't leave issues hanging mid-air. You should not gloss over them, but go further. How to do this would be the subject of further study.

Future research

Future research could focus on further developing the theoretical notions which I have introduced in this study: that of *cultuurtekst*, a possible national articulation, and that of being a text ethnographer, but it could also focus on applied research in using these notions in the classroom, particularly in relation to encouraging learners to take critical intercultural, or indeed transcultural, positions, through discursive mapping as well as including a significant element of 'reflexivity' to help students become aware of their own cultural blind spot.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Article from *Men's Health*

Appendix 2: Translation article from *Men's Health*

Appendix 3: Transcript lesson 1

Appendix 4: Transcript lesson 2

Appendix 5: Transcript first interview with Claire

Appendix 6: Transcript second interview with Claire

Appendix 7: First interview with Sarah

Appendix 8: Second interview with Sarah

Appendix 1

Hanssen, H. 'Huwbare mannen gezocht'. In *Men's Health*, November 1999, pp. 46-50































Appendix 3

Transcript lesson 1, 23 January 2002

**Transcription lesson discussing article: from men's Health
Tuesday 23 January 2002**

Sarah
(5 students present to start off, ~~Ellie~~ arrives later)

intro by me repeating what we have done so far in terms of analysing articles and giving rationale.

explain my involvement with my research and asking permission etc.

explain the involvement of Dutch students and creating a dialogue between the interpretations

explaining the fact that de framework I have used I have adapted as a result of their comments

explain the concepts of cultuurtekst, discourses and intertexts

discussion about what students understand by intertexts

h: dat je bepaalde ideeën weer ziet in een andere tekst

a: ik heb een bepaald frans boek ... (long story)

g: 't gaat vaak om een soort van teksten

r: ja ik weet niet wat de grenzen van teksten zijn. Ik vind dat Cees Nooteboom en interteksten zijn

g: ah, omdat ze dezelfde stijl zijn?

r: ja

H: nou we hebben bijvoorbeeld net de van hella Haasse gelezen en
... over een bepaalde gravin... dat is een echte intertekst ...

G: ja dat soort interteksten wordt ook vaak in reclame gebruikt he.
zoals ik het gebruik is als een groep van teksten ...

A: ja, dat franse boek gaat over postmodernisme

G: ja weet je nog fat we de toespraak van Tony Blair besproken toen zij jij, o dat is net als de toespraak van Churchill

.....

wat verstaan jullie onder discourses?

silence

G nou ja je kunt bijvoorbeeld een feministische

a; dus het is een slant of zo, dus als stem,

g; ja dat is ook een mooi woord daarvoor

r: wat is dan het verschil tussen een disscourse of een paradigm?

G:

g: zegt je dat wat? zeg je, ja ik kan me teksten voor de geest halen die een bepaald discource gebruiken?

H: nee

R: ik heb de indruk dat het te veel is gebruikt.Ik ben bij de groep voor geschiedenis en men zegt dan discourse, discourse, discourse

G: ja, er is een probleem met het woord discourse

r: wat is dan het verschil tussen discourse en meta langugae?

G:

H: jargon dus.

g: ja, behalve dan dat jargon ook op een andere manier gebruikt kan worden. 't is vaak negatief

g: redenen dat we dit doen is niet alleen om, maar omdat

g: goed, nou hebben jullie de tekst gelezen..

we kijken naar dat framework, ik wil het eigenlijk omdraaien, misschien kunnen we eerts even beginnen met je eerste reactie. je individuele puur persoonlijke reactie .

J: Enge vrouwen, man

g; enge vrouwen...

laughter

A: weet je want als je kijkt naar de foto..eh..dat was voor mij een...eh..Ik denk dat het artikel gaat niet met de foto..

G: ah, ok

zarys bere
ideel was
het was
goed

a: ik ik ik kijk naar de foto .. en ik denk ..dit artikel is voor vrouwen en het is ook in Mh en ik denkheel een beetje raar, maar ik denk het artikel was heel interessant en goed, maar ik denk...

g: wacht even hoor, wat is een beetje raar?

a: dat ...

g: je bedoelt de combinatie van de tekst en de foto's

.....de vrouwen in het artikel hebben geen mannen

h: je denkt misschien iets over zwangerschap of zo

a: ja

door elkaar praten

a: ja want er zijn geen mannen dat is het probleem
ze zoeken een man, maar voor mij...

j: ja want voor vrouwen is dit [de foto] ook een ideale vrouw...en het babietje en ze heeft een man ...en een hele leuke man ook.

laughter

J: ja hij is vrij mooi, maar ja ,, dus ze heeft alles, maar misschien

a: ja, je denkt dat, maar als je de eerste zin ...was dat ..mannen vernielen noemen ze het... dat was een beetje ja...

J: ja...

doorelkaar praten

is
rying
yt

A: ja ik denk dat het artikel heel interessant is, maar misschien is de presentatie of de de.... ja... heel raar

g: ja leuk at je dat oppikt. misschien kunnen we aan het eind,vooral als we het als cultuurtekst bespreken is het misschien interessant om weer terug te komen op dat punt. die foto..

...

...

j: ja je kunt wel zien dat het uit MH komt, want die vrouw is helemaal naakt en die man heeft een korte broek..

a: ja

laughter

g: ok heb je het gevoel dat die vrouw als sexueel object wordt neergezet dan?

j: ja in de eertse plaats is zij wel aantrekkelijk en eh...hier zie je een borst..

a: ok maar dit is

j: ..maar hier zie je wel allesja dat maakt niet uit. de vrouw is gepresenteerd als... ja ze ligt op bed en

maar ik ken veel zwangere vrouwen en je ziet bijvoorbeeld niet een ^wangere vrouw die vaak op de wc zit, want dat doen ze vaak.

h: ik ken ook een zwangere vrouw en die wil absoluut niet naakt op de foto.

door elkaar praten

a: ja absoluut... je voelt je niet mooi, je denkt dat je

j: ja je bent zo groot geworden, je hebt geen close up van een foto, 't is echt..kijk naar mij

door elkaar praten

H: ja misschien is het niet een foto van ideale foto van de man, maar toch ze is hartstikke slank, ja ze heeft wel een buikje...

g: dus heb je het gevoel dat ze seksueel is dat ze als sexueel object

door elkaar praten

.....

g: ik wou net zeggen, laten we het van een expert horen..

laughter

g: wat was jou eertse reactie, je persoonlijke reactie op het stuk, John?

laughter

check tape

jo: ik weet niet wat ze zeggen... ja... wanneer ik las, ja ik glimlachte ja moeilijk om een mening daarover te hebben omdat ik een man ben dus

g: nee helemaal niet.. 't gaat om jou persoonlijke reactie

a: 't is MH dus, 't is voor jij...

g: dus je weet niet wat hij zegt omdat...?

jo: ja 't heeft niets met mij te maken?

door elkaar praten

jo: ja ik vind de foto's een beetje vreemd.

g: ja ja

jo: ja

a: jong ook

g: wat vind je vreemd aan de foto's?

jo: een zwangere vrouw ja,

g@ waarom is ze zwanger/ wat is de relevantie? -

door elkaar praten

a: er is alleen een vrouw die zwanger is in dit en dat is op het eind.. en ze zegt oo

ja, ehh eind jaren 80 raakte ze geboeid door dit onderwerp omdat eh..er haar

colleg'as er niet in slaagden, eh o ja, twee mannen geleden heeft ze

geboortekaartjes het land in gestuurd..... om de komst van haar eertse zoon.

maar dir er in niks anders over zwanger vrouwen... 't is alleen maar over mannen vernielen, ja voor mij.. kinderen en mannen vernielen

h: ja ja

a: er is een grote...

j: als je hier die inleiding leest daar staat een ideale partner en een potentiële vader voor hun kind

ja

j: dus dat is echt de bedoeling van die tekst om die te raken

a: maar dan die foto, moet je echt een man hebben, niet een ideale vrouw

j@ volgens mij is hij echt ideaal hoor

laughter

a: ja, maar ok, maar in dit foto je ziet geen man

j: ja dat gaat over die eh. die vrouw die tegenover de andere staat, die eh

a: kijk voor mij is dit de ideale vrouw die de ideale man wilt

h: ja, inderdaad 't is een potentiële vader? voor een kind, maar als je naar de foto kijkt... hij staat helemaal

a: ja

h+a: apart

* met een tekst je persoonlijk aanspreken en er een reactie op te hebben

h: het is niet? belangrijk. 't gaat hier om ..
door elkaar praten

g: nou weet je wat we misschien kunnen doen laten we aan het eind weer terug
komen op die foto's

als we eenmaal die tekst hebben geanalyseerd is het misschien interessant om
te zien waarom we die interpretaties hebben bij de foto's

h: sure

g: en wat dat zegt eigenlijk, omdat het zo vreemd lijkt.

a: ik heb een vraag.. wat is mH? is dit voor vrouwen ook of alleen voor mannen?

g: eh ..dat is een goeie vraag, natuurlijk ik bedoel wat denk je?

a; ik vraag het omdat ik als ik het artikel lees als vrouw, ik denk je bent een
beetje kritisch over vrouwen

h: heel kritisch

a: ...en ik denk dat heel veel mannen hebben dezelfde problemen of andere
problemen, maar problemen en ik denk dat dat is een beetje... er zijn momenten
dat ik vind het een beetje kritisch

j: ja, heel streng

a: ...ja, geschreven

a.....

j:over vrouwen die op jacht zijn, maar dat is echt een minderheid van
vrouwen die op jacht zijn...

h: ..ik vind het ook heel oppervlakkig geschreven, vooral dat stukje met die
stomme quiz

g@ ja ja

h: ik bedoel...

door elkaar

h: 't hele artikel wordt er door ondermijnd voor mij..

r: ja

a; ja

H; meer als een tienerblad

g: dat is interessant

J: zij is echt een takkenwif zo..

h:?

a: zo... als je geen carrière hebt dan moet je tv kijken dat is de anderedat is
de de laatste aflevering van Ally mc beal..

G; ok h zegt.. net uit een tiener blad, dus daar hebben we een soort van
intertekst, ja?

ja

g: uit.. doet daar een beetje aan denken. waarom hebben ze dat misschien
gedaan, is dat misschien juist waarom jij moest glimlachen John?

studies
- geen meer
niet op
door
niet zijn duidelijk
geen werk
is het
iets na
compleet
vergeet
geen
kinderen
geen
kinderen

g: dat soort dingen?
jo: ja 't is een beetje neerbuigend voor vrouwen vind ik.
mmm
g: ja ja
jo: ja maar voor mannen kan 't wel grappig zijn
door elkaar praten
jo: maar als man weet ik niet of ik dit artikel zou lezen.
g: ok zelfs als je MH leest?
jo: ja

h: 't moet ook een artikel zijn waarin je je zou interresseren
jo: ik zou het niet lezen

j: a;s 't speelt met / voetbal boven die baby..
laughter

Jo: ja dan misschien wel.

a: dit is eh.. het is de bridget Jones problem. Mannen willen niet weten dat we hebben problemen en dat ..je je denkt over je kilo's en hoeveel sigaretten je rookt en andere dingen dat als vrouwen zijn dit...

g: zwanger bedoel je?

a: nee, (perfect?)

G' o

a: ja dan kan je niet zeggen mannen vernielen en ze rookt ze zoeken dit. maar ze denken dat dit rtikel zegt vrouwen zijn diten dat is een heel probleem voor mannen, want je zegt, je zal dit niet lezen want of je bent iltelligent en je weet dat alle vrouwen zijn niet hetzelfde, dis je kan niet zeggen wat mannen verno#ilen, maar ja ik weet niet ik weet niet who dit artikel is voor
G : voor wie het is

a: ja

..

..

j: het is waarschijnlijk voor mannen die zoeken een vrouw, zeg mar mannen van jij zelfde leeftijd die eh nog steeds geen partner hebben bij vrouwen of zoiets ze zeggen ...

g: ja, vaak moet je de context een beetje kennnen he, ik bedoel ik weet niet of je MH wel eens gezien hebt en de engelse is misschien ook weer anders, maar 't staat ..je hebt van die eh hoe heet dat nou? je hebt van die rubrieken in een tijdschrift, fitness en sport en deze staat dus onder relaties, en dan heb je al die rubrieken:voeding,sex ...

j' ja maar weet je dat is meer iets voor Elle of zoiets, niet voor mannen

.....

r: misschien dat het artikel geschreven wordt voor andere bladen... door een agent

...

g: maar waarom, waarom denk je dat het niet geschreven is voor een man?

(!) sec!

r: ja er staat niets nuttigs in voor een man

jo: ja, mannen zouden dit grappig vinden

a: vrouwen ook, ik denk dat in elle of Vogue vrouwen vinden dit grappig ik denk dat het een beetje 'mocking'

g: een beetje spottend

a: ja, maar hier denk ik dat het een beetje kritisch is. maar ik denk dat ja waarom?

g: dus jij denkt het is voor mannen geschreven, maar misschien en dan hebben we het eigenlijk al over het doel, he? om een beetje grappig te zijn.

jo: ja het idee van vrouwen op jacht ..dat is grappig

r: ja.....

g: waarom is dat grappig?

laughter by the men

g: dat moet je toch aan ons vrouwen uitleggen waarom dat grappig is more laughter

g: waarom is dat grappig

jo: omdat meestal mannen zijn op jacht voor vrouwen en nu is dat andersom...

h: of misschien...

laughter because of her tone of voice

h: is het gewoon dat mannen daar meer open over zijn en vrouwen doen dat veel stiekemer

g: 't op jacht gaan?

h: ja

J: wij doen dat een beetje subtieler

laughter

g: goed. herken je dat? heb je het gevoel van je hebt al Bridget Jones genoemd.

zeg je ja ik weet precies waar ze het over hebben. ik herken dit?

h: ik herken de stereotiepen daarvan, maar ik herken niemand ..

ja ja

g: en welke stereotiepen herken je dan?

a: de vrouw die denkt de hele tijd dat ze niet goed genoeg is.

....

g: heb je het gevoel dat ze dat zegt?

j: ze hebben wel alles maar alleen niet man en kind.

a: ja niet alles, maar als je houdt niet van jezelf, dan is het moeilijk man en kindren

....

h: nee, ik denk dat het echt gaat om vrouwen die echt denken dat ze niet zonder een man kam datze echt een man nodig hebben

a: ja dat is eh hoe zeg je dat, het is een perfect ideeaal, want als ik een man heb is alles perfect en ja, dan ben ik mezelf. maar ~~dat~~ ja dat gebeurt niet

g: en 't gaat om vrouwen heb jij het gevoel en je herkent de vrouwen, j herkent het stereotiep? vrouwen die een man nodig hebben en dat is een stereotiep vanuit mannen gezien of in zijn algemeenheid?

h: eh, ik denk dat is nou een algemeen streotiep.... ik denk dat dat is een steretiep over de vrouw dat de laatste 20 jaar of zo is ontwikkeld.

Intro-
es
intro
ent

des
intro-
es
intro
ent

1
des
intro-
es
intro
ent

h: ze heeft alles een een eigen auto, maar ze heeft geen man dus eigenlijk heeft ze niets.

g@ goed, ok, zegt de maatschappij

hja

g: want ze is niet volwaardig zonder man

h: ja

g: en kind?

h: eh ik denk 't gaat hiër meer om man

g: andere stereotiepen die je herkent?

silence

g: of is dat de belangrijkste?

a; ja, ik denk dat dat eh ...

j: de stereotiep dat de carrièrevrouw die alles in de steek heeft gelaten om een carrière op te bouwen, dat vind ik echt vreselijk,

want mannen mag dat wel doen. maar vrouwen mag dat niet want dan kunnen ze geen man en kinderen krijgen. Ja sorry hoor, maar ik persoonlijk wil allebei.

a: maar soms je niet accepteren dat de maatschappij zegt je kan alles hebben maar je moet....

j: ja natuurlijk, maar als ik afgestudeerd ben, ga ik niet zomaar een man hebben en... werk vinden

a; nee 't is niet een check list van ik moet een man vinden ok, ik moet een baan vinden ok.

j: ja 't is wel mogelijk als je ... jezelf blijven nu wel wat je wil vinden, misschien kun je wel de ideale man vinden

g: goed; ik wil nu weer even terug naar de tekst als jullie dat niet erg vinden

J: nee..

g: goed, we weten nu wat de stereotiepen zijn. maar wat is nu het hoofdpunt het hoofdthema. hoe zou je dat nu formuleren?

? de hele tekst>

g: ja de hele tekst

j: dat dat soort vrouwen nu bestaan en een beetje gevaarlijk voor mannen zijn

g: ok dus ... vrouwen

j: vrouwen die op jacht willen en jonge mannen willen pakken

g: ja

j: je hebt de indruk dat er een heleboel van hun bestaat

g@ ja?

j: de eh grote groep vrouwen net als die zijn

g: vind iedereen dat? kun je het daarmee eens zijn?

het hoofdpunt ... gaat over ... het thema carrièrevrouwen die gevaarlijk zijn voor mannen

j: ja eh niet gevaarlijk maar hoe zeg je dat nou? opletten

g: ja absoluut, t is een waarschuwing voor mannen

.....

.....

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stadeit
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g: dat zijn de hoofdpunten, wat zijn de bijpunten ?

h: dat als dat niet lukt, dan gaan ze op een soort van vernieltocht om wraak te nemen

g: ok. andere bijpunten misschien, robin?

r: eh eh

g: john, wat zie je als de inhoud van de tekst?

jo: 't gaat over dat sommige vrouwen nu een mannelijke identiteit hebben

r: jaa

g: ...(repeat) jaok, vrouwen die gedragen zich als mannen

wat is het mannelijke daaraan? wat is het mannelijke aan hun identiteit?

jo: dat ze hard zijn geworden

g: agressief, ja? verder nog iets misschien?

e: ellie heb jij de tekst gelezen? waar gaat de tekst over/ puur de oppervalkkige inhoud.

e: eh.. ik vond het een beetje grappig. 't gaat over ja, hoe mannen ook ~~verdwijnen~~ *gedruukt* kunnen worden

g@ ja als hoofdpunt. en als bijpunt?

.....

e: er zitten een heleboel tips in over hoe je deze situatie kunt vermijden

g: ja inderdaad en hoe kan je die situatie dan vermijden? hoe jij als man of als vrouw?

e: ja 't is als ...

.....

...

g: o ja je hebt 't over die inzetsels, zo van hoe herken je een desperada?

e: ja dat ook maar ook in het hoofdartikel gaat het ook over [onverstaanbaar] maar zij kunnen krijgen en zo.

g: jaja ok dat hun relaties niet alleen om liefde gaan, maar dat zeeen machtsstrijd

e: mmm

g: ok dus qua inhoud, moet je zeggen is het vrij vrij oppervalkkig, ja?

h: ja ik vind van wel

g: zit er een argument in?

silence

a: ja, maar het is niet.... in het begin is het een argument voor een gebruiksaanwijzing voor careervrouwen, maar ik denk dat op het eind dat het argument is misschien dat eh therapie..

g: ja

a: dat vrouwen die heeft een therapeut en eh dat helpt, en ik denk dat dat is niet een argument, maar misschien een conclusie van het artikel sommige vrouwen moeten therapie hebben... (laughs)

g: jajaja

a: maar ik denk dat het begint met een idee en dat het eind niet met hetzelfde idee, of in het midden is er een...there's wires crossed

*take
very
exactly*

[Handwritten mark]

g: ja inderdaad wat zijn die verschillende ideeën?

a: ehm ik denk dat het een artikel voor vrouwen is en niet voor mannen
.....ja, ik denk 't is MH dus 't is een artikel voor mannen en ik kijk een beetje
naar de foto's en ik kijk ook naar, ja, zo herken je een desperada en een vrouw:
gebruiksaanwijzing. En voor mij is dat een soort artikel en wanneer je dat artiekle
leest is 't niet

g: 't soort artikel, dus je hebt 't hier eigenlijk over die discourses en intertekst

a: ja ja en dus ja..

g: ok en 't soort artikel doet je denken aan artikels voor vrouwen?

a: ja

G: elle of zo als je zei?

a: ja of Cosmopolitan

j: maar volgens mij zouden deze tijdschriften niet zo hard zijn tegen vrouwen dat
ze niet op dezelfde manier zo...

g: nee, ik denk wat jij zegt is de stijl. daardoet het aandenken, maar qua inhoud
weer niet want zo herken je een desperada is echt voor mannen geschreven ..

a: 't is echt heel....

g: goed, dat zijn dingen die zo weer naar boven komen hoor.

g: als we eventjes nou eerts naar die onmiddellijke context kunnen kijken. wat
doet die tekst he/ en wat voor doel

.....
als we het eerts op een simple niveau houden wat is dan het doel van die tekst'
wat is de functie van die tekst/ john heeft eigenlijk al een paar gezegd, misschien
om te amuseren he

jo: ja

h: misschien om een grapje te maken, he?

g: ja, heb je het gevoel dat er andere functies in die tekst zitten?

wat doet die tekst ik bedoel, informeert die tekst?

h: niet echt uitgebreid, ik denk dat 't inderdaad meer als een soort aumserend
artikel is geschreven. ik vind 't inderdaad erg oppervlakkig en 't haalt stereotiepen
naar voren.

ja dan heb je hier ... en klein stukje met statistieken, maar voor de rest eh

r: 60000 vrouwen op jacht? amerikaans vrouwen, neerlandse vrouwen?

maar 't gaat over nederlandse vrouwen voornamelijk

j+r: ja maar hoe weten ze..

door elkaar praten

laughter

g: ja je had 't over statistieken, noem dat die 60.000

h: ja, 't CBS berekent dat...

g: ja, 't CBS berekent dat...

h: maar dat is maar een heel klein stukje

g: ja zo'n inzetsel

h: gewoon even bijgezet niet als een serieuze commentaar geven alsof het
eenwat dieper artikel is

g: maar zou je wel een serieus dieper artikel verwachten in MH?

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a+h: succesvolle carrière vrouw

h: ja maar dat gaat niet altijd hand in hand met dit [gedrag?]

a: ja preceis, precies

g: goes ok dus wat... we hebben nu toch een soort van commentaar... dus wat denk jij robin, wat wil die tekst bereiken? waarom is het geschreven en waarom heeft MH besloten het te publiceren?

r: dit is door een man geschreven en geen kansen dus misschien heeft het geen raakstuk dus misschien heeft hij geen [onverstaanbaar]

g: sorry, misschien heeft hij geen?

r: misschien heeft hij geen[nog steeds onverstaanbaar] (laughs)

h: hij vernielt gewoon

door elkaar praten

r: misschien is hij een [gedronken?] journalist

jo: maar het versterkt de mannelijke ego

als je ze zegt dat vrouwen zoeken ..als ze worden gejaagd door vrouwen..het versterkt het mannelijke ego.

a: maar ook het artikel zegt naar mannen: het is ok om met 20 vrouwen ik weet niet de term in nederland..

j: ... te neuken met 20 vrouwen..

a: ja... eh ... niet alleen te neuken, maar te zeggen ... dit is serieus en alles, maar...

j: een beetje verliefd..

a: en dan dan is het niet echt..

j:

A: ja en dit artikel zegt mannen, vrouwen zijn hetzelfde dus het is ok om dit te doen, maar ik denk dat voor vrouwen of voor mannen dit is niet een goed idee

G: ja.. em jij zegty het versterkt het mannelijke ego door te zeggen er wordt op ons gejaagd, maar... eh...is dat inderdaad waar het over gaat... ik bedoel..is hij er blij mee? Presenteert hij het alsof hij er blij mee is dat

jo: nee, maar dat is impliciet, ja het is dootr een man geschreven..dus...

g: (a maarzlfz als het niet door een man geschreven zou zijn). wleke mannelijke warden herken je eruit/ wat is het mannelijke dat je erin ziet?

silence

g: waarom denk je van...eh .. het versterkt het mannelijke ego?

e: volgens mij is het gewoon zo ..eh..zeg maar ...de strategie van vrouwen te [bepinnen?].... dus een beetje zelfverdediging ...ze hebben dus een verdediging tegen vrouwen van de vrouwen ...dus dus hebben zij nog steeds de positie van; ja ik herken wat je aan het doen bent...en ieh dus ..eh ik ben nog steeds degene die de beslissing maakt enzo. en misschien.. het maakt niet uit wat je doet...

g: ja dus je zegt het streelt het mannelijke ego, maar aan de ene kant heb je dus vrij traditionele waarden, want de man die blijft eh die blijft zijn eigen beslissingen maken en waar zie je dat aan?

eh heb je het gevoel datde man hier sterker uitkomt uit dit artikel dan de vrouw, hij wordt hier sterker beschreven?

(various) ja,ja

g: en hoe, als we misschien kijken naar ...hoe hij ...

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j: de vrouwen zijn gepresenteerd als echte emotionele onstabiele hoe zeg je dat, ze zijn niet zeker al de tijd net als een tijdsbom of zoiets.....

g: ok ze kunnen ontploffen of exploderen ...

j:als ze de leeftijd bereiken of zo dan gaan ze.....

g: ja ok..eh we hebben het doel gehad, we hebben het eigenlijk ook gehad over die middelen hoe om dat doel te bereiken.. hoewel we hebben eigenlijk ook gezegd we weten niet precies wat eh eh ja wat is het doel nou eigenlijk.. om dat het doel niet duidelijk is.. is het een commentaar of is het bedoeld om het mannelijke ego te streken of ...we hebben een van de middelen die gebruikt zijn is het ..eh grappig maken... eh heb je het idee dat er andere middelen worden gebruikt om ons ja eh wat moet ik zeggen omdat we niet helemaal het doel hebben kunnen achterhalen ...soort van informatie geven, soort van commentaar geven, de mannelijke visie weergeven misschien moeten we het hebben over..

h: ik denk niet dat het echt een specifiek doel heeft. 't doel op zich is het artikel zelf in de zin van ... het is grappig, 't is lichtzinnig

g: ja ja, zoals je zei 't analyseert de situatie niet.

h: nee

g: maar heb je toch niet het gevoel dat er toch een bepaalde structuur in zit?

[ik stelde die vraag om studenten erachter te laten komen dat als je de structuur op een rijtje zet, je de inhoud meteen kan weergeven en dat dat het doel duidelijker maakt.]

h: 't begint met zijn persoonlijke ervaringen met zijn vriendinnen en eh ...vriendenkring

g: ja inderdaad

h: hij begint bij een voorbeeld, zeg maar, van iemand die hij kent ..en een bepaalde houding heeft of zo tegenover mannen

✓ hij begint vrij negatief in feite..

g: door die vrouwen te beschrijven

h: ja

g: hoe beschrijft hij die vrouwen? wat is er negatief aan door te zeggen; leuke vlot gebekte meiden zijn hetetc. wat is daar negatief aan?

j: ze hebben eigenlijk niet wat ze willen

g: ok dat is de volgende zin..alle zijn ...etc. heb je het gevoel dat het negatief is vanwege het feit dat ze single zijn daardoor worden ze neergezet of gerepresenteerd als ze missen iets heel belangrijks in hun leven? of heb je het gevoel dat er iets negatiefs zit in de manier waarop ze hier worden beschreven? luke goedgeklede vlotgebekte meiden zijn het?

h: nou ik denk dat ze kleine stukje dat 'vlot karretje onder de cellulitis-vrij getrainde billen is een beetje spottend: die meiden hebben niets anders in hun leven dan met hun uiterlijk bezig te zijn want verder is er niks, want ja natuurlijk ze hebben tenslotte geen man (H said this last comment at a mocking tone) ze zijn single

a: dakterras of balkon: ik vind dat niet het belangrijkste probleem voor vrouwen Oh ik moet een dakterras of balkon hebben. dat is een stereotiep, dat is een heel cliché, een vrouw die wil perfect zijn

g: ja, en hoe eh waarom heeft hij voor die cliché's gekozen denk je?

2.15
en de tekst
liberel
Hij wil
nemen

e: ik denk dat hij zo begint om ze zo aan te trekken, ze zijn daarin geïnteresseerd.. als je aan een leuke goed geklede mooie vrouw denkt, dan als je als man dat artikel leest dan denk je van 'he mmmm' interessant en dan wat is het, hoe gaat het verder, dus het is eigenlijk, het trekt precies de mannen aan dus het werkt alsof het zo'n vrouw is, 't zegt: hier is een groepje mooie vrouwen en we gaan hun houding bespreken en dat dus het brengt de man die de tekst leest, in, zeg maar, om eh om het verder te gaan lezen en aan het eind is het zo andersom dat eigenlijk eh dan willen ze niet meer dan zijn ze niet meer in deze vrouwen geïnteresseerd want ze zijn eigenlijk een beetje kinderachtig

g: wat bedoel je met kinderachtig? childish, ja?

e: ja, dat ze denken dat ze alles hebben en dat ze alles kunnen krijgen maar eh..

g: ze zijn arrogant eigenlijk?

e: ja maar volgens het artikel ..dus aan het eind dan is dan wordt de mannen vrijgelaten, zeg maar, van de vrouwen in de tekst

g: hoe wordt hij daardoor vrijgelaten ...

e: omdat gewoon hoe het aan het eind is dan zou hij niet meer geïnteresseerd zijn in de vrouw want het lijkt alsof ze een beetje stom is en nergens naartoe gaat.

g: waar zie je dit precies? aan het eind he, ja 't eind is interessant he, jij (amy0 noemde het eind ook al...

e: ja ik denk niet dat het oppervlakkig is want 't gaat over de relatie met hun vader als je kijkt daarnaar dan zie je dat het is een sociologische en psychologische analyse over wat er in hun hoofden zitten dus eigenlijk denk je: ze zijn een beetje gek, het is eigenlijk.. ze weten niet wat ze willen ze willen gewoon alles wat ze denken te kunnen krijgen dus eh 't gaat eigenlijk over de manier waarop mannen oppervlakkig in deze vrouwen geïnteresseerd zijn, maar de doel van de tekst is eigenlijk te zeggen, nou deze vrouwen zijn niet goed voor je want ze kunnen niet goed met je praten want ze kunnen alleen maar over hun praten en ..

g: ja en ze zijn niet goed voor je want ze zijn alleen maar met zichzelf bezig

e: ja

g: en is... dat nu ..wordt het ... we hebben het nu een beetje gehand over de structuur ..eerts heb je dan die vrouwen worden nbeschreven op de manier van hoe ze leven, he die life style ideeën dan krijg je de reactie daarop: hij krijgt er koude rillingen van..(I'm repeating it again) en dan? dan hebben ze het over? op bladzijde 48?

silence

g: wat voor onderdeeljes krijg je dan?

j: hij gaat een heleboel vragen stellen

g: ja wie stelt die vragen?

j: de schrijver.

g: nee, 't is niet de schrijver die de vragen stelt.

a: ja hij praat over het verschijnsel van carrièrevrouwen en eh dat is het moment met de psycholoog.

g: ja het is de psycholoog inderdaad dan krijgen we de psycholoog ineens aan het woord

a: ze praat over het verschijnsel van carrièrevrouwen die zoekt een psycholoog en therapeut want ze hebben problemen van de ja, inderdaado nee ze hebben een psycholoog hier ook. (cites) ik sprak met Sybille Libertijn ..

g: ok dan hebben we het over de psycholoog en dan krijg...wat dan?

hoe zit de tekst dan in elkaar ..silence..we krijgen de vragen van de psycholoog op blz 48 en dan? ,

longer silence

h: ik weet het niet het is een soort van ..niet echt een antwoord op die vraag.. 't is een soort van aanvulling..

g: die vraag van waar komt dat idee vandaan?

h: ja want hij herhaalt het waar komt dat idee vandaan..maar hij legt 't eigenlijk niet uit ..van eh illustraties van verschijnselen of ...maar hij zegt eigenlijk niet zo gek veel.

g: want je verwacht dan dat je een analyse krijgt hoe het komt dat je dit soort vrouwen hebt? hij zeg tdat een blad in Newsweek een kop heeft gehad en dat vrouwen van boven de 40 meer kans hebben om te sterven...dedede ..en daar houdt het dan ook mee op. 't zegt niks eigenlijk niks.

g: iok. maar hij heeft het dan wel over ...'t is misschien geen echt antwoord op de vraag, maar hij wil net doen alsof , zeg je, hij wil gaan analyseren, hij haalt een paar andere voorbeelden aan van dit soort vrouwen, hoogopgeleide vrouwen

h: dit soort eh opmerkingen over vrouwen..

g: ja

e: ik vind het een mooie tekst..want als je kunt ik geloof dat je de structuur kunt zien als je gewoon naar de foto's kijkt .., want als je dat doet..

g: ja, ja we hebben het inderdaad ook over de foto's gehad [implicatie; voordat jij binnenkwam] 't is wel leuk om jouw reactie te horen.

e: maar dat is echt de opbouw van de tekst volgens mij want de eh als je als man daarkijkt dat beeld dan een mooie foto van een zwangere vrouw en mooie huys en zo en dan denk je dat alles mooi is en dan eh dan kijk je naar het volgende beeld en dan gaat het echt een beetje naar de man. Dan ligt hij te denken van: is dat echt wat ik wil... ben ik alleen gebruikt of zo...en dan als je aan het eind kijkt dan is er gewoon een foto van een gewone man naast hem zie je nog steeds de buik van de vrouw met de baby , maar dan gaat het nog steeds verder naar de man ...is ie eigenlijk gelukkig in deze situatie?

g: ja dat is een interessante analyse, he, dat van de vrouw ...

a: maar er zijn geen mannen in de tekst

g: behalve de schrijver zelf dan he die natuurlijk de mannen representeert..maar dat is ook interessant..er zijn geen mannen in de tekst..ja.. en als we even de structuur af kunnen maken we hebben de analyse he, dan begint op blz 49 dat stukje over gebruiksaanwijzing van de vrouw eigenlijk.. wat doet dat laatste stuk?

a: therapie

g: ja inderdaad het is een voorbeeld van therapie. en heb je het gevoel..eh jij zei eerder het is een vreemd eind van de tekst heel anders..de vrouw wordt aan het eind totaal anders beschreven dan aan het begin? Hoe wordt ze anders beschreven?

h: een beetje zielig

g: wordt ze als zielig beschreven? vanuit wie gezien? vindt jij dat ze zielig is of vindt de schrijver dat?

e: wat betekent zielig? g: pityful, iemand waar je medelijden mee zou hebben

a: maar de vrouw op het eind zegt ; eh ja.. mijn relatie gaat nu al 5 jaar hartstikke goed: dat is echt heerlijk maar het iswennen...zeker voor vrouwen van mijn generatie. dus voor haar, zij is een andere vrouw, ze heeft geleerd en nu ...alles gaat goed, nu heeft zij een man en een kind en zij heeftja...

[a+ h talk together at the same time, but i think h says:]

h: dus hij heeft toch eigenlijk wel bereikt wat het doel was waar al die vrouwen naar streven.

g: ja maar dat is de psychologe dus...

h: ja,, maar dat is dus het man en kind verhaal.

a: ik moet zeggen dat ze kan niet zeggen als je geen man en kind hebben is dat ok, op het eind zegt ze moet je een man en kind hebben en dan alles gaat ok. maar je kan niet een vrouw zijn zonder man.. dat werkt niet..mar ze is een vrouw die op het begin zegt..ja het is ok om geen man te hebben, maar op het eind heeft ze een man en dat is..ja..en zegt ze ja, mijn relatie gaat nu al vijf jaar hartstikke goed en dat is echt heerlijk.

g: dus je zegt dat is een paradox .

a: ja ik denk dat zij is een therapeut maar zij luister niet naar hun eigen therapie

g: niet naar hun iegen therapie, want waar is die therapie voor bedoeld?

a: de therapie is voor carrierevrouwen die heeft de lifestyle, op het begin...kleding..

g: j maar ik bedoel wat is het doel van die therapie dan?

a: want ze hebben alles, maar ze zoeken een man, dus de therapie is om ...maar je moet niet een man hebben je kan een vrouw zijn zonder man, dat is ok.

g: ah, zegt 't de schrijver dat, of zeg jij dat?

a: ik zeg dat, want dat is de.. want dit is een grapje, dus voor mij zeg tde schrijver dat deze vrouwen zijn niet normall, dus ze moet een therapie hebben of een andere eh...er is een andere antwoord en ik .. voor mij is het antwoord dat ze moet een man hebben.. dat is het laatste idee dat...

g: ja, het antwoord is dat ze dan...'t wordt als oplossing gebracht, he , volgens de schrijver dat ze dan een man zouden moeten hebben. Maar jij zegt de therapie is bedoeld om zodat ze kunnen accpteren dat ze geen man nodig hebben. Wat denk jij john, is dat het doel van die therapie,

jo: nee om de vrouw te helpen begrijpen wat hun situatie is, zodat ze zich zelf kunnen helpen...

g: om aan een man te komen?

jo: als ze dat willen.

g: wat denk jij, ellie waarom moeten die vrouwen in therapie volgens het artikel, ellie?

e: silence eh nou dat is gewoon de mening van de schrijver denk ik.

g: ja maar hij beargumenteert dat he, hij zegt niet zomaar ze moeten in therapie, maar hij heeft er een argument voor. hij beargum,enteert dat door 't te analyseren.

me
pashy

(1) seg!
teking it affice-va

(1) face-
vele

e: ja, maar hij heeft dat ook geschreven hij kan deze verhouding niet begrijpen, dus volgens hem is het niet te begrijpen zonder dat zij het veranderen. dus het is gewoon een goeie oplossing van de tekstwaar het naartoe gaat. dus eigenlijk zijn zij geen leuke vrouwen ze heb nhulp nodig, misschien doen ze dat om zichzelf eh henzelf te eh...moedigen .zeg je dat? *- she might mean: aan te moedigen*

g: zichzelf beter te voelen, misschien bedoel je dat?

e: misschien

g: hoe wordt er nou precies over het thema...eh de vragenlijst die je hier hebt is een algemene he, 't thema is die vrouwen hoe wordt er over hen gesproken precies, welke toon? we hebben al naar het eerste stukje gekeken he, die vrouwen, hoe worden ze bescreven in economische termen he, designr kleren etc... heb je het gevoel dat er andere ... heb je het gevoel dat er over andere manieren over die vrouwen wordt gesproken? en we hebben gezegd he dat is negatief om zo over die vrouwen te spreken. ja, nee jij niet ?

e: nee ik dacht dat het was om de mannen aan te trekken.

g: o ja, jij dacht dat het was om de mannen aan te trekken, inderdaad.

e: dat is het punt van de tekst volgens mij

g: ja, jij interpreteert het als mannen vinden vrouwen interessant, maar

[teacher talk] hoe verklaar n het feit...eh hij geeft toch kritiek op vrouwen he, wat voor kritiek heeft hij op vrouwen?

G: hij beschrijft ze als onderontwikkeld... een beetje kinderachtig eigenlijk en eh de eerste vrouw heeft een relatie met een getrouwde man, de andere met een schilder met alcoholproblemen,

j: dus iets is beter dan niks, dit soort eh ..

h: ja en andere gaan op...eh one night stands

ja, ze zijn nog helemaal niet volgens hem , want ik er uithaal dan, volwassene op dat gebied. want misschien inderdaad dan dat ze zoveel aandacht aan hun carrieres hebben besteed dat ze geen aandacht aan hun emotionele ontwikkeling hebben besteed. Ik wil niet zeggen dat ik het er mee eens ben, maar dat haal ik er een beetje uit.

g ok eh hh maar wat is de toon, hoe zou je zeggen dat hij erover praat. ze hebben dan geen aandacht aan hun emotionele ontwikkeling besteed ..., maar hoe praat hijoverigens hij noemt dat niet..

h: nee, maar het is impliciet om dat hij een beetje neerbuigend, een beetje betuttelend

g: kun je precies aangeven wat het betuttelend maakt?

a: ja, cliché, cliché

j: ja maar ze zijn ook , de drie vrouwen zijn ook cliché en wat hij schrijft is allemaal cliché. hij maakt een grapje over haar.

[doorelakkar praten]

e: ja maar het gebeurt ook. er zijn wel er is wel een verschijnsel van succesvolle huwelijken., toch denk ik...

g: je zegt het is een bekend verschijnsel van relaties

e: ja, het is wel een cliché , maar er is een verschijnsel van huwelijken die kwijtgaaen omdat er geen goede relatie is

a: ja, maar haar grote liefde haar inruilde voor een jonge griet. voor mij is dat het cliché...

j: je krijgt het gevoel dat hij dacht, wat dacht je dan, dat hij z'n hele leven bij jou zou blijven als er een jonge griet naast hem stond. ja, hallo..

a: alleen als het een cliché is of niet, het is heel moeilijk voor iemand als ze hun grote liefde inruilt voor iemand, dat is heel moeilijk, ja ik weet niet, 't is een gevoel dat dat is acceptabel, om

a:....

h: ja maar je gebruikt de woorden ook eh ik denk dat het ook in het woordengebruik daar een beetje betuttelend is in de zin van eh met een getrouwde vent ipv met een getrouwde man, en eh een onmogelijke verhouding met een vage schilder met een alcoholprobleem en de ander zoekt het in avondjes met jonge mannen

a: ja en de houdbaarheidsdatum ook.

e: maar als je ..ik ben het ermee eens, maar als je vrouwen tijdschriften vergelijkt deze artikelen zijn hetzelfde...er is geen tijdschrift dat is niet cliché

g: ja daar hebben we het inderdaad ook over gehad, misschien is dat interessant om dat punt weer naar voren te halen

e; misschien doet ie dat ook niet, misschien bedoelt hij dat ook niet betuttelend zeg maar te zijn, maar dat is misschien de manier om succesvol te zijn om tijdschriften te verkopen.

j: maar in vrouwentijdschriften is het niet zo betuttelend, is het niet zo (schrijn?), misschien een beetje neerbuigend, maar

h: maar ik denk het toch wel juist in vrouwenbladen, maar dan inderdaad ten nadele van mannen juist

e: ja, dat dacht ik ook

a: niet altijd, niet altijd ..

g: 't hangt er misschien vanaf welke bladen ewe het over hebben. je zegt..ht is interessant dat dit doet denken aan een vrouwenblad. wat precies doet denken aan een vrouwenblad en aan welk soort blad doet het denken? we hebben het hier over die interteksten he, welke interteksten herken je hier in dan. welke soort bladen dan precies?

h; ik vind het een beetje Cosmopololitan-achtig

a: ja, Cosmopolotan

h: een beetje over relaties, seks, hoe mannen en vrouwen met elkaar omgaan, verhoudingen tussen...

a: veel tijdschriften voor oudere vrouwen, carrière vrouwen, er zijn tijdschriften voor vrouwen, maar die hebben dan mode en make-up en niet zoveel seks en relaties en dat soort dingen, maar bijv. She of Cosmopolitan of Red of deze zijn over inderdaad een artikel als dit, maar inderdaad ik ben het eens met Jessica, dat het is niet zo betuttelend. Dit is heel kritisch en ik denk dat

e: maar dat zeg je als vrouw, denk je niet?

a: ja, maar lees je dan eh..?

e: nou niet vaak, want ik vind dat gewoon een beetje betuttelend en een beetje

a; ik lees dat soort tijdschriften

ker-bla

e: ja daarom ben je van deze mening denk ik. je bent door elkaar beter

j: maar ik lees geen tijdschriften en ik ben het eens met Amy dit is echt te erg geschreven, vind ik

g: ja het is neerbuigend, maar neem je het... heb je het gevoel dat je het serieus neemt of rebelleer je er tegen als je dit leest? of denk je dat je het ook grappig vindt?

a: in een vrouwelijke tekst heb je dezelfde grapjes als op het begin, dus misschien een helekorte introductie naar het idee van een raltie of seks, maar ik denk dat normaal dat soort artikelen hebben altijd een serieuze conclusie, dis heb je...

h: o nee, daar ben ik het niet mee eens

g: heeft dit geen serieuze conclusie? Wat is zijn conclusie eigenlijk?

e: ja, ik denk wel dat het serieus is. 't zegt gewoon, let op deze vrouwen, want maar ze zijn niet echt op je verliefd, je hoeft alleen maar naar het hoofdtitel te kijken omdat het zegt volgens het artikel mannen zijn de slachtoffers. Het is een verdediging tegenover vrouwen die denken dat ze alles hebben en denken dat ze boven mannen staan.

g: mmmm, maar het is grappig...

e: ja het is wel grappig, maar..

j: nee niet boven mannen, maar op hetzelfde niveau

g: maar ze denken zelf dat ze beter zijn, althamns zo beschrijft hij het, zo beschrijft de psychologe het, datze dneken dat ze beter zijn dan mannen.

a: maar ik denk ook dat als dit artikel wilde over...eh let op vrouwen, dan moet de schrijver vragen naar mannen wat ze denken over vrouwen, maar in dit artikel zijn alleen vrouwen en voor mij. ik weet niet, maar ik denk het is alleen een interview met vrouwen, maar....

e: maar natuurlijk is het van het standpunt van een man, het is voor een mannentijdschrift geschreven, want als je een vrouwelijk tijdschrift leest zou je ook kunnen zeggen dat het een bettje eenzijdig is.

h:...onverstaanbaar

g: ok zijn er misschien nog andere waarden die je herkent? andere culturele waarden die hier inzitten, Cosmopolitan, maar zijn er misschien nog andere?

j: sterotiepen die mannen zijn aangemaakt door allemaal symbool te zijn

g:....

j: gerepresenteerd als bachelors

g: als alleenstaand

e: maar dat zijn het soort die de tijdschriften lezen, als je het is gewoon single mannen die dit tijdschrift lezen om te weten hoe je een vrouw kunt pakken

r: ...onverstaanbaar

't zegt niets daarover, 't zegt niet hoe je aan een vrouw geholpen kunt worden. door elkaar en

a: ok ja, dit is een grapje, gebruiksaanwijzing, je denkt over, je leest hoe je als je een vrouw ontmoet..

doorelkaar praten

j: hoe je het moet opzetten (laughs), dit is echt niet leuk, dit is echt niet leuk

te gek
zich
het is
ontkenning

21
B

er is een verschil
e: maar dat heb je ook in een vrouwentijdschrift

several people: nou nee

h: tuurlijk lees je dat, ook hoe je mannen moet behandelen, hoe je z'n ego moet strelen

j: ja, hoe je de ideale man moet vinden, maar niet echt een struction manual voor een vrouw

a: maar als dit een artikel over gebruiksaanwijzing voor de vrouw... waar is dan de gebruiksaanwijzing? Er is niks over wat je moet doen.

doorelkaar praten

er is een verschil
e: maar wat ik even wilde zeggen dat het verschil tussen volgens mij, of misschien heb ik het verkeerd begrepen, maar dat het verschil wat eronder zit, is dat het volgens mij toch over de liefde gaat, hier voor mannen, en dat vind ik wel positief en mooi, want het zegt let op want nou als je tijdschriften voor vrouwen leest, dan voelen zij zich alsof ze gejaagd zijn door mannen die niet echt verliefd zijn en zo, dus 't is gweoon door deze artikels dat mannen ook echt eh,...

g: waarom denk je dat? je hebt dus het gevoel dat een man eigenlijk wel een liefdevolle relatie wil en misschien zelfs kinderen?

e: ja natuurlijk

g: maar waarom denk je dat? waar zie je dat dus aan in het artikel?

e: dat is volgens mij, ik ken zomaar geen voorbeelden eh..

a: maar het is een grapje, eh toon van de artikel, ik ben het eens met Ellie dat op het einde zijn er niet stereotiepe mannen en die zoekt dat serieuze relatie..met kinderen en die hebben d4zelfde problemen als vrouwen en misschien zijn er vrouwen die zijn een beetje zoals die in het begin, maar er zijn ook vrouwen die zoeken een serieuze relatie en mannen ook. En er zijn heel veel mensen in de wereld die zijn heel met kinderen en ja, alles gaat goed en ze denkt niet dat over deze probvlemen. En ja misschien in vrouwentijdschriften heb je een gebruiksaanwijzing over mannen en eh dat is ook een stereotiep en je kunt niet generaliseren over mannen

er is een verschil
e: maar dat is wat het grappig maakt, dat het zo cliché is, daarom is het grappig. daarom is het zo opgebouwd. maar een voorbeeld van de manier waarop deze man naar de verhouding van deze vrouwen kijkt is op p. 48 ...dat ze 't klonk zo hopeloos gefrusteerd, 't is net alsof hij precies weet wat zij [vrouwen] nodig hebben, maar zij weten het gewoon niet en het is gewoon zo, volgens mij, nou mijn interpretatie is gewoon dat waar een gebrek aan is, is een liefdevolle relatie tussen mannen en vrouwen en nou de manier waarop die dat doet is door cliché's en zo, maar 't gaat echt over waar is eh.. de liefde in deze wereld
g: oja, zo interpreteer je het?

e: nou ja, niet zo gewoon hippie, maar..

g: je hebt een goed voorbeeld: het klonk zo hopeloos gefrusteerd, 't is bijna alsof hij de rol van psychollog op zich neemt eh, eerst beschrijft hij de vrouw op een negatieve manier en dan heb je het gevoel dat hij zichzelf een beetje in de rol van psycholoog inleeft.

Eh er zijn naar evengoed nog een heleboel andere dingen over dit artikel te zeggen, maar eigenlijk de vraag die ik nu zou willen stellen is eh. stel dat je over dit onderwerp, en het is een verschijnsel, ja?, we herkennen het als verschijnsel,

we hebben erover gehoord, die die een beetje agressieve jonge vrouwen, die mannen plagen eh stel dat je voor een totaal andere doelgroep zou schrijven, stel, misschien niet voor Cosmopolitan, maar een wat analytischer artikel, bijv. voor de Volkskrant. Hoe zou je erover schrijven, hoe zou je het aanpakken?

g: welk ander aspect zou je benaderen?

h: ja je zou het ook wat positiever kunnen benaderen, zo van ja, 't zijn nu wel de eertse of misschien al de tweede generatie onafhankelijke, financieel onafhankelijke vrouwen, die zijn voortgegroeid uit de jaren 60 die voor zichzelf prima kunnen zorgen eh die hebben eigenlijk niemand, geen ouders, geen man, niemand nodig om een dak boven hun hoofd te houden, een eigen baan te vinden, een goeie baan ook, plezier te maken onderling met vrienden e.d. en die dan inderdaad zi vrij zijn dan emotioneel om ook mannen eeh, ja dat klint wel heel negatief en zo bedoel ik 't niet, niet als speelgoed, maar niet zo zeer als maat en vader meteen te zien, en dan op latere leeftijd misschien dan wel, maar nu even niet. zo zou je er ook over kunnen schrijven.

g: ja ja

a: ja

g: dus eigenlijk vanuit een feministische visie, zeg je

h: nou ja, ik ben geen feminist, maar ja, ik ben ook opgegroeid met het idee van van ja, min of meer ik kan doen wat ik wil.

g: goed, andere ideeën misschien?

j: ja meer perspectieven van andere mensen ...[onverstaanbaar] bijvoorbeeld ze gaat over mannen schrijven dan gewoon mannen vragen en ook vrouwen die zeggen, ja ik heb mijn carrière, ik heb geld, ik heb dit, maar..ik heb ook een man gevonden en eh 't gaat toch prima en we zijn even belangrijk en eh..

a: ja, maar ook vrouwen die geen man zoeken..

jo: en geen foto's

j+a: ja en geen foto's

g: ja over die foto's zou ik eigenlijk nog wat verder door willen praten,

j: ja, maar meer perspectieven van de verschillende mensen die hij over schrijft of die hij beschrijft

a: en misschien vrouwen en mannen van een andere leeftijd dat er dus jonge vrouwen, maar ook vrouwen die later ... op het begin van hun leven dit hebben gedaan, maar die later een man hebben gevonden en kinderen hebben of niet

j: maar ook vrouwen die blij zijn zonder man

g: ja ja ok.

Appendix 4

Transcript lesson 2, 5 February 2002

zh
Andy

Transcriptie les 5 februari met Nederlandse studenten

~~Emma, Elle, Claire and~~ niet aanwezig.

Wel aanwezig: ~~Martje, Jasmijn~~ (nederlandse studenten) ~~Emma, Elle, Claire and~~

~~Chris~~

Martje and Jasmijn

Chris

inleiding waarin ik voorgaande lessen samenvat en een korte discussie heb met studenten om te bespreken dat hun huiswerk (analyse volgens framework van een tekst (die van LW?) erg goed geschreven was. Studenten gaven daarvoor als reden: het onderwerp, oefening tot nu toe, en handig om het framework te hebben.

G: Vandaag gaan we de MH tekst bekijken als cultuurtekst (uitleg voor Ned studenten wat dat betekent)

sommigen van jullie hebben daar een goeg tsukje over geschreven....uitvloiesel van dat netwerk van etc..... daar zijn we nog niet echt op doorgegaan, maar de dingen die jullie geschreven hebben brengen ook verschillende dingen naar voren.

Wat is jullie (ned studenten) eerste reactie op de tekst... puur persoonlijk en waar ging de tekst over naar jouw gevoel?

Oz: heel herkenbaar, ja als je naar programma's kijkt als 'sex in de city' en Ally mc Beal dan gaat het echt daarover. En dit artikel, ja dat was niet iets nieuws..... ik herkende alles.

g: je herkende, wat precies

o: Nou zeg maar die hoger opgeleide vrouwen die een man wil om haar leven, zeg maar, compleet te maken en dat lees je ook in tijdschriften als Cosmopolitan en normale kranten ook e.d., voorgekauwd spul was dit.... ja dat heb ik heel vaak gelezen

g: ja, mm, dat was niet echt onze reactie he, dat dit heel herkenbaar was?

H: nee, ik denk dat 't niet zozeer herkenbaar is dat het een feit is, dat het wel echt vaak voorkomt in tijdschriften en op t.v. juist, maar ...

g: ja, maar ik denk ook dat de reactie van ons was, we herkennen dit soort vrouwen niet, we komen dit soort vrouwen niet tegen.

I: dat was mijn reactie ook wel. Om nou te zeggen.. ja ik herken het natuurlijk ook wel, ik heb ook artikelen gelezen dat je ook over al die series op tv over vrouwen,...

a: ja dat stereotiepe ook

i: ja en als ik dan denk van... ja ik herken het omdat ik er vaker over heb gelezen, ik herken het niet als verschijnsel in de maatschappij... ik heb dit soort vrouwen nog nooit gezien. Ja, eigenlijk vind ik het een beetje belachelijk dat mannen vernielen, ik vind dat heeeel kinderachtig. Zijn er echt vrouwen.. is er een hele beweging van vrouwen die dat soort dingen serieus doen?

o: ja, je leest er wel verhalen over, maar gebeurt het ook op grote schaal? Ik ken persoonlijk niemand die zo is.

(GQ ik had moeten vragen of dat belangrijk is of je zulke mensen kent, het gaat met schrijven over verschijnsels vaak over een kleine groep, als je wel mensen kent die zo zijn is het al zo common place dat je er niet meer over hoeft te schrijven)

H; misschien dat soort benoemingen dan, van mannen of vrouwen vernielers, misschien is dat ooit een keer gezegd als grapje, en is dat gewoon opgenomen in de maatschappij en is dat opgenomen door mannen, of ja, door wie, en misschien van daar is het een verschijnsel in de geschreven.... eh pers geworden, want ja, ik denk ja er zijn vaak genoeg vrouwen inderdaad die toch gewoon gelukkig zijn om alleen te zijn en die inderdaad op een beetje fun uit zijn, die wel eens een man versieren, 't is niet zozeer dat ze een man willen vernielen, maar net alles mannen, die willen verder niks.... (onverstaanbaar) ... ja, en daar houdt het dan mee op.

i: ja 't kan ook best wel dat je.... want het is natuurlijk een heel interessant onderwerp, iets zoals dit, dus als je er ook maar een klein beetje aan ruikt of iets opvangt wat een beetje in die trant zit van bvrouwen die een man gaan vernielen, dat klinkt heel interessant en dan kun je daar ook een prachtig artikel over schrijven wat al die mannen ook als een gek gaan zitten te lezen ... ik bedoel 't blijft gewoon een ontzettend interessant onderwerp man versus vrouwen.

h: ja precies, kijk wat een man doet, als een man uitgaat en een vrouw versiert, nou dat is gewoon normaal, niemand kijkt daar van op, maar als een vrouw dat doet dat wordt nog steeds gewoon beoordeeld.

i: misschien is dat dan wel de waarde of het beeld dat je eruit kunt halen, he dat 't van vrouwen niet dat 't niet bij ons beeld van vrouwen past om uit te gaan en mannen te versieren,

j: want net zoals helen zei om een man uit gaan met een vrouw, die wil alleen maar vrijen met een vrouw, die wil naar een mooi restaurant gaan en misschien wat leuks, bloemetjes voor haar kopen, maar op het eind wil hij haar in bed hebben. ...

GQ dit is op zich zelf een stereotiep beeld, wat je ook uit de tekst kan halen, jammer dat ze daar niet naaar verwijst

... maar als een vrouw dat doet, die vrouw heeft geen moraal of zo, geen moraliteit en die is een voorbeeld van die mannenvernier-type vrouwen, maar dat is gewoon twee kanten...

g: ja waar gaat het danover naar jouw gevoel? gaat het dan over het feit dat vrouwen nu die mannenelijke waarden hebben overgenomen, ze willen ook een man in bed hebben of...

j: nee meer zoals ja er zijn zoveel mannen die dat doen, ja er bestaan wel een paar vrouwen die hetzelfde doen, maar waarom zijn zij zo beoordeeld in vergelijking met die mannen?

g: waarom zijn zij zo veroordeeld wat is het precies waarom zij zo worden veroordeeld?

h: door hun gedrag?

g: ja, maar wat precies?

? het mannen vernielen

G: hoe beschrijft hij het mannen vernielen dan, wat is het mannen vernielen?

GQ ik wil ze weer naar de tekst terug brengen

h: een beetje flirten zoenen, en dat soort ding, 't schijnt verschrikkelijk te zijn als een vrouw dat doet

a: ja de auteur zegt, waar ... ja welke man heeft er geen (the rest of the quote follws) ..renedement, dus ja hij denkt dat als je dingetjes investeert, met humor of bloemetjes en anderendingen je moet automatisch rendement hebben sexueel of niet [.....] en vrouwen denkt niet opdezelfde manier. 't is meer

g: ja dat is een heel interessante zin die hij daar schrijft he, want dat geeft inderdaad aan dat mannen verwachten npg steeds... welke waarde spreekt daar dan uit uit die zin?

j: ja maar alsd je naar een kroeg...

h: ja mannen die verwachten wel als ze geïnvesteerd hebben op wat voor manier dan ook, dan verwachten ze wel iets terug en dat is meestal dan ja, sex... en dat is normaal dat is gewoon acceptabel in de maatschappij dan maar als het andersom is..

oz: maar die vrouwen die vertonen dat gedrag met het doel mannen te vernielen die ... dat is fout aan hun gedrag.. daar gaat het artikel toch om?

g: ja

Oz: dat ze zeg maar... mannen vernielen en dat is hun plan omdat ze zelf (woord onverstaanbaar) stuk gelopen relaties hebben of zo...

a: maar ik denk.. je moet vragen waarom de vrouwen denken dit en willen mannen vernielen. Ik denk dat ze zijn gewoon boos

oz: (onverstaanbaar)

a: over de mannen

oz: over de mannen wordt niet gesproken in dit artikel..

a: nee... er zijn geen mannen in dir artikel.

g: nou ja, hij zelf dan en ...

h: maar er wordt ook niet uitgelegd waarom ze dat zeggen. Misschien is het gewoon bedoeld als grapje, dat weet je nietmaar het wordt in dit stukje niet gezegd. Later wordt het in het stukje gesuggereerd dat ze gewoon emotioneel gefrustreerd zijn omdat ze al een stuk relaties achter de rug hebben, maar dat is niet...dat zeggen zij [g: de vrouwen?] dus niet.

g: maar misschien als we gaan kijken naar precies welke waarden in dat stuk zitten en of dat contrsant dezelfde waarden zijn of dat er vverschillen in zijn dat we op eeb gegeven moment missschien tot de conclusie kunnen komen van ja, waarom zegt-ie dit nou? Op wat voor manier is dit nou een weergave van een stukje , indit geval dus de nedrerlanadse, cultuur? Hoewel, het is een vrij globaal

kan niet
aspect
dat wat
wekt

in de
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suggestie
en de
zaken
somme
keuze

verschijnsel, hij verwijst ook naar... Ja ik ken Ally Mc beal niet ik weet niet of dat een Engels of Amerikaans programma

ss: Amerikaans

en Bridget Jones heeft ie het over, dus het is een algemeen globaal populair verschijnsel. Op het eind is het misschien leuk om te kijken of het in Nederland misschien anders wordt geïnterpreteerd dan zoals jullie het kennen.

Maar als we eerst nu kijken naar de zin die jij (Amy) citeerde bijvoorbeeld, dat geeft duidelijk een heel traditionele waarde aan, het feit dat de man de macht heeft, en dat ... zoals je al zegt dat als je iets investeert je geeft dus dat je er iets voor terug krijgt, dus je zou kunnen zeggen dat is so wie so al een cultureel verschijnsel. dat doen we in onze cultuur: je geeft iets dus je verwacht er iets voor terug. Maar als je dan kijkt.... Klopt dat?

J: ja want als je naar een kroeg gaat en een man zegt wil je iets drinken, en als jij dan ja zegt op dat ogenblik wil hij iets van jou terug...

R en Jo: nee

j: ja misschien lekker babbelen door elkaar praten

a: ja misschien moet je een drinkje voor hem kopen, maar niet altijd seksueel

g: nee 't hoeft niet altijd per se seksueel te zijn

j: ja, maar hij wil met je babbelen of zo iets als een (mooie?) vrouw naar de kroeg gaat en een oudere man komt bij haar..

h: hij hoeft niet ouder te zijn door elkaar praten

a: 't grootste probleem is dat mannen en vrouwen denken niet op dezelfde manier en sorry hoor voor de mannen die hier zitten maar ik denk dat voor mannen een biertje in een kroeg is goed genoeg om seks te krijgen, maar voor een vrouw is het niet goed genoeg, je moet meer doen.

j: ..goedkoop

laughter

a: nee ik denk i,25 of iets voor een bier en eh ja..

g: klopt dat, wat jij zegt, met de rest van het artikel?

a: nee ik denk dat het eerste ding dat hij zegt in het artikel, ik denk dat hij praat over een klein procent van vrouwen die mannen verniet en ze zijn heel ja streng, ze hebben macht en ze hebben, ja hoe zeg je dat masculine traits, ze zijn een beetje als mannen en dan praat je over mannen die eh...

h: maar waarom, mag ik je even vragen, waarom je vindt dat het masculinistisch is of mannelijke eigenschappen

g: ja inderdaad, wat voor mannelijke eigenschappen eh... op een gegeven moment verwijst hij vrij specifiek naar mannelijke eigenschappen

a: ja ok dat is ..want het eerste stukje heeft hij het over vrouwen want hij heeft het over attitude en zij denkt één ding

g: ja over attitude. Kijk inderdaad naar dat eerste stukje

a: ja maar... moment

g: ja?

laughter

misschien
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a: ik wil zeggen dat het tweede stukje of de vraag die ik heb geciteerd zijn mannen en die denkt in dezelfde manier als die eerste vrouwen, zoals Karin en haar vriendinnen. En dit voor mij is niet normaal voor een vrouw. ik ken geen vrouwen die zijn hetzelfde, die mannen vernielt, maar..

g: ja maar wat je daar aanwijst zijn gewoon vrouwen die worden beschreven in hun levensstijl, nog niet eens zozeer hun levensstijl, maar wat ze hebben, als consumer he?

a: ja,

G: en jij vindt dat mannelijk. Wat is er mannelijk aan?

GQ ik wilde eruit krijgen dat mannen normaalgesproken als succesvol en consumers worden voorgesteld in dit soort bladen.

a: Ik vind dat mannelijk want de vraag die ik citeer over seksueel rendement ..voor mij is dat heel mannelijk, want ik vind dat dat is hetzelfde als de vrouwen in het eertse voorbeeld en dus voor mij is dat eh hij doet een eh 't franse woord rapprochement eh ja..

laughter

a: wat is dat in het Nederlands of Engels? 't brengt dat eh..

i: toenadering

a: ja,

g: hij brengt die twee dingen bij elkaar

a: ja

G: maar hoe.. wat is er nou precies ...hoe komt dat dat dat op elkaar lijkt.. het feit dat vrouwen eerst worden beschreven met wat ze dragen... designer clothes, cellulitis vrij. . getrainde billen..

laughter

g: je zou kunnen zeggen dat daar een soort...

a: op zich is dat mannelijk want

h: neee, waarom?

a: ja dat hele ...

h: als je succesvol bent, bent je dan mannelijk als vrouw?

a: nee, maar..

h: maar at zeg je dan

a: nee ik vind dat als je dat vind belangrijk, ja ik vind dat een beetje mannelijk

h: dus jij wil gewoon onderdanig blijven aan een man en met geld....

g: helen, Amy zegt volgens mij niet dat dat mannelijk is, maar dat dat de schrijver het presenteert als mannelijk, dat de maatschappij dat zo vindt. doorelkaar praten and laughter

a: maar wanneer je een lijst maakt met alle dingen.. ik

h: hij beschouwt het als mannelijk

a: ja als je geen namen hebt, als je zegt dat hij eh Maarten en zijn drie vriendin eh vrienden, dan voor mij is dat misschien niet zo, ja, misschien niet die billen

.....

laughter

g: Nou die billen zijn wel belangrijk natuurlijk. waarom zijn die ..

a: seksueel

g: omdat hij toch de vrouw daardoor als seksueel aantrekkelijk neerzet.

h: dus als ze dan dit allemaal hadden maar toch die cellulitus dan was er toch niet zo...onverstaanbaar door het doorelkaarpraten

a: luister....dakterras of balkon, ja vlot karretje, ja niet die cellulitus, hoe zeg je dat voor mannen is dat eh... hoe zeg je..

sommige studenten: sixpack

i of oz: wasboord

GQ leuk dat studenten uit zichzelf het scenario proberen om te draaien

a: wasboord, ja make-up niet, maar koelkast met zalm en champagne en die job met uitdagende perspectieven, ja voor mij dat kan mannelijk ook..

j: typisch zo'n bachelor..

a: meer mannen zijn. ja dit zijn mannen, niet vrouwen, dus ik vind het moeilijk om te denken, ja er zijn vrouwen die zijn in hetzelfde eh ja categorie of zo.

g: ja inderdad, dus hij beschrijft vrouwen op een manier die hij ook zou gebruiken om mannen te beschrijven, z zijn succesvol, dingen die voor een man zeer aantrekkelijk zouden zijn. en vooral die cellulitus vr getr billen, dat komt uit MH er zijn heel veel artikels daarin over hoe je een wasboord kan krijgen.

laughter

g: dus het is ...de vrouw wordt beschreven in die succesvolle..economisch succesvolle termen en het prestatatiegerichte...eh hij zegt ook op een gegeven moment eh...hij definieert het mannelijk zijn als eh prestaties verrichten ..op blz ik weet niet zo gauw.

i: ja op blz 49 aan het einde.. 'zo bouwen ze een ,,,, door het leveren van bepaalde prestaties'

g: ja inderdaad, [ik herhaal het]..is een mannelijke identiteit, ja dus met andere woorden, prestaties leveren is een mannelijke eh karaktertrek.

h: ja dan ben ik het met je eens dat het inderdaad zo gepresenteerd is, maar

a; ja, ja

h; maar

g: ja je bent het niet eens met wat ie zegt.

h: nee

g: maar dat is ook eigenlijk de waarde die in de tekst zit.

Ik vind de zin die je citeert ook interessant die van dat sexuele rendement. er wordt dus iets gezegd van: iets terug, we geven iets he, dat is een waarde die vrij algemeen geaccepteerd is in de maatschappij: je geeft iets aan iemand en op de een of andere manier verwacht je toch iets terug.

R: ik geloof dat het hele artikel in het kader van Playboy is geschreven, in het kader van de Playboy ethiek.

G: ja, leg eens uit.

r: nou, ..

A: ik heb Playboy niet gelezen, dus. Ja sorry hoor.

g: de vrouw als .sexueel...

r: de vrouw als sex object en de man als een wezen die rendement wil krijgen ...

g: ja.. maar dat is vooral dat citaat...

r: het is vooral het Amerikaanse

g; heb je het gevoel dat dat het hele artikel...reflecteert?

dat citaat inderdaad

r: mmmm, ja ik denk het wel?

g: zijn daar misschien andere ideeën over. Heb je het gevoel dat de vrouw in het hele artikel als sexobject wordt neergezet? Het is een van de waarden die strek naar voren komt...

a: niet op het eind. Op het eind is ze moeder

i: ja, iemand met wie je een gelijkwaardige relatie kunt hebben. daar gaat het ook om. dat is het probleem van de vrouwen die hier worden geschetst, dat xze zelf, eh dat ze die bepaalde eigenschappen hebben he door het leveren van prestaties en ze zijn heel fel en ze kunnen heel goed kritieken en ze gaan en ze gaan de discussie met iedereen aan en daardoor hebben ze een pantser en daardoor kunnen ze niet een gelijkwaardige relatie met iemand anders aan gaan. Dus daar zijn ze niet als lustobject, maar gewoon als iemand die op hetzelfde niveau staat.

g: maar die zich inderdaad pansert. 't woord pantsen is interessant..

a: wat bedoelt pansert?

g: pantsen is ehh ja eh een barrier, ja je beschermt je, een hatd laagje om jezelf heen

r: als een pantserwagen

g: ja, een pantserwagen. Nog even terugkomn op jouw citaat. welke eh, de woorden die gebruikt worden eh iets investeren, rendement, kapitaal...

a: het is financieel

j: ja, finacniele woorden

g: ja het verwijst naar zo'n kaptialistische cultuur eigenlijk

a: maar herinner je je Ellie's commentaar op het begin over de foto's?

ze zegt dat de foto's bedoelt dat dit is het soort vrouwen dat mannen zoeken, en ze zegt dat, ja op het einde zijn twee andere foto's en ze zegt, ja de man is hier, maar je ziet [hem] niet, maar je ziet een grote foto van de vrouw die deze mannen zoeken en dit artikel is over waarom deze vrouwen wilde de man niet (GQ: bedoelt ze: de mannen willen die vrouwen niet hebben of andersom?) en waarom het werkt niet en waarom zijn er problemen met deze vrouwen in de wereld en ja wat zijn de problemen van deze vrouwen en waarom de mannen heeft geen succes nu en geen sexuele rendement. ja en op het eind, je zoekt sexuele renement want je zoekt een relatie, een serieuze relatie. Ja, dat is misschien niet het belangrijkste punt, maar het is eenonderdeel van vrouwen, en ja de perfect vrouwen of de ideale vrouwen

g: ja, als ik je goed heb begrepen, zeg je van eh er is dus een grote tegenstelling van aan de ene kant zoeken ze dit soort vrouwen aan de andere kant wijzen ze ze af.

a: ja

g: goed, misschien is eht nu tijd om een lijstje te maken. hoe worden vrouwen, hoe worden mannen, hoe wordt vrouwelijk kraktertrekken, identiteit beschreven, hoe wordt mannelijke identiteit beschreven en inderdaad zit er een verschil in, en is dat consequent. Welke waarden spreken daaruit?

We hebben bijvoorbeeld al gezegd die economische waarde, die men's helath waarden van eh de consumer cultuur en eh het er goed uitzien. En er zitten natuurlijk andere waarden is.

j: heb je misschien nog steeds het lijstje gemaakt. ik heb eeb lijstje gemaakt van de woorden, [GQ: ze bedoelt een huiswerkoefening nav mijn framework)

g: ja ja, ik heb het denk ik boven, ah hier heb ik hem

Zou je daar in groepjes eventjes naar kunnen kijken?

We hebben daar, misschien om even uit te leggen aan Ineke en OZelm. We hebben gekeken naar het artikel van LW vorige week en we hebben daar gezien howe mannen en vrouwen werden beschreven. We hebben gekeken vooral naar de grammatic: zijn het actieve zinnen, zijn het apssieve zinnen. is de man object of subject en verder wat voor adjectieven worden gebruikt en welek zelfstandige naamwoorden om het mannelijke of het vrouwelijk te beschrijven? Maar onze conclusie van LW was dat het was vrij extreem en echt consequent dat LW ..dat alle mannen, bij alle zinnen waar mannern voorkwamen, daar was de man object of het was een passieve zin, als hij subject was. en er waren maar een paar zinnen waarin hij actief was, en dat waren dan vooral zinnen waarin hij werd beschreven, dus hij deed verder niks, en dat waren allemaal negatieve karaktertrekken. terwijl all zinnen waarin vrouwen werden beschreven waren actief en echte werkwoorden die actief waren en productieve werkwoorden over denken en analyseren en ja, dat deden de vrouwen.

je hoeft er niet zo lang aan te besteden...

[studenten zijn actief bezig en bespeken druk de verschillende woorden met elkaar]

g: kijk ook naar toon, of het gebruik van bepaalde woorden de toon verandert/

j: over het hele artikel?

g: ja maar lees het niet helemaal opnieuw door, je kunt het vrij snel zien.

[fragmenten die de tape recorder opving:

i en h: je, heel eenzijdig

ja 't gaat ook over status, 't zijn allemaal statussymbolen,

carriere, dat dat een relatie kleurt zeg maar

hij geeft wel haar gedachten weer

ik denk dat hij het gewoon aanneemt

'meiden, dat gebruik je niet voor vrouwen van 35]

g: probeer er zosnel mogelijk door heen te gaan en kijk ook naar de psycholloge he, zij is een vrouw en hoe citeert zij de andere vrouwen

[ik vind het toch heel nïgatief, ja, je krijgt het gevoel, ze zeggen het wel maar ze menen het niet,

ik vind het toch een beetje cru.

systematisch? dat snap ik niet. wat s er systematisch aan?

alsof ze volgens een systeem werken

vrouw alleen kan noey gelukkig zijn zonder kind en man, eigenlijk is dat zijn hele theorie}

g: dat stukje over die filmmaakster, misschien moet je dat laten zitten. dat hangt er zo'n beetje vreemd tussen in he?.

[cariierevrouwen, bedrijfsleven,
raakt er verstrikt in, net alsof zij een boze tovernares is ,
haar zachte kant, dat is dus die andere kant van die vrouwen...die de man
verwacht of zo?ja, 't is zelfvernietiging eigenlijk
ze moet wat zachter zijn...
gebruiksaanwijzing; dat woord gebruik je alleen maar over apparaten eigenlijk.
**GQ die had ik zelf nog niet opgepikt en is in de discussie niet naar voren
gekomen geloof ik, maar is een interessant punt: vrouw al
gebruiksapparaat en ding
glunderen, ja dat is eigenlijk...]**

G: goed, ok. hoe evrandert de toon? we hebben al zo vaak gezegd, dingen kloppen gewoon niet he, dus we weten dat er een tegenstrijdigheid in zit, he, dat kunnen we nu al zeggen, hoe verandert die toon? hoe worden vrouwen, of mannen, in het begin weergegeven?

h: oppervlakkig

g: ja, op wat voor manier?

g: oppervlakkig in de zin van alleen maar geïnteresseerd zijn in uiterlijkheden

i: als statussymbol,

g: statussymbool als door geld, wat ze zich kunnen veroorloven

i: ja maar toch niet negatief oppervlakkig, ze zijn leuk, goed gekleed, 't zijn wel positieve dingen, maar 't blijft inderdaad aan de oppervlakte

a: maar 't is teveel

g: maar heb je het gevoel dat hij het positief of negatief bedoeld?

sss: negatief

g; waarom zou hij het negatief bedoelen?

j; hij maakt het belachelijk

O: ja dure dingen het moet wel negatief zijn

g: dingen die je ook op mannen zou kunnen toepassen en daar dan positief zouden zijn?

ss:ja

g: ok hoe verandert de toon daarna: hoe beschrijft hij de vrouwen in het volgende stukje, we hebben ze al...wat krijgen we dan , die interessante zin, van sexuele redendement(consumers) ^

ss: als cockteasers

a: maar het is cliché, avontuurtjes en de cockteasing en de sport, het is een sport om mannen te vernielen

h: het is het gedrag van de vrouwen onderstrepen als slecht wat in een man..

ss: goed is..

h:..goedgekeurd zou worden

is the
duty
of
the
people
to
keep
the
peace
and
order
in
the
country.

field
Spec
coll
diel
pest
H. S. U. K.
varney
judgment

G: ja , 't agressief zijn, 't plagen, 't alleen op sex uit zijn.. hoewel zijn ze [de vrouwen] uit op een avondje sex? [citeert: sarren, flirten, een beetje zoenen etc.]

h: wie zal het zeggen, misschien wel, misschien niet

g: dus daar zit een grote verwaaring in, dat hij amnnelijkmwaarden weergeeft, maar vrouwen hebben [doen] dat nu, dus dat is impliciet heel slecht.

Dan wat krijgen we dan, dan hebben we die interessante zin van; welke man heeft er geen avonden gespedeerd? dus dan krijgen we dat financiële taalgebruik om aan te gevendat zijn tarditionele macho waarden?.. dat vrouwen traditionele waarden niet meer accepteren?

..en dan...

a : hij schetst ze als zielig daarna

g: hij schets ze als zielig, heb je het gevoel dat hij meeleeft met hen/ probeert hij hen te begrijpen?

h; nee

oz: maar daarna heeft hij het toch over waarom zij zo zijn, dus hij wil wel weten waaron zij zich zo gedargen?

g: ja, hoe beschrijft hij Sybille Labrijn, een vrouw die eigenlijk in precies diezelfde groep thuishoort he, 35 jaar, hoogopegeleid, zal ongetwijfeld ook een goed inkomen hebben, hoe beschrijft hij haar?

i: ik vind dat-ie ook zo heel duidelijk haar leeftijd er bij zet he, wat ie precies hetzelfde doet bij die andere vrouwen waar hij het over heeft. dus hoij wil al zeggen, ja ze is belangrijk, want ze valt in precies diezelfde leeftijdsgroep, dus ze is dan aan de ene kant expert, maar aan de andere kant is ze zelf daar ook een voorbeeld van, tenmisnste dat begint hij hier te suggereren he, ze is hoogopeleid, ze is 35..

G: maar ... zij is geen mannenvernieler dus zij is misschien een voorbeeld van hoe die doelgroep zou moeten zijn. Hoe beschrijft hij haar precies?

i; nou dat ze onderzoek heeft gedaan naar de relatie perikelen van de succesvrouw

G: dus zij is zeer actief, dus de acties die zij doet zijn zeer indrukwekkend academisch, zij is een zeer succesvolle vrouw zelf, onderzoek uitvoeren, zij publiceert...

i: nouuuu...

a: is uitputten een beetje negatief>?

i: ik vind het wel eigenlijk

g: nou uitputten betekent dat zij diep heeft gegraven..

i: ja, maar relatieperikelen, zoiets oppervlakaakigs waar je allemaal simpele boekjes over hebt van : hoe vind ik een amn, bla bla bla... die waarden..

a: ja precies... is het alleen een vraag.. is het een baan of is het, ja uitputtend kan misschien negatief zijn

g: ja kan misschien negatief zijn? en relatieperikelen dat neemt ook een beetje,, eh de werkwoorden die hij beschrijft zijn zeer positief, ze doet waardevol werk, maar met 're'atieperikelen' wordt dat een beetje afgezwakt.

a: Ja, it belittles een beetje

g: ja, 't kleineert 't een beetje..

dan het volgende stukje hoe worden vrouwen in dit stukje van Sybille labrijn beschreven

oz; slachtoffers...ze zijn zelf gekwetst ...

g; ja inderdaad, maar, ze gebruikt zelf het woord salchtoffer niet, het is een heel geladen woord.

j@ ze zegt bewapenen en als jezelf wil bewapenen, dan heb je een tegenstander, dus misschien ben je geen slachtoffer... maar...

[doorelkaar praten]

h: vind ik wel als slachtoffer

oz: ik bedoel als ze een goede relatie had, zou ze dat niet gedaan hebben..

g: slachtoffer geeft weer dat ze echt lijden..

oz: ja maar ze kunnen geen relatie vinden dus daarom zijn ze...

h; ja

g: maar is het echt negatief ... heb je niet het gevoel dat ze het begint af te zwakken het slachtoffer zijn?

oz; ja want we/ze/ hebben meer sociale vaardigheden?..

g: ja, de woorden... kwetsen of zijn gekwetst, ze verschuilen zich achter...woorden die je tegenkomt in wat voor gebied?

j; [sugar lumps?...] *aut
et
what
~
28*

g; ... de discourses.. opwat voor gebied... wanneer gebruik je dat soort woorden? relaties achter de rug hebben, kwetsingen..?

we hebben het gehad over discourses vorige keer.... komt iets uit een feministisches, kaptalistieche discourse... welk geboied...

stilte

g: ... het tehrapie-achtige over persoonlijke relaties praten

i: mm *us
heeft
in media*

g: dus hiet wordt het echt op een...uiteraard want ze is een psychollog..op psychologische termen beschreven. Welke waarden spreken daar uit? waardeert hij wat zij doet?

i: ja

oz: ...{moeilijk te verstaan} hij zet haar in tgenstelling tot die andere vrouwen.Misschien wil hij wel dat alle vrouwen zo zijn dat ze erover nadenken, dat ze ...ja, ik denk dat hij het wel goed vindt wat ze doet...

g: ja

oz; over het algemeen vind ik het wel positief.

g: ja

a: ja, 't is heel gemakkelijk om te zeggen, o ik ben slachtoffer ik ben een succesvolle carriervrouw en er is een ding dat ik niet kan doen en dat is een man vinden en dus moet ik een slachtoffer zijn en ja, ik heb mislukte relaties achter de rug en ...eh 't is heel makkelijk om te zeggen als je niet kijkt naar de redenen, de oorzaak, ja ik weet niet, ik hou niet van psycho-analyse en andere dingen.

g: ok, je houdt daar niet van. eh hij beschrijft ze niet zozeer alleen als slachtoffer naar mijn gevoel, het slachtoffer heeft de connotatie dat ze ontzettend hebben gelden, heb je het gevoel dat ze ontzettend gelden hebben?

ik bedoel ze hebben problemen gehad natuurlijk

h: maar toch, ja, toch wel

oz: misschien dat ze wel een relatie achter de rug hebben, misschien dat ze wel mishandeld zijn

g: ja, maar hebben ze dat?

h: nee maar

oz: nee het wordt niet gezegd, maar het kan wel

h: zo hopeloos gefrusteerd, zo aan het eind van je latijn.

i: er iets psychisch met ze

g@ ja ze hebben psychische problemen,

i: ja ze zijn niet zozeer slachtoffers maar het zijn mensen die op een bepaalde manier ziek zijn en die hulp nodig hebben dat ...

g@ en dat wordt dan verder beschreven op blz. 49, dat stukje van die filmmaakster

h: dat wanhopig zoekende

a: ja, maar ik vind dat raar, want wanhopig zoekend... eh het was een film desperately seeking

i: ik vind ook die hele tegenstelling: wanhopig zoekend versus succesvrouw dus ze zegt dat als een vrouw succesvol is in haar werk dan is ze vreselijk ongelukkig want ze is juist wanhopig op zoek naar een man... en van een carrière wordt je uiteindelijk niet gelukkig komen die vrouwen pas achter als ze de 35 gepasseerd zijn

a: en op het eind zegt ze ook o kijk alles gaat goed, nu heb ik een carrière en ook een man en kind.

h: maar dat is zijn bevestiging van zijn argument, dit allerlaatste stukje dat is zo doorelaar praten

't is zo kunstmatig in elkaar gezet, hij kan zijn argument gewoon duidelijk bevestigen.

g: maar bevestigt hij zijn argument op het eind? want op het eind zegt hij dus heel duidelijk, een vrouw wordt alleen maar gelukkig als ze een vaste relatie heeft...

h: ja, precies

G: in wat voor taalgebruik doet hij dat, als we het hebben over die discourses, hij Praat over aankondigingen en geboorte kaartjes, ik denk, ja, dat is niet het belangrijkste ding in mijn leven, ja sorry hoor, maar

g@ maar hoe zou je dat,... dat is een bepaalde beschrijving van een bepaalde culturele praktijk, he de geboortekaartjes en de huwelijksaankondigen.

wat vinden jullie als Nederlanders? hoe zou je dat plaatsen, als je het hebt over huwelijksaankondigingen en geboortekaartjes? bij welke groep mensen zou je dat plaatsen?

i: nou ik dnek vooral bij mensen die het gaat om de status, want als jij een geboortekaartje stuurt dat zegt verder niks over dat je blij bent met je kind of hoe die hele situatie, maar eerder dat je anderen mensen wil laten weten, he ik ga trouwen, ik heb een kind,

a: ja, ik heb dit, ik heb dat

g: heb je ook niet het gevoel dat het intens burgerlijk is?

i: ja

r: ja

g: en hiet wordt labrijn dus beschreven in woorden als..

i: ja, ze glunderde

g: ze glimlachte, ze glunderde, hij is echt een staaltje MH, 't gaat hartstikke goed

h: ja ze is een succesvolle carrièrevrouw, ze is hoogopgelied die zich toch toch

g: maar met welke waarden associeer je dit taalgebruik

i: ik vind het een beetje denigrerend, 't is kinderlijk

g@ ja/ bedoelt hij het als kinderlijk? denk je?

h: ja ik vind het toch wel een beetje patronising

i: ja, ik denk toch dat ie dat vrouwen niet helemaal op een gelijk niveau staan, ze zijn toch een stukje simpeler dan mannen

sss; ja ja

a; simpeler en kijk ze hebben een kind en een man en alles gaat goed

g; dat trouwen en kind krijgen dat overtreft haar carrière

ozl: 't is een bewijs dat hij gelijk heeft en daar eindigt hij zijn artikel mee

*h: ja, precies

g: ja, ok is het ook een taal die je verwacht van mannen? ok hij citeert haar, maar toch hij gebruikt glundert

h: ja hij doet dat echt met opzet..

g: dat hioj het vrouwelijkh tgebruik... dus welke waarden spreken daaruit? dat traditionele...

h: nee niet zozeer vrouwelijk taal kiest at hij t^{al} kiest dat een beetje, ja wat is het nederlandse woord, een beetje patronising

iG: betuttelend, denigrerend

h: dat het betuttelend juist overkomt. en dat helpt hem met de bevestiging van zijn argument dat een vrouw toch pas gelukkiger is met een man

g: wat vinden jullie daarvan?

oz; ja hij zegt dat het traditionele systeem werkt.

g: ja, waar kom je dat [soort taal en ideeën] tegen ? Is dat Cosmopolitan?

H: nee het is de Flair, laughter

g ik ken de flair niet, kun je het omschrijven?, Cosmopolitan is de succesvolle vrouw

h: 't is een burgerlijk blad

laughter

i: ik vind....

[doorelkaar praten]

h; of de margriet of de Libelle

ss ja ja

g: dus we hebben nu allerlei verschillende waarden. alleen dat stuk waar we het nog niet echt over hebben gehad, dat middenstuk, daar zet hij de vrouw neer in dat therapeutische en psychologische woordgebruik, heb je het gevoel dat hij negatief vind, heb je het gevoel dat hij over therapie spreekt als van ze hebben problemen, ze moeten maar zorgen, dat ze die problemen oplossen of probeert hij zich in de huid van de vrouwen in te denken en heb je het gevoel dat hij sympathie heeft voor de therapie, denk je dat hij er positief tegenopver staat.

J: nee, maar hij zou het wel als feit kunnen gebruiken of zo, als hij aan therapeutische mensen spreekt of zo, dan klinkt zijn rapport meer feitelijk, meet

geonderzoekt of weet ik veel..maar als hij gewoon met de man op straat spreken , o ja dat is gewoon een mening ...maar als hij spreken met iemand die hogeropgeleid is dan is het feit, vooral omdat het [onverstaanbaar]

g: ja, ok dus hij ziet verkeerd...

h: ik vind dat hij is meer medelijdend dan meelevend

i: mmm, ja ik denk dat dat wel meevalt, want doordat ie die Sybille L, hij laat heer heel veel aan het woord, alsof ie echt bezig is om haar te laten uitleggen van hoe zit 't nou precies, dues ik heb toch wel het idee dat- ie daar serieus mee bezig is

oz: maar dat laatste stukje is anders dan waar hij met gebruiksaanwijzing bezig is, [citeert: gebryuiksaanwezig..moet haar leren lezen etc.] dat vind ik toch wel anders dan het stukje daarvoor.

g: maar ik kan toch wel zien wat ineke bedoelt, therapie is niet iets wat hoij afwijst en zegt: o die vrouwen hebben problemen [**GQ dat bedoelt Ozlem misschien ook**]

maar therapie wordt hier toch iets als een serieuze oplossing gezien,

i: ja hij doet er niet echt denigrerend over, terwijl ik uit het eerste stukje wel meer had dat hij wel denigrerend was over die vrouwen die problemen hadden en misschien niet helemaal 100% zijn

g: ja, en hier schrijft hij er serieuzer over.

GQ misschien bedoelt Ellie dat als ze het heeft over een serieus stuk, misschine ziet zij en andere studenten een bepaald aspect en danken dan dat de hele tekst in dat licht staat. helen ziet het vanuit een manier en Robin. met zijn opmerking over hele stuk vanou Playboy eigenlijk ook.

g: nou welke tegengestelde waarden spreken hier dus uit/ we hebben gehad, traditionele mannelijke er zit een traditioneel rollen patroon in, de man als overwinnaar en jager , de vrouw als , hij noemt het heir vrij specifiek, ze moet haar zachte kant ontdekken..

i: (lacht) ja, creativiteit, dat is ook heel vrouwelijk he?

g: ze moet weer afhankelijk worden, vrij traditionele waarden, maar aan de andere kant, is het alleen maar traditioneel wat eruit spreekt?

r: de moeite te hebben een partmner te vinden, dat is traditioneel, maar hier op p.50?4 contra-afhankelijk , toutwjes in handen, eigenlijk kafhankelijk zijn van een onafhankelijke houding, dus dat is ...(lacht)

g@ ja, en wat wil je daarmee zeggen?

r: zij moeten oorsonkelijk, oorsproneklij kwillen zij een partner vinden, en hier willen zij een partner niet vinden

g: ja, wie wil er een partner vinden?

r: die vrouwen natuurlijk

g: o ok ...

r: er is een heleboel onafhankelijkheid en in het begin is het over zoeken naar..

g: ja ja inderdaad..eh ok de oplossing is dus duidelijk vrouwen moeten weer babies krijgen, moeten weer zacht worden en eh..

r: ja ja dat is ook over de vruchtbaarheid en dat was net als met het huwelijk zaterdag 9[GQ huwelijk Alecander/Maxima] dat was ook over de vruchtbaarheid,

oed
je-
lic

nief
kings

't arme prinsesje zij moet de kleding dragen die doet haar lijken op een mieren koningin- een queen ant
g: hoezo, was het heel strak of zo?
r: zij heeft een grote witte rok en z'n helpers de meisjes van de bruid
i: bruidsmeisjes
r: bruidsmeisjes ze was , zij waren net als bij de mieren, rond een nieuwe koningin,

(Ozlem verlaat de kamer moest eerder weg)
g: bedankt Ozelm... maar is dat niet alrijd zo, ik bedoel...
j: net zoals bij Diana

r: ja
doorelkaar praten
h: ...ja

G: in Nederland?

h: nee in Engeland ({GQ^eze heeft het geloof ik over haar eigen trouwerij]

j: heb je die trouwerij gezien

g: nee, maar het was ook niet op tv hier

a: ik heb het een beetje op het internet gezien, met een kleine video: hallo, ik ben maxima
laughter

g: goed maar welke waarden zijn we dan hier tegengekomen? op wat voor manier spreken die elkaar tegen? Of hebe je het gevoel dat ze wel met elkaar in overeenstemming zijn? Is het alleen maar, is dat de hele kern van het artikel? Dat vrouwen weer gewoon moeders moeten worden?

h: ik denk het wel. i: nou ze mogen toch ook wel een beetje carrière houden want hij sluit af met die pscychologe die een succesvolle carriere heeft en ook man en kind. dus ze mogen wel een carier ehbben maar ze moeten niet doordraven ze moeten niet ...

a: vind je het niet een beetje betuutelend... want hij zegt bijna je geeft hem een kind en een ccreatieve beetje creatieve baaan en alles gaat goed.

j: ja ze mag een beetje werken en een beetje haar kind opvoeden...

a: ik vind het helemaal betuttelend en belittleing ?
kleinerend

a: ja kleinerend bvoor vrouwen want ik vind...

g: maar hij zegt ook eh het artikel als doel wat we al hebben gezegd eerder is het feit dat hij juist waarschuwt voor het feit dat vrouwen een kind willen...

a: ja maar ik begrijp niet hoe je een artikel voor mannen kan schrijven dat praat alleen over vrouwen voor vrouwen

g: maar dir is toch niet voor vrouwen bedoeld?

a: nee het is voor mannen, maar in de interviews heeft hij lleen met vrouwen gepraat en op het eind zegt hij ja sorry mannen, maar de vrouwen moeten alleen kinderen en en een man, dus ja, geen sex voor jij, sorry!

laughter

a: dus je kiest voor een huwelijk of niks

g: dus je zegt het klopt niet, want in het begin wil hij vrouwen hebben voor sex voor een avondje,

a: ja ja

G: en hij zegt: pas op want zij wullen meer dan sex, ze willen een kind van je dus je zegt het klopt niet

a: ja het klopt niet en vrouwen ja, ze weet niet hoe ze moet zijn omdat mannen willen een vrouw die sex willen, het eerste vb hij gaat naar een restaurant en dus wil hij sex, maar hij wil ook een vrouw die modewre zij nen die vrouw zijn, dus het is normaakl dat vrouwen denkt, ja wat moet ik doen, ik kan niet de tweede zijn en ja ze denkt ik moet kiezen en als ik niet maak de goede keus, ja dan ben ik ja fout gemaakt

g: dus je denkt dat het probleem is dat hij moet kiezen?

Ok waarom is er die constante tegenstrijdigheid denk je, waarom is dat/ geeft dat iets weer? over de maatschaoppij de culturr waarin dat is geproduceerd/ het feit dat die spanning erin zit tussen de traditionele rol van vrouwen, de tradionele rol van mannen, het presteren, het feit dat een man toch dit soort vrouwen interessant vind, en sex met ze wil, het fei#t dat therapie een belangrijke positieve waarde heeft, heb je het gevoel dat daar iets aanspreekt, hij heef teen probleem met...

H: maar wat is nou het probleem, wil ik weten, wie heeft nou het probleem, want vrouwen die hij noemt die op wraak uit zijn, dat is zijn mening meer of meer, misschien zij zijn gewoon vrijgezel en misschien willen ze gewoon even een leuke tijd hebben en verder niks.

a: dat is precies wat ik zeg. de maatschappij geeft vreemde signaals naar de vrouwen..

h: maar/want wie heeft namelijk het probleem?

I ja dat het ook niet helemaal duidelijk is wat die man nou precies wil. Van wil je nou gewoon een one night stand en wil ie juist thuis kuunen komen naar een vrouw met wie die een kind heeft

h: of wil die juist allebei?

i: ja

g: maar wat geeft dat nou aan, kijk siommigen van jullie hebben vorige keer gezegd ; het betekent dat het een slecht artikel is, het is slecht geschreven

a: ja ik denk dat het een slecht artikel is ...

g: maar... behalve dan het hangt ervan af hoe je het evalueert he, als je het bekijkt van de visie is het een goede argumentatie, ja ok dan is het een slecht artikel, maar wat geeft het aan? het is geplubiceerd, de redactie van MH vond het geen slecht artikel.

a: maar ik denk dat het een slecht artikel is omdat hij geeft geen antwoord

g: maar woaarom geeft hij geen antwoord

a: er is geen antwoord

a: idere vrouw is een verschillende vrouw

g: ja maar gaat het daarom dat iedereen anders is, we zijn allemaal indiviudene of is het feit dat dit geproduceerd is in ee ntijd dat rollenpatronen heel duidelijk aan het veranderen zijn, er zit een betje in van de moderne vrouw, er zit een

beetje in van de moderne man, want de man moet ook kritisch naar zich zelf kijken he..

a: maar we zeggen een ding en we denken een andere ding ik denk dat ik heb hetzelfde probleem, ik zeg altijd ik kan doen wat ik wil, ik kan carrière hebben of niet, wat ik wil, maar ook in mijn gezin, ze zegt altijd, wanneer is het huwelijk, wanneer komt de kinderen en dat is een heel, ja ik vind het heel moeilijk en ik denk dat dat is een normaal probleem van vrouwen in deze tijd, ja de ... hoe zeg je dat?

g: ja de rol, de veranderende rol..

a: ja, de rol, je kan alles zijn of niks zijn, maar het is moeilijk om een balans te vinden.

i: ja blijkbaar vinden mannen dat ook heel moeilijk dat ze niet goed weten wat ze nou van een vrouw moeten verwachten en dat daarom zo'n artikel ook geplubliceerd wordt omdat dat daarop in gaat van wat voorwat willen vrouwen nou eigenlijk en hoe zitten ze in elkaar ...

g: en wat willen ze zelf?

h:: en wat willen mannen?

g: ja precies dat bedoel ik

h: willen ze een hoer hebben of een moeder

g: een hoer en een madonna

A: ja een hoer in de slaapkamer en een moeder in...

i: (lacht) ja in de huiskamer of zo...

dooer elkaar praten

in de keuken

G: ja, indedaad. zit er ook iets in van jaloezie?

dat de vrouw ...

a@ alles kan hebben

g: ...een bedreiging vormt? de man is nu zijn positie kwijt als degen^e die presteert, mannelijke identiteit is het leveren van bepaalde [prestaties

a@: dat is het feministenidee dat ik heb de laatste tijd ook met mijn professor zo gepraat zij zegt dat sinds het begin van de tijd, mannen hebben een probleem, want vrouwen kunnen de kinderen hebben en mannen niet en dus mannen hebben vrouwen eh repressed? ..

i: onderdrukt

a: ..onderdrukt ... enne nu vrouwen kunnen een carrière hebben en een huis en een baan en ze kunnen alleen wonen als we wilt, ja we kunnen alles doen en dat is een grote probleem voor mannen en ze weten niet wat ze willen en ze moeten denken...

i: maar dat zou je kunnen zeggen dat dit artikel.. juist die nadruk op de carrièrevrouw die zeg maar helemaal de plank misslaat, een bescherming is van he, het is altijd van ons geweest om een carrière te hebben en om te presteren en nu doen die vrouwen het ook, maar kijk eens naar ze, ze kunnen er niks van, 't gaat helemaal mis met ze, dus om dat ook een beetje te beschermen van ja maar het is toch ook een beetje van ons, want ja al kunnen ze het wel, tovch niet zo goed als wij.

g: ja, dus spreekt daar dan , als we dat dan bijvoorbeeld vergelijken met LW dat artikel van de man als dinosaurus , de mannen hebben hun positie verloren, ze zijn meelijwekkende wezens geworden, eh het was een heel extreme visie van haar, ze bracht het heel extreem, omdat het polemisch bedoeld was, maar herken je dat misschien iets in, zeg je ja er is een bepaald maatschappelijk verschijnsel niet zozeer het maatschappelijk verschijnsel zo als hij het beschrijft over die agressieve jonge vrouwen, maar is er een maatschappelijk verschijnsel dat mannen, of vrouwen ook, in de war zijn, niet meer precieszoeken zoeken naar..een andere vorm...

h: ja ik weet het niet, het is heel moeilijk, maar ik ben niet in de war, als vrouw zijnde heb ik geen probleem dat ik ook een carrière wil en desnoods kinderen en getrouwd zijn..

i: maar denk je dat dat gaat lukken ook als je dat allemaal wil?

h: dat weet ik niet en als het niet lukt ok daar heb ik ook geen probleem mee.

a: maar ik denk ook dat de vrouw niet kan accepteren dat het ok is om geen man te hebben. Er is een

h: vrouwen kunnen dat niet accepteren?

a: nee de maatschappelijke mensen ja vrouw, ik denk dat het misschien is het....het is dom, want ik weet dat zonder man kan ik gewoon functioneren op een normale wijze..

i: ja..

a: ja er is misschien een soort idee en

i: maar er is toch ook een soort restant van dat hele traditionele dat je toch ook een , dat je toch het idee hebt dat je een man nodig hebt en als je dan ook kijkt naar Ally Mc Beal en al die series, je zit er toch ook op te wachten dat ze eindelijk een vriendje krijgt?

h: maar is het ook niet zo tegenwoordig dat er voor mannen een beetje een nieuw concept is dat zij gewoon een vrouw nodig hebben voor eh eh companionship
ss gezelschap..

h: gezelschap want mensen als wezens, ik denk zijn niet bedoeld om alleen te zijn, man of vrouw, ;t maakt niet uit. misschien is het dan voor mannen, misschien moeten ze een hoofd er

a: get their head around it

h: ja, het idee dat die mogen ook kwetsbaar zijn, die mogen ook zeggen, ja eigenlijk wil ik best wel een vrouw.

G: ja en denk je dat dat hier ook engszins naar voren komt?

h: nee

laughter

g: wat vindt jij robin als man?

r:.... wat verbaast mij is dat deze 60 000 vrouwen zijn een heel heel klein stukje van de nederlandse vrouwen, misschien niet meer dan 1.5 %, en dus gaat dit artikel werkelijk over niks, 't zijn er niet veel. en de meeste zijn

h: ja 't is zo...

i: ja maar je moet je bedenken dat als dit is geplubliceerd in men's Health dat zijn van die mannelijke zaken yuppies die dat lezen en die vrouwen dat zijn ook die

zakenvrouwen zij komen die vrouwen wel tegen op hun werkvloer, ik bedoel het zijn hun collega's.

h: nou ik ...

r: ik heb dit soort vrouwen nooit ontmoet...nooit

[door elkaar praten]

a: ... generaties dat is niet een ...

g: hoe weet jij dat het yuppen zijn?

l: nou, MH is toch zo'n glossy blad?

door elkaar praten

a:.... zo'n hoe zeg je dat?

r: een wasbord

a:.. een wasbord, dat is eh ...

g: ja je herkent dat ook in het taalgebruik he van al dat financiële, redendemnt en zo

r: wat maakt ... Ik twijfel nog of dat artikel werkelijk voor MH is gesschreven.

G: ja ik weet dat je dat zei...want het gebruikt een heel vrouwelijkd stijl...de Cosmoploitan en de margriet stijl.

r: misschien dat het oorspronkelijk voor de Margriet of voor ja misschien door elkaar praten laughter

i: maar ik denk dat het er ook mee te maken heeft dat mannenglossies heel nieuw zijn , het idee dat mannen ook een lijfblad kunnen hebben dus die kijken dat een beetje af van hoe het bij vrouwen plaats ...

g: dat geef een andere laag aan he dat mannen hiervoor dus ook een mannelijke stijl gebruiken

r: maar misschien

g: om een bepaalde identiteit te zoeken

g: sorry

r: maar misschien de redacties van de vrouwenbladen waren slim genoeg om dit artikel te [weigeren?]

g: nee ze hebben dat natuurlijk gekozen omdat dit (onverstaanbaar) anders zouden ze het niet geplubiceerd hebben.

a: ik denk dat dit bij een Cosmopolitan of zo iets, soms is er een pagina over mannen, maar het is alleen een klein stukje in een heel ding dat alles is over vrouwen en als het over mannen is is het heel negatief en over waarom mannen doen dit en waarom mannen doen dat maar dat is alles dus ik denk dit is voor een mannelijke eh...

i: maar toch ...toen ik in groningen in een studenten huyis woonde... het was redelijk gelijk verdeeld 6 mannen, 6 vrouwen en een aantal van mijn huisgenoten kochten wel eens de viva en wie lazen het toen het eerste? ..

door elkaar praten

i: ... de mannen.....dus op de ene of andere manier.. ook de vrouwelijke stijl van schrijven dat vinden mannen blijkbaar prettig om te lezen..ja

G: misschien vanwege het feitr dat er over persoonlijke dingen wordt gesproken

a: de jongens in mijn school hebben het altijd over de quize....doe your girlfriend think this, does your girlfriend think thatdat is voor hen heel interessant. In weet niet waarom, maar..

laughter

j: ... iets opmerkelijk over de argumenten die hier in zit nou die gaat over de carrièrevrouwen die alles heeft, die een baan heeft en zo, maar waarom is dat? in de generatie daarvoor daar zijn heel veel mensen die hebben geschieden..?

g; gescheiden ja

j: zijn gescheiden van elkaar enne ..dan heb je een vrouw zonder man, zonder baan, die haar hele leven voor kinderen heeft gezorgd en familie of zoiets en nu woont ze op een heel kleine verdieping of zo in de buurt zonder een baan te krijgen of die uitkering van de regering en dan heb je deze carrièrevrouwen, waarom, ze willen niet diezelfde ...

g: ze willen niet afhankelijk niet economisch afhankelijk zijn van de man

j; en het is ook voor dit was er een heleboel mensen dat als het sociaal acceptabel was kan geschieden gescheiden worden van hun partner enne ja dan heb je wel divorce of zoiets maar dat is de consequentie als je niet blij bent in een verhouding dan moet je d'ruit en de consequenties daarvan zijn, die man heeft toch nog steeds een baan , maar die vrouw...!

g@ ja inderdaad en machtsverhoudingen spelen daar natuurlijk een grote rol in

j: ja toen mogen zij niet werken als ze kinderen krijgen moeten ze thuis blijven dat was de sociale norm

r: dat is nog zo eh bij mijn onderzoek voor Jane heb ik gevonden dat weinig Nederlandse vrouwen hebben een baan of allemaal deeltijdbanen

a: ja maar dat is in Nederland het is niet hetzelfde als in Engeland want in Nederland heb je heel veel geld van eh

j@ krijg je wel veel geld van de regering, een uitkering..

a: en in Engeland helemaal niks dus..je moet werken doorelkaar partaen

h@ en de alimentatieregeling is veel beter dan in Engeland

ss; Ja ja

h: je krijgt meer...

a: en mannen ook vaders hebben paternity leave in Nederland

j@ Tony Blair...

i: zwangerschapsverlof

a: hoe noem je dat?

i: zwangerschapsverlof

g: maar niet zoveel; nee, maar het bestaat door elkaar praten

h: drie maanden en...

r: cultuur in Nederland

h: en als je gescheiden bent en jij verdient als vrouw meer dan de man moet jij hem alimentatie betalen in Nederland

j: ja

a: in Engeland is het niet...

door elkaar praten laughter

a: precies hetzelfde maar er zijn delen waar een paar ... ja dat is een probleem

g: het is wel interessant dat je al begint over Nederland en Engeland nu te praten verschillen daartussen eh.. heb je het gevoel dat zo'n artikel op precies dezelfde

manier ook zo in een Engels bald geschreven zou kunnen zijn dat gericht is op mannen

j: G and Q bijvoorbeeld?

g: bijvoorbeeld of de engelse MH, die verschillen, zowel het sexuele eh vrouwen als sexobject en de vrouw uiteindelijk vrij serieus bespreken en analyseren en haar problemen en dat op een redelijk positieve manier te doen en dan uiteindelijk tot een oplossing te komen van ja de vrouw is toch het gelukkigst in een moedersrol.

a@ ja, maar ik moet zeggen ik heb in MH in Engeland gekijkt ewanneer ik was in waterstone's en MH in Engeland is niks te doen, of er is een klein artikel over seks maar al andere artikelen zijn over sport en health hoe je kan een betere sixpack hebben

g: ja wasbord dus

l: laughs

a: ja en een betere ...deze schoenen voor voetbal..

g: niets over relaties

a: nee niets over relaties

g: het is niet denigrerend over vrouwen want het gaat niet over relaties

j: ik vind G&Q wel denigrerend over vrouwen want daarin over vrouwen door elkaar praten

j: ... wat er gebeurde in het lichaam van de vrouwen als ze 40 verjaardag kreeg

h: laughs

j: weet je dit over vrouwen ... echt shockeren

g: ik heb het nooit gezien, heeft iemand het wel eens gezien G&Q?

a: nee ik ken het niet

j: als je met mannen wonen dan heb je altijd wel een G&Q in het huis liggen

a: mijn vriend houdt niet van G&Q hij vindt FHM pornography, hij zegt hij kan niet zien dat zachte porno..

g: zachte porno.. precies zou je zo'n artikel precies zoals het hier is geschreven met die waarden die er in zitten zou je dat zo in een Engels blad voor mannen

a: nee

j: niet zo ruim, niet zo ruim

h: ...kent ze niet

l; maar denj dan wat je ook zei dat over Mh dat het alleen maar over sport gaat, dat praten over relaties dat dat niet helemaal kan dat dat te open is/?

a: in engeland het kan niet ja ik denk dat in Engeland je kan het niet publiceren in een engelse mannelijke publikatie..

g: en dan met name het vrij serieuze over relaties en het therapeutische gedeelte..?

a; nee, nee want ik denk dat in Engeland we praten niet over deze soort dingen, want ik denk mannen, maar ook vrouwen praten niet in dezelfde manier over sex,

h: nee

a: in Nederland is het heel... je hebt 6 mannen en 6 vrouwen die woont bij elkaar en misschien ik weet het niet praat je over sex en dat soort dingen..

i: laughs

a: maar je praat over relaties

i: ja dat gaat

a: maar ik denk in Engeland ik praat niet met mijn vrienden over mijn relatie behalve dan in een meer generale manier

g: ik vermoed wel dat..., ja jammer dat JOn er niet is, Robin, wat denk jij?
laughter

G: wat vind jij ?

R ik weet niet over G&Q ik vind dit soort bladen te kostelijk om te kopen.

g: ja maar qua cultuur, qua mannen cultuur. vorige jaar zei een student bijvoorbeeld hij zou zo iets ook in MH hier verwachten vanwege het laddish aspect hij zei het is typisch laddish, maar is die laddish cultuur zou je daar op zo'n manier over therapie praten?

a: nee laddish cultuur is bier en vrouwen door elkaar praten

r: niet werkelijk vrouwen, praten over vrouwen misschien

a: het is vrouwen als sexueel object

r: o ja ...

a: FHM is de perfecte voorbeeld van laddish culture dat is de vrouwen met ..

J: (tieten)?

laughter

g: wat vindt jij heb je het gevoel dat komt dit op jou vrij herkenbaar over dat je deze waarden in een tijdschrift hebt of vind je dat ook vreemd, als je tenminste in ogenschouw neemt dat dit tijdschrift op mannen is gericht

i: ik vind het niet vreemd dat ze iets zoals dit publiceren. Ik heb niet het idee dat dit heel erg buiten de toon valt van era ter verder in Nederland te lezen is. nee

a: dit is een normaal artikel in MH in Nederland

i: ja niet dat ik MH le, maar..(laughs)

g: dus wat zou je dan als engelse student, ja misschien is dat een beetje anders omdat je al zo lang in Nederland hebt gewoond

j: we hebben allemaal in nederland gewoond

g: ja maar zo lang, 12 jaar of zo he?

G: wat zie je hier aan als inderdaad echt nederlands, zeg je he ja dit is interessant want dit is toch echt typisch een stukje nederlandse cultuur?

j: er is veel meer vrijheid in Nederland om te schrijven wat jij bedoelen wat jou mening is, veel nederlanders geven hun mening zoveel makkelijker aan dan engelse mensen het is meer sociaal acceptabeler om te zeggen wat je voelen over hoe het dan is want dat is jouw mening

a: je hoeft niet te vragen over hun mening want ze zegt het door elkaar praten

H: maar mannen makkelijker over gevoelens praten of makkelijker dan engelse mannen over gevoelens praten dat kan ik je wel vertellen. 't is echt tanden trekken soms

g: wat met nederlandse mannen?

h: Ja

j: ik bedoel ze geven hun mening over dingen in het algemeen als je over hun praat...

door elkaar praten

a: ...over seks ik denk dat seks is niet zo problematisch en een soort idee in nederland er is meer sexeducation op school, je bent jonger 't is meer

h: het is gewoon in Nederland

a: 't is normaal, het is topical

j: de engelsen vinden het zo moeilijk om over sex te praten.

g: actueel

A: ja actueel en in engeland het is taboo.

h: het is alledaags bijna in nederland, nietr dat iedereen de hele dag over sex praat, maar

door elkaar praten

G: ... maar hier in deze tijdschriften kom je dat toch ooktegen in Engeland, in Cosmopolitan heb je toch ook een heleboel sex

H; ja maar dat is ...

a: dat is niet..

J/h: dat is voor vrouwen..

a: ook het is ove goede sex..

h: ja maar dat is ook echt niet

tape came to an end

contined on next tape

a; z zeg tdat sex is niet altijd perfect en het gaat niet altijd goed en dat in relaties zijn er momenten dat je hebt problemen maar in Engeland is het altijd ja je moet,

hoe zeg je orgasm in het nederlands

h: orgasme

j: het is elke keer ja je moet een multiple orgasm ..

j@ ja precies

laughter en door elkaar praten

h: ja het is erg extreem(onverstaanbaar)

j: onverstaanbaarsexueel

a: ja ze moeten over sex praten in een soort closed of ja het is een soort perfect idee, ja en je praat over dit perfecte idee, maar het is alleen maar

j: alleen maar de beautiful people

a: ja en je bent niet inhetzelfde soort...

i: het is niet persoonlijk?

a: ja preceis, het is een soort ideaal

g; en dan die foto's . nu we dus hebben gekeken naar die tegengestelde waarden, heb je nu het gevoel dat die foto's wat meer ..

A: dat is een heel groot verschil tussen engeland en nederland, dat is niet een foto dat je kunt in een engelse

g: waarom niet? wat is er nou , heb je het gevoel dat het een sexueel gerichte foto is?

J: nee absoluut niet , ja je ziet wel een beetje haar borsten en een beetje iets anders ,maar het is niet gericht op een sexuele manier, die is gericht op; ik ben zwanger ik laat je alles zien

a: dit is heel, ja ze zijn heel gewoon, ja ik

g: nou ja, heel gewoon zij is, is zij met sex bezig?

J: nee, niet meer

door elkaar parten (laughter)

a: een keer

g: maar denkt ze daar aan? ik bedoel ze glimalcht

sss: nee

h: dit is over; o ik ben zwangetr ik ga straks een kind ...

door elkaar praten

g: zij is helemaal op die baby gericht..

h: ja

g: en ze is heel gelukkig..

en ziet hij haar als sexobject?

j: niet meer (laughs)

a: jhij kijkt in een andere...

g: nee, hij kijkt naar haar, maar op de kopie is dat een beetje weggevallen.. hij kijkt

h: van : mijn nageslacht komt eraan.

laughter

g: en ook van e je ejee, , net wat ellie zei vorige keer, ik ben gebruikt , niet met leifede maar meer als ..

h: wat is er met mij gedaan.? O ..

g: ja.. ik ben verstrikt geraakt.

laughter

I ja ze zit daar zo'n beetje nadenkend in de lucht voor zichzelf starend ...

sss Ja ja

g: maar op wa tvoor manier past datbij het artikel, eerst zei je van het is vreems van het klopt niet, heb je nu misschien het gevoel het klopt wel geeft het misschien diezelfde verwarring weer in waarde/ wat vind je

i: ja die man niet goed weet wat die wil of hij nou een vrouw wil die zijn echtgenote is en de moder van zijn kind of dat hij gewoon een vrouw wil met wie hij plezier in bed kan hebben en verder niet

a: ja wil hij de vrouw hier wil hij de moeder of wil hij de ...

j; onverstaanbaar of wil hij gewoon vrijen en dan vergeten

h: misschien wil hij allebei

g: het heeft meer te maken heb je het gevoel dat het meer te maken heeft met dat eerste, dat van pas o per wordt op je gejaagd, ze willen je als potebntiele cvader

j; hij is een slachtoffer kijk even, hier die man, die is een slachtoffer van die contexxt.

ss: ja

a: ja het is hetzelfde als met..

g: goed ja ok laten we het hier bij laten hartelijk dank hier voor vooral ook aan ineke

Appendix 5

Transcript first interview with Claire, 6 February 2002

Claire

TAPE: ~~Amy and Helen~~, 6 Feb

Notes re. transcription:

G= Gerdi

A = ~~Amy~~ Claire

H = ~~Helen~~ Emma

() = uncertain of word, phrase etc

Words and phrases are repeated according to speech patterns.

Where sentence is interrupted by another speaker, I have omitted the full stop at the end of the line. Interrupted speech follows on as indicated by use of a lower-case letter at the start of the next line of speech.

Transcription:

G: Yeah let's do this one in English

A: Okay

G: What I basically want to know, the kind of ideas and experiences and whether you feel you've come to grips with that notion of cultuurtekst and whether you feel and you recognise whether it's a valuable notion for your understanding of society or your language learning and also whether you feel that it has, well, it's valuable and whether you sort of understand it and can do something with it.

A: I still find the concept difficult to understand and I think what was difficult to get my head round at first was the very fact that when we looked at the articles first, it was () and you said look at it as a cultuurtekst, and I was like, eh, is it necessarily a cultuurtekst but that's because I think I had a different idea of what meant, in a sense that every text can be cultuurtekst as long as there are certain truths in it and, you know, what it represents, it represents a certain type of culture

G: Right

A: and just because I don't recognise the culture doesn't necessarily make

G: Yeah keep going

A: doesn't necessarily make it, doesn't make it not a cultuurtekst

G: Right

A: em, in particular, well that, when you were talking about that article

G: The Men's Health one

A: yeah, I found it very useful to look at it in that, the way that you suggested with all those different questions, you know, like how (are?) people described, how can you interpret words used, you know, the certain kind of truths and the notions like you know feminism or the kind of opposite, which I suppose is machoism or whatever you would call it, em, I thought that was quite an interesting way of looking at it and it helped me to understand the article and, I have to admit I don't find it a very good argument, it's not very well argued

G: No, no

A: (piece?) but it did help that, by looking at all those individual categories, you know, em, you know, how women were described for instance, or the the truths, the stereotypes that kind of thing, that made me understand it a lot better, but I do think it's worth, it's definitely a very worthwhile way of looking at things, em, I'm not sure you could, I think you'd have a harder time applying it to something say like, like fiction or literature, I would find that more difficult simply because you, that's someone, that's

means how
represent the
the fact that
she's not
able to clearly
express her
experience of
essentialist
what she's perceiving?

she means value
a certain type of
culture?

she understands
cultuurteksts
and then relates
it straight
away to argu-
ment. Does she
find that more
important?

Why would
she want to
apply it to
literature

one person's writing, that's, so you can sort of fix things, you see what I mean, you're not talking about something that's necessarily real and it's not based on, supposedly this article is based on fact, so

G: Right, okay, yeah, mind you, you say, if that's, do you think that is the case? That literature is purely an individualist, writing from an individualist view

A: No you you take, as a writer of fiction, you take in things around you but then you process them in a way that's individual to you, so you could be, like for instance, I don't know you could take, say I wrote something and I would take in you know cultural values, so probably the people directly around me would understand what I was talking about but, I don't know, I could talk about something that's very particular to me or to my family, some little inside joke, or something like, I don't know, a funny name that we have for something, which isn't necessarily something that other people can understand, they can probably you know, em, associate with something that they know, something similar, so I don't know, you know, you could have a childish word, I don't know, for instance, like my mum often gives thing funny names when she forgets what they're called, you know, so she'll give things, you know silly names, and so when I jokingly say to her, oh you know have you got the whatever, I make a joke, but another person wouldn't necessarily understand that, but I'm sure they could probably associate that with something that their mum does or someone else does, you know like it's that, but I do think that it's possibly harder with a fictional text or with literature than with something like an article em or a whatever a piece, a sociological piece or something like that

G: Do you think it's important to read a text, rather than, because if you wouldn't have read it on the level of a cultuurtekst, you would have said, well, this is such a simplistic argument, why do we

A: ()

G: () in a fourth-year language class, I mean, do you think it is valuable to write, to read

A: I do, to read like that yeah

G: texts which you wouldn't ()

A: Yeah, well I think I probably would've dismissed it quite early on, that that particular text as being fairly, I mean it suggests things which I don't believe are true, I don't have any experience of those things, I don't believe women are like that at all and they are probably a very small percentage of them, but then he talks of, although they are all encompassing and they are everywhere he goes, em, so yes I think it did, it helped me to look at in a sort of in a bigger perspective I suppose as one man's kind of experience and you know possibly that there may have been moments when maybe I acted like one of this women, in a, you know in a slight way not in the same capacity and that, yeah, it helped me look at the text sort of more open-mindedly, more kind of accepting of what it was rather than just dismissing, which we do have a tendency to do because we do read a lot of stuff so, you know, you think to yourself, oh God, this is another one of those you know, (it's a) multi-cultural this, it's a whatever, and em so yeah it was very good to read it like that. I'd never read a text in that particular way. In my second year in French we had to some cultural reading, of critical literature, and, because what we did was, we looked at em a critic who says that every book ever written I suppose you could say, is a result of the author's experiences. So you can't take the author out of the book, but then, on the other hand, there are some critics who say, you know, you should ignore the author, forget the author, don't, you don't want to know about him, we don't care about him, it's about the book, it's about the story, it's about the words in front of you, so we had to read things in both ways, you know, to try and see what we got out of them, if

intercultural
individualist
imagines
it's supposed to be
supposedly on fact

writing from a
cultural perspective
-ive.
→ she is confessing
cultural / ideological

is talking
about reading
with a certain
pat her from
missing the
X early on
more accepting
what it was
style might
be a contrast
with the
presentation
that
might have
been like
at the time

value of place
as a cultural
seeing it from
'other' people

we got more out of doing it through the author, you know, knowing about where he was born, or where he was brought up or whether he was abused when he was a child, you know, that kind of thing, or then just looking at the words and getting as much out of the words as possible, em, and I thought that was, it's quite an interesting way to do it, but I do think that you can do both and it depends on what you prefer, you know.
G: Yeah, but what do you feel that looking at it as a cultuurtekst, do you feel that has bearings on one of those ways of looking at it? Either the author or without the author?

A: Em, yeah I think a cultuurtekst is, it's sort of in the middle because it's one of those things where you look at it as, you look at the cultural norms to you as the reader, em, which, if you recognise them you usually mean that the author is of the same kind of cultural bracket as it were

a very practical explanation of cultuurtekst

G: Right

A: you know, it's a Western country and you know, I don't know, women have, women have jobs where they can you know go up in the world, they have nice cars, they have you know fridges, I mean, if it was written by someone who came from a completely different em cultural area, where things were completely different, then we wouldn't be the same, so I do not that the guy, the man who wrote it and I are possibly on the same, you know, wavelength, but I do think that, well, number one he's a man, I think that, culturally that makes a big difference, I also think that because he's Dutch that makes a big difference, because I don't think that women are the same as Holland as they are in England, so you know, automatically that makes it kind of em, I do think it's em, because looking at it as a cultuurtekst is not really looking at as the author but not really looking at it without the author because you do take into account some of, you know, the factors, em

really feel taking into account the factors

G: Well, you don't look at it so much as the individual author

A: Yeah you just look at it as the general kind of where it's come from, where it's published, you know that kind of (), the audience it's for as well, who it was meant for, who it was written by, so em, yeah, so obviously I don't know him personally but you know, I know he's a man, and I know he works for Men's Health, em, and I know it's aimed at men who like article about relationships and whatever.

G: So how do you feel you approached it then, knowing, because when you read it you knew that you weren't the audience, the intended audience of the text, I mean for a start you were a woman and the other part of it is ()

A: Yeah, from British not Dutch or anything other than Dutch.

G: Did that make a difference in how you read it or did you feel you, were you conscious of that when you were reading it, or did you feel that you sort of immediately related to it because a lot of it is you know like Western culture and you recognise that.

she reads the text from a British perspective

A: Yeah, a lot of the norms I recognised. You have to bear in mind of course that when I read a Dutch text, I tend to read for vocabulary first, and then I go back and re-read it and that's how I did the culture, one of your articles, cultuurtekst, I read it vocabulary-wise you know to look at all the words I didn't understand, and then I went back and read it and in fact, having done that, I was much more able to sort of formulate and to see the kind of irony in what he was saying and the sarcasm and, I mean, the number of times he is so patronising about (women?)

G: So when did you start

A: Seeing that

G: seeing that, yeah?

A: When I did the, well what I tried to do was read it for the vocabulary so that I understood it fully because it was annoying to have to leave () and then I read it again on the train without writing anything, and without

describes the
process of receiving and
interpreting text
with references to
context &
argument
refers personally
to exercise
class.

she probably refers to

↓ y--

having read your cultuurtekst, and that was when I started to see the kind of, I find it very patronising, em, there are lots of sentences that I don't like, the whole cliché cliché thing and the way he is so mocking about women and, you know, oh her true love left her for a younger women, well, you know, that's quite a horrible thing to have to deal with, you know, you don't have to be patronising about it, but then when I read it with, what I did was when I needed to write out the text that you wanted for the cultuurtekst question, I wrote down all the questions that were asked and then I read it each time so I went through it thinking, how are women portrayed here or how are the people in this story portrayed, and then kind of underlining a word and using some of the things that I saw, and the more I read it, the more I realised that it's not a very, well that the argument isn't very good because it sort of skips from thing to the other, and it never actually says anything, it kind of moves around and around this point but it never makes any statement about, you know,

(conclusion?)

G: Right, so is that actually, because that's what we did yesterday, how are they portrayed, was that actually the thing that focused you most do you think? Or

A: Em well, the truths, the (), em, things the feminist truths he takes into account, but also, well I made up the word the masculine truths

G: Yeah, but the truth is something different ()

A: Yeah it's like a, the kind of, the sort of em what would you call it, the em like a set of values, or a set of rules about, so if you were a feminist you believe in certain things, and there are certain stereotypes and certain norms

G: Ah right okay, ah you mean like a feminist narrative

A: Yeah exactly

G: () interpret

A: and we talked about intertext as well and things like that that he makes reference to, I mean we talked about Ali McBeal for instance, things like that, em, which I suppose stereotypically implies a certain type of person, so I, I was trying to explain that it's, em, he represents certain em well I call them truths but it's not truths but values

G: Values

A: yeah values, that are that are very male I suppose and there isn't really a word for that, there is male chauvinistic, kind of, this idea that this is what women are like, and also that he categorises all the women that he feels that you can, you know, he doesn't feel like well possibly there are all different kinds of women and you can't really say what one type is like, you can't put them all in one box, just because they're women doesn't mean to say they all go in one box, so I found it yeah, the two things that were most kind of, that left their mark on me most from doing the cultuurtekst exercise I suppose, were, yes, the way they were portrayed, so all those words which I think I probably would have

G: That's what we did yesterday, yeah

A: yeah, and then also the whole looking at the truths and how the, I suppose what influenced him to write the article, you know the em, because I found that, I don't know, it could've be, you could've given it a different title the article, you could've said oh, it was an interview with a psychologist who had an unhappy love life and then suddenly found a husband and had a child, because it wasn't really about, it was just about her talking and using other women as a kind of example for how she was behaving or what she was doing, so I don't know I found it, I found it quite an unusual text I suppose.

G: Yeah, so what about, the value things we've done, first we discussed it in the lesson, very much em content-wise, like what was your first impression and () the intended audience, and you know what he possibly

describes
not stereotypes
by "truths"
proposed
truths in
during the
not descriptive
like but she uses
worded "truths"
truths might
be significant

particular
if it's difficult
find words
superficial
which are
social/cultural
& a discourse
comes from

finishes
writing her
personal
reading the
text by talking
to the class but
he seems to
lose the thread
her description

A solid line
between the
two paragraphs
is a sign of
a new paragraph
or a new section
or a new topic

the story
occurs

could have wanted to achieve with it and structure as well, and then yesterday was with Dutch students and em the em () how () looking about, talking about women or men, mainly women. Which of those did you feel, well you said that helped you really to illuminate sort of the values, the looking at it, of how does he portray women, but did you feel that the first lesson, that you got something out of that? You know, what, did that sort of further your thinking or

process of reading

A: Yeah you, obviously, qualified, you have to understand that my Dutch isn't always as fluent as I would like it to be, so the more we talk about something the more I get from it, there are a lot of subtleties in a Dutch text which don't necessarily immediately stand out to me, so it helps when we talk about, the more we talk about something the more I understand it and the more I can deal with it, the more I can comment on it and stuff, so that first lesson was good because, especially looking at the structure, criticising the structure of the article, which made me think, yeah, it's true, it's a terrible argument in actual fact because he never actually makes a point and he has lots of questions, you know where does this come from, why do women act like this, you know, what's the problem, what have we done to make them like this, but never answers them, and that lesson really helped with that, and also it got, because often what happens is when you're at university and you have to comment on a text, it's quite em, I'm always quite scared to say, oh God, I thought it was horrible, or God, that really shocked me or my first impression was oh wow, because

reading needs to be done in a way that you can deal with it

describes doing experience seems to be crying about it very much the next response a text

G: () texts you mean

A: yeah because I always feel like we're being given this for a reason, and the reason we've been given it is not necessarily to shock us but it's to make us comment and so often, you know, like I was really pleased when everyone else said, God, did you see the photographs, you know, that kind of thing

G: Yes yeah you came with that comment sort of immediately

A: Yeah but that was the first thing that I noticed, even when you were handing it out, I was like, oh, because I saw the first page and I saw () and I was thinking, right it must be about career women.

G: What shocked you about the photograph, that she was naked?

A: No not so much that but just like, it didn't have any relevance to the text. If it was about, I don't know, if it had been in a women's magazine about you know be able to fit in your child with your busy career life, you know, with your work and everything else, then fine, but it just seemed to be so kind of out there, whereas what it was talking about, it was talking about women who aren't even contemplating having children, you know, they can't even get a man, you know

the photographs

G: Yeah but it was actually about, the whole text was initially framed as what () these women actually want

A: Want the man yeah

G: want the, yeah, and they want a child off you as well, because they're getting too old, and em

A: Well that's the thing, and they take anyone, they'll catch someone in their net and use them and yeah, but I just, I don't know, I found the photographs very, I don't know, strange, they shocked me, and then I was glad that we had that lesson because we talked about it and (interruption)

A: em yes.

G: Em so, did you feel that lesson yesterday, so we did various things yesterday, one was indeed, what you say, how were women portrayed, and the other it was sort of trying to get a dialogue with this text sort of both in relation to the other text you read, the () one, because she was talking about the same

A: Yeah, similar phenomenon

A. confusing voice in the text for the white tide

G: Yes but obviously in a totally different way, and she puts it very much in terms of power, and em, what the Dutch students said, I mean did you feel that you got a different kind of angle onto the text because of that?

A: Yeah well also I'm not Dutch, so I suppose I can always, you know, rule out what I think by saying, oh well I'm English so maybe it's different in Holland, you know, maybe that a phenomenon I haven't sort of come across in Holland, you know I only lived there for six months, it's not very long, perhaps I haven't met these women who were being described. I thought what they said was interesting, em, I I liked, well I liked, I thought it was quite stimulating the discussion because, well mostly because we were all girls, so I thought, and I felt sorry for (poor Robin?) who was all on his own, the lone man, the lone male voice, but he didn't even, he didn't say that much, I think probably because, I think as women when we get together and talk about something like that, we're much more kind of, it is about power, you know, and everyone talks, you know, em, which is why I quite like the (?) dinosaur text I think that's quite funny, em, I, I don't know I suppose I got a lot out of it in the sense that I'd already read the text, I'd already understood it so discussing it again was quite interesting and it was also interesting to take, to kind of take what I'd got from the text and use it in a wider context, you know we were talking about how we didn't really know these kinds of women and women were more like this than like this and you know, it was an age difference and you know, all that kind of thing, em.

G: So what was also very useful was actually to talk about it with your classmates, to see what the difference

A: Yeah, yeah, to get other people's ideas about it and you know, em, because it's nice to bounce things off other people, sort of say, have you met people like this?, no I haven't, and you know see kind of

G: Do you feel that in the end you then come to some sort of conclusion or is it purely the kind of satisfaction of having discussed it and, even though you might not have necessarily pinpointed to the fact of, this text is about and has these sort of values?

A: Yeah

G: Or would you actually prefer to come in the end to some sort of definite conclusion, this text is about these sort of values, or, is it purely the fun of having the discussion, or the stimulation?

A: Yeah, I would say, if you'd asked me that question four years ago, before I started university, I wouldn't have, I would have said, I want a conclusion, I want a definite answer, I want to be able to summarise it in three lines and say it, em, I think I've learnt to be satisfied with a discussion, I'm very much more inspired by discussion than, I enjoy, I like the way we talk about something and I might totally disagree with the other person, but just because they say something or they mention something, that sparks something in my head and I think oh yeah, and then I go away and I think about it, and that's something that never happened before because I was very much into you know, you ask me a question and I give you an answer, that's all there was to it.

G: So you felt all over the four years, with all the various subjects you've done

A: Yeah

G: this is the ()

A: Yeah, and because as as as, what teachers have taught me to try and understand here is that questions just lead to more questions, and that's good, that's not bad, you know, you don't necessarily have to have an answer, and I think that's one of the things that we, because we talked about it as a cultuurtekst not just necessarily as an article, because as an article you can take it apart.

G: Right

I enjoyed
reading as
discussion
about the topic

she
takes text
to
other
context

locates
text
approach in
whole
university
level

value of
discussion

discussing
the topic is
enjoyable

an interesting
experience to
read the text

relatable
real life

A: You know, but as a cultuurtekst it's very interesting, because it, you know, it talks about a cultural phenomenon, which you know, and I found the way it used, you know, because if you think, you know, I don't read many things by men, so I think that's quite interesting and, you know, yeah. No I found it a very, I though yesterday was really good fun, I really enjoyed it, because it was, you know, especially as you're talking about something which is actually quite interesting for someone my age, you know, talking about politics or economics is something that's not so relevant to me now, em, but social values, sex, things like that, is quite a sort of, that is something I would realistically discuss with a friend, you know, you're not kind of making a you know, a fake situation.

G: Well it's very much part of life and society

A: Exactly

G: and culture

A: Exactly and that's something I came across in Holland, they're very willing to discuss it, they're much more kind of open to discussion, Canada too actually, more than in England.

G: Oh right

A: Yeah yeah very much more.

G: That's interesting. Okay, em, at the moment, I feel a bit like, oh, I'll probably think of other questions later on.

A: Well I can come back another time that's not a problem.

G: ()

A: No not at all.

G: Because I, you know that the idea's not () to say what a wonderful lesson, it's more that I really sincerely want to find out

A: No I know I know yeah

G: what you

A: I really think, I do think, I mean I don't think just that particular lesson, but I do think that they've, at university, they have, I don't know if it's particularly here, but, they encourage discussion in such a way that you do, you do tend to create a dialogue with the text much more, you know, I've read a lot of books while I've been here but with all of them I have you know a memory of what I did and I still can think about things and I still think, oh yes, that was, that week posed a question for me, or that was a problem for me, I didn't understand that, and that, it's quite interesting to talk about it and, em, and I mean I don't know if it's because we only get sort of one hour a week, where you talk about a text, or one hour we talk about a book, but em, there's a lot of kind of I don't know, it's quite inspiring, em, and I guess there's a whole process that's just there to make you think, to make you question, whatever you read, you should question, you should look at more deeply than just the lines on the paper, you know, read between the lines, look at what's behind them, you know, the writing.

G: But you say that is for all the things you've done at university.

A: Most things, yes. I mean, obviously when you're learning a language you can't necessarily do that, because you're supposed to be learning the grammar and how it works and everything but certainly we've done a lot of that and in Dutch this year we've done a lot of it, you know, it's very em, it's sort of stimulating, getting you to think on your own, saying right well this is what everyone else does, now what will you do, you know, take these elements and go and make up your own, you know, and these are the little rules, you have to follow certain rules, but you are free in everything else, you know try and use, you know, write an argumentative piece, following these kind of very basic guidelines, or you know, em, yeah I don't know I find it very, I find it very useful, I mean yes it was a good lesson, it was fun and the people were nice, but more than that, it's em a model for how I think, how I would like to look at other texts, you

elaborates it
in to other
experiences at
university
passed herself
in academic
student

seems initially
suggest that
picked up
local reading
other subjects
or other language
(the issue)
as students
rich (the learning)
r later she
recognizes
& she learnt
> year.
it remains
intriguing

about
the

know, if we had time, it would be nice to look at other things and
G: So do you think that is something you might do? You know, in the rest of your life, you see a text and

A: Definitely

G: think of it as a cultuurtekst as well, although the thing is, how, that the way that, so you actually said that, what actually helped you very much is the way of talking about (things?) which give you an insight into what might be underneath the text.

A: Yeah I think that, certainly from my point of view, I'm English but I went to a French school and a lot of my friends are multi-cultural in that sort of, they don't really come from a particular place, so I'm very interested in what they have to say about something that I've read because everyone has a different take on it and I I, you know, I mean, even just my boyfriend, he's American-French, so he's nothing to do with Britain, so you know, we'll read an article about, I don't know, whatever, the British government or the strikes or something, and he'll have a totally different attitude to it than me, and he's very good at arguing his point, I mean he's a very decisive (?) sort of person, and we'll have lots of, well, arguments I suppose you could call them, and we don't argue in that sort of sense, but, very interesting, stimulating discussions which I'm very pleased to say make me go away and think about something, and often you know he's very convincing because he can make me change my mind, or make me see sense I suppose you could say, and I have a particular view on something and he says, oh well, have you thought about it this way, or look at it from the other side, or you know, em, so yeah, I do look at things in a sort of cultuurtekst sort of way, em, I tend, I think I tend to read, oh, magazine articles or newspapers, or whatever, em, you can read them superficially first and then you can go on and read them more deeply, certainly things that interest me I would read in a deeper way, looking at the cultural side of it.

G: Oh right, oh good, okay, I'll let's stop here then because we often need time for your other bits and pieces

A: But if you have any other questions ()

G: Oh well right, and thanks ...

INTERVIEW / AMY ENDS

()

G: Now can we do it in

()

G: Okay, now, sorry, difficult to talk in English

H: Oh, you want it in English

G: Yeah I do want it in English because the thing is I can ask someone else to transcribe the tape, or yeah, I'll have to transcribe lots of tapes, em, is that going, yeah, okay we might have to turn it over, now it's not you know, I'm not after hearing oh how wonderful, I'm really trying to find out how it is as an experience for language and cultural learning and whether the idea of looking text as a cultuurtekst, whether that makes any sense, and whether you feel you really do get to grips more with the kind of cultural ideas and values which are reflected in a text, what is your sort of experience with this.

H: Well, I think it depends a bit on the text, em, because I mean the the subjects we had were fairly hefty, well certainly the first two, were fairly hefty subjects, euthanasia, and, em, the multi-cultural problems, but, and they are not necessarily unique problems to The Netherlands either

G: No

H: I mean they could, multi-cultural problems come up everywhere, so I

A. does not
make clear if
he already
is or whether
he's at least
cultuurtekst
and her in
the process

discussing a
text - to
be cultural
background

if I interpret
my questions
in terms
of content
and interpret
cultuurtekst
in terms of
the Netherlands

Appendix 6

Transcript second interview with Claire, 26 April 2002

Claire

TAPE: ~~Amy~~ 26 April

Notes re. transcription:

G= Gerdi

A = ~~Amy~~ *Claire*

() = uncertain of word, phrase etc

Words and phrases are repeated according to speech patterns.

Where sentence is interrupted by another speaker, I have omitted the full stop at the end of the line. Interrupted speech follows on as indicated by use of a lower-case letter at the start of the next line of speech.

Transcription:

G: Amy () well and as last time, you know you don't feel you have to say particularly nice things

G/A: (laughter)

G: that's not what it's all about.

A: Don't worry that's okay.

G: Okay, so I basically want to talk about a whole range of things

A: Okay

G: and very much what I'm trying to get at is actually what the value of you know the particular things we've done during the course has been, although I will concentrate particularly at the way we have analysed texts, and then you know what value that has been for your learning the language, producing it, understanding texts those sort of things, yeah, so if you now look back over the whole year, what do you find has been most useful or least useful, or is that difficult to say because it has been building up?

A: Well most useful is the range of texts I suppose, em, because we looked at texts which I wouldn't normally have read in the sense that they're about some newspapers that I would never have picked up, you know, perhaps in Dutch I would read you know maybe the Volkstrant

G: Right

A: or (The Telegraph?) for ease, but I wouldn't cover some of the other things we covered, like the Men's Health article, things like that wouldn't necessarily have been things I would have looked so to analyse those was interesting because it gave me a different viewpoint, gave me a different way of looking at the texts I do read, em, but yeah it does build because when we started I didn't really know what I was looking for, it's you start a year and you say, oh, em, we're going to concentrate this year on analysing texts on learning about discourse, and learning about other influences to a text, you know, how it's written, what the arguments are like and stuff, and you know I (feel?) well that sounds great, it sounds really interesting, but I have no idea how to go about that

G: Right

A: and at the beginning of the year I didn't and so, probably the most useful thing is the way we've built on what we did know and added the sort of, I mean I suppose it's a framework of how you would analyse a text

G: Right

A: that basic framework, which I can use whatever I read, whether I'm reading an internet article in French or I'm reading a newspaper in English, or I'm reading a book in Dutch, or whatever, that is a useful tool and that's

what I've probably, that's probably the most important thing that I've learnt

G: Right

A: em, that sort of framework for looking at texts in general.

G: Yeah. Do you find that you have been using it for French or other

A: Em well at the moment, no, because a lot of the French texts I've been reading, because I have (laughs) because I have two classes where I would look at texts, one of my classes is films so we don't look at anything written basically, but two of the classes I do

G: You could apply it to film, as well though, couldn't you?

A: Yeah you could, I don't know, it's a difficult, I'd find that quite difficult, I'm not very good with film, this is the first () class I've ever taken and I find the analysis of film incredibly hard, I enjoyed the course, I enjoyed watching the films, but I found writing the essays horrible, em, and I needed a lot of help from my lecturer just to kind of understand what I was supposed to be saying, because, I, one of the mistakes I make, which I think you make when you first start reading literature, is I talk about the plot, and that's not what you're supposed to talk about, but because I view films as a viewer, as a member of the audience, not as a critic, I see, oh, so-and-so kissing so-and-so, or so-and-so running away, or doing this or whatever, I don't see the light, the camera angles, the length of the shot, you know, the shadow, em, the cutting and editing

G: Right

A: that kind of thing

G: That's in a way the language you see, that the language

A: Exactly, the language of film, yeah, well I'd touched upon that in my last essay but it's very, it's still kind of a tentative try at that, but I do see that film has a language, that I can agree on

G: Right

A: and I mean I think if I studied it a bit further I could use the framework that we've that we've got for film but I, the good thing about the course that we did was that we didn't actually have to study one whole film and cut it down into a framework, we looked at lots of bits of films and that was quite for me because it makes it a bit easier.

G: Right, right

A: But the other classes I do, don't involve a lot of written French and when they do, like for instance, I don't know if you know but to do a summary or resume in French is totally different to the way you'd do it in Dutch.

G: Ah right

A: So the way of thinking about a text I find is that I've been trained to do it differently in French, it's a lot more about em you enumerate the paragraphs, you give a little summary of each paragraph, you can't mention what's in the text, you can re-use the words, so it's very much about your own interpretation, whereas in Dutch em I mean for instance the practice exam, the practice thing that we did for the exam about, was about paedophilia, to do a summary of that for me seems much easier because I can take the whole of a text as a whole and sort of bring it would again in my own version, so I would use my way of analysing a text, to break it down in my own head and think right, well what are the most important bits, this bit at the end, this bit in the middle, that bit at the beginning, squash them all together and come out with a resume, whereas a lot of the time in French that's not how you work, you've got to be very methodical.

G: Right

A: You tick the boxes, you say right I've done this paragraph, I've done that paragraph, I've done that, you know

G: Right. But for a summary, you are not, yeah you are interpreting the

comparisons
w. reading
in other
classes

content because you have to find out what, you interpret what the main idea is, but you're not interpreting in the same way as using that framework

A: No but I would use

G: () you talk more about

A: what the content is

G: ()

A: not analysing why they've said it or why they've used this, but I find that in Dutch you tend to, because it tends to be more flexible I would be more likely to say to myself well why have they used, because they want to highlight this point or you know, why have they used this particular tense or something, whereas I know in French it's very much more about crossing out the bits that aren't interesting and keeping the rest

G: Right

A: and that's em, but I think that it's, for any text, looking at any text, the framework that we've looked at, the way of analysing, is very useful, even if you don't think about it, I think if you do it enough, it becomes second nature

G: Right, yeah

A: to think about, to actually think, well, you know, I don't know, look at all the passive verbs, or, you know, it just comes out like that, it's just automatic.

G: Yeah. So do you feel, because we have applied that also to reports and to letter writing, did you feel that has benefited you in terms of

A: How to write a report

G: how to write a report as well. I mean has it, or in general maybe, has that been a benefit in terms of using your own language or is it mainly in terms of understanding texts.

A: I wouldn't say I've used it when I've written things necessarily, not yet.

G: No not so much the framework but the kind of idea of how you, are you thinking about, which

A: How my

G: language you use

A: how my audience would react ()

G: Yes

A: how they would read, no I haven't thought about it yet but then I suppose you have to bear in mind that a lot of the stuff that I've been doing in the last three or four months that I'm thinking about is all academic and it's also done to a specific, for a specific point, i.e., to pass an exam, you know

G: Yes

A: so I haven't used it in everyday life but I think that maybe once I start working, I would, for instance, it it has affected the way I email because I know that we talked about, when we talked about reports, and I actually had to do an a a, what do you call it, a round-robin email, you know for everybody at work, summarising a meeting that my boss had had, and the conclusions of that meeting and I remember thinking when I wrote it that, because it's in French, the way I said something, I decided to go back and change it because I felt that it, it sounded too severe

G: Right

A: and I changed, I made the sentence a lot longer and sort of more, well it's softer

G: Yeah yeah

A: just because I kind of, I softened the blow slightly rather than saying, this is what's going to happen, I said, we have decided therefore that this is perhaps a good idea if you know and em I remember saying to myself, this is what we've done in class, you know the way of interpreting

something, and people are going to interpret this in the wrong way

G: Mm

A: if I put it like you know if I phrase it like

G: Right

A: I think if I, once I get a job it will be very useful because writing letters and reports is something that you would do in a job and now of course essays, it's not always the same, because essays I try and be as factual you know

G: Mm

A: em, but I definitely think it will be useful.

G: Yeah.

A: Definitely.

G: And what about em, have you used it in terms of your own Dutch, like for the assignments and for homework, do you

A: Definitely

G: feel that () yeah

A: yeah oh yeah all the time, yeah, well like those two reports, I specifically got out all the notes that we'd done on em well not only the reports but also other things like the way we looked at in the first term, what did we look at, we looked at something, we looked at something which I remember think, right that'll be good, and then, and trying to em, it ended up being a bad idea actually because trying to base it on what other texts (I've?) written, I find that quite difficult, that's not the way I would write

G: No

A: so in the end what I did, I wrote out what I wanted to say

G: Yes

A: and then I used those ideas that we talked about to sort of break it up and make it a bit more the way it was supposed to be, I mean I don't know what you thought, but I I felt, I was quite pleased with what came out and it ended up being quite report-like as I wanted it to be

G: Yes, yes yeah

A: but yeah I definitely did use all the stuff that we talked about and all the all the, I compared it to all the other reports

G: Right

A: You know the very formal ones, or the ones that we looked at

G: And in your essay, because you had to write for the previous assignments, there were some sort of, articles, you felt that

A: Yeah I definitely used them there, because the good thing about the articles was because they were aimed at different sorts of people

G: Yeah

A: the tone was very different, and therefore the types of words you would use, the verbs you would use, the length of the sentences was different, and the way, because they used similar facts, but the way the facts were presented, I tried to, to differentiate between the two types

G: Yeah

A: em and that, definitely, that was, well because the the great thing about what we've done this year is that em I suppose it's a bit of, it's a bit like mind control, it's the way, it's a way of writing something and you have things that you want to put in your text, you can present them any way that you like, but if you interpret, if you know the way you want them to be interpreted, you can change what you write so that they affect a person in a certain way

G: Yeah

A: it's like, it's sort of suggestion as it were you know

G: Yeah. Do you find that there's a negative aspect to that because you are () manipulating people as well.

A: Oh definitely, you can make, I mean it can make it, that is like politics

her power
of writing

you know, and they always say statistics don't really talk because you can change numbers to mean anything you want, you know, you can say, I don't know, well, you know, 75 per cent of people do this but on the other hand you can say well, 25 per cent of people do this, or, you know, like it depends on which figures you present and how you choose to phrase them

G: Yeah

A: em and it's, yeah, the same with words, you can you can make it sound good or bad by using the same information just by changing the sentence structure or the grammar or the type of verb you know, I don't know if you've heard em David Blunkett not long ago, I think it was the beginning of last week, made some comment about em em immigrants in Britain

G: Right

A: who were flooding British schools

G: Right

A: and the word he used was flooding

G: Right

A: and everybody picked up on it and everybody said flooding, negative word, and he said well no, it's a term, I'm saying that they are flooding, it doesn't mean that necessarily that I want to stop the flooding, I need to divert the flow, or he tried to kind to () but it was amazing how much that one word made people kind of react

G: Yeah

A: flooding's a negative word, you can't use it ()

G: And what did you feel yourself?

A: Well I thought that, it was slightly too negative because the way he said it as well, he said, em, British schools, well I don't know, I also didn't hear him actually use it, I heard what the reporter said he said, so I don't know if he used these exact same words, but what the reporter said was, "British schools are being 'flooded'" and he said "flooded" in you know inverted commas, em, according to David Blunkett, by immigrants and children of asylum seekers, and what he wants to do is put them in special centres, and I know that's something we've talked about a lot, and I think I would totally disagree with that, maybe for the first few weeks, because it's difficult to arrive and not know where everything is and what's going and give them a few English lessons, but there's no way they're going to integrate themselves if you keep them apart if you keep them apart, you know, that's what's happening now, they're being you know ostracised

G: Yeah yeah

A: and separated and talked about as you know

G: Yeah but I meant more what did you think about the use of the word.

A: Well flooding, I think flooding is quite a negative word

G: Yeah

A: but on the other hand, it depends on how you interpret it really, I think, yeah, if he'd said that to me, I think I would have found it quite negative

G: Yes

A: if he said these people are flooding our schools, I would have interpreted that as a bad thing, that they shouldn't be in those schools or they shouldn't be here or whatever you want to

G: Yeah yeah. Do you think, has this course made you more aware to those kind of things

A: Definitely yeah

G: do you feel that you would have picked that up anyway, or?

A: No I probably wouldn't, well I mean it, I think if the news had picked up on it then I would have been aware of it, but if I'd just seen in the article or heard him say it, I don't think I would've, I wouldn't certainly have thought about it as deeply as I

G: Yeah

A: because it actually made me think, and then I sat on the tube and thought about it, thought about the word, and the power of the word, and em em, yeah I think definitely this year has made me think, I mean maybe not about so much about when I talk but when I write definitely, what I put down on paper and em you know I, I always used to write much more freehand, just sit down and write

just
in writing

G: Mm

A: and now I tend to write a draft, cross it out, change, things, move things around, leave it for a bit, come back to it, and try and read it from the perspective of someone who will be reading it

G: Right

A: who is going to, whether it's a report, an essay or whatever, and that's something, I mean it's not only the year that we've had in Dutch but it's also the whole university experience has taught me that you know you can't, you can't write on the spot there and then if you want something to be clear cut and precise, it's quite difficult to write like that, em, and definitely this past year has helped me to see that I have to do drafts and I have to think about, even if I don't do a draft but to think about what I'm going to say and try and formulate the argument in my head, so that when it comes out on paper it's clear and it fits the kind of format that I want so it has the, it achieves the aims that I want to achieve.

G: Yeah yeah yeah. There was one, you know you say it's the whole university experience, but I expect that the whole university experience for you has focused particularly on the em the critical aspect of using language but critical in the sense of traditional like being concise as you say, very well argued, and we have talked about that in our classes quite a bit as well, and that you criticise an article purely for the way it is presented, is it well structured, is it a logical argument, is it well supported and those sort of things

A: Yes

G: but at the same time we looked at those kinds of texts as a cultuurtekst and then you look at it from a totally different aspect, you don't look necessarily at the strength of the argument

A: and how it's formulated

G: but the kind of values which, as with the word 'flooded', the kind of values

A: which come with that yeah

G: which come with that. Do you feel that those two ways of looking at a text and doing it in, for a start we've done it in one and the same course, but also em looking at em the kind of values within a text, it's probably different from how you've looked in other subjects, a text, although maybe you might have touched on it at literature, I don't know, but do you feel that is in conflict with one another or is it a confusing way?

A: What the cultuurtekst as opposed to the analysis of, the structure of the argument?

G: Yes, yeah.

A: Em

G: Is that a confusing way of looking at a text?

A: I don't think so, no, I mean you have to, if I was going to get someone else to do it I would have to explain the two differences and I probably would say, let's look at the argument first, and then look at the culture, because I think if, people find it probably, unless you've done it quite often, it's difficult to differentiate between the two, because you can say something like, I don't know, especially if we're talking about a Dutch text, you can say oh you know, I don't know, they're talking about () well I don't know what () are, so that's a badly-argued piece because you haven't explained what () are, but that's actually a cultural problem in the sense that if it's written for a Dutch audience, they would understand, or

not being
intended
audience

you know you can talk about () or whatever you want to talk about, but if it's not in the frame of reference of the reader, then they don't necessarily understand and I think most people who read, who read newspaper articles or whatever, the average reader doesn't necessarily differentiate in their head between badly-written and misunderstood as it were.

(phone rings)

G: () so em

A: Do you want to keep going on that or?

G: Well, I don't know, were you finished with that argument?

A: I think, I can't remember what I was going to say, no I think the main point is, I think it's a good way of looking at a text but you'd have to explain to people what the two differences were between a cultuurtekst

G: Right

A: and this sort of analysis of the argument.

G: Yes yes.

A: Because if people got it confused then it wouldn't work as a way of analysing.

G: No no you're quite right.

A: But I do think that it's a, it's an interesting way of looking at a piece, especially if for instance, I mean it's always interesting to look at other cultures, but to look at your own culture, to look at an English text written by an English person for an English audience, and to look at the analysis, you know, look at the way it's written, em, I do, I tend to do that a lot more than I look at the actual culture and the discourses behind it and the it's affected by other things, em, I don't tend to look at the culture because it just seems to natural to me

G: Yes

A: and I suppose one of the things that I've learnt in the last year is that, to look at it from someone else's point of view, in a way, and so when I write I try and think about other people, but also when I read I try and think about well gosh, how are people going to interpret that or how are they going to understand it.

G: So that is, you say that is the effect if you look at English texts. Or French in your case as well.

A: Just well, yes, exactly French would be the same because I'm used to the culture.

G: Yes, so both French and English would be very natural to you.

A: Yes, I would, I would, well I mean, when I first came to university, in our first year, we would look at texts about France, now I've never, it's never posed a problem for me to look at about, something, look at about, I don't know a text about politics, or about French culture, or I don't know their habit of buying a baguette a day or you know whatever you want to find some cultural frame reference

G: Yeah

A: Whereas with Dutch I didn't have any idea about those so I still need some of them explained to me

G: Yeah

A: and that is always going to be problematic and I suppose in a way I'm much more aware of Dutch texts and the cultuurtekst behind them because I actually have to research and I have to read it with my eyes very very open and see all the different things and I think to myself, well, I don't understand that, is that because that's a cultural thing, is that a cultural difference or is it just because I don't get the grammar or whatever, whereas in French and English, for speed, I don't tend to think about things like that

G: No, right

A: it just sort of goes in and out

G: Right

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A: but I've become much more aware of the fact that other people, especially, like if you sit in a French class here at UCL, a lot of the other people don't have as much knowledge about France as I do

G: No

A: so they (say?) things they say well why is this or what does this mean or what's this for? And I say well isn't it obvious, and then I think well no it's not obvious because they've never been or they don't see that or they've never experienced this particular even or whatever, em.

G: That's quite interesting. So you feel in a way it is definitely, it's easier to look at a Dutch text as a cultuurtekst?

A: Yeah because I have to be, also because that's how I've been trained, if you think about all the stuff we've done over the past four years, you and Dennis have made up, I suppose you've held our hand in a way and you say right this is how you read a text what, you know, em, the () whatever and we've had these little hoops to jump through that make me, when I see it, as soon as I see a Dutch text I automatically start to analyse it and I think right, passive verbs, tick that box

G: Yeah yeah

A: you know I think long sentences or I think you know lots of nouns or lots of adjectives or, that kind of thing, that comes automatically to me now, em, and I don't tend to do that in English or French because I read for pleasure in English and for French, and I don't necessarily analyse those texts, em, you know.

G: Yeah well the two things, I mean, I wouldn't necessarily expect you, every text you read but

A: No no but do you know what I mean, like it just, especially with things, with short things, like, but it's very useful to be able to do that because then you, for instance, I write something like those two reports and then I didn't look at them for ages, but when I went back to try and fix them and correct them and everything, I look at them and I think, gosh well, that bit actually doesn't really make a lot of sense, or that bit isn't necessarily framed in the right way for, and that's what I get from these classes, I learn to read things at a deeper level as it were.

G: Yes yeah. And what about, because you talk about this kind of naturalness of a text and it seems so obvious, em, and with the Dutch being slightly different because of Dutch, you know, a Dutch articulation, which is a the jargony word for it, but em, do you feel that, by looking at texts like this, have you em in some way come to understand a little bit more about certain aspects of Dutch culture

A: Oh definitely.

G: or recognise the Dutchness.

A: Definitely. Well yeah, I mean lots of the things we've done em like okay well the one that sticks in my mind is the () text because I mean I can see that article being written in England in a British magazine or whatever, but the way we talked about it and the fact that we talked about it with some Dutch girls who sort of talked about their interpretation of it and what they saw, I was quite surprised by how unsurprised they were, as it were

G: Yes

A: how that is such, that's the normal cultural phenomenon in Holland, and I suppose that made me think well yeah, of course in Holland women are, it's true, all the girls I met are very much more liberated, much more you know easy going, they say what they think, they do what they like, the thing I find in Holland that I really really like was that there's less difference between men and women.

G: Right

A: In England, if you go to a party, say I don't know, I had a party or a friend's had a party, and I went round there, people my age, there's an

automatic separation between women and men. Girls go to the bathroom together, girls do whatever, whereas in Holland it's not like that, everybody mixes together and everyone shares beer and everyone does, and that's something that's really really nice to see, and that's something that I learnt from looking at these texts because I, my interpretation would be, my gosh! I didn't realise that there were women like this in the world. But in fact the way those two Dutch girls interpreted it made me think well gosh in fact in Holland it's probably quite common, and therefore a bit of a cultural phenomenon, and I mean there are other things as well, in other texts that we've looked at, I mean especially like Helen pointed out a few things, em, through, from the texts that we've read, and the things, em, like when we did the em, the foreigners coming to Holland to live and you know their interpretation of what it was like to live there, and my perception of Holland is always, it's so liberal, it's so open, it's so, you know, and actually when they talked about the problems that they've had you realise that it's not nearly as liberal and as open as you thought, and that perhaps in comparison to Great Britain it is, but it isn't necessarily as liberal as the Dutch people would like to think it is, do you know what I mean?

→ is referred here to other texts (see below)

G: Right

A: Em, so things like that.

G: So which text was that?

A: I'm trying to think, it was, the beginning of the term, do you remember we had two sort of self, two accounts of, there was one from a guy who was political who I think he was

G: Ah okay

A: and one from from a woman who

G: Ah okay yes. Okay yes. She was Turkish, wasn't she?

A: Yeah, she was part of the, she was one of the only Turkish people in the Dutch government

G: Government, yes that's right

A: and she was interpreting, she was saying what it was like when she first moved here and

G: Yeah yeah okay

A: and the I can't remember what the other man was

G: He was a diplomat.

A: That's it, he'd lived all over the place and he talked about, yeah that's right.

G: Yeah.

A: It seems like such a long time ago now, that we did those!

G: Yes actually, yes it was, doesn't it. Em, right I wanted to ask you a bit more about the Dutchness I suppose. Yeah, so did you, so you did say that, looking at those texts actually did help because it is, we also discussed in a way that it's very much a global issue.

A: Yes, yes.

G: But nevertheless you feel you did recognise a certain kind of difference in the way that it was written about within a Dutch context, for a Dutch audience.

A: Yeah I think so, yeah. I suppose also it's the very fact that you know, well, I suppose, I'm of a lazy mind, I don't tend to think about things unless I'm stimulated to think about them and I suppose one of the nice things about the range of texts that we've looked at, we've looked at lots of different topics, and it's made me think, well yeah, of course, they have the same problem in Holland, and they may not treat it in the same way, they don't deal with it in the same way, but they have similar problems

G: Right

A: and the way they deal with it is different and that's something, just the very fact that it's been mentioned, now whenever I read the newspaper or I

that is D. articulation

see something, I think, I've done that class, and we talked about the way it is in Holland, and I often, Daniel, my boyfriend, often says to me, well why, why is everything you always say, well in Holland it's like or when, well in The Netherlands they do it like this, or whatever, and he says, well I don't care you know, you know, because that's just the way you know, that, the things I've seen, well we should do it like it's done in The Netherlands, in The Netherlands they do this, and he says well that's all very well but we're in Britain.

G: You sound like a Dutch person in England actually.

A: I know, well that's funny, because I've just had my French oral this morning, and my topic at presentation was teenage pregnancy in England and how it's the highest in Europe whereas in Holland it was the lowest, and I did my presentation and everything and then they ask you questions, and the Professor, all he wanted to ask me about was prostitution and euthanasia, and what it was like in Holland and I was like, that's not what my talk is on, give me a chance, but he's like, oh, are the police corrupt?, are the police more corrupt because of the prostitution?, because prostitution's legal, and I was like, well I don't know, I'm talking about teenage pregnancy.

G: Why would they be, I don't see the, that's a cultural thing probably. I don't see the link.

A: I think he thought because they worked with prostitutes they would be more inclined to you know, I don't know try and sell on the drugs they'd confiscated or something like that or I don't know, luckily it was at the end of the exam so I didn't have to answer the question, I just said I don't know! Sorry, move on!

G: Do you also feel that, to what extent do your personal experiences and the knowledge you have already play a role. I mean obviously they play a role but to some degree or to a large degree presumably, having been in Holland already and lived there already meant that you already knew quite a lot of things about

A: Yeah but you have to remember that, six months is a long time for living somewhere, it's not a very long time for learning about everything that happens in the culture, I mean already things like the very fact that I arrived in March but left in August meant I didn't experience () I didn't experience () or I don't know whatever could have happened in winter, em, I experienced a lot of stuff, I saw them, I saw () that was a very interesting cultural experience, I saw them play football and I saw what they were like you know on the terraces of pubs and bars and what that kind of social atmosphere was like

G: Yeah yes

A: em but I also found that, because I lived in () it's, it was of a certain you know people are of a certain type so for instance I didn't like Amsterdam and I didn't like Amsterdammers very much and that's something that I feel bad about but I think if I'd lived in Amsterdam, it would've been different, but just because I was living in () I felt more I belonged to ()

G: Right

A: and also I lived with specific people, I lived with students, so it's hard for me to interpret what it must be like for an immigrant or an older person or you know, I didn't really come into contact with many you know, older people, a lot of the older people I did were people like lecturers, em, tend to be a lot more wordly than other Dutch people simple for the fact that, like the woman who was in charge of my course, oh she lived in England for ten years, she'd lived in Spain, she knew about other cultures and that very fact changes you, it doesn't, she's not as Dutch as it were as other Dutch people possibly.

G: But to what extent did your experiences in Holland have an influence

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Wreckt

on how you interpreted texts and recognised certain Dutchness in it.

A: Yeah I suppose it helped in a way, there were certain things that I would recognise but I had a fairly limited experience, em, it, I mean I suppose I took my personal experience and I just built on that and I was possibly aware of things in Holland, which, eh, subconsciously I knew, but I didn't really, I hadn't really kind of brought them to the forefront and thought that's what Holland's like or in The Netherlands they do this, and I sort of was aware and I had experiences in the back of my mind, and when we've done texts I've thought to myself, gosh actually that's true, I've, you know, I never saw that, or I you know, there were none of you people around, or, you know, the texts have brought to the fore what I already sort of knew but I just didn't know I knew as it were

G: Yeah yeah

A: em

G: But it's not so much in Holland they do this, because

A: No, yeah, I think, one of the things I've noticed is that much as we compare and say that the countries are different, actually there are an awful lot of similarities, and you can't get away from the fact that within Europe we're all so close geographically, but politically, economically, culturally, you know, Western Europe is fairly similar, you know you're always going to have a version of, I don't know, there's always going to be bread on the table, it might just be a baguette or a slice of whatever and they're always going to have their form of a bar or a pub or a cafe you know, the thing about that is it's not totally alien to me, it's not like going to Indonesia or India or somewhere, so yeah, automatically you know that things aren't going to be you know that different, but em, I definitely think that my personal experience helped a little but probably not as much as, but then, yeah not as much as we've done in class but then we've done very specific topics in class

Similarities
between
cultures

G: Mm

A: and those are the specific topics that I didn't necessarily cover whilst in Holland, I mean like for instance, Ellie knows a lot about Muslims in Holland because that's what her project was on, so she went out and did research whereas my project was on people, students and people of my age, doing something which is natural to them, so that's something I know about but I don't necessarily know about how the older generation feels about it or how you know Muslims do or you know foreigners or whatever, em, so I think the texts that we've covered have given me a big insight into other topics which like I say because I'm too lazy

G: Yeah yeah

A: I wouldn't necessarily have known about.

G: And they've given you an insight because of the content or because of the values that sort of are embedded without being made explicit.

A: Yeah, I think both, the content because it's interesting to hear about how things are dealt with in another country, especially things that we, problems that we have here, but also the the, to learn about the values and the way people feel about things and the sort of Dutchness of it, em, and to appreciate that you know they do things differently there, it's not necessarily the best way and we don't necessarily do it the best way, and to find some happy medium or whatever, yeah I mean I can certainly describe a, well I suppose I have more stereotypes in my mind of a Dutch person now than I maybe did previously

stereotyping

G: Ah

A: because I em because I sort of I don't know I know more specific things about them, because I think also whilst I was on my Year Abroad, Dutch, all the Dutch people I met lived up to the type of stereotype that I'd heard, you know, the whole kind of very em very open, very honest, they say what they think, and that's what everyone had said to me, oh God,

you'll find Dutch people say really, they really say what they think, and sometimes it's true, I was slightly aghast at (it?), and also because of the language difference, they would use something and when I'd think about it, I'd think oh yeah, in Dutch, it actually means this but because (I?) use the literal translation or whatever, it comes out slightly rude in English or very kind of forthright, and you're like, God!, and you know I'd phrase things a lot a lot differently but they just don't do that because that's not how you speak in Holland em and so yeah things like that but em I think I've learnt a lot about the country and also the government and the way you know the government works and the way I suppose politics affects their lives and, because things like, when we talked about euthanasia, in England euthanasia is considered a health problem, in Holland it's a political problem, and that's something I think is a very good thing so yeah.

G: Right and what, do you think, how important is your personal reaction to the topic, do you think, in order to read texts from a cultural, would that be a bar or?

A: Em, my opinion about a topic? Like what I think?

G: Well maybe, maybe your previous opinion, or yeah maybe, maybe that, maybe your previous opinion.

A: Well I quite like when we do topics that I think I know something about and I actually end up learning something and I end up being convinced otherwise, you know, changing my mind, or of being, em, swayed the other way as it were, you know, to find, at the beginning I think this but then afterwards when I think about the text and what's presented, the facts that are there and the way it's, you know, () and it's very convincing and it's very, and I think, gosh yeah, I agree with this man even though you know 20 minutes ago I completely disagree with him, em, but I do think that personal experience and to some extent opinion can get in the way of interpreting a text, because you can also be quite closed off, I think, well not that I want to name anyone in the class, but there are some people in the class who tend to be very, if they decide they don't like a text and they think it's silly or pointless or, they're not open to trying to interpret it and understanding it, I don't know if you remember the thing we did about cricket

G: Oh right

A: trying to describe cricket in Dutch, you know about what you'd have to do and where you run and stuff, and em, yes one person in the class didn't think what we were doing was right and so completely reacted in a way that meant basically that her opinion was her opinion, she wasn't going to change her mind, she wasn't going to read what was written on the board, she was just going to say, I don't understand cricket and I'm never going to understand it and I don't want to read what you're writing. Whereas I think if you don't let your opinion get in the way and you just think right well I think I know a lot about this topic but I maybe don't, so what I'll do is I'll listen to what everyone's got to say and I'll react in a natural way without letting my opinion get in the way and then I'll make a decision you know afterwards, so it's an educated decision, and, because I don't think you could make a decision about things, especially not important things like well, multi-culturalism for instance, I mean cricket you know, cricket's random, but multi-culturalism is something that I think people have opinions on when they don't really know what they're talking about, and I don't claim to be an expert but with the little limited knowledge that I have, I think certain things and I know that if I learnt a lot more and did so much more research I would probably maybe think different things, you know, em, but I do think that opinion can get in the way.

G: Right

A: But you shouldn't let it, you should try and, because I mean analysing

the way a text is written is nothing to do with opinion, it should be about basic facts that this means this, and this is you know em, and I know people do let their own feelings get in the way and you can have different interpretations of texts as convincing or not, or well-written or not, or well-analysed or whatever but personally you know each individual should have their own way of interpreting a text and they shouldn't let previous experience and opinions get in the way.

G: No, right. And what about you know I want to, you have actually probably already mentioned it but without using that word, within my research the word dialogue is going to be sort of important and with dialogue I mean both engaging with the text I mean have a dialogue with the text for instance but also have a dialogue with that other, otherness, within a text, now it doesn't have to be necessarily the national cultural, we are not so much talking about national culture but aspects of it

A: Yeah, the other discourses you mean?

G: Yeah yeah for instance the otherness in the Men's Health text.

A: Would be feminism or men's culture or

G: Yeah particularly, yeah because we weren't the audience you know, it was sort of an otherness because of being from, such a clear, male perspective. And em then also dialogue with your fellow students in the class. Do you feel, I mean do you recognise it, do you sense that dialogue has been quite important and do you feel that the, has it taken place for, I know it has taken place for you in terms of, with the students because you know there was a lot of dialogue going on

A: Yeah yeah

G: but has it also taken place, do you feel, with the text, was there a kind of engaging (?)

A: Yeah certain texts I engaged with more than others, for instance, possibly because of the topic you know because some topics I find much more fascinating or some topics I don't know a lot about so I find what they say quite you know educating and informative em and then of course there are some topics which I think, oh, I've heard so much about this I really don't want to talk about it again, or you know whatever, so yeah I do think, but I do think also that em I've learnt to get more out of that dialogue, that there's always been a dialogue in a sense that when I read a text, I've always interpreted it in my own way and it's always spoken to me and I've tried to take on board what it says as an individual, but now I think what I would do is I tend to associate the dialogue between the text and me and the dialogue between the text and others and try and understand how it works because, for instance, that Men's Health article, the dialogue was supposed to be from the Men's Health article to men, that's what it was written for

G: Yes yes

A: and yet we were reading it and, you know, I'm perfectly capable of reading it, it doesn't stop me from reading it just because it's not designed for me, but I would take into account in the sort of loop between the text and myself what the text was for and who it was for and so the text spoke to me and I reacted in a certain way and then I had to remind myself that in actual fact, don't get angry about it, think about it, it's written for men, they don't necessarily think in the same way that you do, or they don't have the same opinions or they don't understand the same things or you know, they all think women are weird so of course they're going to write things like so to try and associate your dialogue in the grand scheme of things with all the other dialogues going on, em, and to also, to change, to sort of, because you, the dialogue shouldn't be one thing and only that thing, it should be lots of things and you should take into account, you know, once you've spoken to all the other people in the class, what they all think and what their dialogue is like and take into account those

dialogues into yours and think to yourself, well it's true actually, I reacted in this way but Helen didn't or Jessica didn't and their dialogue is different and I can see why and you know, em, but I think it's very, it's very easy to have a dialogue with a text that's a well-written text but often a badly-written text is a text that doesn't talk to someone and that's the biggest problem and so you have to find a way in and and cutting it up and analysing it is a good way to go about it because you can say, well, actually, this paragraph's very well written but then the next bit goes a bit funny and it goes slightly off the subject or whatever but then he comes back again and this bit's very convincing and I like this ending or whatever, so analysing a text to me creates a much better, wider dialogue that sort of takes into account lots of other things.

G: Right. Because if you say that it's em easy to have a text, to have, engage or have a dialogue with a text that is well written, you might also, a text which is well written, there might in a way be less of a dialogue because you are more (easy?)

A: True true

G: more easily to purely accept what

A: Yes exactly, well it's like I say in English, because to me English is always sort of well written in a sense that I read it, understand it, accept it, get on with life, I don't think about it, so in a way, you're right, the dialogue there is lessened, because of the very fact that I don't go away and think about it em but I do think that if a text, especially if it's something like an argument that's trying to convince you of a point, I think one of the powers of a well-written text like that is that it can convince you without you knowing that it's convinced you. I find some, I mean some writers I've read are unbelievable and I I you know you read something and you don't think about it and you think, and you think, two days later you think to yourself, my God, I've actually changed my mind about something without thinking about it, just because the way that person has written it makes me think, you know, or for instance the way, em, I like reading biographies and I've read biographies of people who I don't really like or appreciate, famous people or whatever, people you see and you think, God he sounds a bit weird or he's not very nice or he's a bit ruthless, or whatever, and the way a biographer writes can actually convince you otherwise and that I find is amazing, the fact that the dialogue is subtle to the point where it just goes in one ear and it stays in my head and I think to myself, gosh I've changed my mind, or you know whatever's happened, and I haven't thought about it and it's just that text talking to me

G: Ah

A: and that's powerful

G: Yes, yes

A: because of course when you start analysing a text you take it apart and it becomes a lot more obvious so the dialogue is much more obvious to you and to everyone around you

G: Right

A: em.

G: So it gives you more control in a way, are you saying that it gives you more power in terms of resisting it maybe?

A: Yeah possibly and also it's a good thing if you don't understand the text, to break it down is a very good way of learning to understand it, texts can be quite frightening at times, I mean I know for instance, you know, some of the texts I got to prepare for my French oral exam, I read them and I think, oh my God, I can't, I don't know how to talk about that, I don't understand it, there are so many words I don't understand, and I can't understand what he's trying to say, but if you sit down and break it down, you're much less scared of the text, it doesn't, I don't fear it as

much if I break it down because then I can see to myself, it's only words, linked one after the other, it just so happens that the way it's done is a way, you know, it's quite convincing or it's well written or whatever, em, and of course you know I can't engage with the dialogue of a text, a Dutch text as much as I can with an English or a French text because I don't speak it as well, so there's automatically a sort of thing, a switch in my brain that says right, look that word up, or don't know what that means, go and find out, or you know cultural reference, (now?) I know what the means, I have to go and look that up as well, so you can't necessarily, the dialogue isn't as smooth but then again you're right, the dialogue may be wider and I may be inclined to find out more about that particular text and to analyse it more deeply than I would with a text that I understand much more sort of fluently (?) without problem.

G: Yeah, yeah. Because when you say that if you, suddenly you realise, gosh I've changed, totally different, I've changed my opinion or I'm thinking different about this person without actually having noticed consciously I mean that is really sort of insidious in a way

A: Yeah, it's dangerous too because I think the power of the word, gosh, you know, you could write something in a newspaper and if it was incredibly well written you'd have the whole of London you know reading Metro and thinking oh, we should vote for someone else or it's that kind of thing, but that's what I mean, I think that texts, well I think people underestimate the power of a well-written piece, I think you can do yourself a lot of good, a lot of justice by writing well, I think writing badly is better than no writing at all, but in a way it's wasting your power, you control, you know, because if you can, if you think your point is important, you want your opinions to be heard, if you write them well, then people will be more inclined, probably more inclined to agree with you but more inclined to listen and to read what you've written and read other things that you've written.

G: Yeah, so what about this issue then that you might be someone, that you might be now with all the kind of tools and techniques you've had in a way, you might be, or, more insights actually, you might manipulate people as well, you might, what do you feel about that?

A: Well I yeah I would, well I I don't know, I think it's, I think it's better to know than not know than not know sort as it were, you know better the devil you know, I'd rather be able to say to myself, if I write this, this is slightly manipulative, and I'm hoping that they'll do something, you know I'll make suggestion and I'll hope that they'll react in a certain way, em, and yes, I mean it, you know, if you use it for bad means, you know if you use to brainwash people it's not very good but if it's for subtle things I don't see, it's not going to change the face of the world.

G: Yeah yes, we're manipulating all the time of course.

A: Of course of course and everything you read is propaganda basically, em but I think it's useful for things like, like how I've interpreted adverts for instance, the way you read about things, I'm much more, well I suppose I'm much more pessimistic and I'm much more kind of em I'm not as innocent about things any more because I read things and I think oh well they've chosen that word specifically like, a copyrighter's gone over that a million times and said right, that's fine, but the fact that it's printed on this tube or poster or whatever means that it was chosen above all the other ways of saying it which means they must be trying to get something across

G: Yeah

A: em and it's the same with writing, you know if I write that things that I try and think about the results and the kind of you know what it's going to achieve, I mean I don't plan on you know brainwashing the world you know, the way I write, but it's I think it's a good thing to know, because

selection

you know, especially if you get a job where you talk to a lot of people, it's good, it's a good way to be you know to be diplomatic about something, to know that to phrase something this way will be more diplomatic and will hurt less people or it's a nicer way of saying something em

G: Yes yes, yeah you can use it, it also helps you to be socially more responsible in a way.

A: Of course yes exactly, you know you can make people do things that they didn't know that they really wanted to do but you can also you know help.

G: Can I just pick up on one point you mentioned, I mean I should have picked up on it straightaway but I didn't want to stop you at that time, you were saying that you came back from Holland in a way having more stereotypes and now you have more stereotypical ideas about Dutch people?

A: Well yeah because I have to be honest, I made the mistake before I went on my year abroad, when I went to Canada, of reading a lot of stuff about Canada, but what I read, I think I picked the wrong things, I read books written by English people or French people about Canada and I ended up I found myself making judgements about people before I'd even really met them, and I found it quite problematic, I didn't make a lot of friends when I first got there, because I had this kind of barrier, and because of things that I'd read and learnt, I decided that Canadians were this way and I wasn't going to get involved, and I regretted that I realised after having spent six months there when I made lots of friends that that was a silly thing to do, but I shouldn't think about it before I went, I should just go and see what happens, so when I went to Holland, I, lots of people had bought me books, you know, this a guide to Holland

G: Oh right, Dutch () and that sort of thing

A: Yeah exactly, and () I'm not going to read them, I'm going to leave it till I get there and when I get there I'll have a look and see what I think

G: Yes

A: and when I got there the people were so friendly and so nice and the girls I lived with were so adorable that I thought well, what am I worrying about, it's all fine

G: Yeah

A: but then the longer I spent there, the more I realised what type em of people they were and they're, I mean the girls I lived were sorority girls, they're part of a sorority, they live in a, they're part of an all-girls kind of group, they live together in sorority houses, it's like fraternities in

G: Is that a Dutch organisation, I've never heard of it.

A: You, oh you must, universities, like boys are all part of fraternities in in

G: Oh, hang on ...

(TAPE SIDE ONE, ENDS;
SIDE TWO)

G: I don't think you have that at all universities.

A: Oh no

G: () is a bit like () one of those posh universities.

A: That's the thing and I came to realise that in actual fact these girls were of a specific type, you know, and they were all very nice, all very sweet and I've become really good friends with a lot of them and I've seen them since and stuff but it does, it made me sort of develop this stereotype about Dutch girls

G: Ah right

A: which is of you know of this specific type and I have to be honest, I've met other people since, I mean Dutch people in London just studying here, and they're not like that at all, you know, but it did leave me with a certain

stereo-
type -
hockey
were
Pence

stereo-
Studenten vereniging

set of stereotypes and they have certain opinions about things

G: Right yeah, well it's easily done of course

A: Well yeah

G: if you are just in one particular environment most of the time it eh

A: And also it was very subtle because I didn't realise that that was the environment I was in until other people who were there with me pointed out that I was, you know, and they said, well yeah of course it's a sorority, and I was like, oh yeah, because they'd said it but I'd never thought to myself, because it's not something I understand you know, em, but it's very kind of secret society they have, like, initiation, and you can't talk about what you have to do in the initiation

G: Oh right okay

A: mothers and daughters are in the same sorority and it's all you know em and it's a little bit secret society for me.

G: Yeah yeah

A: But that made me think certain things, and I have to be honest that when I came back, I tried to stop myself from doing that but the, some of the articles that we've looked at have made me sort of divide up Dutch society in a way that makes me think well perhaps there are certain stereotypes, which aren't necessarily true, but which generally work, you know they are generalisations about people, just like you can generalise about Great Britain and there are certain types of people, you know people from the North are like this, people from the South are like this, you know, em so I don't know, I don't necessarily think stereotypes are all bad because it's a good way, you know a country's so diverse it's very difficult to talk about the people, in general, without stereotyping, and I think stereotypes serve a purpose, of course you shouldn't believe everything you hear, you can't decide that everyone's going to be like the stereotype, you know there's one stereotype and that's it, em, so you have to be open-minded but I do think that they serve their purpose, they are useful.

G: But you see stereotypes rather in certain groups within society then?

A: Yes, that's what I mean by

G: Like those girls

A: Like the girls yeah

G: as opposed to you know a group at ()

A: exactly

G: different ages and that sort of thing. Yeah yeah, but is that, would that, if you had that, and obviously it's much more em much more complex view then to say well the Dutch are, presumably what you get in all these books

A: Yeah

G: but might it, do you feel it might stand in your way in interpreting texts, because you're then trying to slot them in a particular

A: Well yeah I think what happened when I first came back, was I did try, that's how I tried to work and of course you come to realise that you can't because it doesn't work, em, but then also talking to other people who'd been on their Year Abroad and what their experiences had been like, I realised that where I'd been it was a particular type of place, and it wasn't, there was nothing wrong with the place, I went, but it was one type of place, one type of you know, one group of people in one certain environment and you know you just have to accept the fact that you've only experienced one thing, and I mean I'd go back and go to different places and meet different people and hopefully sort of enrich my opinion and my view of all the different types of people.

G: Right yeah yes. Yes it's a complex issues actually () stereotypes

A: Definitely yeah

G: but of course you can't say that you know, we know we can make certain statements about certain groups of people, about certain cultural

stereotyping

'small cultures'

18
characteristics but at the same time, yes

A: Well I think, one of the biggest problems is that stereotypes aren't necessarily wrong but they're not necessarily right either and it, that kind of, you have to find some way of you know, and the biggest problem is I suppose people's attitudes to them in the sense that there are these stereotypes that exist and if you're, if you don't think about it you just accept them and you go around thinking that that's what all you know French people are like or Dutch people are like or whatever, and that's wrong because until you have a personal experience of the place, you can't really make a judgement on, you know, em, and you can only really base it on personal experience, so, I don't know, like I don't understand all these English people who won't go abroad, they criticise abroad because all people are () like this

G: But do you () less of this?

A: Oh I don't know, my mother's family live in Wales and they are very, oh no, I'm not coming to London, I went to London once when I was twelve in 1916, I'm never going back, and you think well, for Christ's sake, it's changed a little bit since then, but no I mean, very kind of closed off

G: Yeah yeah

A: but I mean, they are very happy where they are and they think that where I live is completely bizarre and weird and they can't understand why I live here, just the same way that I think where they live is bizarre and I can't understand why they live there, so you know, it goes two ways and they think I'm a stereotype of a Londoner and I think they're a stereotype of a Welsh person in the countryside.

G: But then actually if you had a dialogue together

A: Exactly

G: you'd find out that

A: If we spoke more than Christmas cards then we'd yes, no I don't speak to them very often.

G: Just one very final question and that is you have said that you have found this, you know, these classes, looking at texts, etc., etc., valuable in terms of your language learning and the way that you write, but has it because it has made you more aware. But has it actually helped you in terms of, do you feel you've become more competent in your language, have you become more fluent, have you become more you know, has vocabulary increased?

A: Yeah, I think vocabulary and things like that, vocabulary's been very much increased because I've learnt ways of saying things and I distinctly remember how some articles were phrased or whatever and that kind of, that stuck in my mind, em, but yes I mean in terms of grammar too, because for instance there have been sentences that we haven't understood that as a class we've said, oh well what does that mean, and when you've explained them it makes sense, and that kind of way of writing something, or that style of sentence, that sticks in my mind too, and I think to myself, oh, you know, em, so yeah I think it has improved, I mean fluency's always improved by reading more, by talking about something more by you know, just because the very use, the very reason that you would use all those words is to improve fluency.

G: Right right

A: So yeah I can't deny that that's definitely improved, but yeah vocabulary is something that I think is quite useful, it's also the different types, the number of types that we've looked at means that you've got a certain type of vocabulary from different areas so I've got vocabulary that's formal to do with reports but I've got vocabulary that's like from an informal letter, or from an article about whatever, and those, all those put together make a much sort of wider variety of vocabulary to use, so I've

got a bigger sort of resource to purge from.

G: Right, right, okay good. Well, that was fantastic, thank you very much. Is there any other comment you want to make, or not?

A: No, just that it was a great year and I really enjoyed it.

G: Oh thanks

A: And I don't know what I'm going to do when I finish because it's going to be really bizarre.

END OF TAPE

Appendix 7

Transcript first interview with Sarah, 26 Febuary 2002

Sarah

TAPE: ~~26~~ 26 Feb

Notes re. transcription:

G= Gerdi

E=~~Gerdi~~ *Sarah*

() = uncertain of word, phrase etc

Words and phrases are repeated according to speech patterns.

Where sentence is interrupted by another speaker, I have omitted the full stop at the end of the line. Interrupted speech follows on as indicated by use of a lower-case letter at the start of the next line of speech.

Transcription:

G: I haven't () everyone, about em, my aim is for me to try and find out how did that notion of cultuurtekst came across to you and whether you feel that this is a useful way of looking at texts and whether you felt you had benefited in any em any way em from that, but I'm just realising that you haven't, you weren't there with all sessions, were you? Em you were there for the session that we discussed men's health and I think you might have missed the session when the em the Dutch students were there.

E: Yeah. When was that? Oh was that when I had my interview?

G: It might have been even before that, it's, I think it

E: Oh that's a shame because I would've found that interesting I think.

G: Yeah. Yeah, as a matter of fact the Dutch students came up with, you know I think there was some subtleties but they came out with some fairly em similar things actually yes as the rest of you came up with yeah. And actually during that session what we did there is we looked at the text again, the Men's Health text, and we looked at how women and how males as well or male identity, how that was actually portrayed, em, whereas in the text of () we'd noted that women were only in active sentences, they were the subject, males were only em discussed in passive sentences, where they were the object, and as you would expect, in the Men's Health text not so much that the females were necessarily passive, em, but you know we looked at the particular kind of words em and verbs which were used to talk about males and females and () fairly traditional actually. So in a fairly traditional kind of way that the males were very much competitive, I mean I haven't got sort of the text here but the words about you know that the male identity was competitive and successful and those sort of things, but anyhow you were for that time we discussed it and I think that was also the time that we had the em the framework, () with questions of cultuurtekst, em did that notion make any sense to you, cultuurtekst or do you find it ...

E: It was a bit general I think

G: Hm

E: but it has to do with eh lifestyle, doesn't it?

G: Well lifestyle is one of the things but seeing cultuurtekst as the particular kind of values in that group of people or in that society which have given rise to that text.

E: Yeah, () you can have different lifestyle magazines, different cultuurtekst, different types of text in the same cultuur ...

G: Oh yes, I mean a cultuurtekst is any kind of text, anything, literally anything could be a cultuurtekst

E: So it is a bit, it is a bit of a

G: but it's about, to see a text, what I mean with that is, to see a text as em as a part of a culture, as a particular thing which is produced in a culture and because of that it will have those values of that particular culture, and it doesn't have to be Dutch culture

E:()

G: but it could be yeah I don't talk about national Dutch culture, small, group, sub-culture or whatever you want to call it, em, which have given rise to that particular text.

E: Mm.

G: And I don't know, do you feel that that came through for you?

E: Yeah. What from the () and the way it's written and the style?

G: Yes

E: Yeah, it is quite clearly a typical text that's ()

G: Right right, so do you find that a useful notion to look at texts, any texts, eh to

E: Puts them in a cultural context.

G: yeah

E: I think em you would do that subconsciously em if you were em if you were the () group of (), it's a bit more difficult to realise that but

G: Right

E: I don't actually buy lifestyle magazines or even read newspapers

G: Mm

E: or anything that's (sold?) like em, because they have a specific () group and I think the more of them that you read, the more sucked in you get and the more em difficult it is to notice that em it's em manipulated

G: Right

E: so I don't so for me it's em it's quite clear when I read an article in a newspaper or a or a em whatever piece in a lifestyle magazine that it's that it's just em that it's quite well it's quite manipulated for a particular audience to try and appeal to a certain type of em frame of mind

G: Mm

E: and I don't I don't like the idea of em of em being so manipulated so I'd rather not read them.

G: You'd rather not read those texts which are so manipulative, is that what you mean?

E: Yeah, so I don't buy magazines, I don't buy newspapers

G: No

E: I don't buy anything to read

G: Oh right

E: I only read books, I don't read newspapers or em or lifestyle magazines, like if I want to find out what's going on in the world I listen to the radio just because it's more em well it's more spontaneous I think even if they have got a script they em they actually have to convey it and em so it's more active in the sense that em it's spoken rather than written so there's less room for manipulation I think and also if you em if you have news just in, so if you listen to a em news, a news radio station, then you have news just in, they haven't really had time to to write a whole manipulative article on it and give any particular stand, point of view, em they just literally read what happens, em

G: Mm

E: always read out what happens as they receive the reports because I don't I don't listen to em BBC radio stations either because em because well I just don't I think it's just the same thing as em watching the news or something, where they've had time to edit and and em

G: So which radio station do you listen to then?

E: LBC.

G: Which is, I don't know it?

E: Em, I don't actually know what it stands for but it's London something,

it's an independent news radio station.

G: So it's news throughout, it is just a news station?

E: Well it's not only news, but then they have people on and discuss and then they have em like em phone-ins and sometimes they play music, it's quite good

G: Mm. Oh right.

E: I don't listen to it all the time, that would be my radio station of choice rather than anything else.

G: Right so you have, basically because you've always had this concern, or () you know since you're a university student or whatever, you've had this concern about and this awareness of that whatever information we get it has been em manipulated from a particular standpoint and towards a particular aim.

E: Yeah, I don't know when I em when I when I really decided that I wouldn't em that I would try not to em em be a particular type of () group or whatever

G: Mm

E: em maybe from when I did 'A' Levels but I em I just I think maybe from being young young, aware of some people having more influence than others and em

G: Mm

E: and why why should somebody listen to that person and just because they're loud doesn't mean they've got anything more interesting to say so just because they're the em they're the em sort of em the em more established if you like em means of or sources of knowledge or information it doesn't mean to say that they're the only ones or the better one

G: Mm mm

E: and that's not that they're the worst either but I'd rather not like I'm not saying I've never bought a lifestyle magazine or I've never bought a newspaper, of course I have but I wouldn't read it on a regular basis.

G: No, because you are worried?

E: Well I'm just really not interested

G: No

E: because it's too it's too em predictable.

G: Right. Yeah. And do you think then that it is possible as you say you listen to this particular radio station, do you think it is possible to bring news which is purely objective from a without any particular angle to it?

E: Well no because it depends what sources you get the news from in the first place

G: Mm

E: and I don't think the sources are even em objective, nothing's objective

G: No no

E: but em you can over-edit

G: Right right

E: and so I just () have accepted em fountains of knowledge

G: so actually in a way are you saying that you've always looked at texts as if they were cultuurtekst or at least from the kind of ideological/political manipulation?

E: Yeah probably.

G: Yeah yeah. Do you find it useful then to do that as part of a foreign language? Or is that then, do you, because we're not looking at a lifestyle article as you know you are not the () group as you said, you're not the target group of it, so we're not looking at it from a point of view of of information, or whatever you can get out of it, we're looking at it purely from the point of view of what does it say about the values of the society in which this is produced.

E: Yeah, I think em it's been a good course, I just maybe objected to the

essentially
septs the
as a group
in a way
and checked
it

content of some of them but that's maybe the articles rather than the actual course but em if you, I don't like the idea of learning to write in a particular style because

G: Right

E: because that's not em that's just, I can't believe that, that you would you would only speak or write in a particular style.

G: No

E: Em and so that's I mean that's another example of why, what I would find abhorrent and professional writing, em, because I just, em I just don't like the idea of it being so em deliberate and em and em with such a em I don't know em specific aim in mind

G: Right

E: em but the cultuurtekst em well I don't think it's em I don't think it reflects fairly the cultuur, you can read one text but it doesn't say anything about the culture.

G: Well, that depends on how you interpret culture you know, I mean

E: Well yeah, culture I would say is like I don't know if I've read it anywhere but maybe I've got the idea from somewhere that I read, it's like a culture, a society of like em it's like em em a duvet cover or a quilt that's knitted together of all sorts of different squares

G: Right right

E: or whatever shapes, it's all knitted together and if you just look at one aspect

G: Yeah

E: I'm sure you can say well this is part of the cultuur but you don't actually get the big picture and so yes it might be helpful to to see em this article as indicative of em certain values but for me it doesn't say anything about the country.

G: Right. So do you think that there is such a thing then, as a Dutch culture or an English culture?

E: Em, em.

G: And is that what you would want to try and discover with learning about Dutch ()

E: Well this is the reason why I studied Dutch

G: Mm right

E: in the first place, em, because that was my question, and em, em yeah I think I think there are differences but I don't think that they are em that em it's helpful to to highlight the differences.

G: Yeah

E: Em em because otherwise (you're finding?) similarities

G: Mm

E: Em well not always, having lived there I've noticed the differences more

G: Mm

E: Em, but I think that there is, there is a Dutch culture so to speak but not but not one that em, there isn't a Dutch culture that's em so different from any other cultures.

G: Mm yes

E: Because again they're, if you say that this culture of a particular society is like a duvet cover, then you could say the whole world is and each country is part of that, so I don't think that there is such a thing as a national culture on its own because they've all, they all belong to the same international movement and developments.

G: Right, so you'd like to think in terms of unity, that there is such a thing as we do share, you like to think in terms of what we share.

E: No, no I'm not saying, no because then I would have that then I would have that em em sort of em that viewpoint from through which em everything else is biased, I don't say oh no, there's em there's more unity

can detect
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listen to the
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than difference, maybe there is maybe there isn't I don't know, that's not what I'm trying to say, I'm not trying to convince you that all cultures are the same

G: Mm

E: I'm just saying that em that they all, all cultures are part of the same world and all people are part of the same em culture and cultures are necessarily divided up into nations just because that's been the way history has developed

G: Mm, mm

E: so if you didn't have national borders, you would probably just have, I don't know, the idea of culture wouldn't exist.

G: Mm.

E: And it's just it's just em

G: Or they might, the idea of culture, because you could also look at it in terms of, for instance that Men's Health article, that that is a particular culture, you know, it doesn't mean to say that everyone who reads that magazine is part of that, because you could be part of different cultures within the same country, within the same group of people even, or do you not agree with that?

E: Well what well what culture do you think that Men's Health article em?

G: Well I don't know whether you can necessarily name it and and pinpoint it as such but there certainly is, I mean some of the things which came out from analysing the text, that em it is obviously from a very traditional male, macho kind of perspective, em, and em, I think particularly that, maybe the traditional macho perspective you know and and the group of fairly successful men em I think we thought that the target group was you know youngish men who put a lot of effort into their appearances and how they come across. But any of those people in that

E: ()

G: within that group of people may be part of another, will be part of you know lots of other different groups or forms of identity.

E: So yeah so that so that article doesn't actually reflect any culture maybe em well there's not much difference between culture and lifestyle, so it's a lifestyle magazines and it would appeal to certain people

G: Mm

E: but it doesn't say anything about them.

G: Right. Okay. So do you feel

E: The traditional male perspective, what are you talking about, I don't I don't think that that came across, that wasn't the em the main point of the article it was em it was more em it was more to say these are, women who sort of like em are successful blah blah blah and that they are that they just they, it will come to a point where they want to have kids and get married so you know watch out, is she actually interested in you or is it just the em is it just the achievement of being married and having kids.

G: Right, right.

E: And well that I think that's a valid point.

G: Yeah.

E: And I'm not part of the () or whatever and I wouldn't have read that unless it was part of the course.

G: No yes

E: But that's a valid point.

G: Yes. But there were lots of conflicting values in there because that one, the way that he was talking about them having kids at the end was very much within the kind of em style as if you know it was from a women's magazine almost em the way that the you know the woman who had had a baby that she was em beaming with happiness and that kind of language so he thought of it very much in positive, you got a sense that he was writing it from, as if this was a good thing, that she had babies, whereas at the

culture in terms of national culture rather than in groups

after culture lifestyle

ess. text in terms of presentation

doesn't see article in terms of 'wives' or 'desires'

interesting interpretation. I'd heard a bit but she is saying from the discussion misses an underlying message.

start of the article, was as you say, was very much this warning, watch out, because they just want to

E: Well I don't think that's conflicting, it's saying watch out for those people who just they just want kids because it's em it's a status symbol but they're saying but actually if you if you do have kids and it is em and it is em em and you do feel that it's you know the right relationship blah blah Blah then brilliant

G: Mm

E: and that's that doesn't contradict. So I'm saying on the one hand you've got two different women, one actually loves you and wants kids with you, because you're special to her, and the other one, em, the other one is just em well she's got loads of money and em she's got everything else now why doesn't she have kids and a husband

G: Mm

E: so he's, there's, the article it's just saying that there are two there are two different types of women

G: Mm

E: and be careful which one you choose, I mean it's not saying that em

G: Right. Do you think that's what it was that it was about two different types of woman?

E: Yeah rather than

G: Mm

E: em yeah, I don't see how you can interpret it any other way

G: Yeah yeah

E: yeah you could try but I wouldn't agree with you, I think it's just em, but then, so then what's it saying? It's saying that there's two different types of women but of course there aren't just two different types of women, to polarise two different stereotypes

G: Mm yeah

E: but that doesn't actually say anything about all the women in the society

G: Mm

E: probably they're all, they are all within the scale somewhere, just because every scale has got two ends and everyone has to fit on somewhere but it doesn't actually say anything about anybody else.

G: Mm. No. So do you feel it was fairly stereotypical in other, stereotypical about the women, do you feel just to come back to that point of you said well what can you see about another culture, did you feel there was any kind of Dutchness in it or did you feel ?

E: (The article)) No I thought it could have been anywhere.

G: Mm

E: That's just, it was probably translated or or not necessarily translated, or I mean, they use the same texts, I notice, because I've read a Dutch magazines when I was out there

G: Mm

E: just I think I was standing in the shop or something

G: Mm

E: and I actually recognised the article and it said translated from (Q?) or whatever so I'd actually read it already

G: Right mm

E: in the English from a couple of months ago or something.

G: Which, what sort of publication?

E: It's a music magazine.

G: Oh right

E: But they they use, these magazines, they're like all international businesses, they use each other's stuff

G: Mm

E: So it could be anywhere, that's not, that's why I wouldn't say it's em.

G: Yeah this was not translated. This was written by a Dutch em

Dutch news

E: No but I, I wouldn't have been surprised if the exactly, if () roughly or not exactly roughly the same thing would be written in English, in an English magazine

G: Yeah, roughly, but what em, roughly perhaps yeah

E: Yeah roughly, so why not exactly, well it's a different language

G: Mm

E: and you have different expressions and different things that are recognised but the the arguments would be the same.

G: Right, the arguments, right, okay. Yeah.

E: The points.

G: What about, this thing about em sort of therapy, did you feel that em that was a negative thing, the way em, because there was actually a difference between what the Dutch students felt that, you know, it was in a very, you know, the emphasis on therapy for those women, to go into therapy, that that was you know seen, talked about it, from almost a caring, and certainly a positive point of view whereas some other students felt that em it was very

E: ()

G: negative that oh she's mad.

E: Between Dutch and British.

G: Yeah, well, I'm wondering.

E: Right, is that is that what the outcome was?

G: Well no there wasn't an outcome as such, no, it's just that this was sort of one of the things

E: The tendencies, where British people would think oh therapy's a bad thing and Dutch people would think therapy's a good thing.

G: Well not so much that that's what they would think but some of the other students had interpreted it as if that was another negative way of talking about these women, like oh they're mad, they must go into therapy, rather than that being a, you know, a fairly kind of caring, because you also

E: Well I don't think so, I think that's a bit exaggerated, because, well, there are all sorts of different therapies available now, there's like aromatherapy, whatever therapy, this therapy that therapy, and em there are therapies for everything so if you're a bit paranoid

G: Mm

E: then you would think that they're going, then you'd sort of say, oh, this man's saying they're going mad

G: Mm

E: but I think that everyone's opinion says more about them than it does about the actual magazine

G: Mm

E: and em mind does as well I don't know what it is, and that's why I wouldn't be able to see that, because I can't I can't listen to my opinions () somebody else, it's that my opinions reflect me more than the article

G: Right

E: but em

G: Yeah

E: so I think em that em, would it be em negative, is that negative to go to therapy, well, because a friend of mine has a sister who works in America as a therapist and to say that that's a Dutch - British difference em wouldn't really be wouldn't really be em satisfactory because then if you go to America they're all keen on therapy and well that's a generalisation but em so yeah you don't just have em em national differences em

G: No

E: I'm sure there are people in Holland that would be like em like the idea of therapy and people in Britain would encourage it but em.

G: Mm, yeah. So do you feel that everything that you look, that you say

is interpreting
question
literally

ah but it's a personal thing and you've got people like this in all countries, you know regardless?

E: Yeah because em maybe there is such a thing as a generation difference, em, so for example my mum would em would em would see therapy as a good thing whereas I would rather not bother

G: Mm

E: but then that's not em that's not in line with the general trend because you would say you would think that therapy is becoming more acceptable

G: Yeah, particularly for young people, yeah

E: yeah but em but I think that there's such a thing as generation differences and that's why things appear to change but really they are just the same.

G: So are there cultural differences as well or is it impossible to talk about cultural differences?

E: No, (there are?) cultural differences but then there are sub-cultural differences within cultures

G: Mm, mm, yes

E: so the idea of cultuurtekst well, that's just text, I think.

G: What do you mean by, it's just a text?

E: Yeah it's just a text. ()

G: And a text is not important in terms of reflecting cultural values, is that what you mean?

E: It depends what the text is about. So if it's about culture and then it's cultuurtekst if that's what you mean.

G: But if it is about culture then em it's rather explicit whereas everything, looking at it from the point of a cultuurtekst, it's very implicit. You try to go underneath the text rather than what it actually says, not the content but the values which are reflected through it.

E: Yeah, but we've only been, we've been looking at cultuurtekst haven't we, in as much as they're texts explicitly about different cultures.

G: Right. Em. Well, have we looked at texts which are explicit about different cultures?

E: Well, explicit about the culture that they're from.

G: Yeah

E: As you would want to put it, so that the Men's Health magazine is

G: Oh okay

E: is a traditional male, men's cultural perspective.

G: Yeah I don't know whether you can actually describe it as clear as that because I think the boundaries are very very fluid.

E: Yeah I don't think you can at all.

G: And I think that part of the thing that came through em through well you know part of the discussion showed that em there is not necessarily, that a lot of these values are actually very conflicting, on the one hand you may say this, on the other hand that and actually, you know, they seem to be fairly opposing values.

E: What within, of the writer?

G: Yeah. Although he might not necessarily be conscious of that.

E: No but then that doesn't matter. I don't see why that matters.

G: That it's conflicting you mean?

E: Yeah.

G: Apart from maybe that if it is conflicting maybe that does show up some sense of ... the fact that it is a society which is in in movement, in em disarray sounds a bit strong, but em, the fact that it may be some confusion about something, no stable values, certainly, doesn't it? You don't, no, please tell me. You don't agree with that?

E: Em. Well there are different values but they're not em they don't cancel each other out.

G: Mm

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desirable or is it totally undesirable, should everyone have their own individual interpretation?

E: Well em you did say that em the consensus () that's what the Dutch system tends towards whereas the British system would tend towards the majority, em, decision of what's acceptable, em so they're both equally valid.

G: Mm

E: Em, it's just em, so if you look at, it's theoretically the Dutch and the British systems are very different.

G: Mm

E: But in terms of the em cultural problems that everyone's having at the moment, they're all the same so I don't think that it really matters, if you come to an agreement or not.

G: Mm, right, okay. Well just sort of finally and you don't need to answer it if you don't want to em, what em, I mean to start off with you were fairly, you found it very difficult to work with this kind of level of text, looking at a target audience and that sort of thing, do you still feel that or have you just sort of accepted it like this is what the course is?

E: Well I got over it because I can understand the point of the course but I don't em I don't like it.

G: No

E: But that doesn't matter

G: No

E: I just, I don't like it, em. Because well I don't I just don't like the articles at all.

G: No

E: Any of them. I don't think I've liked a single article that we've read.

G: Mm. Because what would an article need to have for in order for you to like it? You'd want an academic article, would you?

E: Em, no not necessarily.

G: Or journalistic ones?

E: Em, no because there's not a particular type of article that I would like to read, I mean, the articles that you've chosen probably best illustrate the points that you are trying to make

G: mm

E: So em, they're good, but it's just I don't like them.

G: Well what

E: I don't like, I just don't really think that em, I'm not interested, I would not choose to read it, that's what I'm saying. So like I've already said I wouldn't have read any of the article unless you'd given them to me to read for homework.

G: Yeah, none of them, not even the one from Paul Scheffer about ()? *multiculturalism*

E: No, I wouldn't have chosen to read that either.

G: No, no. What kind of articles would you choose to read?

E: Em.

G: Does that depend on the topic or the kind of publication?

E: Em, yeah probably topic. So I would read on something if I'm interested in the subject

G: Right

E: and em I would try to read various articles and not just em one

G: Mm. Yeah

E: so em yeah the topics, so I got a bit cross with the topics because I don't like the topics but then that's just, I can see that I shouldn't have em reacted quite so much but then I couldn't really help it because I just don't like the topics.

G: So what kind of topics would you have chosen? Sort of political-oriented or economics-oriented or literature-oriented or historical?

E: Probably historical, or, yeah, em, historical or actually about, so if you

want to learn about Dutch culture, if that's what we're trying to do, I would be more interested in em in em the history course that () did and the different em organisations and like em and historical figures like I don't know anything about () and nothing, and kind of was hoping to, and there's all sorts of different Dutch people in history that I don't know anything about () but then that's not really modern Dutch culture and the emphasis on this course is modern Dutch culture

G: Mm

E: and the dissertations that we had to do were on current themes

G: Mm

E: fine but em that's maybe where you can find more differences in in different cultures just because the different famous people that they have, the people

G: Mm

E: that they identify with but a Dutch friend of mine says that we don't have any heroes, we don't have any Dutch history heroes and all of, well not all of, but where he's from, the monuments to various people have been graffitied or whatever and people don't really care about historical figures.

G: Mm

E: So you could say that that's a difference between em Britain and em The Netherlands, but that would be only, there are loads of people in Britain that don't care about

G: Mm

E: but that's just my personal interest, I would like to know about (Erasmus?), I would like to know about em (), I would be interested to learn about that

G: Right

E: so I'd rather learn about that

G: Yeah yeah

E: than these cultuurtekst.

G: Right, okay, good, well thanks very much for your time.

Subject: Languages at War Conference Reminder

From: Simona Tobia <s.tobia@reading.ac.uk>

Date: Wed, 30 Mar 2011 11:45:07 +0100

To: Christopher Tozzi <Christopher.tozzi@gmail.com>, "M. Manuela Fernandez-Sanchez" <mmfs@ugr.es>, Ulrich Tiedau <u.tiedau@ucl.ac.uk>, Pekka Kujamäki <Pekka.kujamaki@uef.fi>, Roberta Cairoli <roberta.cairoli@unimi.it>, Mona Baker <Mona.Baker@manchester.ac.uk>, Constadina Charalambous <constadina.charalambous@ouc.ac.cy>, Marija Todorova <todorova@uacs.edu.mk>, Franziska Heimbürger <Franziska.heimburger@gmail.com>, Alison Smith <alismsmith@liverpool.ac.uk>, Lisa McEntee-Atalianis <l.atalianis@bbk.ac.uk>, Gianluca Cinelli <Giancin77@yahoo.it>, Sylvie Kleinman <Sylvie.kleinman@gmail.com>, Timofey Agarin <t.agarin@ecmi.de>, Petra Svolizac <petraSv@zrc-sazu.si>, Kameda Kameda <masumikameda@yahoo.co.jp>, Linda Fitchett <l.fitchett@aiic.net>, Justin Lewis <SO1@DOLSU.mod.uk>, Eleonora Bernardi <elebernardi@hotmail.it>, Paul Cohen <p.cohen@utoronto.ca>, Anneleen Spiessens <Anneleen.spiessens@hogent.be>, Joanna Bourke <j.bourke@bbk.ac.uk>, David Best <dbestio@yahoo.co.in>, Nick Fletcher <Nick.fletcher@britishcouncil.org>, Peter Hare <Peter.hare@et.britishcouncil.org>, Diarmait Mac Giolla Chríost <macgiollachriostd@cardiff.ac.uk>
CC: James Taylor <jtaylor@IWM.ORG.UK>, "Baker C." <C.Baker@soton.ac.uk>, "Kelly M.H." <m.h.kelly@soton.ac.uk>, Louise Askew <louise_askew@yahoo.co.uk>, Hilary Ann Footitt <h.a.foot@reading.ac.uk>

Dear all,
just a quick reminder: for our conference presenters who have not already done so, could you please send us a written version of your 20 minute paper (2,500 - 3,000 words), as the original deadline was last Monday?

For all of you who will need to use PowerPoint presentations, would you please send your presentations no later than 4th April to James Taylor - jtaylor@iwm.org.ac.uk, and also bring a back up version on the day on a memory stick.

If anyone has any other requirements, please do not hesitate to get in touch so that we can arrange technology accordingly (hopefully!).

All good wishes,
Simona

Appendix 8

Transcript second interview with Sarah, 7 May 2002

E P. 8/5 - seem to confuse issue of logical structure in italics.
(prob. because I used that in lesson P. 11. H?)

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G: Right yeah

E: say for example, but even if you're not em trying to make a point or trying to refer to something specific or if you're not giving your opinions, clearly then styles can be easily sort of em changed to suit to suit different people or for different reasons and so it's just em there isn't anything that's written or published that's carefully considered and em so it just makes me sort of more em well even less interested in reading ().

G: Yeah right, because you said before you didn't like reading, the news and things like that, but em you said em that it, didn't quite understand, you say it is less considered when people, or do you say that people do manipulate it very careful, do you say it (goes?) automatically?

E: Em well I thought that it was just automatic but in fact it seems to me more that is actually really em carefully thought through and em yeah I suppose.

G: Do you think that is always the case? Because for instance I remember Helen saying that she said well, certainly if you do it yourself, if you write yourself, then quite a lot seems automatically, seems to come automatically.

E: Yeah, I mean I would agree with that, that's what I think, but then I suppose with the things that we read, with people who write professionally, either in the newspaper or for an organisation or whatever or em they're a writer, and so if you write professionally then it's all em I don't know, carefully chosen

G: Right

E: then if you're just writing a letter, but then actually it made me think well, it's not just, so if I wrote a letter to somebody instead of I would em instead of just saying what I think em for example I would try and work out how I'm actually getting my message across

G: Right

E: whereas I wouldn't have done that before

G: Right

E: so I suppose em it has improved my awareness of language but I don't () like it?

G: Right

E: because it makes you less able to em to actually trust anything written down or even spoken so when you're having a conversation with somebody how do you know they're not really trying to () what they want say and try and change things to suit and try and, I don't know it just makes me more, more worried.

G: This was, this was sort of a problem you had at the start, that you felt that if you had to accept the notion that people em writers speak differently in different contexts for different situations that this business of to what degree can you still trust, what's happening, but is that a notion that you feel more comfortable with or is it still sort of a point that worries you?

E: Well it's em that's the thing that I've learnt really or taken from the course and I don't know if I'm comfortable with it, no.

G: No

E: But that's how it is, I have to accept it.

G: But when you write yourself now, you said, maybe for the exam or whatever, you felt you did take that into account as well, you did take the kind of context and the audience into account.

E: Yeah, so I've tried and like for example with the course work that we've done I've tried to do what you were sort of looking for and so that's quite specific because it's for a course and everything and so yeah, it's not like I'm really trying to you know trick anybody, but em but still I don't like it.

G: No.

E: Because

G: But why is it such a negative thing because it helps you to bring your message across, it doesn't have to be for a negative aim in terms of trying to influence people against their will, it could purely be to have a better communication.

E: Em, yeah sure, if you're just em, if you're just talking I think, but if you've got, if you've got any reason or motive then em then it's difficult to work out what that is if someone else is speaking, if em, if you consider that they could have said the same thing in different ways, because it makes me wonder why did they choose to say that, then, and what are they actually trying to do, is it what they're saying, and so it's just difficult to trust people if you think that they can em use language so much, so easily.

re-trust

G: But a lot of people would do that unconsciously anyway, I mean people do that unconsciously anyway. Do you feel that you do that unconsciously or not?

E: Manipulate language?

G: Well not necessarily manipulate but talk in a different tone to different people.

E: I guess I do em I guess I come across differently to other people, to different people, but em I don't feel like I'm, well obviously I'm the same person, so I know that I communicate differently with my mum for example but em I don't, I'm aware of that and I don't like it.

G: Oh right.

E: But so

G: Right

E: so it just highlights something like that.

G: Ah right okay. Maybe because of, the specific example, because I mean could you imagine being in a work situation for instance, that there you will communicate differently with you know maybe the person in charge or not?

E: Well I think I'd be aware of there being an office mode, but I don't like that because if everyone's just in office mode then I just won't feel comfortable

G: Right

E: it's just, if they're not talking properly, if they're just talking office mode, so I mean I don't really have enough experience of offices to be able to say

G: Right

E: but I just, I don't like the idea of there being, because I think that em, because obviously I've seen when my parents come back from work and I just get, I feel like that, maybe not so much my dad, but my mum goes from office mode, to mother mode, to whatever mode.

From office mode to mother mode

G: Ah okay, and then you feel that it's a role that people play?

E: Yeah and I really, I don't like it all because then, I don't feel like I, I don't feel very comfortable with that at all.

G: Yes yeah yeah. Could it also be, does it have to be, do you have see it purely in terms of being in a certain mode, I mean could you see it, for instance if you talk about the text, rather than sort of people speaking, it's probably easier to recognise in a text, if you read a text, do you feel that you could see or get a feel of the kind of environment or culture in which the text is produced? I mean it could be a kind of mode, it could be an office sort of mode, but do you get a sense, is that something that you have perhaps have gained from this course, that you can read texts in terms of what values do they represent? Or try and put across, whether that's conscious or unconscious doesn't really matter, but ...

E: I think that's easier to tell in some genres than others.

G: Right

E: Em, although em just because some things are more clear than other, so

if you're writing about something abstract, and although they might mean this, that and the other, that it's not necessarily clear and em so, so for example when there was the text about the Cotswolds or something

G: Yeah

E: still that was a very long article, for something to be that long I don't really see how it can, how you can really manipulate that so much and we did look at it a lot and em I can't really remember everything you said, but

G: Well that was the text which was written very much from a nostalgic

E: So that was when we were talking about () or postmodernism or something, but something that, a text that long, you might have certain things that you put in, but em, that kind of style was more em, was more just em feelings and looking at them in different ways, sort of how you feel when you walk down the street and things that you notice and so that's, there's no logical order there, it's just different things coming as and when em, when it seems to arise

G: Yeah

E: so I don't, that's more difficult to see now how they've actually used language to get (something?) across.

G: Well I seem to remember about that text that one of the things that we discussed was that em the language he used was already sort of very much emphasising there, I mean the content was about nostalgia, England is you know a country built on nostalgia, and the language he used had something quite romantic and literature-wise, sort of traditional literature and slightly convoluted.

E: I suppose that it was more with vocabulary and em and surroundings than sort of or em logical structure but so I suppose that's the use of language but it just didn't seem to be as manipulated as other things so sometimes it's easier to tell than others

G: Right

E: so that's why I prefer reading things like that than

G: You are, you know, very much focusing on the word manipulation and I know I've used the word manipulation, but em, you don't necessarily have to see it in terms of purely manipulation. But more in a representation of you know the culture or the values or do you feel that that's not how you see it?

E: Em, no sure, if that's what in mind, if that's the subject you're dealing with, em, yeah. But em yeah, so if you're writing professionally though you're going to

G: But then could you not say with that nostalgia article, could you not say that that represents a certain cultural value? Which is sort of traditional, very much appreciative of you know literature, older literature? Are there not certain values, cultural values? I mean actually that's maybe difficult with that text because that was about culture, so should talk about a text which is not about, specifically about culture. Em, well the Paul Scheffer text for instance, although I know you had a totally different opinion on that, but do you not, felt that you could get some values, did some values shine through the text?

E: Sure.

G: Such as, which ones?

E: Well again that was a really long text.

G: Yes.

E: So it's less em for me it's more convincing and it's longer than, because well, if you're writing an article you have to be (), there has to be, I suppose the shorter an article is then the more obvious it is to spot.

G: Right

E: That they've em that they've really been more (careful?) in what they say

G: Yes

E: so the fact that it was such a long article sort of em made it I think, I preferred that to read than others we've read, but it's more difficult to structure something so long so you might tackle different angles as you went along but really em what I mean is if he was, he wrote that article and as he brought different points in, then he might have a big picture in his mind, still you don't know what that is until the end of it, and probably he didn't know either, he knew that there was, knew that there were different points and sometimes with those points (in his essay?) there was the big picture

G: Mm

E: so if you start off carrying, that this thing in my mind looks like this, and I want to, I want to get that across then, then it's more, if you come from it that way round then it's more easy to choose what to say. So when I read that, I think maybe he's so good that he could write such a long article and still have something in mind when he started

G: Yeah yeah

E: sure but so em maybe if I read it a lot of times I could perhaps work out his structure but em I didn't notice a quite so blatant structure or choice that could have been anything else.

G: But the language for instance, did that appear to be very much representing partly the Dutch liberal value? Because I know that we highlighted a few sort of bits like you know, do you feel that this represents liberal values or in fact the opposite, not exactly () but certainly being very critical towards Islam for instance.

E: Em.

G: Or do you find it difficult, is it difficult to em pinpoint what is the language and what is the content, what's the two, where does the two merge?

E: Em. Well he did represent what you might call a typical point of view and then to kind of criticise it but then I don't think that em that's obviously a stereotype so I could kind of appreciate that he's writing what is his opinion

G: Mm

E: and that he considers it to be opposite to (?) but that's still em, he just presented it as far as I could see, just as his opinion and you don't, and em, I didn't agree with (), but he's not em trying to em to, I didn't think that he was trying, he probably was trying to em make () but em yeah so anyway that's just the kind of article () I didn't have such a problem with it

G: The noise

E: I can't really remember all the article but it was long and he was trying to convince people that this is the way I see it, this is the way that's right

G: Yes

E: I don't think he was that successful, just because probably, it's not something that you can easily persuade people.

G: No, so what about if

E: What were you saying about sorry language and content, how is that different?

G: Yeah, do you find, in terms of, in fact I can fill that in with the next question because I was going to ask, did you find the framework for analysing (texts?), I gave you two frameworks, one was, we used that I think for the Men's Health Article, analysing texts, first in terms of who is it aimed at, why is it written, and then gradually to more in depth questions such as which values, eh, does this text represent, and what particular intertexts do you recognise or discourses? Em yeah maybe if you can, I mean did you find that useful that framework, or not?

E: Em yeah. The sort of things that are em that you that em I suppose you wouldn't think about if you just read it, if you were a regular reader.

G: Yeah, they come automatically.

*value/legitimacy
article as
expression of the
cultural*

E: Em, well if you're not a regular reader of certain magazines you're not so into the mode, the same mode, so you kind of read it with a bit of distance.

re: informal reader

G: Mm, yeah.

E: Em, so yeah, but that's a lifestyle magazine () yeah but you can apply the same framework to other things, so it's a useful framework.

G: So does it help you, does a framework like that with specific questions, forcing yourself to think about the audience, you know initially the immediate (context?) the audience and the aim, and then later on to think about well which intertexts, which discourses, are used, which values does it represent, is that, do you find it helps you that way to get deeper under the text, whether it's a lifestyle magazine or an analytical article in a newspaper.

E: Em, well, I've read some of the lifestyle article kind of things and em I don't think it's possible to really get underneath them

G: Mm

E: just because there's nothing underneath them as far

G: No in terms of content, no

E: Em, yeah but also that, I just don't even, they're not, they don't even really, they're just crap really because even if you did know everything about the author, why he's writing it and what his experiences had been and what his opinions are, it still doesn't mean that you understand the text any better really because it's just em it's based on this kind of sort of this how do you call it preconception is it or this assumption that everyone knows what he's talking about

G: yeah

E: because it's sort of fashionable but still it's em it's not, nobody's completely like that and so just it's I don't really think it does fit the context, a real context, only an idea, so I don't know if I can really get underneath that.

! yeah exactly!

G: So what about getting underneath it in terms of an anthropological way, I think you actually mentioned in the last interview that this text wasn't interesting unless perhaps I don't know (maybe not you?) but someone mentioned it, maybe it's interesting for anthropologists you know, if they find it a hundred years hence

E: Oh (right yeah?)

G: would it be interesting from an anthropological point of view to get a sense of, imagine, imagine that someone would find this text a hundred years from now, em, and get something like this and think, oh well that gives me a very interesting picture of Dutch ideas, ways of life, values in you know the year 2000.

E: That would be quite worrying wouldn't it because it seems to be so superficial that if they say, if they use that as a source of evidence about people and the way they live now, em, they () get a very good picture because that's basically what it is so that people can identify with it and then buy the magazine but really it's so exaggerated and (un?)typical that it's not really real but I don't know if people if people say in 200 years or something, also realise that it's just a, just a style magazine and not em, well I'm sure they would (they wouldn't?), if they knew what a style magazine was they wouldn't take it that seriously but they

G: But you actually do say that it would be good to get an idea of what people's identities are like because (if they write it?)

E: Oh the sort of things that they read em on a monthly basis, em, sort of things that they can relate to but it doesn't really, I don't think it says much about an individual but it might sort of they might say something about the values of of em I don't know popular culture.

G: Right, yes

E: So just because of that it doesn't mean that it's, it's very good evidence

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about what people are like, so

G: No but perhaps of the values they had.

E: Yeah

G: I mean you said popular culture as if you em think there's no point in studying popular culture, not for what it has to offer you in terms of ideas, but what it would have to offer you in terms of what it says about the values and identity of people who like, who use, who are part of this popular culture.

E: Yeah, that's why it would be worrying because it, it's a good, yeah it would be a useful source

G: Yeah

E: but it's worrying just because it's so em it's sort of stereotypical, and I suppose you can't just, if say in 200 years some historian picks it up and looks at this magazine then he wouldn't consider that on its own, he would consider that along with lots of others things.

G: No, absolutely, yeah.

E: Em. So question really actually what was being read at the time and what was happening at the time and what people were doing at the time and so it would probably, it would be useful but I don't know if it would really weigh up to much, you know, sort of analysis.

G: Right, right, okay. What about, we've looked at different ways, one of the ways was with this framework and was looking at discourse, and intertext and so on, and the other way was, for instance, we actually looked at the Paul Scheffer text and some of the others in terms of the, there we looked at the quality of the argument and whether you agree with the argument and so, so you could say that the way we looked at the Paul Scheffer text was kind of traditional, you know was very much a part of traditional university education, you really look at the argument, and the structure and whether you think that it's a good argument, does he back up, has he got good evidence for his you know his argument that he makes, and looking at the Men's Health text for instance, we weren't interested in his arguments because it was clear that that wasn't a particularly strong argument and perhaps not even written in order to argue a particular thing but we looked there at the intertext, the discourses, the identity of (?) of this particular popular culture element.

E: Yeah

G: Did you feel that looking at those two em in two different ways, a text, one is looking critically at the content and criticising it for not being a solid argument, and the other way looking at a text purely in terms of what does it say about you know a particular group in society? Or particular values in society. Do you think that looking at these two texts are very conflicting with one another.

E: The two texts?

G: No sorry the two different ways of looking at texts.

E: Well I don't you should look at, well if you can look at texts in different ways you should, although we don't have to obviously, but if you're just going to look at texts in one way you're only going to see half of a picture so yeah it's interesting to look at texts in different ways but I suppose if you, if you really wanted to know all about the texts you should probably look at, look at it in as many different ways as possible, the same text, yeah to compare two different texts in two different ways em I don't think it's possible then to compare them because, well if you're looking at it in different ways you can't really, you don't really have the same, em, direction, you're not going

G: So () yeah, so is that, that is a problem then? You say you come up with two different interpretations.

E: Well say you have a discussion, about the two texts, and you want to em compare them then you'd have to come up with the same criteria,

which is ways of looking at them.

G: Yeah but if you, what I actually meant was if you look at one text in those particular ways, for instance, if the Men's Health text, you could have looked at it from the point of, it is a good argument, where does he back up the points that he makes, is it a good, logical structure, and then you could look at it the way that we looked at it, do you think that that is confusing or conflicting to look at, will you then come up with different interpretations, and em, you know we could do the same with any text, we could do it with the text of the man as ()

E: Yeah exactly

G: We could do it with

E: so you can, so you can, not only does the writer make choices and so structure a text that it says what he wants to say, but also a reader by interpreting it in different ways understands it differently, so that's why the whole idea of, that's why I think you get lost, anything you read or you listen to or anything, any kind of communication, there's such a lot of room for error, just because if you are going to interpret it one way or another and you mean it one way or another

G: Yeah yeah

E: there's so much potential to em confusion

G: Yeah

E: despite it being what you might call a better communication, it doesn't mean, I don't know, a good communication has got to do with listeners as well as speakers or readers as well as writers

G: Yes yeah

E: and you can't, and so to, so you have to rely on your audience and so that's why if you're going to, if you think you can manipulate them, well then if they can't rely on you, em, I suppose () so I think the whole trust thing is that you read a, it would be nice to be able to read a text and em for them not to be playing with you and it depends on genre so if you, I don't know, if you're like criticising things and don't mind reading crap then you can quite happily read different things that I wouldn't be able to read because I, I don't know, I don't like that so

G: Right okay

E: Does that make any sense?

G: Well the way that I interpret your answer is that you feel, that it basically boils down to the fact that you feel you can't really interpret a text like Men's Health, like a lifestyle magazine, eh, that you only look at it in terms of content and it's a crap thing, not in terms of it has, it has something to say about a particular, particular values because

E: It's alright yeah

G: it's just stereotypical like that.

E: Yes

G: That's what you're saying.

E: Okay so you're talking about reading texts not from an interested point of view but from a disinterested point of view.

G: Not from a content point of view

E: Yeah!

G: from a disinterested point of view, yes.

E: Right and also if you're reading it for study purposes you can read anything in it and say something, but if you're just reading it because you want something to read on the train

G: Ah right, okay

E: then it's crap.

G: Okay, no I was actually, sorry, I didn't include that, but my question actually did mean that if you, we are reading these texts for study purposes, for analytical purposes.

E: But right they're you're taking them out of their original context

G: Yes

E: because they're designed for people who are sitting on the train.

G: Oh absolutely, yeah

E: So it says more because it's out of context.

G: Right

E: Em, yeah, so then you can stand back from it and em and analyse however you will but it means that em that you're not the ^{best} group so you're not sort of manipulated as it were, you're not em looking at what it's actually saying to you, you're looking at what it's saying about how it fits in

G: Yes

E: yes so you can do that, sure, can't you, but I mean em

G: But is that, do you find that a valuable exercise?

E: It depends what you've got in mind because if you, if you ask me

G: Yeah

E: or anybody else, say if you ask me about a women's magazine em that I've read or whatever, so you read the article, and you em you draw conclusions about women

G: Mm

E: and then you ask any woman, okay, does this describe you, and they'll say yeah, yes or no to a greater or lesser extent but not I mean it won't tell you much about real life, I mean it will tell you about just em things in general about women that are that em I don't know interest women because otherwise they wouldn't read it I guess.

G: Mm mm, yeah. What about, maybe the example is too extreme, of a lifestyle magazine, how about it would be, we haven't really looked at the brochures that much, although we did look for instance at the different texts relating to euthanasia, in a different style, one was actually from the Ministry of Health and another one was I think a commentary in a newspaper, I seem to remember that, I mean that was em we read this text about, partly to hear about the new euthanasia law really but we also very much read them in terms of how they were being talked about. In terms of the Ministry of Education

E: yeah

G: of em presenting it in a, with a very sort of positive em how do you call it polish on it.

E: Spin.

G: Spin yeah, and em, because they obviously have a totally different aim those texts, and the commentary and the article, but certainly the values which were underlying, not explicitly mentioned, but in the government text, the values which were underlying that text shone through about the fact that you know, em, people had the right to determine themselves

E: Yeah

G: It wasn't even mentioned it was sort of taken for granted for instance.

E: Mm

G: And there were a few other things which I can't remember at the moment but em, now why did I say this ...

E: So are you trying to

G: I was just like, I was going to ask you that, yes if you look at the texts like that, you could look at it purely for what they say, you know what the information, and do they present it in a correct way, and do they present it so that their aim, etc., is fulfilled, but if you go underneath the text, we look at which particular ideologies and values which the Ministry of Health has are shining through, and in this case you could also say values which they already assume are going to be more or less accepted

E: Yes

G: by the Dutch, by Dutch society.

E: Sorry, so do you mean em, are you saying, how the values and how

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values fit into, I don't understand the question.

G: Right, em. The question is, what I'm trying to get at, whether you recognised the totally different ways of looking at a particular text

E: Yeah

G: the difference between looking at it from a traditional, university point of view, yeah, traditional critical thinking, which is a good solid argument, you do that all the time, you know exactly what that's all about, and then the fairly new way of looking at a text, which I introduced, which is looking at it from the terms discourses, intertext, cultural values.

E: Oh yes, okay.

G: Not, partly about a why a text is written and who it's written for and were they successful, and partly what is this text about, but then we go deeper, not so much in terms of is it a good argument, because that would indeed mean that there's no point in doing, studying lifestyle magazines, because we know already before we would analyse it, that in terms of an argument there isn't very much there. But we read it for different reasons, to find out which values in society sort of reflect, come through.

E: Yeah, em. Yeah. But I think you can only do that if you read it out of context.

G: Right yeah absolutely, in terms of study purposes.

E: Yeah

G: Yeah

E: So, but then if you, so then if you actually, if you want to know what it, what em what the text says about the values of whoever's written it, whatever institution, or whatever, what it's supposed to represent

G: Mm

E: em then you can see the values are there, but whether or not the values actually are em matched by the reality of the situation, the person or whatever, is different. So you can, you can take out the values but still, so you can learn a lot about different, the values of different authors or places, but em but some people's values, they don't actually live up to in real life, so, that's why you could have a text about euthanasia and say that we have this value, but then if you actually look at the figures, then it doesn't, it might not necessarily fit.

G: Right

E: Or it could even contradict, so, I suppose em that you can values but whether or not they actually live by them or not is different so if you want to find out about values alone then that's easier to do by looking at different texts but if you want to find out what people are really like and how people live then I don't think then studying any kind of text is really going to actually be very conclusive because you would have to em find out about people themselves rather than what they're reading.

G: Right, right. Okay. Do you think that, because when you do read a text, even if you know out of context like what we've been doing, and then we'll try and interpret it, is the fact that you already have certain ideas and certain knowledge, does that stand in your way, do you think? In looking at a text almost as an outsider, because that's what we're trying to do, yeah. Do you think that's difficult. Does it make it very difficult, the fact that you already have ideas.

E: Yeah if you have already ideas then you have to get over them before you can really em be objective about texts and so for some people, for some people, different texts are either easier or more difficult, because em some people might have a strong opinion about one subject and find it difficult to get over that, hurdle, to actually understand the texts in whatever way, so, so it can be it can make it more difficult.

G: Did you find it difficult at any stage or was that something you were able to do fairly easily.

E: Em, well I found it difficult but not because I had em because I hadn't

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own argument to defeat first, it was more because of the more general idea about here's another different text, looking at it in another different way, because for all these different reasons, and just it was, sorry, I just had a problem at first with the idea of the course

G: Yes

E: but I realise that, well, it's a course with a clear aim and a clear method so follow up, but at first I found it difficult because I don't like, I don't like it

G: Right well tell me a bit more about

E: so if you read the specific, anything, any kind of specific text we looked at, em, say I don't know, it maybe depends on generation or em background or anything like so different people will read the same text in a different way. It could be a way of finding out about the person I suppose by their interpretation of it, I suppose you can't really get away from that can you?

G: Yeah, no

E: So em unless it's a subject that really doesn't affect you personally, then you can't really leave your own background or ideas behind. And so although you, although you're just discussing one text, if you read it with different people like we did, you'll see that it meant different things to different people, say that em text about the ~~Barberry~~ or something, em, we did quite near the end, 'we'll meet again' or something, the

G: Oh right yes

E: ()

G: translation it was

E: yes, so that said something different to, I suppose we looked at it all in different ways, John, Helen, and I suppose that our class was quite good because, for this course, because you couldn't get probably six more different people, all next to each other in the same class, and so you know I suppose it's difficult to em

G: Did you find that useful? Did you feel that em there was a dialogue going on between you as a class and, and that was beneficial? Was that useful?

E: Well I did think that em it's quite interesting, because if you just forget the texts but look at the class, I think that em for whatever reasons, in the end people identified with each other differently than at the beginning.

G: Was that with one another or with the texts?

E: Yeah, with one another, and I actually think it might have to do with probably to do with the course because it was so much based on discussion and interpretation, and we only were all together in this one class, so if you just look at over the say three years or whatever, these classroom lessons, how people interact with each other, and I think that em people began to identify differently with different members of the class.

G: Right

E: Em, I don't know if you want me to be more specific but em

G: Well yeah I mean obviously if I ever, which is that I certainly wouldn't mention any names, but are you talking about the fact that there became a bit of a them and us, sort of different groups, is that what you mean?

E: What does that mean?

G: Well, did you say people are starting to identify with different members in the class, do you mean there became certain groups?

E: No, I'm talking about people as individuals

G: Right

E: and the way they relate with each other, and I think it changed.

G: Right

E: And so

G: For better or for worse, or just a change?

E: Just, it changed. And em I think that could be, that, that did just happen

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within the four walls of the class and so people might have their own stuff going on outside the class but in the class even itself, as a case in point, people did, through talking about different things, people realised that perhaps they've got more in common with this person or that person. Whereas before it might have been a different person.

G: So is it because of that emphasis on discussion and interpretation, was it em a threatening class for instance?

E: Threatening?

G: Well threatening in a sense that you showed yourself as a person too, so much discussion about your interpretation

E: Yeah

G: did it, was it a sort of very personal em

E: Yes it was personal, well I thought so anyway all along, I don't know about threatening, em, it's challenging, but I do remember saying when we did the presentations, that everybody, you have them on video, there, everybody's personality, whatever that was

G: Right

E: em because I don't know how I came across

G: Very well

E: but I know how other people came across

G: Yes yes

E: so they know how I come across but they don't know how () themselves came across, but I think, from looking at everyone else and probably I believe myself as well, just everybody came across as themselves, quite clearly, even though they're supposed to be in a different role.

G: Mm

E: So em so for me that sort of made me think well yes, so you can have this role but you're still you

G: Yourself

E: and so for me I think, so it was quite interesting

G: Right

E: em because I'm not sure if that was really the idea but I did think that everybody, well because everyone sort of makes their own role up

G: Yes, yes

E: em so maybe it's not such a good example, but I think people em, it was clear, what people's personality anyway

G: Yes but at the same time it was also clear they were in a certain mode so to speak or in a certain role.

E: (laughs) Were they, I don't know?

G: You were, you were definitely a teacher there! I think.

E: A teacher? No I don't think

G: Well very much a you know, giving a seminar, yeah

E: Yeah if you just, if you turn the sound off and you look at the seating arrangements but that's only because I was standing there and everyone else was listening

G: ()

E: I don't think I was in mode at all.

G: Ah well there you go, maybe you slot into the role automatically. So was that a kind of turning point?

E: I don't think I did very well to be honest if I was supposed to be a seminar person, I don't think I'd do very well.

G: No, right well you know, I haven't got the details in my head at the moment. Was that a kind of turning point for you then? That realisation of, well you can actually talk with a certain aim and with a certain kind of communicative force and a certain manipulation as it were and yet still be yourself?

E: There was a turning point because I actually understood that em that I

don't like the idea of it, that em it's a course and it's something that I can learn things from so I got over the em the sort of dislike of it and I think that's because, well either I say what I think or I don't so, but sometimes I didn't and sometimes I did, I can't really remember. But I think it had to do more with the way the discussion was going rather than not wanting to say what I think, but, I don't think I was, I know that I wasn't manipulating anybody because I know that all of these people in the class are not really listening to me they're looking for their own opportunity to say what they think as well, and they might be, they might have an idea because of what someone else has said and vice versa

G: Yeah but that doesn't sound like a dialogue then, if everyone is just putting in their own

E: No but listening and responding, but I never had it in mind to try and persuade anyone of my opinion and to see things how I see them, I was, I didn't have any of that aim in mind

G: No, no

E: And I know that you were listening for the purposes of recording and em sort of conducting the class but I don't, I never thought that whenever, when I was speaking that I had any motive in mind other than getting thoughts out of my head

G: Well no well good, good

E: so I suppose it was kind of a thinking-out-loud class

G: Yes

E: so I don't em so I don't think em, I didn't really have a problem after I realised that but I don't know what it was that I did.

G: Mm yeah. What about, there was quite a bit of dialogue amongst yourself, do you feel there was a dialogue with the text, did you start to think of it differently through the discussions and through the frameworks.

E: Any one text?

G: Any, any, yeah, in general, or choose one in particular.

E: Probably the Paul Scheffer made me think more than any of the others, I think. I can't remember all of them

G: No

E: Em, but I suppose the more ideas that the text throws at you, the more you think rather than what the text is about or what em, how long it is I suppose so there was just more, I think there was more more to think about in the Paul Scheffer though than the other ones.

G: Right, yeah. And what about, I think we talked about it in a previous interview actually, but do you feel that it gave you any different insight or confirmed (older?) insights you had about Holland? In terms of values, or content, or

E: Em

G: Did you feel you learned anything about a particular kind of Dutch articulation, you know, to sort of say it in a jargony way, you know a kind of Dutch sense, slightly different way of thinking or writing about this, because the texts have been produced in Holland and so are, you know, produced in a slightly different, you know ()

E: So you're going back to the (SNC?) kind of thing? Whether it's

G: Yeah well for instance

E: () they have a Dutch essence to them, is that what you mean?

G: Well, no, actually I don't mean an essence, yeah, this is a difficult one, not as strong as that

(TAPE SIDE ONE, ENDS;
SIDE TWO)

G: Agree that there are certain different ways of talking about something, writing about something, thinking about something, in Holland, as (?)

England? And I don't mean in an essentialist kind of way.

E: Yeah em

G: Or is that not important, would you say that's not important when we look at texts like this, it's sort of a general kind of way of understanding texts and understanding values and ideologies? And it doesn't matter that it's specifically Dutch?

E: Well I think em because we sort of mentioned that before, haven't we, and what I said was em em was that you can only talk about em a sort of certain way of doing things in one place or another if you compare two so where you've got a text say for example the nostalgia text or we'll meet again text, for example, that's where you've got a Dutch person in an English context, so when you're comparing two, then it might be more obvious, whereas if you're just looking at the text (), so if it's like a Dutch text about, just in a Dutch, in Dutch society, say like the what was it, the, any text, the () or other lifestyle magazine or whatever, it's not comparing Holland particularly with any other country

G: No

E: So I don't really, I think it depends on the content of the thing, not in terms of what it's saying but em whether it's Holland as opposed to something else, if there's, if it's like comparing or there's two contexts, but it did say, didn't it, in the () it was saying that this is different in Holland or something

G: Mm, yes

E: em but then I think that any country would say but it's different here

G: Yes

E: because blah blah blah.

G: Yeah yeah

E: But whether or not they actually are

G: But that might be interesting for you as a non-Dutch person to read that and say well that isn't, they think it's different there but it's not.

E: Yeah. So it's difficult to, so I would have to say that () because I'm not Dutch so em em because there is such a thing as Dutch stereotyping () any other kind of stereotype, that em well I think we kind of got over that and I don't think that there is, especially having lived in Holland for the last year or however long before we got together to do the course

G: Yeah

E: I don't think anybody had any sort of Dutch way of doing things

G: No

E: Or I wouldn't have thought that there was.

G: So you felt you'd come over the stereotyping, but throughout the course is that what you mean, or you didn't have them at all, or I mean what do you

E: What do I mean?

G: Yeah what exactly do you mean.

E: Em. Whether I think that there's a Dutch way, a Dutch way of doing the course, is that what you?

G: No no no. Well, my initial question was did you recognise any kind of Dutchness so to speak in any of the texts? That was my first question.

E: I wasn't really, I don't think we were really looking for that were we?

G: No, we weren't looking for that although I know I did ask em at () texts I think probably the Men's Health text, like is this a particular Dutch way of?

E: So that's an example of one of the ones that definitely weren't? Because it was just

G: That's I think that is a matter of interpretation, you might think there's a slight Dutch articulation in it? I would have interpreted it, some things as a Dutch articulation.

E: Maybe there are idioms that were used or something but then idioms

they're don't, they're used to express an idea but don't actually do it in any sort of proper way, not proper way but a way of using words that aren't part of a preconceived idea so you can fit that to what you mean but whether or not you're actually explaining that, em, isn't clear

G: No

E: if you don't know the idiom and sort of familiar with fluent use of it, so when we come across a new idiom, I mean obviously it's different for you than it is for us.

G: Yeah yeah.

E: So I don't think that that was. Just because you can imagine the same text in England

G: Yes, yes

E: So where you can't is where you've got two, two nationalities to compare, so if it's just say the em em I don't know though because the euthanasia text, there isn't euthanasia here is there? There isn't.

G: Well no no

E: So I think so I suppose that's a Dutch text but they're not because of anything

G: But that is because of content, yeah

E: No I think more of the fact it was about euthanasia, which is different in Holland, so I don't think you get a different Dutchness from the texts.

G: Is that something you feel maybe the course should have concentrated on more, because we started off this course by in a way, we started with a text from a course book, or one of them, the early texts, I don't know if you remember that, it's from a course book and I think it gave this rather I think quite a lot of the people, I don't know what you felt yourself, but quite a lot of the students felt terribly convinced by that text, like yeah yeah exactly that's how it is in Holland, because they described it in a way that was very difficult to disagree with it, it was very recognisable

E: () the 1980s history

G: Yeah

E: Yeah

G: There were some incidents, the way it was described was very recognisable, you know, most people said, yeah yeah yeah that's exactly how it is, I would have as well, but then we started analysing it and then we realised how that really it was only a very specific way of looking at it, because you know, let's see, you know incidents described, I can't remember exactly now what it was but a certain incident was described but you know and thereby a certain statement was made but we could have quite easily said yeah but on the other hand.

E: Yeah

G: Do you feel that might have become a little bit more critical of these sort of texts or images or arguments, or, do you feel that that hasn't figured that largely in this course? Or do you think it should've figured more?

E: Em I don't know. I don't know, I can't remember what I said about the texts at the time obviously

G: No

E: Em em well, I mean I think, I don't know how you feel about the course but I think do you manage to achieve your aims to quite a large extent, whereas at the beginning I couldn't see where it was going, what you were actually trying to do but then I realised that, well you're actually listening to what we're saying, and we are, it's a sort of interactive course

G: Mm

E: so, sorry, I think that, I don't know, I don't think, I couldn't, I couldn't comment on how it could be better or ()

G: Because it's

E: A lot depends on what happens in the class I guess.

G: And is it also partly because this is a sort of new way of looking em

E: Yeah because I haven't done a course like that before or any of my other courses aren't really like that.

G: No

E: Although there's discussion, it's about something specific like a book

G: Yeah

E: Em, and that's with it in mind to answer a certain question

G: Mm

E: or certain, I don't know, different type of question

G: Yes

E: but this is, seems to be much more, it seemed to me to be less clear, which is why also at the same time as not liking it, being frustrated because I didn't really know where you were going.

G: Yeah

E: But em but then em I think though because we were talking about, was what we were talking about, we actually em, I think I've learned a lot but it's a strange course because I can't really put it on paper

G: Mm

E: and so I'm not sure how well the exam tested us

G: Right

E: but the course I think was successful.

G: It was successful?

E: Yeah

G: Right

E: I don't know, what do you mean?

G: (laughs) But em, well, so we've progressed on now from that last question, em in what way was it strange? Because you said it, you found it very difficult to figure out where we were going, I did, you did get a handout and I did mention it.

E: Yeah I mean

G: Was that too vague or how come

E: No that made sense. But then I didn't see how what we were doing in class related at all to it because it just seemed to be like, well here's a text, let's just talk about it

G: Right

E: and em

G: What had you expected?

E: I don't really know, I didn't really form any expectations. Em, but em, I think as it went along I started to realise that well every class in itself is em, because usually one class follows on from another I guess, whereas this one was well, if you missed that week, well, just do that week, and although it, you've missed that way of looking at things, it does mean that that so in terms of with an exam in mind, it didn't probably matter if you'd missed that text. Em but you've missed that way of looking at whatever text you chose that day, so if you missed one day, in the grand scheme, it doesn't really matter, but, it's just that em it was probably you probably chose different texts for a different reason for blah blah blah so it was part of the course but em so I think I don't know how many I missed but I didn't I didn't want to

G: You didn't miss many no

E: No I didn't, I think maybe I missed more of the translations because they're on Wednesday, but em but I didn't want to miss any but I knew that if I did well it, the chances are that it won't make a huge difference of my exam, so that's why I couldn't really understand the course, because surely a course leads up to an exam, so I found that that's why it's strange because although it was a good course, and I think it was successful and that we were well enough prepared for the exam, I don't see, I didn't see the, I didn't see how we did that so

G: Right right

E: it was quite strange.

G: Em, gosh, just as a question. Well two question. One is about representation, what was the other one about. Oh yes, what is the em most important thing you feel you have learned?

E: From doing the course?

G: Yeah

E: Em, I don't know ...

G: Sort of a mixture of different things?

E: Well because I don't, that's what's difficult to, if you, to put down on paper.

G: Mm

E: I think it's more of an experience the course than an actual em

G: But do you take anything away from it, have you learned anything in some way of gaining different insights, which you can take away now and will use in you know your professional life or whatever.

E: Well I have to say, I have to say em that em it's just made me, because I was talking about people, when people write, when people do anything, and if it's not spontaneous, well then, is it really natural and so, I don't know. I don't know if I've learned that, but I sort of certainly realised it more and more. And so I don't know if I like it, I don't like it.

G: So what are your problems with the course then? Is that the main thing?

E: Yeah. Because well because em I mean I'm going to naturally take an interest in what I'm doing, so maybe I should have been sort of more academic and disinterested and just and not done that but em so I so I no I don't know maybe I was too involved.

G: Mm

E: But anyway, so so, but then surely if you're talking to anyone you're involved with them, and if you're writing to somebody you're involved with them, so in terms of applying it to my own life, then it's made me quite, I find it quite em difficult to feel like I'm communication with somebody well or not properly, but well, because yeah, so if the idea is to communicate better, I don't know if it, I don't know if I can because

G: Do you mean that has made it worse for you?

E: Yeah

G: Because you said that at the beginning as well, you felt that you know before you would just communicate with people and now you you know you think, how do I come across, yeah. But your idea was was still to allow your your normal communication, but just to be aware of what other things are at

E: But how can you do that though? How can you at the same time be aware of the flaws and the em

G: Not so much the flaws

E: Yeah well the flaws or the fact that there's different ways of saying the same thing or writing the same thing and different ways of reading or listening to the same thing, makes me think well, how can you actually talk to anyone properly?

G: Mm, I think a lot of that you do particularly with texts if you have the time, you know, if you take this disinterested view as it were, or maybe not disinterested because you are interested in it, you want to find something, or you are looking for things, not necessarily for a particular answer, em, I think in em, maybe I've made a mistake saying something like this happens also in communication, but then I didn't necessarily mean go and look at your own communication

E: No but that's something I'll do

G: or

E: like I said, because I'm naturally interested and that's why I'm not a very good academic because whatever I read about I try to learn or not learn, yeah learn something for myself, but to apply it to my own life, to

try and sort of, because as you learn things you kind of surely want to be able to yeah it's not just information that you store in your brain, it's also a way of living so em so for example if you read something about human rights that will make think about human rights and decide what I think say for example, and so then I'll em be aware of, more aware of that as an issue because I've read about it

G: Mm

E: so with this, it's largely about communication and em so then I'll think about communication and how, how do I communicate so that's just why I'm not perhaps a very good academic, it's because I can't read anything from a very, from a properly disinterested position, em, so yeah, so I feel, I feel like I have learned but it hasn't been stuff that I can actually, it hasn't helped me at all in fact.

G: No.

E: So I don't know. I don't really feel that, there's kind of a barrier, you know.

G: There is a barrier now still, in terms of your

E: Well I don't know about still but em now there's a barrier that now between any kind of commun(ication), so when I communicate, unless it's just a spontaneous kind of how are you doing kind of blah blah and this is quite relevant because things have come up this year

G: Yeah

E: and I've actually wanted to be able to say something to somebody, whatever that reason is, and when it's actually important and you're aware that there are different ways of saying it and different ways that they can interpret it, well then it makes it difficult.

G: But then if it is in a personal situation, don't you feel that, because it is a one-to-one situation, it's there, you're there, you can repair, eh, communication which has gone wrong, you can repair it very easily.

E: How do you mean?

G: Well if you feel that what you say has been misinterpreted you can say actually I didn't mean it like that, I meant.

E: Yeah. Mm. But what I mean is, I'm not like I'm just thinking sort of very narrowly, I mean I mean just however, any conversation logged, however a conversation (there is?), if you look back on any conversation, an important conversation, if you look back, you sort of still think, well no I didn't know what I was talking about at all, for example. I mean, I could be mor specific but em yeah if you have em if you're trying to get a message across but you don't want to feel like you're leading them too much or, yeah so it's just to pitch or

G: Tone, yeah

E: Tone, pitch, even body language everything so it's just made me much more self conscious.

G: But maybe you should now just sort of forget about all that, I mean it's there in your head, in your everyday communication, you should probably forget about that, and I'm sure that when you'd need it, like you are in a difficult situation, you've got to go to someone you find quite difficult, I expect then that may these sort of things may slip through in the right way, like ah but I need to tone this down or soften it down and those sort of things, don't you think that might work? () for your normal everyday communication, it's only that, don't think about it, it will come to you if you need it.

E: But the thing is I, because em, how can you just not think about something. I said that to you as well, I've said that to you before, how can you choose what to think, you can't and so

G: You can push thoughts away of course.

E: So that's a barrier right there isn't it, if I'm going to not think about that. To actually consciously, so there again, you're actually consciously

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choosing to do something or trying to suppress a thought then you're, then that's a, you you do that because you have, then that's a barrier, if I'm trying to suppress these thoughts now because I've got them

G: Mm, yeah, or just be easier, maybe you, it's a strange thing to say about a student, that maybe you take things too literal, not too serious but too literal.

E: Probably too serious.

G: Mm. Because if you said you wouldn't do that and I thought no, of course you don't necessarily do that in communication but I, certainly, I feel it has actually benefited me personally to quite a great degree because if I have to say some difficult things or I have an idea in a meeting, the way, of course you think about I've got this idea, now you know beforehand who are going to have certain problems with it and why, you sort of prepare yourself in such a way that you can already sort of present it in such a way that it's more (palatable?), not, that's, you could call that manipulation but you could also call it strategies for communication, those kind of situations. For instance, and I of course have this cultural thing, you know, whereby in England I can still be quite Dutch and be quite direct, whereas in England people tend to really hedge a bit around it before they actually say what they want to say, and em so often in social situations I come back angry with myself, I, tttch, did it again, came in with my opinions straightaway until one day I thought well this time I'm just not going to come straightaway with whatever my opinion is, I'm just going to listen and listen how they do it, and it was fabulous, and little phrases, even doing, don't you think that? Or asking questions in a certain way, not what Dutch people do, come straightaway with your opinion but first ask questions, and just those little techniques and strategies of communication and they can really help you to

E: Yeah, sure.

G: Sure, but

E: But, well no, so that I mean that's just em

G: That's just an example, you know, I mean there's different

E: But then so, I don't know, so I mean if you're talking about in a professional situation, as a student, em, actually not having work experience as such, not having a professional role

G: No

E: I'm just a, I have up until a couple of weeks ago, just been a student

G: Yeah

E: And my dealings with people are informal, em, always and so em so so anyway, you have a certain type of discourse, right, with whoever you're talking to and so yeah it's sort of like coffee and blah blah whatever, it's just very nothing of substance sort of em, I'm not saying I'm going to go and have a discussion about euthanasia with my friend over coffee but like em when so for example I'm talking informally with somebody but em but em there's a lot of em there's a lot of problems em then so to be aware of em ways of tackling them makes you, makes you, if I can try and explain what I mean. If you know that there are different ways of communication, this is just like a general thing, em, then the way that you choose, whether or not you actually choose it that's different, but so you'd communicate in this way, em then it makes you think well could I have been more clear if I'd have done that, well, I did that now, so, that's just looking back, but I can't really be more specific than that.

G: No no well I very much understand what you mean. It hampers your, it has hampered your you know the flow, the ease of communication

E: Yeah so I don't think it's improved my communication.

G: It hasn't?

E: No, perhaps my Dutch communication but my talking about myself, my English communication, not

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G: And you've noticed that all round?

E: Em, I'm really, I'm kind of referring to a couple of specific things but it's just em I don't know, if em, I don't have the confidence in what I'm saying and that's you know to do with my own, that's to do with the situation but also just because I know that em you know that communication is so limited.

G: Well communication is not necessarily limited (), the possibilities are endless

E: Yeah, I don't know, the power of words and all that, I'm not sure.

G: Yeah I wish, I wish I could say the right thing there to em to help you over that barrier, I've got a feeling that you probably will, because do you feel that in relation to how you felt about this at the beginning, because I remember at the beginning you referred, you said something that it really did affect you in your personal life as well

E: Yeah, that's what I'm referring to.

G: But do you feel that, has that not improved?

E: No.

G: That's still as strong, so your feelings about that are still as strong as they were in the beginning then.

E: I guess, I don't know, I can't remember exactly what I said but em yeah I'm still, that's still what I'm talking about.

G: Mm

E: Eh yes

G: But you're still talking about an incident then or sort of things which have occurred

E: Yes those things have happened now but just I'm aware that em, so it depends who you're talking with as well because if they're not aware of different ways of communication, they can't accept that well look, em, if they're not prepared to make allowance perhaps, even perfect communication, then there won't be so many misunderstandings too, so you're always rely on the other person and perhaps I have the problem that I don't rely on the other person enough but em still it makes me very conscious of what I'm saying all the time, even why I'm saying it

G: Mm

E: So then it makes it look like I'm not so reliable myself because I'm questioning what I'm saying while I'm saying it if that makes any sense, not that you can do that

G: But is that not a good thing, is that not a positive thing?

E: No it's a terrible thing when you're trying to come across as somebody who means what they say, because I always do, and when

G: But I'm sure you do, I'm sure you very much come across as someone who means what they say, and if you, and I think people do this anyway, because you are thinking while you're talking, it doesn't just come, you're thinking and I think, I'm sure you automatically think, or perhaps not so automatic now, about how to phrase it, certain phrases come in

E: No if I would be less spontaneous then that would be less trustworthy I think.

G: That depends. Then we're down to the big question about you know how trustworthy are you if you say it in one particular way, to soften something for instance, then in other ways that

E: Yes so

G: Don't you see it, I mean

E: But we're talking about communication, communication is (I think?), so you could say it's endless, so yes it's endless because em em there's superficial communication and there's all different types going on at the same time, and so if you're talking about communication, to really talk about communication, you do have to ask all those big questions so and we haven't done that. So so that's why well

G: Ah okay so you feel that's what you would've liked to actually address more.

E: I suppose, okay I suppose, it didn't occur to me before but now we're talking, I suppose, there are other aspects of communication, em, that we haven't talked about at all, so

G: And these are, to what degree you can ()

E: Well they're not really to do with the course, it's not really relevant to what you're talking about, but still nonetheless it's the sort of things that I've been thinking about and em as we're going along, and they are, they are deeper questions to do with em other subjects and em so there's no scope for that in the course but but then you take that (), either you do or you don't, you take it away with you, think it over, and em so that's the sort of, because, () when you start thinking about something then you have other ideas and ideas

G: Yeah

E: and so it goes deeper and deeper and so so I've done that with this course and em yeah, I don't know.

G: And what sort of questions are they? What sort of questions would you have wanted to have addressed?

E: Well. I suppose em if you're talking about communication, then yes, ways, genre and quite safe em types of text where you look at em a text and say where it's from and what is it called and all the, that's kind of the safe, that's kind of the safe sort of questions, and then you go down into and then you can, then the problem is that that's when it gets personal and so if that hasn't occurred to other people then fine, so then if you really wanted to know about what somebody's writing and why, or somebody's saying why, and then you'd have to go sort of it would also become em em, it would have to do with individual personality and em yeah I don't know, what, do you want me to be any

G: Well I'd just like to know what, so you basically say, if you are going deeper into what communication is

E: Yeah

G: then it becomes even more kind of personal, is that what you mean?

E: Yeah

G: Or do you feel that people, it was already in a way too personal?

E: No it was personal just because em I took it personally and so it was, it was person but just because it made me sort of, because if you think about things then, well if you're going to analyse them, you go deeper don't you?

G: Yeah

E: So it's personal but it sort of taps the surface and then so if you take it further then it, the further it goes the more and more personal it is.

G: Yeah. So questions would be like, to what degree can you actually say what you mean, to what degree are you individual, to what degree are you

E: So that's more philosophical, psychological and all that.

G: Right

E: So that's what I mean. It would be, they would be the next questions, and I would be interested in those, probably more than the

G: Yeah, now what do you feel about that? Do you feel that, what is your view now? Do you feel that you are, when you are communicating, are you communicating your own individual meaning or is it actually the meaning of culture or the group from which you belong, or various groups to which you belong.

E: Yeah. So how do you answer that, and em.

G: Yeah but have you got any ideas about that at the moment?

E: So I would like to think that I say what I think and what I mean but then so that, em, how can I actually say what I mean without being limited by other things and how can you rely on other people, realising to what extent

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that you and to what extent it's, what you're saying is what you mean, because you have the whole trust problem, so they might say well you're saying that but do you really mean it, and so, yeah, so it goes quite deep and I think that's interesting, so I would feel more comfortable with the course if it actually went further.

G: Yeah. Well the thing is, it is actually based on ideas like that because that sort of philosophising I have done, you know before actually setting up the course, but indeed I haven't been explicit about that.

E: No, well, so and I'm aware that this course, although it's a good course, successful and leads to an exam and then you get the degree and the tutor organises the courses, em, you've been recording all of it and I remember you sort of asking permission and I never actually explicitly said okay but I mean everyone else didn't mind and I don't really mind because of all your recording.

G: Well you can

E: But you're doing this for your research also, and I don't know anything about your research, other than you're doing it about cultural, use, language use, or something, so if you're going to, if this is designed around your research, it might be quite interesting to know what you're doing because then I could maybe feel a bit more comfortable with the course.

G: Right

E: Because I thought it was a UCL course for a UCL exam rather than em, sort of a Gerdi () research

G: Yeah but what's the difference there. I'm working here but it's my course, all the courses that I give are my courses.

E: Yeah. What I mean is so teachers, I've only been at school before I've been at UCL

G: Right

E: so teachers don't do their course, they do a ()

G: Yeah that's true yeah

E: so I thought that there was a like a () so this is, so I would call this, so like I've done a language course in German or something you know, you use textbooks or something like that or not necessarily textbooks, but I'm just saying that, or it's based on this book or that book, so this is your course.

G: Yeah

E: And it is personal, and it's your research, and I don't, so I haven't really () with it or

G: Ah right, well you should have ()

E: But you need that and I did tell you that.

G: Yeah I didn't realise you were uncomfortable with the fact that it was for my research and

E: No but that's not I just don't, so that's why I haven't been able to to feel like I know where it's going or whatever

G: Ah okay, okay

E: Maybe those things would have helped.

G: Okay I can tell you now. Again you are right, I haven't been that explicit, partly because no-one actually asked very much about it, and partly because you know when I started taping the lessons I wasn't that certain yet which themes would emerge, because as you said, I can't predict how the course will go, it is really made by the students. I'm getting an idea of themes which are emerging but if you want to know about my PhD, but you know

E: I'd be interested to read it then if you come any conclusions about the communication because I'm kind of struggling with it.

G: Well my premise is very much that a lot of communication, I mean it's partly individual, it's partly very much geared you know via an individual

because you have these choices of how to say it, and these choices are your individual personality, but that what em what that you are as an individual, that you are really sort of quite limited by what you can say because your culture, the culture in which you function, provides the ways of saying it and the different ways of saying it that you can choose if you don't, often that is obviously sort of an automatic process because you've internalised it and you've grown up in that culture, you've become, it's come natural, I say that most of communication is actually quite natural and what indeed I want you to be is more em alert as it were to the fact that it seems natural but of course it's not natural in the sense that it's not a universal way of communicating, it really depends on the culture in which you've grown up and whether that culture is partly an English culture or partly a Dutch culture but then again, I'm not necessarily going with, I'm very critical of the ideas of an essential Dutch culture, but a culture, it could be a middle-class culture, it could be a youth culture, it could be you know all these various different groups which we have in society.

E: Yeah but then isn't that idea a logical following on from there being an em a national culture from the period where nations were created, and now you look at society and then you had class culture, and now classes are being (knocked down?) and you have different group cultures, like youth, this that or the other, black culture, so then you have, it's just, it's not those ideas, and it's a natural way of interpreting society now because it's not so much national and not so much em class but now it's divided up into groups, so is that really em

G: It's not, I think that is a little bit too simple to say that it's just dividing up into groups, because there's still an overarching themes or views that bind people together, it's not just like, because whenever you feel you might be a member of a particular group, you might share an identity, whether it's black or whatever, then you will also share many other things, you might be black and yet you might still very English or you might feel British or you might feel partly English and partly you know wherever you might have been brought up, whatever country you might have been brought up, so I think that's very complex, and I think, one of the things that I'm aiming at is actually em bring across an idea of culture which is much more complex and (rich?) than I think a lot of people would at the moment imagine, because you know there isn't, there is a tendency in people to em pigeonhole things.

E: Yeah so what you were saying about things that they identify with, then it's an individual thing isn't it? How people () that they're a particular mix of things that they identify with, em, and I remember that you looked at the first essay, which was awful, before I did my proper sort of one that I eventually handed in more or less, the one about where I thought about how people fit into society, because that's kind of something similar that I was doing with the, well if you're a, if you're from a different cultural background, religious background, so I did that idea of how people seem and how people fit in and that kind of thing because it's quite philosophical, so it's quite difficult to put on paper, but if you're going to try and do that it would be quite interesting to read it because yeah even if that's not, I'm not even sure that em, an individual identifying with this that and the other, I don't think that's necessarily less natural than somebody a hundred years ago identifying with a nation, because obviously society's changed and one is neither more or less natural than the other and so that's, so I think, em it makes me wonder well, yeah, am I actually saying what I mean or what?

G: What now you mean or in general?

E: Yeah in general.

G: Yeah but this is exactly one of the questions which I discussed, to what degree do you we actually express our own individual meaning or to

which degree do we express meanings which have already been made beforehand.

E: Yeah right

G: By the culture in which you live, yes exactly.

E: Right and also by people around you that have expectations.

G: Yes

E: Right so em that's kind of the things that I've been thinking about.

G: Right

E: And obviously that's the background of the course so I would have maybe like to have em

G: So would you have, you know I didn't do it because it was very theoretical and I would have assumed that everyone was

E: No I would have really appreciated it, no because I mean, yeah I don't mind if that's there but em but em I mean because it didn't make any difference, it's just a () thing, but em I was thinking, well what are you doing actually, why, so then I just thought well I don't have to know, I'm just doing the course, but actually would have liked to have known.

G: Although I've got a feeling that not everyone, well, yeah, I wish I'd asked now afterwards. I just because it was a totally new way of doing something as part of a language, you know, through the language course, I did em.

E: Did you not do it last year then?

G: This year was like a better structure, I did it last year, but I did anticipate a lot of em resistance, which you obliged with (laughs)

E: You're welcome

G: and last year there was not open resistance, I felt there probably was resistance but nothing that came to the fore very clear.

E: Why did you expect resistance?

G: Because it is a controversial way, certainly at UCL, to think about language? Language is either em, there are universal truths, such as in literature, there is one particular good way of thinking about it, language is partly the aesthetics, or in terms of language teaching, it's very often either the old-fashioned just grammar teaching or the communication, but communicative language courses, you know, particularly in textbooks and so on, with communication they tend to mean something totally different than what I mean with communication here, about the questions you have, so it's a totally different view of communication.

E: Yeah, well it's certainly interesting.

G: But this is what a lot of students would have found rather strange and confusing because you know they wouldn't have done anything like before and em

E: I have found it strange and confusing but then I mean that's because I was thinking about the things that you've obviously been intending in the first place, you know, addressing the same things, so if you write ()

G: Yes well I will certainly, this has been very interesting, thank you, it is about making it explicit and perhaps I haven't made it explicit enough but I also think that then you have a time problem because really there should have then been a separate sort of section, which is very much theoretically preparing for it, yeah.

E: No, well I'm not sure, I don't think that you have to make that available perhaps not many people, I don't know how many people would be bothered, would be interested

G: No

E: but I think that's important myself, so I would've, well, so that's why I've been struggling with that through the course.

G: Yes, I wished I'd em, because I know you were struggling but I always found it quite difficult to quite understand even although you did say it was about manipulation, I found it quite difficult to get to the, yeah,

about
theory
needed?

that's a shame, anyhow. I can certainly, you have to give me, you have to remain in touch really and give me your email address and I can send it to you.

E: When do you expect to finish.

G: Well I hope that the next academic year, I'll be able to finish it.

E: It's quite a difficult thing to put on paper though isn't it? I mean there's a lot of thought but actually () words

G: Yes it is very philosophical

E: () same as your writing, you're communicating your ideas right there and it must be difficult.

G: Well that's why the interviews are very good and the transcriptions of the lesson, they give me, you know something to hold on to and to analyse from.

E: But what are you, are you handing in a written piece of work.

G: Yeah. 80,000 words.

E: Really. Em. Well I'd quite like to read it then. Are you trying to, what do you have in mind for the conclusion, I mean you haven't written it yet but what are the questions you're trying to answer specifically.

G: Well what it's going to be, I actually don't know that until I, even that I don't know until I have em listened

E: (?) you made us give you a question before we ()?

G: But after I've listened to it, certain themes will emerge but what I will be looking out for is very much the pedagogy of this, because I've done already quite a lot of theory so I'll now be looking out for the, whether it was pedagogically successful, whether, what my aims, what I had wanted students to achieve, to em sharpen up their awareness towards text and languages, cultural text, and to have you know not just to be an individual voice but also the fact that you repeat voices from the past and voices from other people and other texts you might have () given, that sort of awareness I had wanted to come across and I think that

E: Yeah the problem is that especially with, I don't know maybe you're lucky that you had a couple of maybe, I don't know, I'll say that if you're, the thing is, () having a class, having quite a lot of younger people, that they're still struggling with those things themselves, just as they go through life, who am I and all that stuff, so they're, so to really base your conclusions on them, perhaps if you're actually looking at them as case studies themselves.

G: Ah but again, I'm not going to come up with one conclusion. No it is a case study. Because again, I don't buy in to the, I'm now going to come up with, I'm going to find an answer to a big, universal, a universal answer to a big question, no I can't do, if I would do that I would have interview I don't know a thousand people or something like that and they would, so I'm very much looking at the pedagogy of it, where, what, the pedagogy

E: What I'm saying though, your success depends on the students really.

G: Yes, yeah, but also you know not so much, try not to look at it in terms of my success but more of the kind of yeah yeah

E: So the success of the course then?

G: Yeah, but I think that would, unless you're very unlucky and have a very unco-operative group of students, students on the whole

E: But then even if they're being unco-operative, what appears to be unco-operative doesn't mean that they don't give you food for thought, what I mean is it

G: That it shows that pedagogy wasn't right for that you know, but I would've imagined that

E: I was quite unco-operative at the beginning

G: Yes

E: But em, so

G: Well we solved that because you came to me to talk about it and we, you sort of agreed to sit in the course and you know as long as you didn't have to be asked specific questions and then gradually you started to contribute more so I think that solved itself, I mean that could, it could have been quite a big problem but then again that would have been interesting, like the problems you've had with the course are very interesting ones and often it's actually the problems which are the most interesting issues, rather than (when the?) students say it's a fantastic course, I mean, yeah, well what do you write down then, I've designed the course and it was fantastic, I mean no-one, no-one benefits from that, if I would do that.

E: No well I don't think I've really benefited from the course personally because I don't think it's really tackled anything. At the level that I was thinking when I, at the level I think about it

G: Right

E: But just the course, yeah, fine, but for myself I've taken a knock back and not really very clear on em, well when you start thinking about things when you're young, you must know, em, that you start to be interested in different things and you try and find out as much as you can about that subject to satisfy your interest, well, so I've presented myself with these quite big questions because I do that anyway but I haven't, you know, it's quite, got any em sort of, I don't feel like I've actually come further forward.

G: Mm. In those big questions.

E: So the course is kind of something separate, I'm taking it personally now, but so then yeah, I mean how do you gain in confidence having lost a lot of it and em so that's not really anything to do with ()

G: So you say that you haven't gained on that level, but have you gained in terms of having more of an awareness of looking at texts, understanding texts and communicating, being more like in your writing for instance, that you feel you know more

(END OF TAPE)

Did E.
want
ready-made
answers?

