



Discourses on Integration:

Top-Down versus Bottom-Up Perspectives on Managing Integration of a Somali Migrant in a Dutch Neighbourhood

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Abstract

Integration is a popular topic of discussion in contemporary societal and political debates on migration in the Netherlands, especially after the increased migration flow in 2015 and a growing fear for terrorism in recent years. Even though it is a highly discussed topic, the concept of integration is not yet grasped into a widely agreed upon definition. The variety in definitions on integration is spilling over into policies and management regarding integration. Through ethnographic research, this study investigates how integration is perceived and managed from the top-down perspective of three different institutions and the bottom-up perspective of a Somali migrant. The web of institutions under investigation consists of a school, a municipality and a welfare organization. These institutions are all connected to the Somali migrant, whose perspective upon this management of integration as performed by the institutions is investigated in order to unravel what it means to do integration in the Dutch neighborhood where he lives in, at the margins of globalization. This research sheds light on the matches and mismatches across macro- and meso-institutional discourse and micro-social discourse layers, not only within one institutional context, but also across the three different institutional contexts. The multi-layered research design employed here helps us gaining insight into the complex discourses around bureaucratic rituality, showing how these discourses can lead to the categories 'integrated' or 'in need of further integration'.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The present times we live in are identified as the era of liquidity and mobility (Bauman, 2000; Urry, 2000; Ghorashi, 2017). This liquidity and mobility are manifested in our daily encounters with concepts such as globalization, migratory influxes and increased (super-) diversity in our surroundings (Scholten, 2018). While solid categories like culture and tradition are argued to be eroding, a paradoxical development is introduced through the re-emergence of old and solid classics such as nationalistic sentiments and the emphasis on cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic differences (Ghorashi, 2017). Thus, whereas on the one hand boundaries seem to be eroding, on the other hand walls are being (re)constructed. This emphasis on differences and divisions, fed by cultural frames, has become dominant in the discourse on migration in Europe (Anthias, 2013). This is also reflected in what Duyvendak (2011: 92) calls the ‘culturalization of national citizenship’. In countries like the Netherlands, the dominant culture is thought to be under threat and in response to this threat, a growth in attempts to protect and define the old, the ‘traditional’, cultural heritage is faced (Duyvendak, 2011: 92). These attempts are, for instance, embodied in the notion of integration and Dutch language learning: a process that migrants are required to engage in from the moment they enter the Netherlands (Spotti, 2011).

The idea of integration was introduced in the Netherlands around the 1980s (Ghorashi, 2017). At that time the government realized that the incoming and settling migration flow that it was dealing with, predominantly consisting of guest workers, was not of a temporary but rather a permanent character. This realization nourished a turn in the policy approach from the idea of cultural identity maintenance by migrants themselves towards the need for migrants to integrate into the Dutch society. During that period, the cultural background of people coming from over the Dutch borders was seen as being totally different from, but not threatening to, Dutch culture (Duyvendak, 2011; Ghorashi, 2017). However, the idea of facing difference but not a threat changed over the years. The debate shifted towards the problems that the Dutch society is facing due to migration (Joppke, 2007) and resulted in the sharpening of regulations (Extra, Spotti, & Van Avermaet, 2009). Consequently, the Netherlands slowly exchanged its focus on the long-standing self-image of ‘multicultural promise and tolerance’ to a focus on decreasing fear and increasing protection with regard to the ‘national identity’ (Duyvendak, Engelen, & de Haan, 2008). This shift was managed by expansion of restrictive policies for migrants, including mandatory civic integration and exams, which is described as moving towards the quest for assimilation (Vasta, 2007).

In the past decade, attention has turned to the question to which extent the integration policies are in fact effective, and under which conditions migrants might best be integrated (Craig, 2015). Craig (2015) argues that this change of focus is not surprising, considering the long history of migration, particularly since the 1950s, to EU member states and the more than twenty million non-EU third country nationals currently living in Europe. Moreover, the recent growth in numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers around

the year 2015 has launched new challenges in the political and public spheres (Craig, 2015; Lams, 2018). The majority of the refugees who arrived in the Netherlands during this period (i.e., during the ‘refugee-crisis’; Scholten, 2018: 19) came from places in North Africa and the Middle East where civil wars, authoritarian regimes and poverty have pushed them towards Europe (Angeloni & Spano, 2018; Scholten, 2018). Ending up in the Netherlands might have been influenced by the perceptions of migrants on opportunities or ‘generosity’ in the host country, or guided by the possibilities with regard to illegal smuggling routes (Craig, 2015: 12). No matter the reason for their arrival in the Netherlands, the focus now lays on the manner in which these migrants cope with the circumstances they have arrived in. From the moment migrants are permitted to stay in the country, they are faced with, on the one hand, strict directions on what to do, and on the other expectations on living independently as soon as possible. In the midst of a web of institutions and regulations, as well as in the midst of their demands and discourse practices, migrants do seek to organize their lives in neighborhoods they are directed to.

1.2 Problem statement

Against the background spelled out above, studies aim to capture the status quo with regard to the management of integration by nation-states, institutions or migrants themselves. In search for what it exactly means to integrate and what someone is integrating into, these studies oftentimes reflect upon a concept related to integration, e.g., feeling at home, finding a new *heimat*, acceptance of the new situation, impact of government policy (Andriessen *et al.*, 2017; Mulvey, 2013; Joppke, 2007). Moreover, these studies shed light on the management of integration from one, etic perspective. But there is more. Quite often integration depends on the demand and will of multiple institutions. When institutions’ policies are incorporated in research, institutional coherence is mostly researched in the scope of the European Union and intra- or intergovernmental management (e.g., Martiniello, 2006; Hong & Knoll, 2016), while neglecting the dynamics on the local level. Studies that are taking place on a local level, for instance on the relation between neighborhood composition and integration, are predominantly conducted in metropolises (e.g., Clayton, 2012; Derudder, 2012; Gijssberts *et al.*, 2011; Lolle & Torpe, 2011; Scholten, 2018). Less typical places are neglected in the field of research on issues related to globalization and migration (Wang *et al.*, 2014). This tendency is defined as metropolitan bias, which is a problematic phenomenon in the literature as the situations in neighborhoods in metropolises, where tracks of globalization are omnipresent, are considerably different from situations in more peripheral areas of countries, in the margins of globalization (Wang *et al.*, 2014).

Besides, as Craig (2015) argues the voice of migrants themselves is rarely present in the literature that is rather dominated by ‘top-down’ views on integration. When the perspective of migrants is presented, it is mostly in research findings that display an etic or quantitative view on the matter. For instance, previous surveys of refugee attitudes reflected a relative acceptance of refugees’ new situation, however not in

absolute terms of the society into which they are attempting to integrate, but relative to the situation they fled from (Mulvey, 2013). Recent surveys among migrants in the Netherlands indicated a decrease in the number of Somali migrants that feel at home in the Netherlands (Andriessen et al., 2017). While these findings do display a negative picture regarding the success of integration and thus evoke more questions on the reasons underlying this negative notion, these etic findings lack explanatory substance from the perspective of migrants themselves.

This study focuses upon the process of integration of a non-Western migrant and how this is managed by institutions and by the migrant himself. In particular, macro- and meso-institutional discourses together with micro-social discourses are studied in order to gain insight in how integration is being defined, how it is acted upon, and how this is translated into interactions between institutions and an individual migrant in the process of integration, i.e., the everyday life of a migrant who is supposed to be integrating. The top-down perspectives – embodied in the discursive practices of three institutions dealing with the management of integration – are here investigated and contrasted against each other. This all happens together with the bottom-up perspective emerging from the migrant's own discourse practices. The three institutions involved in the research are a school, a municipality and a welfare organization, selected due to their specific connection with the integration process of the Somali migrant under investigation. The management of integration is studied in an area selected here as an area at the periphery of globalization, which has not been exposed to a high degree of migratory flows and ethnic diversity. This research is thus led by the following main question:

What are the matches and mismatches between different institutional discourses on the management of integration of a Somali migrant and how is this related to the perception of the integration process by the Somali migrant himself?

In addition, multiple guiding sub questions are formulated that enable to answer the main research question. Although these questions are used in terms of guidance during the phases of the research, an openness to possibly emerging additional foci and patterns in the field remained throughout the research process. This is in line with the ethnographic approach that is chosen as the research method, to unravel what it means to manage integration as a Somali migrant in an environment in the margins of globalization, taking into consideration the meso- and macro-institutional discourses on integration. The guiding sub questions read as follows:

- *How is integration being defined in macro-level institutional discourses present in documentation of the institutions under investigation?*
- *How is integration perceived and managed through the institutional discourses produced by each of the three institutional bodies at the meso-level?*

- *How does the perception and management of integration differ among and across institutions?*
- *How is integration perceived and managed by the Somali migrant under investigation?*
- *How is integration managed at the intersection of meso- and micro-level discourses?*

1.3 Relevance

This study aims to contribute to the development of the field on migration studies both academically, as well as by putting forward practical recommendations that advise institutions on how to manage the integration process of migrants, in particular in dealing with migrants living in municipalities at the periphery of globalization. Where most studies focus on the consequences of globalization in urban places (as large cities and megalopolises) in which features of globalization have been abundantly available and documented (Wang *et al.*, 2014), this research focuses on an area on the margins of globalization. More specifically, the study focuses on how integration is managed in an area at the margins of diversity. This is an area in which only a small percentage of the total population has a non-Western immigrant minority background. Wang *et al.* (2014: 24) argued:

“The world looks different when seen from its margins than when seen from its centers. Views from the centers tend to dominate, however, since margins are margins – that is, places of inferior importance.”

Wang *et al.* (2014: 24)

Due to the Dutch regulation that imposes a so-called *taakstelling* (i.e., responsibility to accommodate a certain amount of migrants based upon the number of inhabitants) on every municipality in the Netherlands, each place in the country – either urban or rural – encounters the consequences of migration to a certain degree. Therefore, studying the management of integration in a small village instead of an urban metropolis is of importance. This concern is also acknowledged by Lundsteen (2017: 5), who mentions that an area at the periphery of globalization is “an interesting context” to do research in, since such an area is “often characterized by another kind of sociality and inter-relatedness” than the urban sociocultural space.

In addition, this study takes on an emic, bottom-up approach in researching integration, in the form of an ethnographic interpretive enquiry that aims to get a thorough grasp of integration management through the eyes, voice and interactions of a Somali refugee with institutions that are related to his integration process. The emic perspective challenges traditional, ‘etic’ ways of studying diversity, in which salient categories are assessed (Tatli & Özbilgin, 2012). Rather, it tries to move beyond what is commonly known and strives to unravel the complexity that lays beneath the daily encounters with institutions through examining an insiders’ perspective. In this endeavour to attain emic validity, it is attempted to understand the informant “from his own system of meanings” (Whitehead, 2005: 5). By taking in this approach, this research thus answers the call of Craig (2015: 7) to fill the research gap on migrants’ perspectives in integration and migration studies, which according to him is also of practical relevance as “the history of

policy-making suggests it is much more effective if it [a policy AS] is grounded in the experience and views of those at whom policy is directed”.

Furthermore, the comparative component of the research contributes to increase academic and practical knowledge in the field of migration and integration. This research compares the perspectives and doings of different institutions and a migrant, and displays them in concert in order to create a sound reasoning on the complexity of the integration process of a Somali migrant. Moreover, this study takes into account different (macro-, meso-, and micro-) level discourses on managing integration. As indicated by Gumperz (1983: 110), “mere descriptions of formal organizational procedures cannot account for how these organizations work and affect our lives” and therefore also “empirical analysis of the day-to-day activities” is required to attain a comprehensive overview of the institutional management of integration and how it affects the migrant’s life. While previous studies have explored these fields individually or at a macro level, a crucial contribution of this research is that it examines the full web of macro- and meso-institutional and micro-level discourses in the integration process as performed within this particular case. This examination is also relevant in the light of practical advancement on institutional coherence, both within and across institutions, and how this affects the everyday life, i.e., integration process, of a migrant. Because of this research approach, it is possible to disentangle the twists in ties and to detect the breaks in the network, which has the potential to provide relevant insights for policy-makers and practitioners in the field.

1.4 Outline

This thesis consists of five chapters. In this chapter, the context in which the research is embedded is introduced, which is followed by a description of the main focus of the research and of the academic and practical relevance it has. Chapter two comprises the theoretical framework and describes the concepts that are explored and taken on board in the initial phase of the research. In chapter three, the research design and applied methodology are discussed. This chapter devotes words to the different stages in the research trajectory (i.e., prior, during, and after the fieldwork) and the researchers’ position in it. Chapter four extensively reports the discourses on the management of integration of a Somali migrant. This chapter includes the perspectives of three different institutions and the particular migrant at hand in order to unravel the complexity, the matches and the mismatches, between the management as performed and perceived by different actors. Chapter five closes the study by reflecting upon the main question and tackling the sub question, while also discussing the findings in the light of existing literature. Moreover, this chapter highlights limitations of this research, suggestions for future research, and academic and practical implications and recommendations of the findings.

Chapter 2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces concepts that are taken on board in the exploration of the management of integration. The chapter starts with a general introduction on the concepts of globalization together with migration and what makes people move, where both these phenomena that have directed attention towards research on the connections that migrants maintain or attain, over borders (transnational) and within borders (through integration). The Chapter then zooms in on the concept of integration in the particular context of the Netherlands and national, institutional and micro-level discourse models. Last, it turns to integration as managed on a local level and discusses social capital and neighborhood composition.

2.2 Globalization, migration and connections across and within borders

Present day globalization – although not new – has disrupted the homogeneity of nation states. It has and continues to break down tangible and intangible national borders, and has introduced new, more complex forms of interconnectedness among people (Vertovec, 2007). The flow of, among others, goods, finance, information and people mixing up Appadurain landscapes over the globe are no new phenomena, however globalization has intensified tremendously over the last decades (Appadurai, 1990; Wang et al., 2014). The acceleration of globalization in the recent decades has been facilitated by the internet and mobile communication technologies (Wang et al., 2014). Due to political, economic and social reasons, migratory flows to European countries have increased¹ after the end of World War II (Lucassen & Penninx, 1994). These flows included post-colonial immigration, labor migration, family reunifications, circular migration, and the process of asylum seeking as well as the condition of becoming a refugee. As a consequence of these migration flows, social spaces do no longer consist of merely local, regional or national people, but have become a mix of diverse compositions with roots all over the world. This mix impacts the lives of individuals, both migrants and non-migrants living in social spaces, who are facing cultural diversity on a daily basis. Constructing or maintaining connections in this era of globalization is considerably different from the connections that existed in homogeneous societies. On the one hand, due to transnational activities, migrants are now able to maintain connections with the social space of origin, while on the other hand, there is an urgent call from different perspectives for connection between the migrant and the social space of settlement.

Transnationalism is introduced by Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton (1992: 6) as “the process by which immigrants, through their daily activities, forge and sustain multi-stranded social, economic and

¹ On purpose the flows to *European countries* are referred to in speaking about the acceleration of migration, inspired by e.g., the work of Czaika and Haas (2014), who wrote about the *globalization of migration hypothesis* and questioned whether the world became more migratory over the past decades.

political relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement, and through which they create transnational social fields across borders”. This involves migrants, in other words the persons who crossed the border of a political or administrative unit for a certain minimum period of time (UNESCO, 2017), maintaining connections that exceed the borders of the society they are currently settled in. These connections can be familial, organizational, or political relations and can involve economic or religious elements (Schiller *et al.*, 1992). For instance, one can maintain conversations with or send remittances to family in the country of origin. While for a certain period scholars thought that migrants would assimilate to societies of settlement and these transnational homeland ties would slowly disappear, scholars now increasingly recognize that some migrants remain strongly connected to the society of origin and maintain networks around the globe (Levitt & Schiller, 2004).

While transnationalism is focused on connections of a migrant with the country of origin, the concept of acculturation focuses upon how migrants connect with the country of settlement. Throughout the years, discussions have been going on about the way in which migrants will or need to acculturate to the dominant culture in the country of settlement. Whereas from early in the 20th century onwards the acculturation theories were predominantly focused on a unidirectional view (i.e., merely emphasizing assimilation), the view on acculturation evolved towards approaches that included multiple strategies, such as the bi-dimensional view (including assimilation, separation, marginalization and integration; Berry, 1974; Berry, 1980) and the interactive acculturation model (including the interaction between the dominant and subordinate cultures; Bourhis *et al.*, 1997). Despite these attempts to capture the processes going on around acculturation, the literature has been dealing with these notions in confusing and inconsistent ways (Ngo, 2008). While this inconsistency has led to a melting pot discourse on migrant acculturation, in recent years many of the terms have been overshadowed by one concept in particular: integration. Integration seems to be the term elected – both in academic and public debate – to describe what is going on, or should be going on, in the case of migrants entering a European country (Böcker & Strik, 2011).

Although the concept of integration has become the prominent player in the field, the contemporary discourses have not yet overstepped the confusion or inconsistency when discussing the dynamics between a migrant and the culture in the country of settlement. A plethora of different definitions of the concept of integration has been presented in literature and policies (Phillimore, 2011). For instance, according to Berry (1980), integration takes place when on the one hand maintenance of heritage, culture and identity, and on the other hand involvement with the larger society is sought by a migrant in the country of settlement. UNESCO defines the concept of integration as having two meanings: “providing stability to a social group”, and “acculturation, i.e., the process of making someone equal or fitting to the rest of the society” assuming “that ‘native’ members of a host country already share the same traits which the immigrants still have to attain”. According to Ager and Strang (2008), instead, integration concerns host communities and migrants achieving equal public outcomes, social connections (with the country of origin, with the country of settlement and with services and functions of the country of settlement), and shared notions of nationhood

and citizenship (by having sufficient language skills, knowledge of the culture, sense of security and stability). The way in which integration is defined is of importance, as it forms a basis for the policy goals and desired outcomes of projects for migrants (Cherti & McNeil, 2012). In the following section, the focus turns to the discourses on integration in the Netherlands.

2.3 Discourses on integration in the Netherlands

Integration is a popular topic of discussion in contemporary societal and political debates on migration in the Netherlands, especially after the increased migration flows in 2015 and a growing fear for terrorism in recent years (Craig, 2015; Duyvendak, 2011; Ghorashi, 2010). However, also within the borders of the Netherlands integration has not yet been grasped into a generally agreed upon definition. Definitions on integration differ and are accordingly spilling over into policies and management regarding integration (Cherti & McNeil, 2012). Living in a nation-state-owned structure, for human beings whether indigenous or foreign, integration seems dominantly focused on integrating within national borders. This view is supported by multiple institutions, centralized in the nation state of the Netherlands, which form a body to regulate the lives of the population, including migrants. The institutions play a role in housing, health, education, and the labor market, which are all regulated in some manner for migrants (Cherti & McNeil, 2012). Examples of institutions involved in this process are municipalities, housing associations, schools, and voluntary organizations.

Over the last decades, the top-down directions contemplated in national discourses on integration have implied consequences for the role institutions ought to play in the process of integration. These directions have changed hand in hand with the shift in national immigration and integration policies, going from a more multicultural stance (Koopmans, 2009) to tighter regulations (Bonjour & Duyvendak, 2018). Further, in 1998 the Law on Civic Integration (*inburgering*) of Newcomers was introduced, which required migrants to participate in Dutch language courses and orientation programs (Bonjour & Duyvendak, 2018). Through decentralization of these tasks, the responsibility regarding guidance of the integration processes and the obligations that came along was shifted to municipalities (Joppke, 2007; Gerritsma, Goedee, & Ramsaran, 2012). In the years that followed, regulation on integration was tightened, for instance by the addition to the law in 2006 that urged migrants to pass an exam on their language skills (Bonjour & Duyvendak, 2018; Extra, Spotti & van Avermaet, 2009). These tightened regulations had consequences for the development of new initiatives regarding integration programs and language courses, in cooperation with municipalities. However, in 2013 the responsibility on the integration processes was taken from municipalities and given to the migrants themselves (Algemene Rekenkamer, 2017). Every migrant entering the Netherlands after the first day of 2013 would be individually responsible for arrangements regarding integration issues, such as schooling and financial arrangements (Algemene Rekenkamer, 2017). These concerns are also what the migrants during the ‘refugee-crisis’ around 2015 experienced, who for

instance had the opportunity to choose their language school out of a tremendous amount of (new) schools (Scholten, 2018). In 2017, the national discourse on this approach changed: municipalities should take more responsibility again and migrants ought to participate actively (Rijksoverheid, 2017). Moreover, non-Western migrants face even tighter regulations, like an increase in the required Dutch language level that has to be met (moving from A2 to B1 on the CEFR²) and an extended period from four till five years of living in the Netherlands without criminal records before one can apply for Dutch citizenship (Rijksoverheid, 2017).

In the midst of the dynamics created by top-down national policies and the bottom-up social reality affected by the increasing presence of migrants, institutions have responded with new initiatives (e.g., language courses, guidance programs, voluntary activities, buddy systems). Accordingly, the discourses of institutions on the integration process changed. Institutions and people within and around them make use of parameters in an attempt of ordering the world around them. These parameters are referred to as ‘discourse models’ (Gee, 1999:43). Discourse models are the models, the theories, which people have created in their minds based upon experiences in the sociocultural spaces they have lived in and the associative networks they are surrounded with (Gee, 1999). People attach different meanings to words depending on the particular context and moment in which they are used, which Gee (1999) refers to as situated meanings. Moreover, the establishment of a particular explanatory theory on a concept is rooted in the experiences of a sociocultural group. Wu (2010) focuses on a social cultural approach to discourse analysis and describes these theories as cultural models, shared by people who belong to a particular social or cultural group. The explanatory theories may deal with the language someone uses, with the acts that someone performs and with the way in which this is done. Studying discourse models enables to understand how pragmatics, discourse and culture work together (Yule, 1996).

Discourses function as more than just language uttered so to convey information (Gee, 2010). Using discourses allows people to not only say things but also to do things and to be things (Gee, 2004). Through language, one can do things and can undertake activities such as negotiating or policing (Gee, 2004). Besides, discourses function as a tool that helps people in the attempt of establishing, displaying, or being a certain socially significant identity (Gee, 2004). Discourses have a social function and are interactional (Wu, 2010). A person is evaluated not just based upon his walk, but also upon his talk. In this way, people are recognized as having a particular identity when they “walk the walk” and “talk the talk” (Gee, 2004: 2; Gee, 2010: 177). For instance, if migrants want to be recognized by others as ‘being integrated’ in the country they are settled in, they have to behave in a certain way but also engage in discourses in a particular way. The same holds for the recognition for institutional workers, who behave in a particular way and use

² The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR), developed by the Council of Europe, describes foreign language proficiency at six levels ranging from basic to advanced language proficiency: A1 and A2, B1 and B2, C1 and C2.

language in a specific manner in order to be fully recognized in their position. Therefore, the discourses people use display more than just words and sentence expressions.

Discourses are the window through which someone can recognize meanings and patterns that are attached to the certain identity and situation, influenced by particular social and cultural schemata (i.e., frameworks of interpretation; Trappes-Lomax, 2004; Wu, 2010). In the light of discourses that take place in the migratory context, engaging in (social cultural) discourse analysis is a way to unravel the meaning behind what seems normal and what seems strange – which is undoubtedly entangled with different cultural backgrounds of those involved (Gee, 2010; Wu, 2010). Culturally constructed (for the actor him/herself normal) habits influence the discourse of a migrant or institutional worker, while this discourse is also influenced by the new surroundings and unfamiliar situation (Wu, 2010). Through an analytic juxtaposition of the sociocultural experiences of the actors and the current context in which a discourse is produced, one can aim for better understanding of the interactional activity of discourses (Wu, 2010). The complex analysis of discourse can by no means be detached from the context and the time in which it unfolds, as these notions form the background against which the language makes sense for particular people in particular times and spaces.

2.4 Social capital and neighbourhood composition

Over time, across and within countries attempts remain to be undertaken to grasp the notion of integration into the right discourse for a varying set of reasons. The complexity of defining integration reflects the complexity of doing integration. In the Dutch context, migrants are – after having spent a certain period of time in an asylum seeking center – assigned to housing in a particular city or village. From this moment onwards, migrants are expected to *do* integration. They are supposed to find connections within the sociocultural space they live in. Constructing this interconnectedness and a social network is according to Phillimore (2012) a fundamental aspect of integration. Putnam (2000; 2007) introduced the concept of social capital to describe the social networks people create, in which norms of reciprocity and trust are telling. Putnam (2007) made a differentiation between bonding and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital reflects the creation of strong ties, often within community groups or families, while bridging capital refers to setting up weak ties with people outside of these close groups (Putnam, 2007). Bonding is perceived as a useful way to “get by”, but bridging is elected as the key for “getting ahead” (De Souza Briggs, 1997: 225; Putnam, 2000: 23). By means of bridging social capital, connections between people from different groups are created and cohesion in society is expected to be amplified (CIC, 2007; Kindler, Ratcheva, & Piechowska, 2015).

The extent to which social cohesion is possible or likely to be enhanced depends on many factors, of which the cultural diversity of the local community is one. Contrasting results have been found in the literature regarding the effects of diversity in cultural backgrounds on the social cohesion in the

neighborhood. Søholt and Lynnebakke (2015: 2314) examined the claim that segregation occurs because “immigrants don’t want to integrate – they prefer to stick together with co-ethnics”. Mixed neighborhoods are for this reason seen as essential to enhance social cohesion (Søholt & Lynnebakke, 2015; Phillips, 2006). This idea is supported by the spatial assimilation theory (Park, 1926, in Peach, 2005), stating that people interact with others who live in their near surroundings (Søholt & Lynnebakke, 2015). This claim is however contrasted by findings from a large array of studies that has been conducted on the relation between the diverse composition of the neighborhood and levels of social cohesion experienced in the community. The findings display a mix of contrasting outcomes (Letki, 2008; Lolle & Torpe, 2011). For instance, some studies indicate a negative relation between the level of ethnic diversity in the neighborhood and the number of mutual contacts, which can be buffered or enhanced through factors such as the support of laws and legislation (Gijsberts et al., 2012; Lancee & Dronkers, 2011). In her research, Boschman (2012) did not find a relationship between the diverse composition and the amount of contacts people have, which according to her is related to the communication technology existing in current daily life. The variety in findings can be explained by electing one of the different theories as developed by Putnam (2007), who tried to clarify particular phenomena by the contact, conflict or constrict theory as an explanatory instrument. Moreover, Putnam (2007) stated that, whether the social networks and social capital in the neighborhood hinders or promotes integration of migrants, is dependent on appropriate public and private policies.

2.5 From global migration to local integration

This Chapter moved from a ‘satellite view’ on migratory dynamics around the globe to a rather delineated view on interactions related to integration on a local level. Through globalization and migration, new concepts such as transnationalism and integration are introduced into the daily lives of not only the migrants who are moving, but also the indigenous who remained in the same place as where they were born. The new surroundings and situations that unfold over the years have kept people puzzled on the question how to deal with it, as this destructs the routine and therefore quests for change. Integration is elected as one of the manners to facilitate the desired change in the current context. Discourses and policies on integration have been produced and reshaped in the institutional contexts of countries who face migratory influxes over the last couple of decades, of which the Netherlands is one of them. At the same time, migrants continue entering the Dutch institutional context and face challenges in their everyday life, in which they ought to integrate. This integration process includes the constructions of connections to build social capital and dealing with the particular environment which they are placed in – which might be a vibrant city in the midst of influences of migration, or a silent village at the periphery of globalization. The latter context is exactly the surrounding in which Amin is performing his attempt to manage his daily life. This everyday life is infused with notions of integration, manifested in discourses and interactions produced through and

with institutions. To understand how integration is managed by both Amin and the institutions that are involved in his everyday life, this research analyzes the discourses in the sociocultural environments where they take place.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

‘To unravel’ is the appropriate verb to describe what was intended when first engaging in the research approach that this study subscribes to. It is of importance to understand that ‘unravelling’ a phenomenon, a happening, sounds interesting, but becomes difficult when you experience and realize you are doing this unraveling with a human being. In general, when thinking about ‘unravelling’, we either picture someone peeling off an onion layer by layer, or a person digging with a shovel into the sand to find meaningful objects. Both imaginations do not involve a human being that is under investigation and of main importance. However, in this research, a human being – namely Amin³ – is the subject that is of main importance. Digging into his experiences and thoughts that are embodied in his discourse practices is what I aimed to do, and what I likewise attempted to do in the investigated institutions. This research was conducted to shed light on how integration is being defined and managed from a top-down (i.e., macro- and meso-level) perspective and how this integration is being perceived and managed from a bottom-up (i.e., micro-level) perspective. In this light is worked towards understanding “what people do, what people think, and what people think they do as they do what they do” (Anderson-Levitt, 1987: 174). This way of unravelling is described as doing ethnographic research.

Ethnography goes beyond the mere asking of questions in order to find out how management of integration is being done by institutions and migrants. Rather, it includes observations, conversations and in-depth interviews in the field to open up the complexity of a phenomenon, which in this case is the process of integration. In their ‘guide’ to ethnographic research, Blommaert and Dong (2010) give a description of the structured sequence of practices that is usually followed in the explorative, open research that is called ethnography. This sequence was also performed in the current study, which entails that I engaged in pre-field preparation (i.e., familiarization with sensitizing concepts in literature, with the field and with its actors), fieldwork procedures, and post-fieldwork analysis and writing. Along the lines of this sequence, chapter 3 is structured. It highlights the important aspects of the research process that give insight into the methodological practices that have led to the findings as described in chapter 4. First, section 3.2 provides an introduction to the actors in the field. Following, the procedure of data collection is discussed (section 3.3). The chapter closes with the analysis and interpretation of the collected data (section 3.4).

3.2 The field and its actors

In the first phase of the research, the pre-fieldwork preparation, the main focus lay on familiarization with sensitizing concepts related to integration (as discussed in the previous chapter) and on familiarization with

³ A pseudonym is used for ethical reasons. Also names of places, institutions and employees are changed into pseudonyms to preserve anonymity.

the sociocultural spaces in the field of research. ‘The field’ in this ethnographic research is constituted by the interlocking of multiple sociocultural spaces and movements circling around the notion of integration of a migrant. The movements are embodied by the actors in the field, that is to say one migrant and three institutions. These actors are selected as focus points of this research due to the links they have with the concept of integration and with each other. The selection of these actors started from the initial stage in which I as a researcher established the link with the migrant named Amin. On May 17th, 2017, Amin and I met during an activity organized by Tilburg University. That was the beginning of an array of weekly meetings that focused on practicing the Dutch language and exchanging stories. The content of these stories slowly shifted from initially mainly focusing on superficial subjects, towards the highlighting of deeper topics that played a paramount role in the integration process, i.e., the everyday life, of Amin. In these stories, a range of institutions returned on a regular basis. These institutions are the school where Amin follows classes for Dutch as a second language, the municipality of the village in which he lives (Udenberg), and the welfare organization Taaron that offered him voluntary help. Based upon the frequency with which these institutions were mentioned by Amin, they were chosen as part of the research field that would lead towards deeper understanding of how integration is managed in the life of a Somali migrant. Since, at least in the political and public debate, ‘newly arrived’ migrants like Amin are supposed to be integrating, Amin’s daily life and undertakings herein are understood as being in the process of integration. No specific definition of integration is chosen in this study, as the conceptualization of integration as adhered to in this research is grounded in the words of the informants themselves, upon which further unravelling of the management of this notion took place. Further, although the work in the pre-field preparation phase circled around familiarization with the particular actors, an openness remained towards other possible influential institutions in the life of Amin that might have come up during the fieldwork – which was not the case. In the following sections, more background information on Amin and the institutions is provided.

3.2.1 Amin

Amin is a man in his thirties who was born in Somalia and raised in a village several hours from the capital Mogadishu. After he had finished primary and secondary schooling, he became an English teacher. Later, he became involved in the management of schools and started his own school. Amin organized classes for children from different places and socio-economic classes. Children of families who did not have the financial resources for paying the tuition fee were welcome to join. This work was done in cooperation with volunteers, many of which were Dutch people. After some years of educating and helping others in different areas, Amin started to get threatened. This threatening was based upon suspicion that was raised with regard to his collaboration with foreigners (i.e., the volunteers), his successful entrepreneurship, and his voluntary activities. Due to the ongoing threats, he had to flee his country around the year 2006. This was the beginning of a journey that has led him to Ethiopia, Uganda and back to Somalia to search for a place where

he could work and live safely, and to somehow take care of his family. In all of the places he lived, Amin managed to set up entrepreneurial activities that helped others. However, at some point living this entrepreneurial life became too dangerous and the burden of insecurity forced him to search his route to a safer place. Although he wanted Somalia to be this safe place where he could provide direct care for his family, it was not. During his last attempt to live and work safely in Somalia, he faced an escalation of risks, and his mother insisted upon the need to leave the area and to travel to a place that is safe. Around 2016, Amin fled from Somalia to the Netherlands. In the first months after his arrival, Amin lived in an asylum seekers center in the northwest of the Netherlands. After a while, he was reunited with part of his family. His wife and some of his children had arrived in the Netherlands already several years before Amin himself left behind his mother, his other children and other family members in Somalia. Now Amin was able to join his wife and children in their house located in the small village called Udenberg. From this moment on, he started to get acquainted with the three institutions that are introduced in the following sections.

3.2.2 The school

By traveling between approximately one and a half hours with public transportation one can get from Udenberg to Doorne, a city with more than ten times the inhabitants of Udenberg, which counts 20.000 inhabitants. In this city there is a school that offers tertiary education, including a large range of studies in applied sciences. Moreover, a very small part of this public organization's activities is focused on offering Dutch as a Second Language (DSL) courses to migrants. The teaching is established by a team that consists of teachers, a coordinator, a head of the department and a former teacher who currently supports extra activities around the courses. There are also two colleagues that help with administrative tasks regarding the registration and tuition fee of students. Whereas the school in general is one of multiple regional divisions in the Netherlands, the DSL courses are merely locally organized. However, there is close contact with a division in another big city to exchange experiences and knowledge on the setup of the courses. The DSL courses that are offered range from classes focused upon A1 (basic level) to C1 (highly proficient) level. All classes take place every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning from 08.30 a.m. until 12.10 p.m. The classes consist of a minimum of ten and no more than eighteen students. As language of instruction the Dutch language is used, whilst the use of other languages is welcomed if it helps students reach the aim of the assignment. The migrants within the classes can originate from anywhere in the world, though at the moment this research was conducted, the majority of the students were refugees from Africa or the Middle-East. The students either enrolled at this school because they were referred to it by others or because they had found it by themselves. The latter was the case for Amin, who had to search for a school to attain these DSL classes since the (only) course that is offered in Udenberg does not match his (higher) educational

qualifications. At the time of writing, Amin is following classes to learn Dutch as a second language on level B2.

3.2.3 The municipality Udenberg

Udenberg is a small village in the Netherlands with approximately 20.000 inhabitants of which 3.4 percent had a non-western background in 2017.⁴ Next to these non-western migrants, 6.0 percent of the inhabitants of Udenberg is classified as a migrant with a western background. To put this into perspective: in 2017 the total Dutch population consisted of 12.7 percent migrant inhabitants with a non-western background and 9.9 percent with a western background.⁵ In the middle of Udenberg, the municipality office is located. One person within this office is primarily focused on the participation of migrants living within the village. This so-called participation coach is a freelancer who joined the organization in August 2017. He helps inhabitants of Udenberg with support towards ‘the shortest route to work’ and with daily requests. Before his entry into the municipality, no one in particular was focused upon the target group of migrants. The only colleagues that were in contact with migrants on a regular basis were client managers of Social Affairs. These managers are responsible for arranging the social benefits and other financial contributions for inhabitants of Udenberg on the basis of laws. Whereas the client managers focus on a broader group that consists of unemployed inhabitants in general, the participation coach is merely focused upon the target group of migrant inhabitants. These migrant inhabitants can either come to the service desk of the municipality during the day to see whether the participation coach has time for a meeting, or they can make an appointment for one or two days afterwards. The participation coach aims to meet migrants at least once every three months, while the client managers barely have meetings with migrants – unless problems arise with regard to the financial circumstances of a person, like has been the case for Amin.

3.2.4 The welfare organization Taaron

Taaron is a local welfare organization that offers a variety of services and activities for any inhabitant within and closely around Udenberg. It provides voluntary services for people of any age, which includes listening, advising, supporting and referring to specific institutions. Taaron focuses on multiple tracks, of which the Welfare track is one. Within this track there is the department General Social Work, which consists of a team of volunteers, paid social workers and a manager. These people work together to help any client with any issue. Clients can either visit the open office, which is a short walk from the municipality office, or make an appointment. Besides, Taaron offers a list of activities that people can join. Some of these clients are migrant inhabitants of the municipality Udenberg, and Amin is one of them.

⁴ www.allecijfers.nl/gemeente/udenberg. Statistics are from 2017. A *migrant* is considered as someone being born in- or outside of the Netherlands with at least one parent that is born outside of the Netherlands. *Non-western* refers to inhabitants of the municipality with a migration background from Turkey, Africa, Latin-America, and Asia with the exception of Indonesia and Japan.

⁵ [http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=37296ned&D1=0-51&D2=0,10,20,30,40,50,\(1-1\)-I&VW=T](http://statline.cbs.nl/StatWeb/publication/?DM=SLNL&PA=37296ned&D1=0-51&D2=0,10,20,30,40,50,(1-1)-I&VW=T)

3.3 The fieldwork

3.3.1 The ethnographic corpus

The fieldwork done in this study involved the collection of an ethnographic data corpus, divided into multiple sub-corpora. In the context of this research, it means that the concept of integration is being studied from different perspectives, both on a horizontal and vertical spectrum. Horizontally, this research considered the perspective of three different institutions as introduced in the previous section, i.e., the school, the municipality and the welfare organization. The reason for including this horizontal aspect to the research design was because it enabled the sketching of a comprehensive picture in which the match or mismatch in the management of integration as performed by institutions could be investigated. Vertically, this research included investigation of different layers, namely the investigation of macro- (e.g., managers), meso- (e.g., staff members), and micro-perspectives (i.e., Amin) on managing integration. The reason for including this layered approach is because it would prevent the presentation of a mere description of formal organizational procedures while being blind for the actual behavior that is performed in the institutions. Moreover, shedding light on the micro-perspective would give insight into how the formal organizational procedures and the actual behavior in the institutions affects the daily life of a migrant (i.e., Amin). By using this approach that incorporates the emic perspective, this research aimed at getting a thorough grasp of integration management through the eyes, voice and interactions of a Somali migrant.

Related to the fact that this research is focused on an integration process that revolves around a migrant who lives in a relatively small area in the margins of globalization, in one of the institutions this three-layered perspective could not be investigated and remained a two-layered perspective. This holds for the municipality Udenberg, as in this institution only one person is hired and responsible for ‘taking care of this target group’ (with the additional help of a colleague from Social Affairs). This person, the participation coach, does not have to report to a supervisor nor works with subordinate workers. His activities are operational rather than strategical and therefore he is considered to be operating on a meso-level in the institution. The schematic overview of the horizontality and verticality in the multi-layered research design is displayed in Table 3.1. This table also includes the interviews, documentation and observations that together have led to the construction of the ethnographic corpus. More details on the data collection are discussed in the following section.

Table 3.1: Schematic overview of the horizontality and verticality in the multi-layered research design

Perspective	Instrument	School in Doorne	Municipality Udenberg	Taaron
Macro-level	Interviews	Head of the study program Coordinator DSL courses	-	Manager welfare track
	Documentation	Policy paper (in process) Goals DSL classes	Participation law General policy rules	Annual report
Meso-level	Interviews	Teacher DSL class Initiator Language Café	Participation coach Client manager S.A.	Social worker
	Documentation	Published scientific article Published popular article	-	-
	Observations	Language Café DSL class	Waiting room	Waiting room
Micro-level	Interviews	Amin	Amin	Amin
	Documentation	Amin's homework	Letters from/to municipality	Letters from Taaron Emails from Taaron

3.3.2 Data collection

As described by Golafshani (2003), triangulation forms an important methodological issue in ethnographic approaches to the investigation of discourse practices in order to minimize bias and to come as close as possible to valid conclusions. By means of working with several kinds of research methods and data, this research examined the same process from different angles. The methods used for collecting data in the field included doing observations, making field notes, having informal conversations, conducting interviews and collecting more documentation from the actors (next to what was readily available online). The period of fieldwork in which data was collected took place from March 7th until April 26th, 2018. Institutions were initially contacted via email and after the first meeting took place with one of the actors within the institution, other meetings were arranged by help of this person. Throughout the whole fieldwork procedure, meetings and online contact with Amin continued. This contact enabled a continuous loop of gathering data from a top-down and bottom-up perspective, which could then be reflected upon in follow-up meetings. It is of importance to denote that my association with Amin was not exposed during the different episodes of fieldwork in the sociocultural spaces of the institutions. The institutional actors were aware of the research purpose focusing upon investigating the management of 'integration' from a top-down and bottom-up perspective, however neither my specific connection with Amin nor my connections with other institutions in the field were revealed. This was decided upon, firstly, because of ethical considerations regarding the possible consequences that Amin and other institutions might face and, secondly, because it might have affected the picture that interviewees were willing to sketch during the interviews.

Observations of the physical environment and behavior of institutional actors took place within all of the institutions. An overview of the observations, during which field notes were taken, is presented in Table 3.2. While observations took place in every institution, only in the context of the school, interactions between Amin and the actors of the institution were observed. The reason for this is that in the school setting, it was possible to observe the actors (including Amin) in a group setting in which it was not obvious

that the researcher's eyes were mainly focused upon Amin and the interactions he was involved in. This ensured that the position of Amin did not get affected in any way, and – looking at consequences for the research – that interactions between Amin and actors in school were not influenced due to their knowledge regarding my research purposes. Observations of the interactions between Amin and the actors within the institutions of the municipality Udenberg and the welfare organization Taaron would have required an infiltration of the researcher in a one-on-one meeting, which was not desired for previously mentioned reasons and therefore not enacted. This does not mean that no observations at all took place within these institutions, since the researcher's eyes obviously were absorbing everything (e.g., the physical environment and interactions between employees and visitors) in the waiting room before entering an office for interviews.

Table 3.2: Overview of observations (duration in minutes)

Observation	Actors involved	Date	Duration
Language café	School and Amin	09-03-2018	60
DSL class	School and Amin	14-03-2018	220
Language café	School (Amin absent)	16-03-2018	80
Meeting at municipality Doorne (where school is located)	School representatives	28-03-2018	90
Waiting room municipality Udenberg	Employees and visitors	26-04-2018	40
Waiting room Taaron	Employees and visitors	26-04-2018	25
Amin at home	Amin and family	10-04-2018	240
Total			755

Next to the observations that took place, interviews were conducted with actors of different institutions (i.e., on a horizontal spectrum) who portrayed discourses from different perspectives (i.e., on a vertical spectrum), as was displayed in Table 3.1. A detailed overview of the interviews, including information on the interviewees, dates and duration, is provided in Table 3.3. Although not being an obvious point of focus in this research, an interview with the only employee of VluchtelingenWerk in Udenberg was conducted in order to clarify their non-role in the daily life of Amin. This interview confirmed that this institution does not play a key role in the life of Amin and therefore the focus of the research remained on the three institutions as discussed. The interviews with actors at macro- and meso-levels of the institutions consisted of semi-structured and follow-up interviews (in which previously mentioned concepts were discussed). The interviews with Amin can best be described as conversations that did not change drastically in the setting and atmosphere from earlier conversations, however were occasionally content-wise directed towards a certain topic that would give more information on questions or concepts that emerged during the fieldwork. Thus, with the consent of Amin, our meetings had turned into *natural conversational ethnographic interviews* (Whitehead, 2005). Interviews were conducted in Dutch and with the consent of the interviewee. Only in the case of Amin the use of language shifted between Dutch and English, often within one sentence. All interviews were transcribed and the episodes of the transcriptions that are quoted in this study were

translated as adequately as possible into English. To do so, also errors in sentence constructions are incorporated in the translated passages. The original Dutch passages of the interviews are presented in Appendix A. Due to Amin's mix in language use, both the original passage and the translated passage of the interview are presented in the text instead of in the appendix. In the transcriptions, [...] is used to indicate a pause, [-] to indicate a stop, [xx] to indicate an utterance that was not clearly recognized, and [comment AS] to clarify something in the transcription.

Table 3.3: Overview of interviews (duration in minutes)

Interviewee	Location	Date	Duration
<i>School</i>			
Head of the study program	Head's office	16-03-2018	33
Coordinator DSL courses	Coordinator's office	19-04-2018	44
Teacher DSL class (Nienke)	Employees' canteen	14-03-2018	26
Initiator Language Café program (Maartje)	Student restaurant	07-03-2018	39
Initiator Language Café program (Maartje)	Student workplace	16-03-2018	37
Total			179
<i>Municipality Udenberg</i>			
Participation coach (Erik)	Office at university	04-04-2018	61
Participation coach (Erik) and client manager Social Affairs (Nicole)	Office at municipality	26-04-2018	45
Client manager Social Affairs (Nicole)	Office at municipality	26-04-2018	18
Total			124
<i>Taarom (welfare organization)</i>			
Manager Welfare track (Christina)	Manager's office	26-04-2018	24
Social worker (Nienke)	Social worker's office	26-04-2018	20
Total			44
<i>VluchtelingenWerk</i>			
Team manager	Main (and only) office	26-04-2018	52
Total			52
<i>Amin</i>			
Amin	Canteen of university	09-03-2018	37
Amin	Student workplace at school	14-03-2018	61
Amin (no recording, only notes)	Amin's home	10-04-2018	± 60
Total			158

Besides the data that is collected by means of observations and interviews, a number of documents has been gathered. This documentation was retrieved from or referred to by the actors of the institutions or Amin. Details on the texts that are gathered are presented in Table 3.4. While some of the texts were used as instruments in the work place of actors, others could be considered as providing contextual information.

Table 3.4: Overview of documents collected

Title	Related to	Indication of content
<i>Beleid op Visie</i> (A policy paper on Vision - still in progress)	School	A report that is constructed by one of the colleagues as an assignment for her study. It shows the values of the team and management and uses the model of Biesta to sketch a desired future situation.
<i>Niemand past in één hokje</i> (Nobody fits in one box - article)	School	An academic article that was the central piece around which a Bildungconference was held, where Maartje (school support) joined.
<i>Doelstellingen NT2 klassen</i> (Goals DSL classes)	School	Indicates the goals of the DSL courses per class that is offered. The documents include many details, in the class a shortened overview is presented.
Article by Newsflash on the language café	School	A popular article that was constructed around the event of the language café by one of the members of Basics, the news providers of the school.
Policy rules on participation and the 'Participatiewet' (law)	Municipality	Reports the laws on participation and the obligations that come along with this.
Jaarverslag (annual report)	Taaron	Provides a detailed overview of the work Taaron did in 2017.
<i>"Gun ons de tijd.."</i> (Give us the time)	VluchtelingenWerk	A booklet, constructed by workers from VluchtelingenWerk, which indicates the difficulties and psychosocial issues that refugees may face in trying to settle in another location.
Notes from school	Amin	Homework of Amin that he made for school.
Letters from / to institutions	Amin / institutions	Letters from and to the municipality and Taaron, mostly on financial matters.

3.4 Analysis and interpretation

As discussed by Blommaert and Dong (2010), the three sequential stages of ethnographic research (i.e., preparation for the fieldwork, the fieldwork procedure, and the post-fieldwork analysis) can be overlapping and can unfold simultaneously. This overlap is visible in the case of the analysis and interpretation, which did not only take place after the fieldwork procedure but also during the fieldwork. The research design consisted of intertwined research episodes moving between institutions and the main informant Amin. This means that constant analysis of data happened in order to determine the next steps in the research procedure and to shed light on interesting findings in a follow-up meeting. The ethnographic research is a dynamic process, which involves knowledge gathering and knowledge formation by the researcher (Fabian, 1995). Since my position as a researcher in this data collection and interpretation process has been central, first some words are devoted to my position in the fieldwork before the methods of analysis are discussed.

3.4.1 The researcher's position

The corpora derived from the different ethnographic research practices are connected, not only to each other but also to the sociocultural context in which they emerged. In other, non-ethnographic studies the researcher may go into the field, grab some data and take off, which can be metaphorically described as taking the fish out of the water and displaying it on a platform. On this platform, observing the situation is less complex than in the water. It enables the researcher to elect several variables to investigate and discuss them. Combining this investigation with theory can lead to a nice piece of art, but not one that is created within the actual context. However, in ethnography, the subject is not separated from its situatedness. Instead, the fish is observed in its surroundings, in the midst of coral, ships and other living beings. It is

observed how interactions take place in this particular context and one attempts to find the reasons behind these interactions. Whereas in the first phases of doing the research the field may be marked by chaos, this chaotic perception may fade away as the fieldwork continues. Blommaert and Dong (2010:26) describe this phenomenon as the learning process, which entails an interesting twist of turning away from the chaotic perception and turning towards more understanding of the actual happenings within its context. This learning process is embodied by the researcher and marked by 'rich points' (Agar, 1995): points at which the researcher bumps into the limit of what is readily understandable for this person as a researcher, which is determined by the researcher's own cultural and social conventions. For this reason, reflexivity upon my own position in the field is of great importance. In the process of doing research, my own presence and knowledge could have functioned as a vehicle or an obstacle in the gathering and forming of the knowledge that was required to build the research corpus. In any case, my presence has impacted what is researched in the learning process as described above. In line with statements of Bourdieu (2005) and Blommaert and Dong (2010), the importance of reflexivity upon the situatedness of the knowledge in this research is recognized, which has led to the creation of the following sections which reflect on the ethnographer's role in the context. As elaborated on by Spotti (2014), interpretations and knowledge formation by the ethnographer cannot be taken separately from two conditions: the external view on the ethnographer's position and the internal features of the ethnographer.

First, the ethnographer's own positioning by others within the context under study may have influenced the data that is gathered (Spotti, 2014). In the case of this research, the researcher intruded in the environment of a migrant and of different institutional workers. On the one hand, due to the connection and relation of trust with the migrant that has grown out of almost a year of weekly meetings, it was possible (with the consent of Amin) to have a subtle shift in interactions from informal chats into natural conversational ethnographic interviews (Whitehead, 2005). Therefore, the risk of high impact on the data collection due to the researcher's own positioning by the other (i.e., Amin) seemed to be minimized. On the other hand, I visited three sociocultural spaces, the institutions, in which the researcher's positioning by others seemed more likely to have affected the data gathering and formation. There was no familiarity or connection between the researcher and the interviewees of the institutions before the fieldwork took place, and for this reason my position as a researcher might have distorted the understanding of what was going on and the meanings behind it.

Second, the ethnographer's own interpretive capacities and experiences play a role, in such a way that the ethnographer's own background may affect the data collection and formation (Spotti, 2014). On the one hand, in the case of the ethnographic practices executed in the institutions, the researcher's unfamiliarity with the scenes might have positively affected the curious and information-seeking spirit to find more about the institutional behaviors and underlying meanings. This was manifested in 'silly questions' and a sense of 'innocence' (Blommaert & Dong, 2010: 28) towards the yet unknown field. These were asked in a context of a common cultural background of being a Dutch native researcher in institutions

organized by Dutch natives. On the other hand, I acknowledge that I have a cultural frame of reference – as a researcher born and raised in the Netherlands – that may have impeded the process of knowledge gathering, formation and understanding around the perspective of Amin, who is born and raised in Somalia. Therefore, it is of importance to denote that this social research is contextually embedded and presents the macro-, meso- and micro-discourses on integration as caught during my presence within the context. There was no aim to arrive at a stage where generalizations can be made on the topic of integration in the Netherlands. Rather, the research aims to shed light on this particular case in this particular context: a Somali migrant in his integration process and his interplay with institutions while living in a neighbourhood in the margins of globalizations.

3.4.2 Data analysis

The fieldwork delivered a diverse set of data and the analysis hereof is inspired by two methods of analysis: discourse analysis (e.g., Gee, 1999) and the key incident approach (e.g., Kroon & Sturm, 2000; Spotti, 2007). Discourse analysis was used as a means to unravel the meanings that people attach to social phenomena. This approach enabled analysis that could focus on topics that emerged in the context and consequently seek for the discourse models, the cultural models, the schemata behind it. These discourse models (Gee, 1999) refer to theories that people have created in their minds in the sociocultural spaces they have lived in, which is also influenced by the associative networks they are surrounded with. In this study, discourse analysis was used to shed light upon the theories people have in mind while managing the process of integration in the Netherlands.

To open up the complexity present in the discourses that spin around the management of integration, the analysis trajectory involved a high level of consciousness and awareness with regard to key events that might be *picturas* of a broader, underlying phenomenon, in line with the key incident approach (Kroon & Sturm, 2000; Spotti, 2007). Although not reaching the microscopic depth of key incident analysis the method of analysis used in this research was inspired by the key incident approach. ‘Inspired’ should be underscored, as the current research did not adopt the full package of key incidents analysis tools to tackle the research findings. Rather, this approach is used as a manner to highlight events or verbal acts that shed light on abstract principles of social organization around the concept of integration (Erickson, 1977). An event was depicted as ‘key’ when it had the potential to uncover latent notions and the possibility to open up theoretical loadings behind salient patterns. This gave the key incidents an emblematic character, as they are the mere pre-views of something bigger: the socio-culturally constructed story lying beneath it. Therefore, shedding light on such an event enabled the exploration of links between research findings and other events or theoretical constructs (Green & Bloome, 1997).

Chapter 4. The complexity in integration

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sheds light on the encounters of Amin with the institutions that affect his integration process, i.e., his daily life. It reports how these institutions define and manage integration and how this is reflected in Amin's own perception of his integration trajectory. The chapter is constructed along the vertical and horizontal layers of the research design (see section 3.3.1). This means that the horizontal diversification of institutional perspectives is reflected in the three sub chapters that focus upon the school setting (section 4.2), the municipality Udenberg (section 4.3), and the welfare organization Taaron (section 4.4). Further, every sub chapter is divided into sections based upon the macro- and meso-institutional and micro-level discourses on the management of integration as performed in the context of that particular institution. The chapter continues along the line of the attempt to unravel what lies beneath the observed or heard events that unfolded during the fieldwork. This leads to the last section, which focuses solely on Amin's responses and on the insights regarding the erosive effect of the discourses from the three institutions.

4.2 Learning Dutch as a second language

Besides taking care of his family, Amin focuses his daily life on learning Dutch. In approximately a year, Amin took course after course and worked himself up on the educational ladder to the level at which he is now: B2 of the CEFR. The course for the B2 level is followed at a school in Doorne, which is the sociocultural context this sub-chapter focuses upon. After the macro-level perspectives on the school's role in management of integration are outlined, the meso-level perspectives and activities (i.e., the class and language café) are discussed. These perspectives are followed by a section that reflects upon the integration in the school setting as perceived from an emic stance, i.e., Amin's own position.

4.2.1 Institutional discourse under construction

The institutional discourse as constructed by the school is made up of several documents, one more official than the other, and the interviews that took place with the head of the study program and the coordinator of the Dutch as a Second Language (DSL) classes. The DSL courses are part of a study program that focuses on educating students in becoming a teacher. The head of the program, who also fulfills this job for other programs like beta-oriented studies, explains the group of students in the DSL courses "is actually not our target group". Instead, the target group consists of students and some teachers in post-education, and the DSL courses are "placed in a bit of a weird corner". Nevertheless, the head argues that "it is fantastic that we have it, because from an ethical perspective I think it is good that we work with those people". Besides, the discourse of the head reveals that including this course into the program benefits the other students in the school, who are in the process of becoming teachers and will face a future with diversity in classes. In

addition, incorporating this course into the program responds to the school's wish for 'internationalization'. The head stated: "We continuously get addressed that we should do something regarding internationalization". Including these Dutch language classes in the program therefore contributes to this quest.

The head further explains that there is neither an official policy nor a vision embodied around the DSL classes or around the notion of integration. When speaking about his understanding of integration, he refers to one refugee from Iran that he had met during his previous job. By providing this example, he points out that he sees integration as a matter of where people feel at home, feel safe and can sufficiently speak the language to communicate with others. In the context of the DSL classes and a vision on the role of the school in integration, the head argues that the ideas of the organization regarding the DSL courses should come from the bottom up, from the teachers themselves. Elaborating on this matter, the head explains: "so I believe less in assigning or propagating a vision, or from top-down, I believe more in the other way around". The only official document with regard to the DSL language course is a document pointing out the goals of each class. These goals are merely focused upon the cognitive aspect of the learning process, while both the head of the department and the coordinator of the DSL classes argue they are searching for ways to focus on more than just this cognitive aspect. They indicate that they are aware of the fact that the school plays a considerable role in the integration process, which is also a pressure that they experience from external, societal forces. To the question whether the head thinks that this responsibility with regard to the process of integration is also present amongst the teachers in DSL classes, he argues as follows:

Annick: Do you think that the teachers who are now working in the DSL classes, or something that is related to this target group, do you think that they feel a certain feeling of responsibility? Or do you speak about it really being a part of the integration process that people often see in the Netherlands?

Head: Well, way too little. I see now the teacher works on the vision, and now Maartje is here, now, the consciousness increases. That was, that, eh, yes one did not know how to give hands and feet to it, that is it, I guess.

As emerging from his discourse, the head reports that teachers and others involved in the DSL classes were uncertain about how to deal with this management of integration in and around the classroom. By this utterance, the head actually reveals a contradiction in his discourses. On the one hand, the head lacks the belief in top-down policies and his preference goes out to ideas coming from the teachers themselves. On the other hand, he emphasizes the importance of the focus on integration and how to deal with it. There is a gap between these two discourses which is revealed in the latter discourse regarding the responsibility: if the teachers do not feel the responsibility or are not consciously thinking about the role to play in integration, how can then the desired goal of a vision on and contribution to integration be reached?

The only certainty lies in the shared idea of the people involved in the DSL courses, namely that the focus of the work needs to be moved beyond the mere attention to language acquisition. This idea is reflected in the attempt of one of the teachers to write down a vision based upon the ideas of Biesta, a philosopher in the field of education. This work considers a draft that is still under construction, and is an assignment for a study program that this teacher is following. The work arose from small research that is done with teachers and managers, and was referred to by both the head and the coordinator. According to the ideas of Biesta (2012), education would benefit from taking into account three domains. The first domain relates to the cognitive aspect of education: the *qualification*. This domain focuses on the role of education in the acquisition of knowledge, competences and attitudes. The second domain entails *socialization*, i.e., the process of becoming part of societal traditions and practices through education. The third domain is related to the role of education in the development of the student as a self-developed person, the *subjectification*. The coordinator of the DSL course linked this model to her view on what is necessary for integration of migrants. In her opinion, these three factors describe the process of integration, in which a migrant needs to acquire knowledge, take part in traditions and societal events, and needs to have room for personal, inner development. Her discourse shows the link between the current situation, in which the main focus in class lies on the qualification and the language skills of migrants, and the desire to move beyond this first domain. The coordinator argues that she and others (e.g., the head, teachers, and Maartje) are looking for ways to also include the socialization (i.e., the student in relation to the society) and subjectification (i.e., the student's self-development) aspect in the DSL program.

Ideas to embody this desire consider the emphasis on “bringing the reality into the class” and the organization of the language café. The latter concept is organized by Maartje, the person whom the head of the study program referred to when he mentioned the consciousness regarding the responsibility in the integration process increases. Maartje is a woman who does not have a clear job description, but who works on different tasks in the study program, like the coaching of teachers and students. In the context of the Dutch language course and integration, her main contribution is the organization of the language café, which aims to move the service of the school beyond the mere focus on the domain of qualification in this educational program. The head of the department emphasizes how he provided space for Maartje to engage in arranging the language café *around* the classes, whilst the coordinator of the DSL course discussed the changes they were aiming to establish *within* the classes. The meso-level activities and perspectives of DSL teacher Anna and Maartje are presented in the following section.

4.2.2 Integration in and around the classroom

It is in the morning of March 14 that I joined the DSL class taught by Miss Anna. Twelve students were present in the class, with, next to Amin, students coming from Turkey, Syria, Afghanistan and Romania. Anna started the class with an explanation of the goals that are outlined for the day and the activities that

will be performed accordingly. Moreover, a new secretary for the day is appointed, who is going to make notes and create a summary with the most important learning points from the class. The student who is appointed as secretary is clearly not amused by the assigned role, but “can ask Amin for advice, for example”, says Anna. Next, Anna turns to the whole class and asks them about the activities they have undertaken in the last couple of days. Some students enthusiastically explain what they have done, while others stay quiet. After the rounding up of this group discussion, Anna starts with the first assignment, which is one of the many exercises of that day. After several hours of making assignments, doing group discussions and watching a video on the VOC and the myth of the Flying Dutchman, a woman enters the classroom and walks towards the wall. On a whiteboard she writes in Dutch: *praatcafé vrijdag 16 maart 12.15 uur lokaal B208* [language café Friday March 16, 12.15 p.m. room B208, translation AS]. When she leaves the room, she shortly connects with Anna and shares the idea of promoting the event. As arranged in this short interaction, at the end of the class Anna points towards the whiteboard and promotes the upcoming event that will take place in two days. She ends the class and, while the students leave the classroom and say goodbye, starts to recollect her belongings and prepare for the next class she has to teach.

In line with the words of the coordinator of the DSL classes, the class is focused on learning the language, the qualification domain as described by Biesta (2012). This was confirmed by Anna later that day during the interview we had. The main focus lies on the goals as prescribed for the specific class at this specific level. There is no time to undertake more than these goals, as the class programs are focused on schooling and no more than that. Anna explains that “in the class you just focus on the work” and if students want to talk to you “then you will have a chat with those students, but not with everyone, because you do not have time for that”. What the teachers however attempt to do, is “bringing the reality into the class” by letting the students give talks about their activities that they undertook outside class. In this way, according to Anna, a bridge is made between activities in- and outside the class, which gives the feeling that “they are a part of the society”. This view is related to Anna’s description of integration, in which she explains that she sees integration as “attaining the feeling that you are part of the society over here” and “a link in the whole”. Next to the focus on activities outside the class, Anna also gives explanations of how assignments in class are relevant for practices in daily life. Anna refers to a moment in class when one of the students asked why they have to work on a rebus, as this is not something they will use in interactions with the municipality. As a response, Anna involved everyone in class to come up with ideas where one could find a rebus in daily life (e.g., “in a magazine”). Additionally, and what was clearly observed during the morning, Anna always tries to create positive dynamics in the room in order to build a ground on which the students “can continue, can continue developing. Also through the language cafés”.

The language café is a new concept that took place twice up until now. The café is initiated by Maartje and entails an organized meeting between students from all DSL classes and students from a track in the study program. During the two language cafés I observed, the same scenario took place. A room full of tables is organized by the students that are already present. These are not the DSL students, as they are

still in their class or on their way, but the students from the other study track in the educational program. When the tables and chairs have been placed in a convenient manner, the students find a place to sit and wait for the other visitors. Slowly, one by one or in small groups, the DSL students enter the room and find their way to a table. The people who are still standing or walking around are Maartje, several teachers, and an intern who now and then ask how students are doing and if they would like to have a cup of tea or coffee. After a short introduction to the event, given by Maartje and one of the teachers, the chatting begins. Especially during the second language café, the room was full of energy – energy which was not only produced by students and organizers, but also uplifted by interested visitors who came along to take a look. This group of curious visitors included colleagues from the department, a journalist and people from the management. After about one hour of chatting, the first people started to leave, which was a signal for Maartje to grab everyone’s attention. She kindly thanked all the visitors and underscored the importance of a meeting like this, after which also the other students left the room.

In one of the interviews, Maartje describes the language café as a “small invisible pilot”, which she tries to get under the attention of the colleagues in higher positions. All extra attention focused upon the event is highly appreciated. This is not only what she explains to me (“I thought it was nice that the Newsflash was here, the newspaper, to put it on the map”), but is also reflected in the multiple interruptions that marked our second interview immediately after the second language café. This interview took place on a desk some meters from the entrance of the room in which the language café was held, and was repeatedly interrupted by Maartje to have chats with passers-by, like a teacher, the deputy director of the study program, and someone from the management team. In all cases, Maartje’s discourse was focused on emphasizing the value and importance of the existence of an event like this. This focus is in line with her idea that integration entails “also that the Netherlands is open for new influences” and that people should look at “what we [both migrants and non-migrants] can share” with each other. At the end of each conversation with any passer-by, a deal to meet in the near future was arranged to discuss more on the organization of the language café. While macro-level discourses held by the head of the department portrayed the idea that bottom-up initiatives were preferred and no written-down policies were required, the discourse by Maartje reveals she craves for recognition and a visible instead of invisible project (across all layers in the organization). She explained to me that she is “pretty wild, within the institution” and that I found “the wild one, outside of the curriculum”. She feels like she is the one in “a sort of pioneering position”, this time fighting to set up an event that goes beyond the first domain of Biesta – the domain that up till now receives the main focus in the DSL classes:

Annick: Do you have the idea that also, yeah it is maybe a bit of a difficult question for now, that people in the class, in the DSL class, that there is attention for; how is your integration process going?

Maartje: I have the idea, very subjective, that there is not. There is interest from the side of the teachers to the students, like how are you, and nice if that happens, but not for the trajectory of integration.

Annick: No, okay. And is being a teacher here for a DSL class mainly focused on the support of students in the class, and then when you actually go outside of the class, that does not belong to it anymore?

Maartje: Yes, that is correct. It is mainly focused on language. And that is weird, actually. Because language is part of a culture. However, there you see the cognitivist idea of knowledge transfer on language, and then you will have to figure it out yourself. And some succeed, some do not.

In her discourse practice, Maartje refers to the ideas of Biesta and how the current way of managing the DSL classes is merely focused upon learning the language in class, while lacking a holistic approach to the integration process as a whole. While there seems to be a wish from the macro-institutional level to engage in more than one domain of Biesta to play a significant role in the integration process of students, this is not enabled in practice as teachers do not seem to have time for this. Moreover, Maartje points towards the experience of the students in the DSL classes and how this is related to their integration process, of which some will succeed, while others will not. This displays the idea that the school helps the students within the walls of the classroom and within the program of the course as it is outlined, while the attention towards issues outside of this box is neglected.

4.2.3 Amin and his ambition to learn Dutch

Amin is an active student who participates in every school activity, whenever possible. This includes active participation in the language café and the DSL class. During one of our conversations, he shared his thoughts on the language café, the school's attempt to move beyond the mere transfer of knowledge, with me. The language café "was fun", however, it "was a very general conversation. Very superficial. Extensive conversations, not intensive." Amin explains how he and co-students experienced the event like an investigation:

Amin: Een onderzoek. Een scan. It's like that. Maar niet open gesprek over [...] niet relaxed over van alles. Maar ik heb interesse in meer praten ja meer gesprek met Nederlanders te voeren. Dus het is goed voor mij om mijn Nederlands te verbeteren. Maar voor de meeste mensen zeggen, de meeste mensen uit andere landen zeggen 'nee nee nee wil ik niet'.

Annick: En waarom niet?

Amin: Ja ik weet niet. Ik heb het gezegd, ik zeg 'kom wij moeten daar heen. Oefenen.' Zij zeggen 'nee wij willen niet, zij stellen vragen over wat doe jij in Syria, of Somalia, het is niks. Het is als een gehoor [verhoor AS].'

Amin [translated]: *An investigation. A scan. It's like that. But not an open conversation about [...] not relaxed about all kinds of topics. But I am interested in speaking, yeah, in having more conversations with Dutch people. That is good for me, to improve my Dutch. But the most people say, the most people from other countries say 'no no no I don't want'.*

Annick: *And why not?*

Amin: *Yeah I don't know. I told, I told them 'come, let's go there. Practice.' They say 'no we don't want, they ask question about what are you doing in Syria, or Somalia, it is nothing. It is like a hearing.'*

In the same way as Amin's classmates spoke about the questioning during the language café, Amin had experienced it himself during his first language café at the school in Doorne. He explained how during the event he spoke with several people and he kept on receiving the same questions, including "Where are you from? Why are you here? For what reason..?". Amin explained "they ask you about very few questions and they run away and they go away, like what the guy did." He refers to a scene in which he had been speaking with a guy for several minutes, which was merely focused upon these, seemingly basic but in practice interrogative, questions. The conversation did not continue to another field of interest, however, the student left the table and was replaced by three girls. Again, the same questions were asked. This discourse by Amin reflects how an initiative from an institution that strives to help in the process of integration, actually has the counteractive effect. Although Amin experienced during this event why his classmates do not want to join the language café, he remained firm in his view that as DSL students they "have to practice conversation with Dutch people, it's very important."

Amin did not attend the next language café. This was not for the reason that he had the feeling that he was being investigated by the other visitors of the event, since his ambition to learn the Dutch language and to practice as much as possible would have won from the uneasiness that came along with the conversations during the language café. However, Amin had texted me earlier that week he would not go to the class on Friday. "I can go, but don't have enough money for the transport", he explained. When I spoke to him in person during the week, he stated that he can go and that he wants to go, however, that he does not have the money to pay for the transportation costs for three trips to Doorne in a week. Amin wants to attend activities, like he always does when he can. He is an ambitious man who prepares for classes, does his homework (as one of the only students) and actively participates during classes. This latter is reflected in the many times he has answered the question of Anna in class and the fact she chose him as a helper for the appointed, dissatisfied secretary for the day. However, Amin's ambition is getting affected by external factors, like the lack of money for transportation costs:

Amin: I was very active. I was shining. Now I [...] I am [...] I don't know who I am, I don't know what I am. I was smart, I had long vision. Now my vision is getting shorter and shorter. I have no ambition. I have ambition, but in the Netherlands my ambition is becoming smaller.

Annick: Your ambition is becoming what?

Amin: Yeah I have ambition anyway, but it is getting smaller, I have ambition, I will not give up.

When speaking about his ambition declining, Amin sheds light on the reasoning behind it:

- Annick: And what do you think are the main causes that you at some point just felt like you could show less of your ambition and energy, what do you think?
- Amin: I have ambition to come to this school. What forces me to tell you that I cannot come to school? I am healthy. I have the appetite, the desire, to come to the school, to the class. But what prevents me coming to the class? This is an example what prevents me. [...]
- Annick: So you mean the financial restraint from the municipality?
- Amin: Yeah. You must help somebody who is running. You must give [...] I don't know. You have to give, you have to help someone who is working.

In this case, the help does not come from the school. The teachers do not have the time to hear or speak about the problems that are experienced by DSL students. This sentiment is reflected in the meso-level discourse and in the discourse of Amin. Besides, the school is not helping students in the financial support with regard to transportation costs. During the interview with the coordinator of the DSL courses, she explained that this is a matter that is arranged by the municipality and that dealing with this situation is “actually outside of our package”, which they also “prefer to keep like this”. However, in case a student wants help with these issues, the student can approach the school and ask for help. Subsequently, the school would carefully consider if and how to intervene in the matter between the DSL student and the municipality. As the coordinator explains, “we can briefly join in, but if we make it difficult for the municipality, for his coaches, yes it can be that the person will get a bad temper, and that we should just not do”, because also “the social benefit is dependent on this”. The combination of the lack of time and the fear for approaching the municipality displays again that students are helped within the walls of the classroom and the borders of the cognitive aspect of the language courses.

4.3 Money matters

Amin is dependent upon the municipality and its resources, for instance for receiving social benefit and the compensation of transportation costs. Therefore, the municipality as institution plays a big role in the daily life of Amin. In order to unravel how the municipality Udenberg perceives and manages the integration, a part of the fieldwork was focused on investigating their ways of working with migrants. In the next section, the meso-level perspective on this topic is provided by Erik, the participation coach, and Nicole, the client manager of Social Affairs (in two individual interviews and one group interview). After this section, the paper will turn to Amin again and report his perspective on the management of integration as done by the municipality.

4.3.1 Working with integration, laws and trust

In August 2017 Erik started working for the municipality Udenberg. Erik is a man, living in a big city around one hour away by car from Udenberg, with his own business in consulting on topics related to

migrants, the labor market and unemployment-related laws. He functions as a participation coach that aims to get people out of unemployment (i.e., the social benefit) into employment. Before Erik became part of the institution, there was no one in particular focusing on this the target group of non-western migrants. The only employees who were in contact with the target group were the client managers in Social Affairs who are responsible for the provision of the benefit. There are four client managers in the municipality, who have caseloads that cover all inhabitants of the area that are currently unemployed. One of these four client managers is Nicole. Nicole explained that “previously [...] we as client managers ourselves had the direction over everything, also for reintegration and so on, but you just saw that is a spec [-] yes reintegration is a specific topic on its own. We also did not have the time to work with the people and so on.” This the reason why the introduction of a participation coach in the institution, Erik, was highly appreciated. Nicole mentions multiple times the word reintegration when speaking about the target group of migrants. In the Netherlands, the word reintegration is used for the people who once were employed, then became for one reason or another unemployed, and should now be reintegrated into the employed circuit. This choice of word therefore reveals the focus of Nicole on unemployed inhabitants of Udenberg in general and the absence of focus for migrants in particular.

In the interview with Erik, we spoke about institutional discourse, more specifically about the purpose of the municipality with regard to integration. Although nothing in particular is written down to explicate this purpose, the participation coach does refer to a document which is of use:

Annick: And I had asked it before, if there are some documents, if something is written down, like okay, what is the purpose of the municipality with regard to integration?

Erik: Yeah we are working hard on that. There is not really something written down yet. You could look at the website of the municipality if something is stated, but I doubt that. (Hmm) But for me, the purpose of accompanying the migrants is to integrate these people in a society and make them independent as soon as possible and to ensure self-maintenance.

Annick: But, and this is not yet written down on paper?

Erik: No, but you can also grab a bit out of the law, the participation law, in which is written that everybody who is healthy, has to work. And most of the migrants are healthy. Of course there are psychological problems and there will also be pointed towards help and preferably to an Arabic speaking psychologist, because then they can also tell what is up, and (hmm) by means of an interpreter that does not work. So then they get told to move, do sports, keep yourself busy, do not sit quietly in a corner, because you will be removed from it anyway.

Erik introduced several notions that were dealt with in other parts of the interviews. First of all, the meaning of “to integrate these people” is elaborated upon in the following:

- Annick: And integration in this context. To start with, how would you describe integration?
- Erik: Merge into the Dutch society. That is the most beautiful. And also participate. And that is what we also attempt through sports (hmm) setting up sports trajectories. We also started with an experiment with 32 people. They can go and do sports subsidized by the municipality for half a year, sports in their preference, but as much as possible focused on contact with Dutch people, so no individual sports, but team sports.
- Annick: (Hmm) Okay. And when is in your opinion someone well integrated, or integrated?
- Erik: When the person does not need help anymore. When the person knows what the norms and values in the Netherlands are. And when the person has also adapted himself. And of course he is allowed to stick to his culture area, cultural heritage, but he should not forget that he is in the Netherlands and should adapt himself.
- Annick: And adapting in what kind of areas?
- Erik: All areas.
- Annick: All areas [...]
- Erik: Yes.

The aspect of adaptation to Dutch society comes back in the discourses of both the participation coach and client manager during the group interview. Both explained that, in order to guide migrants in this process of integration, and therefore adaptation, the topic of norms and values is immediately introduced in the first meeting that the municipality has with the migrant. To give body to the concept of adaptation, Erik explained that he has experience with living abroad, in Germany, “there you also must adapt yourself”, for instance by doing “*Frühshoppen*, with eating *Kuchen* and so, eating cake and so”. The example Erik gives during another interview of what adaptation means in the context of the Dutch society is focused on the activity of shaking hands when meeting:

- Erik: For example not shaking hands. I do not accept that. Where is the Qur’an it is stated that you cannot shake hands?
- Annick: You mean shaking the hand of a woman or a man?
- Erik: A woman shaking hands with a man, yes. In this case a Syrian woman who does not want to shake the hand of a Dutch man, or does not want to shake my hand. I say ‘I do not accept that, I feel offended’. I say ‘and you may tell me where in the Qur’an it is stated that you are not allowed to shake my hand’.

While Erik has earlier mentioned that people could stick to their cultural heritage, from this discourse, it seems that Erik does not see someone’s religion as being part of the cultural heritage that one can stick to. Instead, he sees shaking hands as part of the adaptation that is needed in the process of integration in the Netherlands.

Besides speaking about the meaning of integration from the perspective of the workers in the municipality, the interview with the participation coach and the client manager turned to the other notion as introduced by Erik, namely that they are “working hard on” a document or making explicit the purpose of the municipality with regard to integration. When returning to this statement in the second interview to ask what exactly was meant by “working hard on” this, Erik did not speak about a document they are working on anymore, but instead led the conversation again to the participation law, which is one of the laws they frequently refer to. Laws are not only mentioned in the interviews, but also in communication between the coach or client manager and migrants. For instance, when the municipality sends a letter to invite someone for a meeting or to inform about an activity someone needs to participate in, the letter includes the laws at the bottom of the page and a reference to possible consequences for the social benefit if one does not comply with the law and the request made in the letter. The client manager explains they explicitly mention the laws to “provide clarity at the front side”. When the participation coach and client manager were asked about how they think this approach is experienced by the migrant inhabitants who receive this, the following is said:

Annick: And how is this experienced by the migrants?

Erik: That they have certainties about what is a possibility and what not. Because if you are in a foreign country and you don't know what is possible for you and what not, or what is allowed and what not, then you just do something. And that is absolutely not the case.

Next to ensuring that there is clarity in communication, the municipality aims to build “a trust relationship” that makes them easily approachable for questions by migrants. According to Erik, this is done by “speaking often with people and speaking with them about all sorts of things and by providing them with good advice”. Thus, the regularity of speaking with people and the quality of the information provided are perceived as being of importance in order to reach the status of being approachable. Erik explains that, by using this approach, this feeling is achieved amongst the 85 people that are his target group:

Erik: The feeling that the people will get is that there are low thresholds [*“laagdrempeligheid”* AS], that people can easily ask anything, that people can report anything, that everything for them, what has to be arranged, will be arranged. Because in Udenberg for example there is no language provider [school that provides DSL courses], there is no language school, yeah there is one, but that one is just slow. I advise people to go Eelden, there you will get instead of two times two and a half hours, you get four times three hours or five times three hours classes, for the same costs but with more progress, you go faster. (Hmm) Part of transportation costs they get from the municipality, that is what they also don't get everywhere.

- Annick: And that is what they always get, transportation costs?
- Erik: No, because there is also UAF.⁶ UAF you know? They provide for highly educated also a bit of transportation costs for example to Doorne. But there are also people who follow language classes at the university. (Hmm) Yes everything that is ought to be arranged, should be arranged.
- Annick: Yes yes, oke.
- Erik: And within the municipality Udenberg it is arranged, there they get each month their transportation costs compensated, or one time in a week their transportation costs compensated.

The participation coach reports that people will see the municipality as easily approachable (“*laagdremkelig*”) and that the municipality arranges everything, including the transportation costs. The fact that migrants have the feeling they can easily approach the municipality and ask questions is of importance, as the coach will not approach migrants nor language providers in case of possible problems they might experience. This is just part of the “interplay”, as Erik describes it. Thus, migrants are welcomed over the low borders into the institutional sociocultural space. When present in this space, the migrant receives an introduction to the institutional apparatus and its numerous possibilities, though, within the boundaries of, and according to, the rules of the constructed institutional setting. To the question “if you look at people for whom integration does not go as smoothly yet, what do you think it depends on?” Erik answered “the motivation of the people”. However, Erik argues that when people take the initiative to approach the municipality, the municipality will arrange what needs to be arranged. The idea that migrants should take initiative in approaching the municipality is part of the idea of being a self-reliant citizen in the Netherlands. According to the words of Erik, also taking into account the criterion mentioned (i.e., of not being a highly educated migrant following higher education), a migrant student like Amin should receive compensation for his transportation costs.

4.3.2 Amin and the application for financial support

In order to understand why Amin is currently not receiving compensation for his transportation costs and why he is not approaching the municipality, it is of importance to go back to 2016. In December 2016, Amin sent a first request to the municipality to ask for the compensation of transportation costs. This request was the beginning of an application trajectory that took one year. During that time, Amin was studying Dutch at another school in Doorne and had to travel by train and bus three days per week. Over multiple months he received contradictory messages from the municipality with regard to his request. Every step in this trajectory is documented and after almost one year of attempts to get clarification on the response to the request, Amin had sent the overview of the trajectory to the municipality. This overview shows how Amin is repeatedly asked, at the service desk or via telephone, to fill out one form after another and await

⁶ *Universitair Asiel Fonds*, known as the *Stichting voor Vluchteling-Studenten UAF*. The Foundation for Refugee Students UAF supports highly educated refugees in the Netherlands. Source: www.uaf.nl

for a response. Responses were however not taking place up until May 2017, when Amin received a letter with a positive message to his request: the municipality reported that he would receive the compensation for transportation costs. Despite receiving this positive notice, Amin did not receive any money, after which the previous phases of requesting and waiting were repeated. This process came to an end in the month December of 2017, when Amin finally received a confirmation of his right to receive the compensation and subsequently found the compensation of the transportation costs for one year in his bank account.

Next year, the transportation costs play a major role again as Amin is expected to apply for this new year of studies. In order to receive compensation for his costs, he should approach the municipality. He did not do this yet and he is hesitant of doing so. Amin does not want to approach the municipality, for which reasons become clear in the following utterances:

Annick: Okay, so, but, I am thinking now. Can we [...] ehm make an appointment with the municipality, ask for, or like, write.

Amin: You will get confused. My lawyer wrote hundreds, hundreds of times, saying, two years ago, and she said, 'I don't know, Amin, these people'.

Annick: But Amin, you have the form to actually request. Can we [...]?

Amin: If I ask the mo[-], if I ask, if I fill in that form and ask, I have to wait until 2019 or 20. I am in need of[-] I need to eat something. I don't know whether I will live ehh two years or one year later, or five months later. I need the transportation this month, today, after a month is possible, after two months, but [...] I asked 2016 and I got 2017, after a year.

Annick: Okay but we will start asking now, really.

After a short conversations about steps to undertake, Amin said:

Amin: I don't like to beg, I started working when I was 8 years old. Twenty-two years I were working for myself. I don't want begging, I am asking help for two years in Nederland.

Annick: Okay but this is different because we also have to apply, you know, for money, it's not begging, but it's applying.

Amin: It's begging, it's begging.

Amin states that approaching the municipality will lead to confusion and that he does not want or can wait for such a long period of time again. Additionally, he states that he does not want to beg. He refers back to what happened the previous year, a trajectory that took twelve months. He explains that during that time he at least had a foot to stand on, namely the approval letter he received in May 2018. This time, it is different:

Amin: And at that time I had decision saying 'yes' that's why I did. I didn't go [xx]. I wanted to stop, even with mine yeah yeah, approval letter. Now I don't have approval letter, now I have to start knocking on the door. You know, I have the form.

Annick: Why don't you fill it in?

Amin: Yeah because I don't know what will happen. They said we give you this for one year. The last lady said you get another form. I said why do I have to do another thing.

In his discourse, the uncertainty of what will happen is followed by mentioning the administrative repetition that is experienced by Amin. In order to succeed, he has to start by "knocking on the door" again. Subsequently, he will have to fill out new forms that are actually the same as the forms he filled out last year. This repetition gives Amin a particular feeling, as explained in the conversation that followed after Amin had calculated the transportation costs that he faces for three days (of circa eleven euros per day) and showed it to me.

Amin: Then, I don't want to ask them [the municipality AS]. Three days, three days.

Annick: Why don't you want to ask them? Because you don't want to have the same struggles?

Amin: Yeah yeah, it's not only the struggles. The way they are treating me. No is good answer. But the way yeah they disregard you. They disre[-] yeah 'come here, what you want, no come tomorrow, you go there', so you make an appointment, or you go there and to the office and say 'why you want to go there, come there'. They noted everything. And then with them they say 'ahh why are you here'. So I came for this this and this this. 'For the reiskosten [transportation costs AS]?' Yeah. 'Who are you.' Isaak. 'Ahh okay. What you study?' And they know. This is a stupid situation. 'No that's not possible. Why do you not study here?' First they say 'no we don't have a place for you here because we have a school for very [...] low students'. And then you have to find school for yourself. And then they say 'why do you go there, we have school in the area, [xx] you pay yourself [for the transportation costs AS].' Then okay, no problem, probeer [try AS] another time. It's fine. Then they say 'okay possible'. Eh! Someone speaks in a way and another person speaks in another way. Only the expression from their faces is not so happy, they are not happy. They [xx]. I don't know, they are not happy with their work. They have to respect me, 'oh this is not possible. This process is stopped'. Ja. Then you can say this process is stopped. But she says 'the process is open' and then 'no you can not get'. I don't know what will happen. I had a decision that is okay, after the decision what happened. [xx] the last letter they wrote! I cannot go, I can go to, no problem. I am healthy, I am strong, I can try, I can go every day if they want yes. I asked one question: please, I want to work, can I work, for simple things, I try to find, if not possible find work for me for two, three, five hours a day. If I get money from there I can use as bus fair. And they say 'if you get money, you will not get uitkering' [social benefit AS]. Why, why?

For Amin, the experience of last year has influenced his current willingness to again ask for the transportation costs compensation. The contradictory messages and repetitive administrative requirements have led him to feeling disregarded back then and uncertain now. For these reasons, he refrains from contacting the municipality. In comparison to what the discourse on the meso-institutional level proclaimed, Amin does want to approach the municipality and does not have high feelings of trust. There is a distortion in the connection between Amin and the municipality. This distortion is not only the case now, but was also experienced in the recent years. During the time Amin has been in the Netherlands, he has had “a lot of problems”, amongst others with the municipality. Amin said he can show “the letters we wrote to the gemeente [municipality AS], my lawyers, everything everything.” The one institution that has helped him in dealing with these kind of problems, was the welfare organization Taaron.

4.4 Chasing the purple crocodile

Interestingly, the welfare organization Taaron is not an institution that deliberately focuses on the target group of migrants or the topic of integration, instead it directs its services to the entire population of Udenberg and some surrounding villages. Therefore, migrants are part of their client base. In order to understand the role Taaron plays in the integration process of a migrant, interviews were held with an actor in the macro-level and an actor in the meso-level of the organization. The next section revolves around the macro-level perspective on Taaron’s role in relation to the integration process of migrants as presented by Christina, the manager of the Welfare track of Taaron. Following the perspective of Nienke, a woman who is regularly in contact with migrants due to her work in ‘the forms brigade’, is described. Then again the perspective of Amin on the management of integration as performed in this context is displayed.

4.4.1 The institutional service for everyone

Taaron is a welfare organization located in Udenberg that provides service to people from all ages and with a variety of problems, for instance involving housing, day care or elderly support. Their institution consists of hundreds of volunteers and a small percentage of paid workers, working in and around the municipality that Amin lives in. According to Christina, the institution works from a solution-focused mindset in which the questions of customers are the main focus. Besides these goals, they aim at encouraging self-reliance of the customers. The vision of Taaron is that “everyone can participate and counts”, in which they try to facilitate that people “get more out of themselves”. One part of the customer base consists of migrants who experience difficulties and are seeking for advice or help. Christina, the manager of one track of the organization, argues that “the target group newcomers or refugees is not a specific target group of our organization. Those are inhabitants of the municipality in which we work and therefore they can also make use of our services.” Besides, when Christina was asked about the cooperation with other organizations,

she explained that Taaron is not part of any meeting or focus group that discusses topics related to migrants in Udenberg:

Annick: Could you tell me something more about the municipality and VluchtelingenWerk, are you meeting together, in what way are you in contact, do you for example have meetings with each other?

Christina: No. Well, there is some kind of contact with the municipality because one of our team members is part of the neighborhood team where all disciplines are represented, but for instance VluchtelingenWerk isn't. Thus then you really speak about organizations like All in One, homecare, (eh) yes. There's a lot represented at the table. But again, not explicitly [for this target group AS] because perhaps the group of our newcomers does not have such a considerable size that that has ever been initiated. I know that other municipalities where plenty of refugees are located, that there appropriate care [*"passende zorg"* AS] is created (ehm) but here I actually think they integrate in a more natural way because they are not labelled as a separate target group. Of course they bring their own problematics along, but not that there is a separate network of different parties is created, so maybe for the newcomer himself that is a bit more difficult because you have to search yourself for organizations that want to help you.

In this passage Christina refers to the relatively small size of the group of newcomers as a possible reason for not initiating a meeting across several institutions. Through speaking about refugees in other places, it seems that Christina by the group of newcomers refers to the non-Western migrants that arrived in the Netherlands during the 'refugee-crisis' around 2015. Christina links the quantity of the non-Western migrant inhabitants, which is in fact significantly less than the average number of non-Western migrants living in the Netherlands, to the (unavailable) need for a meeting across several institutions to discuss the issues regarding this target group. She argued that the lack of having such a network might have negative consequences for the migrant inhabitant. Though, when later in the interview we returned to this topic, Christina explained that there are no major issues amongst the group of migrants detected:

Annick: And then for me, for my imagination. Because, thus, there is not a meeting that is focused upon this target group?

Christina: No, no. It can be initiated in the moment there is a case and we think like, well this is a good reason for sitting together and creating a plan of action. That would be possible, but that is not regular. As I say, the number of newcomers is limited here, (hmm) in my eyes there are no signals known that particularly this target group of newcomers experiences certain problematics for which we should jointly work together. The only thing I know is that language at this moment is something that eh can be difficult sometimes.

Language forms a barrier when dealing with administrative work, which is according to Christina one of the reasons why migrants visit Taaron. Migrants either come to Taaron because of a referral from the municipality or VluchtelingenWerk, or on their own initiative. Although Christina is not sure, since she does not focus in particular on the group of migrants, she thinks that migrants visit Taaron most often for “the forms”, as they “face the bureaucracy”. According to Christina, “especially the municipal services” demand a lot of administrative arrangements in which support is needed and subsequently provided by Taaron.

4.4.2 The forms brigade

When migrants have found their route to Taaron, they can receive help from social workers or the so-called forms brigade. The forms brigade is a group of people who are knowledgeable in filling out forms and help others in doing so. One of the persons working as a social worker in the forms brigade is Nienke, who regularly speaks to migrants that experience issues relating to administrative arrangements with the municipality. She describes how she and migrants experience the arrangements that are required from the municipality:

Nienke: For most of them, all of the requirements that come along with it and all obligations, especially the whole financial administration that comes along with it: incomprehensible. At least, for the most people I see over here. And also, it's so much hey. But that is also, and that is what I don't perceive as good on behalf of the municipality, so many times all of the same documents need to hand over. For instance proof of incomes, again a copy of the housing association, again a copy of [...] and then I think like, yeah that already lies in front of you, three times. And that is frustrating for those people. Besides, for us as well, because oftentimes you are collecting the same information again, while the data in most instances is already known. Thus, the administration that comes along makes it difficult for a lot of people to understand.

Nienke describes the difficulty of the administrative arrangements with the municipality, which lays in both the extensive size and in the repetitive requests to fill out another form. She argues that this can be frustrating and can lead to “a lot of anxiety about what are the consequences of what happens and if I do not comply”. Moreover, it leads to “incomprehension” of why it has to happen in this way. Nienke compares this dealing with these administrative tasks to a commercial on television involving a purple crocodile:

Nienke: That is a[-], there was a few years ago a commercial of, I believe it was at a swimming pool or so, that a girl had lost a [inflatable AS] purple crocodile, which was now stationed at the department for found goods. And then the mom and daughter came and said ‘we lost a purple crocodile’. And it really stood behind it [the desk AS]. But she had to fill out whole forms and go through

bureaucratic struggles to do declare the crocodile was missing. Whilst you were thinking like, but *it stands over there*.

Annick: Ahh yes yes.

Nienke: And with this I mean like[-], if I say, *it stands over there*. Then I think about the employees of Social Affairs who have a report in front of them with an enormous amount of information of which you oftentimes think, *it all lays over there, in front of your nose*. Perhaps merely the last transcripts of the bank account, the last three months, okay, that once in a while you update those, that makes sense. But it is, I see also my volunteers sigh every now and then, like ‘here we go again, we will search for all of it another time.’ Because it just has to happen.

Nienke reports how the process of dealing with the administrative aspect of the municipal system is frustrating, not only for migrants but also for them as social workers. However, since it “just must be done”, they will adhere to their administrative procedure. In the interview she explained that when this procedure is finished, it is up to the client to visit Taaron again in case they have a question. Except for several social workers who do home visits once in a while, there is no volunteer who regularly checks how a (former) client is doing. Nienke states “that is also the own responsibility of someone, to come back and report himself”.

4.4.3 Amin and his appreciation for Taaron

Looking back at what issues Amin has faced in the previous years in the Netherlands, he has been speaking about Taaron regularly. Taaron is the institution that helped him and his family when they were experiencing difficult situations, for instance during the request trajectory for the transportation costs compensation last year. Additionally, there is another experience Amin spoke about a lot in which Taaron has played a big role. When Amin was still in an asylum seeker center, his wife, who was already living in Udenberg with their children, was forced to go and work outside of Udenberg. Since Amin was registered as being in the Netherlands, it was expected that he could take care of the children while his wife could go to work. However, Amin was located in an asylum seeker center far from Udenberg. As such, it seemed the children could not go to daycare, because the municipality did not provide the family with compensation for the costs of daycare.

Amin: She started to eh-h-h to eh-h ja to organize kinderopvang [daycare AS] or something, she went to Taaron and they tried. And ultimately they say the father is here, the mother is here, the father is not going to school so she cannot get kinderopvang [daycare AS] for her children. If father works, mother works, then kinderopvang. I was in AZC. Then they say: he has no documents. No.. We don’t care about that. We cannot give kinderopvang. We cannot pay her kinderopvang, she must work. Taaron called the municipality and said yeah mevrouw [miss AS] has a problem, she cannot regel kinderopvang, we help her, her husband is in AZC now, he is far away, he cannot take care of children once she is at work. The gemeente [municipality AS]: ah aah okay come. Amin you

must.. She must get.. She must work after 8 o'clock. After the children.. just in the buurt [neighborhood AS]. Look, there were people working in Udenberg and there were people send to Oldendonck.. they say no you have to go to Oldendonck cause see she has problems. No, you have to go there. If you don't go, you will not get uitkering [social benefit AS]. It happened! Something clear. Taaron, they are very nice people. They did everything, whatever they could, they strived to help us. I liked those people, they are very pure.

This narrative by Amin sheds light on a serious struggle Amin experienced with the municipality, but also on how Amin perceives Taaron and their way of managing the situation. He likes the people working at Taaron and appreciated their help. He trusts them, their work and the way they intervened in the issues that happened between the municipality and Amin. They helped him and his family to deal with the purple crocodile. However, in this current moment, when Amin is facing another issue – i.e., not being able to attend all language classes because of the financial restraint – Amin does not want to approach Taaron for help. He does not want to ask them again. Numerous times we have discussed this topic and Amin stuck to the stance that he does not want to ask for their help another time, even though he trusts these people.

4.5 Baahi badan, baryo badan, iyo bukaan badanba waa laysku naca

There is no other institution playing a big role in the life of Amin. He knows about the existence of VluchtelingenWerk, which is an institution that is commonly known for its help to refugees. This institution is also located in Udenberg, but Amin has only spoken once about them. He mentioned that VluchtelingenWerk in Udenberg is not organizing many activities and he is not in contact with them. Afterwards he never mentioned VluchtelingenWerk again in any conversation, nor any other institution. There is no other institution to turn to, however there is still more to unravel with regard to this integration process. What complicates this process of integration, of basically just learning the language, which disables this motivated migrant? What lies beneath the observed and heard events, which complicates the daily life of Amin?

4.5.1 The active Somali migrant

After all the observations that are done, conversations that are held and narratives that are heard, it is clear that Amin is an active man. He is ambitious, wants to learn the language, and wants to go to classes. From Amin's perspective, being active is what characterizes every Somali person:

Amin: Ik heb met een [...] met een trainster van mijn zoon Charif gepraat over dingen ja klein dialoog of gesprek tussen [xx] en vorige week, vorige zaterdag. En zij zei ooh wij denken dat Somalisch zijn niet goed mensen. Wij denken als Somalisch in Nederland zijn, zij kunnen niet integratie. En zij willen niet integratie maken met Nederlanders of [...] En ik zeg Somalisch are soooo sneller dan die andere, in vergelijking met mensen uit Afrikaanse landen, ja zij zijn actief. In ehh in Ethiopia

zag ik Somali mensen, in Uganda, in Kenya [...] Ik was niet in Kenia maar bijvoorbeeld alle landen in Afrika zijn er Somalisch. Eén Somali is actiever, ja meer dan een honderd andere Afrikaanse mensen uit andere landen. En ze houden van iets te doen. Zij zijn ja handelaars. Maar hier, hier in Nederland, zo alles is moeilijk. Maar Somalisch are sooo actief, sooo sneller.

Amin [translated]: *I spoke with a [...] with a trainer of my son Charif about things, yes a small dialogue or conversations between [xx] and last week, last Saturday. And she said ooh we think that Somalis are no good people. We think that if Somalis are in the Netherlands, they cannot integration. And they don't want to make integration with Dutch people or [...] And I say Somalis are sooo faster than those others, in comparison with people from African countries, yeah they are active. In (ehh) in Ethiopia I saw Somali people, in Uganda, in Kenya [...] I have not been in Kenya but for in instance all countries in Africa there are Somalis. One Somali is more active, yeah more than one hundred other African people from other countries. And they love to do something. Yes they are merchants. But here, here in the Netherlands, everything is so difficult. But Somalis are sooo active, sooo faster.*

Although Amin is convinced that Somali people are active, his son's coach has told him that Dutch people think differently about this. Amin had heard this view before. During the time he was working in Ethiopia, he met both people with a Dutch nationality who came to volunteer as well as people from Somalia who had been in the Netherlands. In those meetings, stories were told about living in the Netherlands, about the Dutch culture, the Dutch people and Somali people in the Netherlands. During that time, Amin heard a lot of negative stories from both sides. These stories contained negative perspectives from Dutch people towards Somali people, but also vice versa. Amin reports "I was thinking while I was there, in case I arrive in the Netherlands, I must do anything about integration, Somali integration in particularly" and he continued:

Amin: Then I was thinking is that I must help Somali people to understand Dutch people in the positive way. And to help Dutch people to tell stories to the Dutch people about Somali people that they are very active people, they are fertile, you can cultivate Somalis, they are active although they have problems in their own country, they are very active. They are open minded, open handed. But there is.. there is [...] [Amin sighs AS]
[...]

Annick: A barrier?

Amin: Yeah a barrier between Somalis and Dutch people.

He then adds:

Amin: In the US, in America, you see hundreds of Somali people who are there for less than five years and working for big company, are in high position, they are secretaries, they are managers [...] but

here, there must be something wrong. Maybe because of Somali people or maybe with the Dutch people, yeah.

Amin reports there must be something wrong. It is difficult for him to say what exactly it is, but it is clear to him that it is something that occurs in the Netherlands, but does not occur in other countries. He spoke about how he knows that Somali migrants in other countries can help their families who are still in Somali, while he cannot. He also described how he noticed that some active Somali people in the Netherlands became mentally ill and isolated, because of how they were treated by others. “I can say, I saw many Somali people who can learn, who are highly educated, in Somalia, when they came, they came here they, they stopped learning. They stopped. Some work, they stop working, why? They had lot of problems with the system, and with everything.” While acknowledging that there is an issue, Amin could not pinpoint the exact issue.

4.5.2 The inactive Somali migrant

Amin emphasizes how he is active, just like all Somali people. However, when looking at the situation of the financial restraint that prevents him from attending all language classes, it is observed and discussed how Amin does not want to undertake action to apply. He does not want to ask teachers at the school for help, he does not want to approach the municipality, and he does not want to visit the welfare organization Taaron for help on this matter. Over months, this was a topic that came back in conversations. Sometimes as the main topic of discussion, sometimes just as a minor chat regarding the current status. Even though Amin had the form that he could use to apply for the compensation of transportation costs, he did not fill it out. After several weeks, he had finally filled it out, but did not undertake the action to hand it in at the desk of the municipality. When again I asked about the current status and whether he had asked the municipality or Taaron about the compensation, he repeated that he does not want to beg. I explained him again, like I had done before, that it is not begging, but applying. This is how the system works in the Netherlands: administrative arrangements and applying for compensations are just part of it. Then Amin told me about a Somali proverb: “baahi badan, baryo badan, iyo bukaan badanba waa laysku nacaa⁷”. In referring to this proverb he explains to me that in Somalia, the more you ask, the more you are perceived as being ill, and the more you get hated.

By mentioning this Somali proverb, Amin reveals a deeper notion beneath the layers of experiencing distortion in the integration process, of not going to one third of the classes, of not approaching the municipality, and neither approaching the welfare organization. This sociocultural meaning attached to the act of asking is the reason why he refrains from undertaking action and becomes inactive with regard

⁷ Translation as found online: “excessive neediness [neediness AS], too much begging and chronic ill-health can create undo resentment in others”. Source: Somali Adult Literacy Training (SALT) retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/SomaliAdultLiteracyTraining/posts/1064408673618931>

to this issue. In Somalia, Amin constructed the discourse model, the way of thinking, that when one repeatedly asks for something, the person is seen as being a beggar, as being ill, as being excessive in neediness, which can subsequently create undo resentment in others. Amin does not want to come across as being ill, which is also reflected in the multiple times that he mentions that “he is healthy” and “strong”. Moreover, Amin does not want to ask and be seen as a beggar, who will be hated. His inactivity towards asking is his way of preventing undo resentment in others – while the three institutions are organized in such a way that they require the activity of asking. This complex matter does not only reveal a mismatch between the management of integration as being done by these three institutions and this Somali migrant, but beyond that, a mismatch between the Dutch system and the Somali culture.

Chapter 5. Conclusion and discussion

5.1 Recapitulation

This thesis has dealt with discourses on the management of integration. More specifically, it has dealt with top-down and bottom-up perspectives on the integration of a Somali migrant living in a Dutch neighborhood. This research has been executed in the midst of a web of institutions (i.e., a school, the municipality, and a welfare organization) that exists around Amin. After an introduction to the concepts of globalization, migration and integration in the first chapters, and an extensive account of the applied methodology in chapter three, this thesis turned to the data that was collected in the field. In line with the multi-layered research design, chapter four reported the macro- and meso-institutional and the micro-level discourses on the management of integration in the three particular institutional contexts. The chapter moved back and forth between the institutions and Amin, and continued over the horizontal course of multiple institutions. Through this approach, matches and mismatches in defining and managing the integration process of a Somali migrant were disclosed. The data collection procedure and data analysis were guided by the main research question and sub questions. The main research question was:

What are the matches and mismatches between different institutional discourses on the management of integration of a Somali migrant and how is this related to the perception of the integration process by the Somali migrant himself?

To guide the research towards the answering of the main research question, the following sub questions were introduced:

- *How is integration being defined in macro-level institutional discourses present in documentation of the institutions under investigation?*
- *How is integration perceived and managed through the institutional discourses produced by each of the three institutional bodies at the meso-level?*
- *How does the perception and management of integration differ among and across institutions?*
- *How is integration perceived and managed by the Somali migrant under investigation?*
- *How is integration managed at the intersection of meso- and micro-level discourses?*

In chapter four, answers to the questions are discussed in extensive detail in the form of separate sub chapters that presented the discourses over different (i.e., macro-, meso- and micro-) layers in a particular sociocultural space. In this chapter, the analysis rotates a quarter turn and therewith does not anymore approach solely the vertical diversification in multiple discourse layers, but also the horizontal differences across the different institutions. Interesting elements that derived from the data analysis are discussed in the light of existing literature. The chapter consists of a discussion in which first the macro-level discourse layer across the three institutions is considered (section 5.2.1). Next, the meso-level discourses are

compared with the macro-level discourses and subsequently contrasted across the different institutions (section 5.2.2). By moving to the third discourse layer, the micro-level perspective of Amin, it is possible to reflect upon all of the aforementioned in this chapter and discuss some of the insights this has led to (section 5.2.3). Following, a reflection upon the research and its findings is presented, in which limitations of the research, suggestions for future research and implications of the findings are elaborated upon.

5.2 Multi-layered discourses on integration

5.2.1 The macro-level discourse layer

The analysis of the macro-level discourses and documentation within the three institutions has shown that in every macro-institutional discourse it is recognized that the institution plays a certain role in the integration process. However, what this notion of integration entails or how the organization aims to play a role is not explicated in institutional documentation. The underlying reasons and discourses for not (yet) having this notion documented are of a different origin across institutions. In the case of the school, the macro-level discourse displays a twofold situation. On the one hand, the head of the department states there is no official documentation because he opines that top-down documentation and policies will not lead to the desired outcomes. On the other hand, the macro-institutional discourse indicates that there is the wish of the management to shift from being merely focused on the cognitive aspect (i.e., Dutch language acquisition) towards a broader scope of attention for the integration process (including socialization and subjectification). According to the head, this shift should be empowered by the meso-level staff members. The first step in this process is recently taken by one of the teachers who created a preliminary document with a vision. However, as will be discussed later, in practice no clear traces of a shift in the direction of this drafted vision on the three components of Biesta (2012) are experienced on the work floor. In the case of the municipality Udenberg, no macro-institutional policies are available with regard to the concept of integration and the intended role of the municipality in this process. However, laws are referred to as a matter of guide, in particular the participation law. This law refers to the obligations unemployed inhabitants of the Netherlands have, aiming to get them out of the social benefit, into employment.⁸ The third institution, the welfare organization Taaron, displays a completely different discourse. Taaron does not have any official documentation that elaborates upon the notion of integration or the target group of migrants. Rather, they target all inhabitants, thus also migrants, in Udenberg and close surroundings. They do so with a vision that “everyone can participate and counts”, in which they as welfare organization facilitate that people “get more out of themselves”.

This analysis of the macro-level discourses brings to light that, although each of the institutions is involved in one or another way working towards integration, not one institution (let alone a web of

⁸ https://www.udenberg.nl/inwoners/onderwerpen-a-z_42663/product/participatie_860.html

institutions) has defined what this goal of integration entails. Thus, a match in the conceptualization of integration across institutions is fully lacking, meaning it is possible to speak about a mismatch in the attempts of defining the concept of integration. While the school and Taaron opt for more attention in the integration process to the development of migrants from an individual growth perspective, the municipality works towards the transfer from unemployment to employment (and away from the need for social benefit). From this analysis it is derived that the discourses of the school and Taaron revolve around the *process* of integration, while the municipality focuses upon the *goal* of integration. Whereas the discourse models of the school and Taaron regarding the integration were focused upon migrants' strengths and assumed the development as central, this stands in sharp contrast with the discourse model of the municipality Udenberg in which adaptation and participation are key.

When discussing the mismatch in the macro-level discourses on integration in the light of the research by Scholten (2018), the current findings contribute to knowledge regarding the status quo on integration management as sketched in his article. Scholten (2018) argues that discourses on integration are predominantly observed and shared on a national level, while he recommends to make a local turn in order to improve the management of integration. Scholten (2018) argues, in fact, that “rather than thinking of integration in the sense of coherent ‘national models of integration’ (Bertossi, 2011), integration should be redefined as a local issue (Zapata et al., 2017)” (Scholten, 2018: 7). National models on integration are criticized, for instance because of the oversimplification and the emphasis on coherency and consistency assumed in rhetoric, while in reality practices and discourses on migration and integration policies diversify broadly across local contexts (Bertossi, 2011; Scholten, 2018). He states that in the governance of migration-related diversity the conceptualization should go through a local turn and prevent policy decoupling or policy contradictions. In his line of reasoning on the deconstruction of integration as a national model, Scholten (2018) refers to the local contexts as the cities, which are the places that according to him face challenges in the urban governance of the diversity and conceptualization of integration. The current research, however, emphasizes the importance of moving beyond the turn to the urban places and also include the villages. Speaking about a village as the unit of analysis, the conceptual apparatus within this sociocultural space exemplified how even on a smaller scale, on a *very* local level, integration and conceptualization challenges are faced, which therefore calls for an extension of Scholten's argument (2018). Not only should practitioners and policy makers go for this local turn that includes villages, also researchers should invest in research on challenges faced by migration in areas at the periphery of globalization.

5.2.2 The meso-level discourse layer

The staff members, the workers at the meso-level of institutions, strive to embody the institutional goals by acting in a particular manner. Although it is not a surprising matter if the actual (meso-level) activities

within an institution do not fully match the intended actions as exclaimed on a higher institutional level, the understanding of how the discourses across the different levels relate to each other becomes especially interesting when the institutional space in which activities take place is one that works on a rather unspecified process of integration of migrants. In the context of the school, the meso-level discourses indicate a battle with the perception of time and recognition. First, while macro-level discourses exclaim the desire for more attention on non-cognitive aspects of the migrant's development, this is an unattainable goal for teachers considering the time and purpose that are set by higher-level management for each class. Second, the macro-level discourse on the lack of belief in written top-down policies contradicts the need for recognition as experienced on the meso-level in the case of the language café. The lack of policies in this context leads to a lack of focus and action on the desired matters to enhance the process of integration. In the case of the municipality, there is no clear distinction between the macro- and meso-level bodies. Rather, the meso-level workers elect the participation law as the golden guide, while for the remainder of the work they experience the autonomy and freedom to manage the integration of migrants in Udenberg according to their own set of ideas. This method is manifested in living up to their own formula of combining clarity on laws (e.g., in letters) with high levels of trust (e.g., through high quality and regularity of meetings), which together would lead to an approachable institution for migrants. Through this discourse model, the municipal meso-level workers are convinced that any motivated migrant inhabitant of Udenberg will find the office and arrangements in case help is needed. In the case of the welfare organization Taaron, the forms brigade holds its arms wide open for any inhabitant in the neighborhood. Although not in particular focused upon migrants as a target group, which is in line with the general vision as prevailed in the macro-level discourse, the forms brigade helps migrants in their process of integration through support in the Kafkaesque administration work – mainly stemming from municipal requirements.

Analyzing the institutional coherence in the meso-level management of integration across institutions reveals a picture that is far from an institutional web around the migrant. Instead, it is a dotted field with, if at all present, inconsistent lines of contact. Taaron contacts the municipality when they have a client with issues in front of them and is through this activity the only institution that has contact with one of the other institutions at hand. The school is hesitant of approaching the municipality in case students face problems, due to the possible negative consequences for the students (e.g., for their social benefit) that could result from this intervention. The municipality in its turn is neither contacting Taaron nor the school, because this is considered a task out of the scope of their work. Rather, the municipality is in contact with VluchtelingenWerk, while this particular institution does not have a full coverage in their contacts with migrant inhabitants in Udenberg (e.g., they are not in contact with Amin). There is no 'integral meeting' (i.e., in which all relevant parties are involved) arranged across the meso-level institutional workers, which according to the manager at Taaron relates to the small number of migrants settled in the neighborhood and the unawareness of problems playing among this group. Although there is no explicit interconnectedness across the institutions, there are eyes focused on others: both the municipality and Taaron have particular

expectations of the management of integration as performed by the school, as they see learning the Dutch language as one of the main priorities in the integration process of a migrant. Besides this focus, the three institutions do match in one particular domain. All of the meso-institutional discourses revealed that their systems require a certain level of self-reliance by the migrant. No matter the institution, in case a migrant faces an issue, it is up to the migrant to approach and ask the institution for help. When putting this notion of self-reliance in the perspective of the whole ‘web’ of institutions, it indicates a concerning image. None of the institutions has (structural) contact with another institution in the field, whilst from the migrant is demanded to be the one and only actor in the field that approaches the institutions and asks for help. These findings are discussed in the light of existing literature in the following sections.

The consistent factor across the institutions of pointing towards the migrants’ own responsibility and self-reliance is in line with the contemporary national discourse on neoliberalism, the participation society and the self-reliant citizen. Nourished by the constant fear that governments might be governing and interfering ‘too much’ (Foucault, 1994a: 74), self-organization and deregulation are promoted in Western societies. This sentiment is echoed in migration management, where migrants are urged to develop themselves as full economic actors who can not only maintain themselves, but can for instance also function as change agents in home country development (Geiger & Pécoud, 2010; Mitchell, 2016). In the Netherlands, the idea of self-reliance (i.e., *zelfredzaamheid*) comes forward in what – from Dutch King Willem-Alexander’s speech in September 2013 – is called the participation society (i.e., *participatiesamenleving*; King’s speech, 2013). Citizens in this society are elected as good citizens when they participate actively (Schinkel, 2010), take responsibility for their own well-being and are self-reliant (Koster, 2014; Vodegel, 2018). This idea has been subject to critique, amongst others because the pressure on self-reliance would decrease the autonomy of vulnerable inhabitants like migrants (Kerstholt, 2014), and increase inequality in neighborhoods (Kanne, van den Berg, & Albeda, 2013). In order to help migrants’ understanding of the core elements of this Dutch participation society idea, and to stimulate them to participate in it, migrants who settled in the Netherlands after 2015 are asked to sign the Declaration of Participation (i.e. ‘de Participatieverklaring’; Saharso, 2017). This document emphasizes next to the importance of the citizen’s own contribution to the society that speaking the Dutch language is essential (Grondtekst Participatieverklaring, 2017). Concluding, migrants face on the one hand minimal (neoliberal) governmental support, while on the other hand they face expectations to participate, to be self-reliant, and to speak Dutch. This conviction is reflected in the meso-level discourse models on managing integration of migrants, in which it is argued the institutions do not approach the migrants, while the migrant is expected to be an active, self-reliant individual who masters or otherwise learns the Dutch language.

Throughout all macro- and meso-level discourse layers across the different institutions, the concept of bureaucratic rituality came to light. The bureaucratic rituality has a twofold impact on the management of integration in the sociocultural spaces under investigation, as it constructs on the one side a barrier for Amin and on the other side a barrier for the institutional workers. First, Amin faces a barrier in his process

of enregisterment, which is a (sociolinguistic) process people go through in their search for recognition and understanding as a specific someone in that particular sociocultural space (Agha, 2003; Karrebaek, 2011; Spotti, 2017). Certain behaviors (i.e., practices, repertoires, discursive interactions) are perceived as valued commodities in particular contexts, and therefore displaying these behaviors results in positive evaluations, as they count as an index of the status position of the person (Agha, 2003). In the institutional context as investigated in this research, the behavior and social conduct the migrant should adhere to is signaling “zelfredzaamheid” (i.e. self-reliance). Moreover, the migrant should engage in the behavior of filling out forms and asking for help, which is enregistered in the public and institutional awareness as indexical of the migrant’s status position and self-reliance. This bureaucratic ritual characterizes the register of the institutional context, which is the cultural model (Agha, 2003) that is based upon conventions and the dominant way of reasoning in a specific sociocultural space and time. It is this ritual, with its forms and bureaucratic expectations, which hinders Amin from advancement and on top of that, discourages him in his integration process.

Second, the institutional workers face a barrier due to bureaucratic ritual, which may either be a shield to hide behind or a serious obstacle that hinders the work in the management of integration. This barrier provokes another difficulty for migrants, on top of the difficulties they possibly already face, since employees might not offer the help that is needed in the particular sociocultural space. Cotter, Meyer and Roberts (1998) described how the bureaucratic legacy in involvement of employees with clients’ issues can prevail (over the humanistic legacy) in the sense that employees might feel powerless to change their way of working due to a lack of time, resources or skills. Therefore, they cannot enact change in their attention and support for clients’ needs (Cotter, Meyer, & Roberts, 1998). This is perceived in the institutional context of the school and Taaron. In the school setting there was the wish, however, a lack of time to provide more attention to the students and their issues, such as Amin’s transportation costs issue. In the context of Taaron, it was clear how staff members felt powerless due to the bureaucratic wall of forms that had to be faced, time after time. The system of bureaucratic rules, as ubiquitous in the sociocultural space of the municipality, creates an impersonal distance between the employees and the client (i.e., the migrant) that diminishes the moral effect that could have been generated by seeing the suffering of Amin (Gill, 2016). This phenomenon could be described as the ‘nothing personal syndrome’, in which even face to face encounters between institutional workers and a suffering migrant do not result in feelings of moral concern (Gill, 2016). The bureaucratic ritual (or in the context of the municipality, ‘the law’) constructs a wall and creates the distance that diminishes the moral obligation and concern that the institutional workers experience, while it can also function as the external factor to point to as an explanation for the negative attitudes shown in the work (Gill, 2016; Bauman, 1993; Cotter, Meyer, & Roberts, 1998). Investigating the meso-level discourse layer across the different institutions has indicated how bureaucratic ritual contributes, albeit in different ways, to the construction of an obstacle in the process of integration.

5.2.3 The micro-level discourse layer

Through taking in the perspective of a migrant on the management of integration as performed by institutions, mismatches between institutional top-down and individual bottom-up management of integration have come to light. The micro-level discourse of Amin, a Somali migrant living in Udenberg, has indicated a number of contrasting insights compared to the institutional discourses as held by the school, the municipality, and Taaron. Three of the major mismatches are discussed in this section.

First, while all institutions (and the Declaration of Participation) point towards the role of the school and learning the Dutch language as an essential element in the integration of a migrant, Amin's micro-level discourse has revealed that this desired language acquisition cannot be met. Amin can merely attend two out of the three DSL classes at school due a shortage of financial resources, while in theory the public transportation costs would be compensated by the municipality Udenberg. Due to the lack of institutional coherence and contact across the institutions, the only road to tackle this issue seems through the initiative of Amin himself approaching and asking the institutions. Up until the moment he approaches an institution with regard to this financial restraint, Amin will find himself in a socio-economic disadvantaged position in the contemporary society (Duchêne, Moyer, & Roberts, 2013) that denigrates his learning and integration process. The financial restraint forms an obstacle in the integration process, as it does for many people categorized as belonging to minority groups (Craig, 2015). The financial burden is on the culturally distinct migrant, who is overrepresented among the poorest in the Western population (Craig, 2015). The likelihood of maintaining or increasing financial restraints is heightened when institutions neglect the different steps that need to be taken before the desired finish line is reached. Overlooking these initial requirements would be self-defeating (Craig, 2015), as this decreases the chances of a migrant to construct a sustainable future. Craig (2015) argues that focus needs to be on basics such as access to decent quality housing, the development of at least the basics of the host country language and appropriate forms of health care, which in turn would benefit the goal of economic integration that for instance the municipality Udenberg adheres to. Through neglecting the current obstacle that Amin faces in his daily life, the institutions fail to facilitate the management of the process that should lead towards the desired integration.

Second, a prevalent mismatch in the institutional discourse of the municipality Udenberg and Amin's discourse came to light. Whilst the meso-level discourse model of the municipality displayed the idea of a trust relationship between the migrant and municipality, in which migrant inhabitants would approach the institution thanks to the adequate and frequent help it has provided in meetings, this positive image is not reflected in Amin's discourse. Amin is reluctant to contact the municipality due to previous negative experiences. These were not necessarily negative experiences with the institutional informants in this research, but were experiences with a number of workers at the municipality, which has evoked a negative impression of the institution as a whole. This stance can be explained by the institutional performance model of political trust (Newton & Norris, 2000; Mishler & Rose, 2005; Röder & Mühlau, 2011). According to this model, the confidence citizens have in public institutions is based upon the

economic and political performance of the institutional workers. The greater the institution performs on economic and social topics in terms of effectivity and reliability, the more confidence the citizens gain in the work the institution does (Röder & Mühlau, 2011). Moreover, as indicated by Tyler (2006), when a migrant is in direct contact with the institution, the way in which this migrant is treated is perceived as a signaling function on how the migrant is placed in society. In addition, the perceived procedural fairness plays a major role in the establishment of confidence in the public institution (Tyler, 2006). The concept of trust is thus a complex one, which might be difficult to reach. In the case of Amin, different conditions have not been properly met by the municipality, which means the level of trust as put forward in the institutional discourse is not reflected in the micro-level discourse on the management of integration. The overestimation of the trust relationship by the participation coach worker might in the first place originate from the fact that the migrants who do visit him often (on their own initiative) are the ones who actually trust the institution, which gives a biased impression to the participation coach. Moreover, migrants might have indicated that they trust the institutions, but these optimistic evaluations should always be considered in the contours of the 'dual frames of reference' (i.e., comparing institutions in the country of settlement along standards developed in the country of origin) that affected the perception of the migrant (Röder & Mühlau, 2010: 540).

Third, since the welfare organization Taaron was the institution that could have helped Amin in solving the financial issue and, moreover, was trusted by Amin, another mismatch seemed to lay beneath the sociocultural encounter with this institution that was now being avoided. In the unravelling of this phenomenon, it appeared that this particular mismatch is not only underlying the connection between Amin and the welfare organization Taaron, but also the connection between Amin and the other institutions. The mismatch is detected in the activity of asking, and moreover, the background assumptions that come along with this. Among the Dutch institutions, the art of asking is undoubtedly attached to the self-reliant citizen who participates actively in society. For Amin, this activity of asking is connected to the notions of begging, of being perceived as a person who is excessively dependent on others, and who in turn will be hated for this. This identified mismatch is also been highlighted in the work of Gumperz on social difference being tied to social inequality. Gumperz (1983: 110) described how the actual operation of managing an issue "is significantly affected by taken-for-granted and for the most part not explicitly stated conventions and background assumptions." Gumperz (1983: 110) stated that economic, political or attitudinal problems in intercultural encounters are to a large extent "produced by interactive and evaluative processes that are intrinsic to the bureaucratic institutions which characterize our society". The interactive processes in the institutions under investigation in this research all rely on the self-reliant citizen and the idea of the participation society. When a client approaches the institutions and asks questions, the client is evaluated as an active, good citizen. This client, however, brings his or her own social, political and cultural baggage to the interaction, "which consists of attitudes, organizational knowledge and culturally based knowledge and which includes their command of rhetorical and contextualization strategies for managing the emergent

interaction” (Gumperz & Roberts, 1991:73). In the case of Amin as a client of the institutional organization in the Dutch society, he brings along the idea that his daily life (i.e., integration process) can best be managed by not asking questions. This way, he assumes to prevent the development of the idea that he is not an independent citizen who can manage his own life. Gumperz and Roberts (1991: 73) argued that “when we look at interethnic communication, we need to identify where there is a fundamental difference in cultural/organizational knowledge”. Identifying this fundamental difference in discourses can be established through socio culturally rooted approach to discourse analysis, that allows to shed light on the cultural frameworks based upon which sentences are constructed in order to communicate and *to do* and *to be* particular things (Gee, 2010; Wu, 2010). Through the ethnographic research on the everyday life of Amin and his encounters with the institutional sociocultural spaces of the school, municipality and welfare organization, this research has identified a fundamental difference in the cultural schemata as held by the actors on the ‘art of *not* asking’.

5.3 Reflection

This research has led to a holistic overview of the web of institutions that is merged into the everyday life of a Somali migrant. Moreover, deeper understanding of the management of integration as done by these institutions and a Somali migrant is acquired through ethnographic enquiry. By blending these holistic and profound insights, a complex portrait of contemporary integration management is exhibited. The research findings should however be perceived in the light of several research limitations, which are discussed below. In addition, recommendations for future research and academic and practical implications and recommendations are outlined.

As in every research, the researcher’s position plays a significant role in the choices that are made during the research trajectory, which via one way or another affects the data collection procedure and analysis. However, in ethnographic research this position seems to be in a bigger spotlight because it is the researcher who was present, who has observed, heard and felt not only from his/her point of view but also attempted to do this from the perspective of others in order to unravel exactly that what cannot be understood from a superficial point of view. This is a highly vulnerable position to be in and therefore it has to be acknowledged that research findings are limited to the extent of my personal functioning as a researcher (e.g., of my eyes, ears, and brains). In order to make explicit the process I was involved in, an extensive account of the methodological features and the position as a researcher has been presented in chapter three. Another limitation of this research is the limited extent to which the insider’s perspective of Amin could be taken in during the data collection trajectory. Although it would have been interesting to observe the interactions, for ethical reasons it was not possible to join Amin in his encounters with the municipality Udenberg or the welfare organization Taaron. In this regard, I was facing the same imbalance in power relations as experienced by the school, which led to a paralyzed position when it came down to

intervening in the interactions between Amin and the institution. Afraid for the possible consequences for future (financial) support, interactions between the main informant and the institutional actors have thus merely been observed in the context of the school.

This research calls for more future ethnographic research in institutional contexts to detect mismatches and miscommunications that could (unconsciously) harvest social inequality. The findings of this study have shown the importance of examining taken-for-granted wording and practices, and the way in which these affect the management of everyday life for both institutions and migrants. Moving beyond the normalcy of using the fuzzy concept of integration in conversations, and beyond the normalcy of the practices in the Dutch bureaucratic system has revealed supposedly unintended consequences of a taken-for-granted way of working in the sociocultural space. In addition, the current research findings could be used as a point of departure for future quantitative research on the interactions between Somali migrants and the Dutch system on a larger scope. This approach is called for due to the notion that quantitative research enables the generation of findings with higher external validity, which in contemporary society is perceived as stronger evidence to be used in the attempt to influence national policies and debate. Therefore, researching a larger group of Somali migrants and their integration processes in the Dutch institutional context would be of relevance for future research.

This research contributes to the field of literature on integration and migration studies due to its multi-layered research design that is applied in researching the integration as managed in a sociocultural context in the margins of globalization. Scholten (2018) called for a local (urban city) turn not only in policies, but also in the study of migration and diversity. The findings of the current research indicate how this turn might well be directed towards a *super*-local level, i.e., a village, as already on this microscopic level with small traces of globalization significant challenges of migration are faced. Additionally, in order to grasp an adequate impression of the management of integration of a migrant, this research aimed to “combine institutional context with the actors’ social meanings that inhabit this” (Ackers & Wilkinson, 2008). Through combining the perspectives of multiple institutions and of a migrant, this research has overcome the oftentimes mentioned limitation of studies that shed light on a concept from one single perspective (Niblo & Jackson, 2004; Sullivan & Cottone, 2010). Furthermore, connections were made between insights that emerged throughout the research and recent literature published over the last decade. However, this research also stumbled on an old solid classic from the nineties which, interestingly, seems highly applicable up until this day: the work of Gumperz (1983) named *The Communicative Bases of Social Inequality*. After four decades of human development and a plethora of initiatives to address inequality and diversity, the culturally diverse individual remains “the last to be affected” by measures to correct the access to public resources (Gumperz, 1983: 109). Moreover, as also argued by Gumperz (1983: 109), “when minority groups do enter the public arena, their contributions and abilities are likely to go unrecognized”. This is reflected in the experiences of Amin, who lagged behind in access to public resources and feels unrecognized as an active citizen. The current research thus indicates how a reproduction of the same

discourses occurs over the years, with a slightly different coating due to for instance decentralization. The accuracy of Gumperz' work placed in contemporary society underscores the importance of further examination of institutional interactive and evaluative processes in the lives of minority groups.

The bridge between this academic relevance of this research to the practical advancements is laid bare by the following:

“The bureaucratic procedures which govern the conduct of affairs in industry as well as in public institutions depend on the assumption that there exist uniform, objective criteria of evaluation which control access to valued resources. Failure to understand that these criteria are themselves necessarily culture and convention bound, and that the conditions under which we live prevent many individuals from learning what these conventions are, leads to a vicious circle of miscommunication, stereotyping, and indirect discrimination which is difficult to break.” (Gumperz, 1983: 117)

This research illustrated an example of one of those criteria which in itself is culture and convention bound: namely the normalcy of asking as a matter of coming across independent (i.e., self-reliant) and therefore acquiring resources. In order to come across as independent, Amin will not ask. Since the apparatus of the by the society's majority shaped institutions prevails, Amin continues facing the vicious cycle that includes for instance fewer classes, less knowledge acquiring, more miscommunications, less trust in institutions, fewer contact moments with these institutions, and acquiring fewer resources. Therefore, and especially since in the beginning of 2018 the Dutch government has stressed that municipalities should take more responsibilities in the management of integration, it is of importance for institutional workers to take on board this knowledge and sensitivity with regard to the interpretation of Dutch institutional criteria and the judgements based upon them. More specifically, both policymakers and practitioners would benefit from trainings that increase awareness on possible consequences of the current bureaucratic rituality and the unquestioned conventions based upon which everyday judgements take place. This information could underline the value of the right balance that institutional workers should opt for between the normativity in the institution's apparatus and the flexibility for individual quests. Such trainings would not only improve the experience of daily encounters between institutional workers and migrants, but also benefit the long-term process of integration as desired and required by the national government. Further, establishing a shared conceptualization of the popular concept of integration across institutions has the potential to benefit the integral management of it, as it could create a clear common goal that invites for working on a clear shared path. Creating a shared path of integration would prevent unevenly (and unnecessarily) distributed attention of institutional workers towards obstacles and vehicles in the process of integration. This research has shown how a lack of institutional coherence and explicit conceptualization, together with the rooted existence of bureaucratic rituality, lead to the negligence of elements in the integration process that are perceived as essential, as for instance learning the Dutch language.

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Appendix A

In this Appendix, the original passages of the interviews that are referred to in this paper are presented. The headings refer to the section in which the passages are displayed. Asterisks are used to cover names or, in case this would distort the readability of the text, a *pseudonym* is inserted.

Section 4.2.1

The head of the department at school

Head: Ik ben hier nou een aantal jaren teamleider van het ** team, bachelor master opleidingen en van de ** academie. En in die ** academie, zit een beetje gekke hoek, is NT2 voor ons omdat dat is eigenlijk niet onze doelgroep snapje de doelgroep dat zijn studenten en ook wat docenten in nascholing maar die NT2 zit een beetje in een rare hoek. Maar ik vind het echt fantastisch dat wij die hebben want ik vind het wel vanuit een soort ethisch perspectief heel goed dat wij met die mensen aan de slag gaan.

Head: We worden er voortdurend op aangesproken dat we aan internationalisering iets moeten doen.

Head: Ja. Maar het heeft wel heel erg mijn belangstelling zegmaar. Al vanuit die tijd dat ik bij het *andere school* zat.

Annick: En dan [...] die belangstelling komt dat ook terug in de doelstellingen die zijn gezet voor de NT2 lessen?

Head: ehh [...] ik werk het liefst andersom. Kijk ik ben teamleider hier zo van tien elf opleidingen die soms ook nog 2 3 gedeeltes hebben; bachelor deeltijd voltijd master toegepaste wiskunde. En ik ben heel erg van bottom-up werken, dus laat gewoon de docenten, de professional, met elkaar uitmaken van hoe ze willen dat het staat. En ik ben dan ook gewoon gesprekspartner. Dus ik geloof veel minder in een visie opdragen of uitdragen of van boven naar beneden. Ik geloof veel meer in die andere kant.

Annick: Denk je dat docenten die nu bezig zijn met NT2 lessen of iets dat met deze doelgroep te maken heeft, denk je dat zij een soort van verantwoordelijkheidsgevoel voelen [...] of hebben jullie het erover dat dit een deel is echt van het integratieproces wat mensen vaak zien in Nederland?

Head: Nou veel te weinig. Ik zie nou die docent die met die visie bezig is en nou da *Maartje* erbij is, nou, da bewustzijn da neemt toe. Dat was, dat eh ja men wist niet zo goed de handen en voeten aan te geven, dat is het denk ik

Section 4.2.2

Miss Anna, teacher in DSL class, and Maartje, language café initiator

Anna: In de les behandel je gewoon de stof en de rest dan ja, als ze daarover praten, dan ga je een praatje houden met die cursisten maar niet met iedereen want je hebt daar geen tijd voor.

Annick: Nee nee nee.

Anna: En wat wij op dit moment aan het doen zijn, bij verschillende niveaus, maar bij A2ers. Vragen we de cursisten om kleine presentaties te geven over activiteiten die zij buiten de lessen om hebben gedaan. En dus in het Nederlands. Wat heb jij tijdens de week of de voorbije dagen in het Nederlands buiten de schooluren gedaan. Ben je naar de markt gegaan? Ben je naar de bibliotheek gegaan? En wat heb je met het Nederlands gedaan?

Annick: Hmm.

- Anna: En komen ze in de klas en gaan ze een presentatie van 5 minuten houden. Over wat zij met de Nederlandse taal hebben gedaan. En dan breng je de realiteit, de werkelijkheid, in de klas. En zo heb ik het gevoel, hebben wij; mijn collega's en ik, het gevoel dat wij zo ja, dat zij een deel uitmaken van de samenleving. Ik weet niet of het de goede techniek is maar dat zijn de gewone ideeën die wij aan het uitproberen zijn.
- Annick: Ja. Ja ja. En als ik dan aan jou vraag: hoe zou jij integratie omschrijven?
- Anna: Integratie ja dat gevoel krijgen dat je deel uitmaakt van de samenleving hier, de Nederlandse samenleving, maar in andere Europese landen het land waar je naartoe bent gegaan. Het is gewoon dat je een schakel bent van het geheel en daarom vind ik het goed dat je bijvoorbeeld, ik kom uit België dus ik mag stemmen op de gemeenteraadsverkiezingen bijvoorbeeld. En dat vind ik goed. Ik weet niet of mijn cursisten dat al kunnen doen. Ik denk dat ze vijf jaar moeten wachten voordat zij mogen stemmen omdat ze geen Europese burger zijn.
- Annick: Wat zijn dan volgens jou dingen die daaraan meehelpen aan die integratie? Aan het mogelijk maken daarvan?
- Anna: Ja. De dynamiek, de groepsdynamiek dus in de klas dat de cursisten het gevoel krijgen dat ze er zin in hebben. Dat ze in de ochtend opstaan en dan denken: ik ga naar de les ik heb er zin in. En waarom? Omdat er een goede sfeer hangt. En daar wil ik aan meedoen. En dat is elke keer waar ik aan denk als ik in de klas sta, voor de klas sta, dan denk ik: zij hebben zo veel meegemaakt. Ik zou niet weten wat ze allemaal meegemaakt hebben. Maar ik zorg ervoor dat de sfeer goed is en dat er veel interactie komt tussen de cursisten onderling. Dan krijgen ze het gevoel dat ze bij de groep horen en dat is niet alleen een gevoel, dat is de werkelijkheid. En zo heb je een positieve dynamiek en dan kunnen ze verder, zich verder ontwikkelen. Ook via de taalcafés.
- Annick: En wat is jouw rol precies hier? Functieomschrijving?
- Maartje: Ja dat zit nergens in. Ik ben docenten opleider, ik begeleid stagiaires, ehh ik begeleid studenten bij alles. Maar dit, dit is een soort van onzichtbaar pilotje. Het is wel echt zo.
- Maartje: Ik vond het fijn dat de Bron er was, de krant, om het ook wat op de kaart te zetten.
- Maartje: En ik vind integratie ook dat Nederland open staat voor nieuwe invloeden. Dus niet alleen dat nieuwe mensen zich aanpassen aan wat wij in Nederland met mekaar hebben bedacht, maar omgekeerd ook kijken naar: nieuwe mensen komen binnen, wat kunnen we met hen delen?
- Maartje: Ik ben nogal wild he, binnen het instituut. Je hebt een wilde gevonden, buiten curriculair.
- Maartje: De prijs is best wel flink, want ik ben altijd onzeker, ik heb altijd het gevoel dat ik moet vechten en ik weet daar soms mijn eigen positie niet in te vinden, soms denk ik dikke vinger ik doe het niet meer en dan denk ik kom op het is ook wel weer leuk, dan denk ik oke ik geef gewoon weer mijn eigen geluid, dan word ik weer verdrietig, het schud mij alle kanten op, maar er is iets wat ik heel graag wil ofzo in mij waardoor ik het doe en dat heeft te maken met dat we d'r weer blij van worden. Het is geen leuke positie, een soort pionierspositie en daarin zit ik al heel mijn leven en dan zit ik nu weer hier: whyyyy (lacht).
- Annick: Heb jij het idee dat er ook, ja dat is misschien een beetje een lastige vraag voor nu, dat mensen in de les, in de NT2 les, dat er dan aandacht is voor hee hoe gaat jouw integratie proces?
- Maartje: Ik heb het idee, maar dat is heel subjectief, dat het er niet is. Wel de interesse vanuit de docenten naar de studenten van hoe gaat het met je, en fijn als dat lukt, maar niet een traject van inburgering.

- Annick: Nee, oke. En is het docent zijn hier voor een NT2 klas ook vooral gericht op het begeleiden van de student IN de klas en dan zodra het eigenlijk verder buiten de klas gaat dat het dan niet meer erbij hoort?
- Maartje: Ja dat klopt. Het is vooral gericht op de taal. En dat is raar, opzich. Want taal is een onderdeel van cultuur. Maar goed, daar zie je het cognitivistische idee van kennis overdracht op de taal en dan zoek je het maar uit. En dat lukt sommigen wel, sommigen niet.

Section 4.2.3

Amin and the coordinator of the school

- Annick: Wat vond je van het praatcafé?
- Amin: Ja. Het was leuk.
- Annick: Heb je goede gesprekken gehad of allemaal basis gesprekken?
- Amin: Het eerste gesprek is vooral basis gesprek. Overal.
- Annick: Over van alles?
- Amin: Over van alles. Ja zij stellen vragen over hobby's, studie, het leven.
- Annick: Oke oke.
- Amin: Het is een heel globaal gesprek. Heel oppervlakkig. Extensief gesprekken, niet intensief.
- Annick: Ja zeker weten. Want daarover gesproken, stel dus zoals je als voorbeeld noemde, dat iemand inderdaad iemand niet kan komen doordat ze het transport niet kunnen vergoeden, is er dan iets dat jullie daarin kunnen doen, nemen jullie dan contact op met de gemeente of is dat eigenlijk buiten jullie pakket?
- Coordinator: ehh dat is eigenlijk buiten ons pakket en dat willen we ook zo houden eigenlijk. Want wij zijn geen ehh wij zien onszelf niet als die partij, dus wat wij ehh wat wij soms is het wel zo dat wij een student hebben die bijvoorbeeld niet meer naar de les mag komen van de gemeente omdat die moet gaan werken, in dat geval ehhh vragen we aan de student vind jij het prettig als wij met de gemeente contact op nemen voor jou? Om toch even te kijken, nouja om te vertellen dat jij een cursus volgt en dat dat toch tijd kost en dat de cursus bijvoorbeeld bijna afgelopen is binnen vier weken dus dat dat toch misschien zinvol is dat je deze afmaakt, maar als een student aangeeft nee liever niet want ik wil met de gemeente geen last, want ook hun uitkering hangt er aan vast, dan doen wij dat niet. Ik vind wel dat wij dat moeten vragen aan zo'n student, want het gaat wel om zijn uitkering he we kunnen dr even tussen komen maar als wij de gemeente, als wij zijn begeleiders daar lastig maken, ja kan het zijn dat die het op zijn heupen krijgt en dat moeten wij gewoon niet doen. Als die zegt van ja dat vind ik wel prettig he dat er toch over gesproken wordt dan doen wij dat maar wel altijd heel voorzichtig want uiteindelijk zijn wij een partij die iets aanbiedt voor die persoon maar de gemeente gaat wel over zijn uitkering dus je moet er wel even voorzichtig in zijn wat jij daar gaat poneren. Het is iets anders met een prebachelor student want daar is dus inderdaad voor bedongen dat zij een vrijstelling krijgen he dus stel dat iemand daar niet kan komen omwille van de gemeente ja dan moet je wel echt even serieus gaan spreken he en het is wel zo dat ehm *school* ehh al heel veel doet eigenlijk vanuit een fonds, dus bij de prebachelor zie je dat de student een deel betaalt, het UAF betaalt een deel en *school* betaalt een deel vanuit het steunfonds, dus dat wordt zegmaar serieus vanuit *school* gesteund en ook de taalschool die betaalt een deel van de lokalen, van de kosten van de lokalen wordt betaald vanuit het steunfonds van *school*. Dus in dat opzicht denk ik dat *school* al een financieel flinke bijdrage levert en het is niet zo dat wij, wij waken er eigenlijk een beetje voor om ons te gaan opwerpen, ja hoe moet ik dat zeggen, ja dit is toch een proces wat die cursist zelf moet gaan bewaken.

Section 4.3.1

Nicole, the client manager, and Erik, the participation coach of the municipality

Nicole: Voorheen, ik werk hier nu tien jaar, en toen ik begon, toen hadden wij als klantmanager zelf ook echt de regie over alles, ook over de reïntegratie en dergelijke maar je zag gewoon dat is een spec[-] ja reïntegratie is gewoon een specialisme aan zich. Wij hadden ook gewoon echt niet de tijd om met de mensen allemaal aan de slag te gaan enzo. dus vandaar dat er toen ook coaches in het leven zijn geroepen en ja dat werkt gewoon veel beter. Ja dus dan hebben we gewoon de juiste aandacht erop. Dus die splitsing in inkomen en participatie is gewoon veel beter zo.

Annick: Oke. Oke. En ehm ik had het al eerder even aan u gevraagd, of er iets van documenten zijn, of er ergens iets staat beschreven, oke wat is het doel van *Udenberg* m.b.t. integratie?

Erik: Ja daar zijn wij volop mee bezig. Er staat nog niet echt iets omschreven. Je zou op de website van *Udenberg* kunnen kijken of er iets staat, maar dat betwijfel ik. Ehhhhm voor mij betreft het doel van begeleiding van de statushouders om deze mensen te integreren in een samenleving en zo snel mogelijk zelfstandig te maken en te kunnen voorzien in eigen levensonderhoud.

Annick: Maar, en dit staat dus nog nergens op papier?

Erik: Nee. Maar je kunt ook een stukje uit de wet pakken, de participatiewet, en daarin staat iedereen die gezond is, moet gaan werken. En de meeste statushouders zijn gezond. Natuurlijk zijn er psychische problemen en er wordt ook op gewezen dat ze daar hulp voor moeten gaan zoeken en het liefst ook bij een Arabischspreekende psycholoog, want dan kunnen ze ook vertellen wat er is, en eh door middel van een tolk werkt dat niet, dus dat wordt tegen ze gezegd; ga bewegen, ga sporten, blijf bezig, ga niet stil in een hoekje zitten, want je wordt er toch uit gehaald.

Annick: En integratie hierbij. Om te beginnen: hoe zou u integratie omschrijven?

Erik: Opgaan in de nederlandse samenleving, dat het mooiste. En ook meedoen. En dat proberen we ook door middel van sport ehh sporttrajecten ehh op te zetten. Zijn we nu met een proef mee bezig met ehh 32 mensen. Die mogen op kosten van de gemeente een half jaar gaan sporten naar hun keuze van sporten, maar dan wel zoveel mogelijk gericht op contact met nederlandse mensen, dus geen individuele sport, maar een teamsport.

Annick: Uhu uhu oke. En wanneer is volgens u dan iemand goed geïntegreerd, of geïntegreerd?

Erik: Wanneer die geen hulp meer nodig heeft. Wanneer die weet wat de normen en waarden in nederland zijn. En wanneer die zich ook heeft aangepast. En natuurlijk mag die zijn eigen cultuur gebied, cultuur erfgoed vasthouden, maar hij moet niet vergeten dat ie in nederland is en zich moet aanpassen.

Annick: En aanpassen op welke gebieden dan?

Erik: Alle gebieden.

Annick: Alle gebieden [...]

Erik: Ja.

Annick: Oke, ik ben het nog even aan het verwerken. Alle gebieden.

Erik: Dat mag hoor (lacht)

Annick: Want alle gebieden; dat heel veel?

Erik: Das heel veel! Maar je kunt de vergelijking maken naar jezelf, als je zelf naar het buitenland zou gaan verhuizen, hoe je je zou moeten gaan gedragen. Als Nederlander of als inwoner van dat land.

Annick: Hmm oke oke. Hier ga ik straks nog even verder over nadenken.

Erik: En ik kan het uit eigen ervaring zeggen.

Annick: U heeft in een ander land gewoond?

Erik: Heb bijna 20 jaar in Duitsland gewoond.

Annick: Aha, wauw.

Erik: Ja, dus daar moet je je ook aanpassen. Natuurlijk weten de mensen wel dat je uit Nederland komt en dat horen ze ook wel aan je uitspraak dat je uit een ander land komt, maar je gaat wel ehh je gaat wel op eh bijvoorbeeld met fröhshoppen, met ehmm met kuche eten en dergelijke, taart eten en dergelijke. Dat zijn de gebruiken in Duitsland, in die regio tenminste, waar ik woonde. Dat doe je wel met elkaar. Ja.

Erik: Bijvoorbeeld het niet geven van een hand. Dat accepteer ik niet. Waar staat in de koran dat je geen hand mag geven?

Annick: Maar bedoel je dan een hand geven aan een vrouw of aan een man?

Erik: Een vrouw aan een man een hand geven ja. In dit geval een Syrische vrouw die een Nederlandse man geen hand wil geven, of mij geen hand wil geven, ik zeg dat accepteer ik niet, ik voel me beledigd. Ik zeg en jij mag in mij gaan vertellen waar dat in de koran staat dat je mij geen hand mag geven.

Annick: En hoe wordt dat ervaren door de statushouders?

Erik: Dat ze duidelijkheden hebben van wat kan en wat niet kan. Want als je in een vreemd land bent en je weet niet wat je kan en wat je niet kan, of mag en niet mag, dan doe je maar wat. En dat is absoluut niet het geval.

Nicole: - En dat leidt misschien ook wel weer tot problemen. Dus nee die duidelijkheid van de voorkant is heel belangrijk.

Nicole: Maar we leggen dingen wel goed vast net als in de brief die ik stuur, de verplichtingen is inderdaad wel om aan de voorkant wel die duidelijkheid te geven, dit is je inlichtingenplicht, dit moet je doorgeven aan ons, als deze situaties zich voordoen, dit zijn je arbeidsverplichtingen, hier moet je aan gaan voldoen. Dus ehh ja.

Erik: Als je vragen hebt zeg ik kun je langs komen kun je vragen bij de receptie of ik tijd heb op dat moment voor je en anders maak ik een afspraak en dan wordt je binnen twee dagen dan wordt je gesproken.

Annick: Ik kan me ook voorstellen dat sommige mensen eh niet durven, of niet, om een bepaalde reden niet die stap maken om langs te gaan of te mailen-

Erik: -Maar das een kwestie van vertrouwen. Want je moet een vertrouwensband met de mensen eh ehmm maken zodat de drempel heel erg laag is om naar je toe te stappen.

Annick: Hmm hm oke. Maar das best wel moeilijk?

Erik: Ja en dat krijg je alleen maar door mensen veel te spreken en met mensen te babbelen over van alles. En ook mensen ehmm goed advies geven.

Erik: Ehh het het gevoel dat de mensen krijgen is dat er een, dat er laagdrempeligheid is, dat de mensen alles makkelijk kunnen vragen, dat mensen alles kunnen aangeven, dat alles voor ze, wat er geregeld moet worden, geregeld wordt. Want in *Udenberg* bijvoorbeeld is geen taalaanbieder, is geen taalschool, ja zit er wel een, maar die is gewoon langzaam. Ik geef advies aan de mensen ga naar *Eelden* toe, daar krijg je ipv twee keer 2,5 uur, krijg je vier keer drie uur of vijf keer drie uur les, met dezelfde kosten maar je hebt wel meer vooruitgang, je gaat wel sneller. Ehmmm. Stukje reiskosten krijgen ze van de gemeente, dat krijgen ze ook niet overal.

Annick: En dat krijgen ze altijd, die reiskosten?

Erik: Nee. Nee want je hebt ook nog UAF. UAF ken je wel? Die doet voor de hoger opgeleiden ook een stukje reiskosten vergoeding bijvoorbeeld naar *Doorne*, er zijn ook mensen die volgen hier taallessen op de universiteit, ehmm ja alles wat geregeld moet worden, moet geregeld zijn.

Annick: Ja ja oke.

Erik: En binnen de gemeente *Udenberg* wordt het geregeld, daar krijgen ze elke maand hun reiskosten vergoed, of 1 keer in de week hun reiskosten vergoed.

Annick: Ja ja oke. Ehmmm. Als je kijkt naar mensen bij wie de integratie nog niet zo goed verloopt, waaraan denk je dat dat dan ligt?

Erik: Aan de motivatie van de mensen.

Section 4.4.1

Christina, manager Welfare, and Nienke, social worker at Taaron

Annick: Oke oke. En wat zijn jullie visie of doelstellingen?

Christina: Dat iedereen mee kan doen en mee telt. Dus op het moment dat eh ja we hebben natuurlijk ook een heel grote doelgroep die juist in hun kracht staat, dat zij namelijk onze vrijwilligers. Onze totale organisatie kent 150 medewerkers verdeeld over kinderopvang en welzijn, waarvan welzijn ongeveer 30 medewerkers heeft en daar zitten 500 medewerkers aan gekoppeld. Dus om te zeggen, wij helpen mensen, nee die mensen helpen ons ook. Onze klant helpt ons ook als het ware. Dus wat wij daarin doen is eh de mensen faciliteren om nog meer uit zichzelf te halen dus dat loopt eigenlijk wel als een rode draad door onze dienstverlening heen.

Annick: Zou je mij iets meer willen vertellen over de gemeente en VluchtelingenWerk: zitten jullie ook echt samen, op wat voor manier hebben jullie contact, hebben jullie bijvoorbeeld ook overleg samen?

Christina: Nee. Nouja d'r is wel overleg met de gemeente omdat 1 van onze teamleden, zit dus ook in de wijkteam waar alle disciplines aan tafel zitten, maar bijvoorbeeld VW niet. Dus dan praat je echt over organisaties zoals Mee, de thuiszorg, eh ja. D'r zit vanalles aan tafel. Maar nogmaals niet expliciet om eh misschien dat onze groep nieuwkomers ook niet een dusdanige grootte heeft dat dat ooit opgetuigd is. Ik weet van andere gemeentes waar wel echt veel vluchtelingen ehmm gehuisvest zijn dat dat daar dan ook wel passende zorg omheen is gecreeerd ehmm maar hier denk ik juist dat ze op een natuurlijkere wijze integreren omdat ze niet als aparte doelgroep echt ergens bestempeld zijn. Ehm natuurlijk brengen ze hun eigen problematiek mee maar niet dat daar een apart netwerkje omheen zit van de verschillende partijen dus misschien voor de nieuwkomer zelf dat dat wat lastiger is want dan moet je wel zelf op zoek naar organisaties die jou kunnen helpen

Annick: En dan nog even voor mij, voor mijn beeldvorming. Want er is dus niet echt een overleg dat zich focust op de doelgroep specifiek?

Christina: Nee, nee. Dat kan wel geïnitieerd worden op het moment dat er een casus zich voordoet en dat we denken van nou hier is het wel goed om even integraal bij elkaar te gaan zitten en een plan van aanpak op te stellen, dat zou kunnen, maar dat is niet regulier, wat ik zeg, het aantal nieuwkomers is hier beperkt ehmm er zijn bij mij in ieder geval geen signalen bekend dat juist de doelgroep nieuwkomers bepaalde problematiek ervaart waarmee we dus gezamenlijk op zouden moeten trekken. Het enige dat ik weet is dat taal op dit moment iets is wat ehmm soms lastig kan zijn.

Annick: Ja, oke oke. Ehm en ehmm heb jij enig idee van eh voor welke kwestie nieuwkomers het meeste hier langs komen?

Christina: Ja de formulieren. Dus ze lopen toch wel aan tegen bureaucratie, binnen met name gemeentelijke voorzieningen, dus als het gaat om het vragen om een uitkering of het doen van bepaalde ehmm ja verzoeken die ze moeten indienen, huisvestingsaanvragen, hoe werkt dat hier, waar kan ik me inschrijven, soms worden ze ook doorverwezen voor VW, ja met name die taalbarrière dat is ehmm ons denk ik wel dat we in de papierenhandel eigenlijk vooral, dat daar ondersteuning in nodig is.

Nienke: Voor de meeste zijn alle voorwaarden die erbij komen kijken en alle verplichtingen, met name heel de financiële administratie die erbij komt kijken, onbegrijpelijk. Voor de mensen die ik hier zie dan. En ook zo veel he. Maar dat is ook, en dat vind ik ook niet altijd goed vanuit de gemeente, d'r

moeten heel vaak allemaal weer dezelfde gegevens aangeleverd worden. Zoals weer bewijzen van inkomsten, weer een kopie van de woonstichting, weer een kopie van [...] en dan denk ik ja dat ligt er allemaal al, al drie keer. En dat is voor die mensen frustrerend. En voor ons ook want je bent heel vaak dezelfde informatie weer opnieuw aan het verzamelen. Terwijl de gegevens in veel gevallen wel bekend zijn. Dus het administratieve eromheen maakt het moeilijk te begrijpen voor veel mensen.

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Nienke: Dat werkt wel frustrerend. Ook ehh, kan ook veel onrust geven van wat zijn nou allemaal de consequenties wat gebeurd er als ik hier niet aan voldoe bijvoorbeeld. Maar ook onbegrip van nou waarom? Bijvoorbeeld. Dus het ehh.. het werkt eerder onrust in de hand dan dat het gerust stelt. Maar dat komt omdat de mensen die wij hier zien, die hebben een probleem of die hebben een vraag. Misschien dat het in heel veel gevallen heel goed gaat maar die mensen zien wij hier niet.

Nienke: Dat is een[-], er was een paar jaar geleden een reclame van, ik geloof dat dat bij een zwembad was ofzo, dat een meisje een [inflatable AS] paarse krokodil was verloren en die was bij afdeling gevonden voorwerpen terecht. En daarna kwam moeder met dochter van 'we hebben een paarse krokodil verloren'. En die stond echt daarachter. Maar toen moest ze hele formulieren en hele bureaucratische toestand om in ieder geval aangifte te doen van vermissing van de paarse krokodil. Terwijl je dacht van maar *hij staat daar*.

Annick: Aah ja jaja.

Nienke: En hiermee bedoel ik van[-], als ik dan zeg, het staat daar. Dan denk ik aan die medewerkers van sociale zaken die voor zich een dossier hebben liggen met ontzettend veel informatie waarvan je ook heel vaak denkt, het ligt er allemaal, voor je neus. Alleen misschien de laatste afschriften van de bankrekening de laatste drie maanden oke he, dat je die af en toe even bijwerkt dat is ook wel logisch. Maar het is, ik zie mijn vrijwilligers ook af en toe zuchten van 'daar gaan we weer, we zoeken het weer allemaal opnieuw op'. Want het moet gewoon.

Annick: Ja en als mensen bij jullie zijn geweest is het dan zo dat zij in het vervolg, als zij een vraag hebben, dan kloppen zij zelf aan of is het zo dat jullie een soort van controlesysteem hebben.

Nienke: Dan kloppen zij in principe opnieuw zelf aan

Annick: Ja jaja. Oke.

Nienke: Dus het is wel ook een eigen verantwoordelijkheid van iemand om dan terug te komen en zich te melden. En we proberen ook en dat lukt niet bij iedereen hoor, we streven er ook naar om mensen op zo'n manier te helpen dat ze het de volgende keer zelf doen. Of dat ze de volgende keer komen en het gedeeltelijk zelf doen. Dus we proberen wel te voorkomen dat we alles uit handen nemen maar er blijft wel altijd iemand bij wie dat toch niet volledig lukt. Dus een paar vrijwilligers van ons doen ook enkele huisbezoeken bij mensen om dan bijvoorbeeld een keer per maand of een keer per twee maanden een beetje een oogje in het zeil te houden om te voorkomen dat de zaken escaleren.