PART 2

Receptive multilingualism in discourse
Despite the typological proximity of Dutch and German, receptive multilingualism is seldom used in Dutch–German communication. This chapter explores the factors that influence the choice for receptive multilingualism as a mode of communication in German–Dutch encounters by reflecting on the relationship of the two languages and nation states. Furthermore, attention is paid to the institutional constellation and the relationships between the actual interactants in discourse. These theoretical preliminaries are examined in an analysis of receptive multilingualism as it occurs in the language teaching team of the Goethe-Institute in Amsterdam (cf. Roelands 2004) by analysing team discussions as a form of institutional communication (cf. Koole and ten Thije 1994). It is highlighted how institutional keywords are used in order to convey institutional knowledge that is not language-specific in order to enhance felicitous communication. The authors finally show how the discourse at the Goethe-Institute is structured interculturally, making use of Rehbein’s (2006) concept of the ‘Cultural Apparatus’.

Keywords: German Dutch interaction, team discussion, interactive planning, institutional keywords, Goethe-Institute, intercultural discourse

1. Introduction

This paper deals with receptive multilingualism in Dutch–German team cooperation. In order to give the reader an impression of this specific mode of communication we begin this section with a discourse fragment between the Dutchman Gerard and the German Bernd (see p. 74). The fragment is a representative extract of discourse between the Dutchman Gerard and his German colleague Bernd who both work at the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam. Gerard and Bernd have decided at the start of their working cooperation that they both want to use their respective mother tongue while speaking to each other. Both of them have adequate, that is more than minimal, knowledge of their interlocutor’s language so that they can understand each other reciprocally. The discourse stretches between Bernd and Gerard are some of the few documented cases of German–Dutch receptive multilingualism. This leads us to the question as to why the
use of receptive multilingualism is so rare between the Dutch and the German. Taking into account the typological closeness of the two languages and the cultural proximity of the two nation states, it is astonishing that bilingual Dutch–German discourse does not occur more often in the receptive multilingual mode. In most cases, either one of the interlocutors adapts to the language of the other, or English is used as a lingua franca (see Zeevaert, this volume, for an outline of all possible modes of multilingual communication).
In this chapter, we start by reviewing the factors that support the occurrence of receptive multilingualism. We relate these factors to the parameters introduced by House and Rehbein (2004: 3) as a means for analysing multilingual communication. Section 2 discusses the occurrence of receptive multilingualism from three different perspectives. First, we focus on the social and linguistic relations between the two nations and their standard languages. Second, we discuss the institutional constellations that enable or restrict the occurrence of receptive multilingualism. In a third step, we investigate the perspective of the individual interactants involved by describing the linguistic and cultural competences that might encourage the use of receptive multilingualism. In section 3, we discuss a case study on receptive multilingualism from the Goethe-Institute in Amsterdam in more detail. This leads to a discussion as to why receptive multilingualism is a successful mode of discourse in this specific case. We exemplify this success by analysing a stretch of planning discourse taken from team discussions (section 5). Illustrated by the use of keywords, we discuss one of the means by which understanding is established within the receptive multilingual mode. This chapter is based on a case study that was carried out by Roelands (2004). In section 6, we discuss how cultural understanding is achieved in receptive multilingual discourse. For this purpose, we will apply Rehbein's notion of 'Cultural Apparatus' (Rehbein 2006). Finally, in section 7, we draw conclusions from this first case study on German–Dutch receptive multilingual discourse.

2. Receptive multilingualism as a form of multilingual communication

House and Rehbein (2004) distinguish a number of parameters that constrain multilingual language constellations. In this paper, we relate these parameters to the specific case of receptive multilingualism, which we consider as a specific mode of multilingual communication. These parameters operate on different levels, which are, however, interconnected. Besides the perspective of the individual interactants and the language contact point of view, which was discussed in House and Rehbein (2004), we consider it as inevitable to incorporate also an institutional level as an intermediate stage between the discourse of individual interactants and language contact on the societal level.

2.1 Language contact between two nations

First of all, typological proximity is a parameter that acts in favour of receptive multilingualism since, as in the case of cognate languages, both interlocutors can easily gain a certain passive command of the other’s respective language (House and Rehbein 2004: 3). Möller (this volume) reveals how speakers can detect the meaning of previously unknown words in a second language on the basis of their cognate status. In actual fact, typological distance is used as a criterion for defining whether we are dealing
with receptive multilingualism in the broader sense of the word, or rather with semi-communication (see Zeevaert, this volume).

Besides linguistic distance, differences in the socio-political status of the two languages and nations also play a part in the determination of receptive multilingualism as a form of multilingual communication (House and Rehbein 2004: 3). Receptive multilingualism is the most equal mode of communication, as none of the interlocutors has to adapt to the other, nor are they forced to use a lingua franca. Therefore, we would rather expect to find receptive multilingualism in situations in which the two languages have an equal socio-political status. De Swaan (2001), for instance, introduces a model that measures the status of a language on the basis of its amount of speakers and its connection to other languages (‘centrality’) via multilingual speakers. The status of the language is furthermore determined by the economic and political power of its speakers. Inequality of status will in most cases lead to the speakers of the lower status language adapting to the speakers of the language with the higher status. The status held by a foreign language in a particular country is reflected in its position in the school curriculum (Clyne 1991; Bourdieu 1992). A Dutchman would rather be expected to have some basic knowledge of German than a German of Dutch, since German is—at least traditionally—considered as an important foreign language in the Netherlands, whereas the opposite does not apply (Nelde 1988; CPB 1997). Note, however, that recently this imbalance has changed: Dutch is becoming more and more popular among German high school and university students, whereas German is losing its strong position in the Netherlands, resulting in a significant change in the language constellation between Germany and the Netherlands. This change in the traditional constellation has brought about the need for different forms of communication (Finkenstaedt and Schröder 1992). Whereas, traditionally, the Dutch would tend to adapt to the Germans, receptive multilingualism now provides a possible institutional solution for communication across the border (Herrlitz, p.c.) in those cases where the Germans have acquired receptive language skills in Dutch. The social-cultural changes in the German–Dutch relationship are a recurrent topic of various conferences (Raven and Aspeslagh 1997; Aspeslagh 1998).

An additional factor to be mentioned with respect to the multilingual language constellation is the general attitude of the speakers of one language towards the speakers of the other language. In the case of the attitude towards Germans, for example, speakers of other languages occasionally still have anti-German feelings leading back to the Second World War (Zahn 1984, 1986; Lademacher 1989; Müller and Wielenga 1995). This in turn has also influenced the self-perception of Germans (Westheide 1997; Linthout 2000). The attitude and ideas of speakers about the way they are perceived might thus influence the choice of the specific multilingual discourse mode. In the case of Germans, this (expected) negative attitude can lead to an avoidance of the use of German in discourse and consequently to the use of the other person’s mother tongue (Dutch in our case), or a lingua franca (in most cases English). For instance, Prescher (2006) discusses language attrition among Germans living in the Netherlands
and relates this process to their problematic multiple identities. This can be opposed to the general positive evaluation the Dutch receive in Germany (e.g. Rudi Carrell and Linda de Mol) (Westheide 1997).

2.2 Institutional constellation

The second perspective with respect to the occurrence of receptive multilingualism relates to the institutional constellation in which the multilingual discourse takes place. Based on general research referring to language choice in Europe (Milroy and Muysken 1995; De Bot 2004) we would expect the use of receptive multilingualism to depend on the ratio of speakers of the two languages within a societal organisation (see Schjeeve-Rindler and Vetter in this volume for a historical account of language choice). Furthermore, we would expect the status held by the speakers of the languages with respect to each other within the hierarchy of the institution to be an influential factor (cf. Lüdi this volume, Werlen this volume). The more equally the two groups are represented in terms of number and status, the more probable it is that receptive multilingualism will be used. Moreover, the language policy of the organisation plays a role (Herrlitz 1997; De Jongste 1997). Herrlitz and Loos (1994), for example, discuss the ‘Rudi Carrell model’. According to this model, some organisations encourage the use of multiple languages, whereas others discourage from it and prescribe the use of one single language which is considered to be the standard language of this company. It could also be the case that an organisation does not have a clear conception with regard to its language policy. In that case, it only depends on the employees which mode of communication is chosen to be used (Loos 1997, 1998).

Koole and ten Thije (1994) have shown that the length of the cooperation between employees within an institution is an important factor in the establishment of a ‘discursive interculture’ (i.e. the common team knowledge that results from the multicultural long term team cooperation within the group and cannot be traced back to the sum of the individual discourse knowledge of the single participants). Due to receptive multilingualism being part of such a discursive interculture, we would expect it to potentially take place in situations in which employees have co-operated for lengthy period of time.

The factors mentioned above might be enhanced or weakened depending on the country in which the institution is situated, i.e. Germany or the Netherlands (see 2.1).

2.3 The interactants’ perspective

The third perspective deals with language choice from the point of view of the individual speaker and his interactions with other interactants (House and Rehbein 2004: 3). This covers both the individual’s linguistic competence in the second language (e.g. Grosjean 1982), as well as their past experiences with other cultures and languages (‘intercultural competence’). If somebody is accustomed to dealing with other cultures, he
or she will thus be better trained in communicating with people of a different origin. The knowledge of additional languages can be helpful in determining the meaning of an unknown word. Research has moreover borne out that the knowledge of several languages also enhances metalinguistic competence (Hufeisen and Marx, this volume).

Besides the actual linguistic distance, the notion ‘psychotypology’ should also be considered when referring to the language constellation of multilingual communication. Psychotypology concerns the language learner’s perception of the actual linguistic distance. Work by Kellerman (1979) suggests that a language user often miscalculates the actual amount of cognates existing in a closely related foreign language. Psychotypology plays a key role in language acquisition, seen as the learner subconsciously decides how much linguistic material he can transfer from his mother tongue into the second language depending on his estimation of the closeness of the two languages. Therefore it might also be a relevant concept for assessing how much the listener actually understands in the receptive multilingual mode (Lutjeharms, this volume).

Finally, it should be mentioned that language users arguably have to be familiar with the phenomenon of receptive multilingualism itself in order to adequately use it. In most cases, receptive multilingualism does not arise spontaneously, but is far more the result of an agreement on the part of the speakers involved (Braunmüller and Zeevaert 2001; Zeevaert, this volume).

We have discussed how various parameters referring to multilingual language constellations may influence the occurrence of receptive multilingualism in comparison to other forms of multilingual communication. In the next section, we will illustrate how these factors influenced the multilingual communication at the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam.

3. The Goethe-Institute Amsterdam

The research discussed in this chapter is based on a case study at the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam (Roelands 2004; Roelands and ten Thije 2006). We will reconstruct the discourse structures observed at this international institution, paying attention to the department of language teaching, where receptive multilingualism is applied as the mode of communication. We will examine which of the factors outlined above come into consideration.

The Goethe-Institute is a German organisation established to promote German language and culture abroad. It is represented in 144 cities worldwide. In our case, the German institution is situated in the Dutch capital Amsterdam. From a language contact perspective, German and Dutch are considered to be cognate languages. Linguistically, the two languages are thus closely related, a characteristic which might work in favour of receptive multilingualism. As outlined above, however, the relation between the two countries in terms of status and power is not equal. German is spoken by far more people in Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Furthermore, Germany is
economically comparatively more powerful than the Netherlands (Delsen and de Jong 1998). Consequently, German has been part of the Dutch obligatory school curriculum for a long time, whereas it was relatively uncommon for a German to speak Dutch. However, as has been stipulated above, there have recently been changes in this respect. Dutch is gaining more and more appreciation among German students, whereas on the other hand young Dutch people do not often choose to learn German any more.

From an institutional perspective, the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam can be considered as a German organisation that operates internationally and, in our case, is situated in the Netherlands. In the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam German and Dutch colleagues have been cooperating closely over a longer period of time. Interestingly, due to the vast amount of highly developed language competencies of the employees in the organisation several different communicative modalities can be found when looking at the internal communication; employees either speak German, Dutch, or use receptive multilingualism in their communication. However, English as lingua franca is not used. Finally, all kinds of code switching can be detected (Auer 1998). The participants have the choice of speaking their first language or switching to other communicative modes.

When looking more closely at the multilingual communication within the Goethe-Institute, we found that three departments fulfil the preconditions required for the use of receptive multilingualism, namely the department of language teaching, the department of culture, and the reception desk. However, only the department of language teaching has actually chosen to operate in the receptive multilingual mode. Functionaries in the other two teams prefer to converse in just one language, either Dutch or German. In this context, the question arises as to why the team members in the language teaching department have chosen to communicate by means of receptive multilingualism, whereas the employees working in the other departments have made different decisions with respect to their multilingual communication. Taking into consideration the biographical interviews with all employees and the audio recordings that were carried out with various analyses on distinct discourse types (Roelands 2004), we conclude that language competence, institutional position and discourse topics were the decisive factors for the decision on the respective mode of discourse used by the employees in the three departments.

The following can be said about the language teaching department, which is the only department in which receptive multilingualism is used. The department is made up of two employees. The team manager Bernd is from Germany and only temporarily living in the Netherlands. He estimates his language competence in Dutch approximately at the level of B2 according to the Common European Frame Work (Council of Europe 2001). The Dutch team member Gerard is a local employee. He estimates his German language competence at the level of C2. Both are aware of the potential intercultural problems between the Germans and the Dutch resulting from the historical relationship of the two neighbour countries and the indirect influences of the Second World War. They unequivocally state that at the start of their working relationship three years
ago they chose to speak their first language with each other while at work. Consequently there are no discussions relating to the choice of language at the start of each interaction. Receptive multilingualism has become the institutional standard for their communication at work.

In his biographical interview the Dutchman Gerard states (Roelands, 2004: 29): “It is much easier. I can express myself more easily and more precisely with respect to important details or when I am joking. It costs less energy, less effort, less reflection and I can react instantly.” (Translation by R/tT). The German Bernd mentioned an additional reason for the use of receptive multilingualism: “When everybody is allowed to speak his first language, democracy comes into being.” (ibid, 29) (Translation by R/tT).

In section 2, we reviewed a number of factors that we regard to be influential with respect to the occurrence of receptive multilingualism. On the basis of the case study in the Goethe-Institute, we are given a better insight into the factors that are relevant for the constitution of this multilingual communicative mode. It turned out that the individual interactants play a major role in the choice to be made between the different multilingual modes. Within the Goethe-Institute, only one of the three departments chooses to use receptive multilingualism. The typological relationship of the two respective languages and the organisation in which the interaction takes place create various possibilities. The actual use of these possibilities, however, depends on the institutional language policy of the respective Goethe-Institute. The Goethe-Institute thus creates the possibility for its employees to choose their own mode of communication. This is referred to as the rise of an action space (Rehbein 1977).

This case study raises the question as to which extent the language team in the Goethe-Institute is ‘special’. The general institutional purpose of the Goethe-Institute is to promote the German language and culture abroad. Consequently, the organisation might be more willing to develop alternative modes of multilingual communication. On the other hand, it could also be possible that such an institute has a quite strict and defined language policy with respect to the internal communication as is the case in many multinational companies. In actual fact, this case study has led us to the conclusion that the overall language policy results in an action space that the employees of the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam have filled in differently.

From an interactants perspective, it might not be coincidental that, in contrast to the other employees of the Goethe-Institute, the members of the language teaching team have decided to employ the receptive multilingual mode. From their professional expertise they are aware of the impact of code switching and language choice on identity construction during communication at work. Although the members of the remaining departments have comparable language competencies in both languages at their disposal, they do not set themselves the same professional challenge to develop receptive multilingualism as an alternative mode of multilingual communication. In actual fact, the everyday receptive multilingualism used by the language teaching team exemplifies the overall general aims of the Goethe-Institute in a very original and concrete manner.
It will be necessary to conduct more research in different institutions to assess the factors responsible for language choice more precisely. Comparing Goethe-Institutes in various countries could bring about interesting findings. With the help of this procedure, we could measure the effect of the factors linguistic and cultural distance of the two language communities by means of the occurrence and development of receptive multilingualism. Furthermore, it might help to shed light on the effect of the language policy adopted by the respective Goethe-Institute for the way the different local institutes fill in the action space. It is self-evident that research in other institutions is also necessary in order to gain an all-embracing picture of the phenomenon receptive multilingualism.

4. Receptive multilingual mode of the speech action pattern “Interactive Planning”

In order to reconstruct the relevance and interlacement of the factors mentioned above in the actual realisation of discourse, we analyse the discourse structures in the case study conducted in the Goethe-Institute first of all as a form of institutional discourse (Bührig and ten Thije 2005). We begin this section by introducing the functional pragmatic approach to discourse (Ehlich and Rehbein 1986; Rehbein 2001) with a focus on Koole and ten Thije’s (1994) approach to team discussions. After that we will raise the question whether this approach is applicable to discourse in a receptive multilingual mode.

The functional pragmatic approach⁴ to discourse and text aims at the reconstruction of speech action patterns as the realisation of societal purposes. An institutional analysis includes the reconstruction of these social purposes and their transition into speech actions. Institutional discourse is analysed by means of differentiating between first order institutional knowledge (every day interactant’s knowledge) and second order institutional knowledge (professional knowledge). This difference is based on the dichotomy between clients and professionals (or ‘agents’ cf. Ehlich and Rehbein 1986) within institutions. That means that an analysis of institutional discourse begins with the reconstruction of speech action patterns while characterising the purposes of the discourse types involved.

Our discourse data stem from team discussions within the language teaching team at the Goethe-Institute. According to Koole and ten Thije (1994), team discussions are instances of professional (agent-agent) interaction and can especially be characterised by two specific speech action patterns, namely the speech action pattern of interactive planning and the speech action pattern of reporting. These two patterns enable efficient knowledge transfer and action coordination within a (professional) team. The pattern of interactive planning aims at reaching a consensus on common action plans, whereas the pattern of reporting aims at the transfer and assessment of institutional knowledge in order to make decisions. By analysing the speech action pat-
tern of reporting and interactive planning in the language teaching team we focus on their main communicative tasks and thus are able to identify the receptive multilingual characteristics of German–Dutch professional discourse.

As mentioned above the pattern of interactive planning has its purpose in reaching a consensus of common action plans. In practice this purpose is realised by one of the actants formulating a proposal for a plan, which is subsequently assessed by another actant. The former is referred to as the author of a plan and the latter the critic (Koole and ten Thije 1994). The critic has the opportunity to formulate an alternative plan if he does not agree with the author’s proposal. In this case the author of the original plan has to judge the alternative proposal and either persist on his original proposal or accept the alternative proposal. When one of the proposals is accepted by both author and critic a consensus is reached with the result of the pattern purpose being realised and a further speech action pattern being initiated. These subsequent crucial steps in realising the purpose of the speech action are called pattern positions (Ehlich and Rehbein 1986). The speech action pattern of interactive planning is often used as a comprehensive pattern in which other speech action patterns such as substantiating (giving reasons), explaining, rephrasing or reporting are embedded. This means that various pattern positions of the speech action pattern of interactive planning coincide with pat-

![Figure 1. The speech action pattern Interactive Planning (Koole and ten Thije 1994: 122)](image-url)
tern positions mentioned before. For instance, the positive or negative judgement of a proposal for a plan is realised by a report on the actual state of affairs (see figure 1).

Figure 1 depicts the action structure of the speech action pattern of interactive planning (Koole and ten Thije 1994: 122). The flow-chart in figure 1 illustrates the recurrent structure of the pattern by which several judgements can be formulated about either the original or the alternative proposal before one of them is finally accepted by both author and critic. Moreover, on the basis of this flow-chart, the difference between a single pattern position and distinct speech actions must be pointed out. For instance, a proposal for a plan might be realised by one or more assertions, or even by a combination of a suggestion and an assertion whereas the acceptance of the plan might be realised either by an assent or an assertion as well. By differentiating between the analysis of the illocution of the single speech action on the one hand and the quality of the pattern position on the other, the contribution of single speech actions to the purpose of the overall pattern can be determined.

The pattern of reporting has the purpose of assessing the institutional relevance of transmitted knowledge elements with the aim of making common decisions. This pattern is also characterised by the dichotomy between a reporter and an assessor (Koole and ten Thije 1994: 108). The purpose of the pattern is achieved when both accept the relevance of the transmitted knowledge for the actual speech situation. The pattern positions of the reporter are the identification, the representation and the judgement of a certain state of affairs. The pattern positions of the assessor are inquiring about and subsequently accepting the transmitted knowledge. This pattern is also recurrent in that a sequence of speech actions, i.e. a sequence of assessments and questions, can pass by before both reporter and assessor agree and accept the relevance of the transmitted knowledge.

In the following, we reconstruct the discourse in our case study at the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam. We first focus on the standard traversal of these two institutional patterns in the team discussions before proceeding by analysing receptive multilingual peculiarities in this context. The question whether the realisation of the speech action pattern as introduced above (figure 1) is also applicable for the analysis of intercultural discourse has been raised before (Koole and ten Thije 1994) and was answered affirmatively. The focus of the present study is whether this also holds for intercultural discourse under the receptive multilingual mode.

The following stretches of discourse were taken from the planning discussion of the language teaching team, in which the team discusses the agenda for the coming month. In this fragment the colleagues discuss an unfortunate overlapping of events within the institution. The team has the task of organising examinations on German language skills in which the teachers of the Goethe-Institute act as examiners. When going through the following month’s agenda, the team coordinator notices that the next examination overlaps the farewell party for a colleague. Therefore, the examiners could run the risk of missing the farewell party. The team coordinator’s observation of this overlapping initiates a planning discussion in order to solve this problem (see fragment 2).
Fragment 2. 210404: fare well party

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[50]</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>Gerard [v] En dan staat hier 27 april AANmelding DEELnemers</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading aloud</td>
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<td>And then it says here April 27th enrolment for the</td>
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<td>Reading aloud</td>
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<td>exams.</td>
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<td>May 26th written exam 28th oral exam.</td>
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<td>[51]</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Bernd [v] Das ist ja nicht</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Well, that's not</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>That is more than a month before.</td>
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<td>Dat is over RUIM een maand.</td>
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<td>26th it?</td>
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<td>26th it?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Nee, dat is prima.</td>
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<td>No, that's great.</td>
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<td>bad.</td>
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<td>[53]</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>Bernd [v] Da ist schriftlich</td>
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<td>That's the written exam</td>
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<td>and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ja. Zesentwintigste vijf</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes. 26th five</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Germain [v] Zesentwintigste vijf</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yes. 26th five</td>
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<tr>
<td>[54]</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Bernd [v] Weißt Du was ich hier</td>
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<td>Guess what I see here?</td>
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<td>Ja. Zesentwintigste vijf</td>
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<td>Yes. 26th five</td>
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<td>Bernd [v] Zesentwintigste vijf</td>
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<td>Yes. 26th five</td>
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<tr>
<td>[55]</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>Bernd [v] feststelle?</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>That's the same day as Gaby's farewell party (</td>
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<td>Da ist der Abschied von Gaby (</td>
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<td>That's the same day as Gaby's farewell party (</td>
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<tr>
<td>[57]</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>Bernd [v] Weil, sonst könnt nämlch Corina und Carola</td>
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<td>Since otherwise Corina and Carola or whoever</td>
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</table>
Receptive multilingualism in team cooperation

Bernd [v]  
oder wer auch immer da gebraucht würde, die wollen  
will be needed there, they would like to be present at

Bernd [v]  
ja beim Abschied dabei sein, denk ich. Dann können  
the farewell party, I presume. Then they could not go

Bernd [v]  
die ja nicht nach Valuas fahren, oder?  
to Valuas, don't you think?
Gerard [v]  
Das ist  
That
Jaat maar ( )  
Yes but ( )

Bernd [v]  
abends, denkst Du.  
will be in the evening you think.
Gerard [v]  
Volgens mij wel,  
According to me it is.

Bernd [v]  
In de keuken zoals altijd, of wie.  
In the kitchen as always, don't you think so.
Gerard [v]  
ja.  
yes.
Of iets  
Something

Gerard [v]  
dergelijks, ja, ja. Dan KAN het zijn dat ze wat aan de  
like that, yes, yes Then, it could be the case that
late kant terug zijn als ze nog met de trein terug moeten  
they come back quite late if they have to come back
maar op zich halen ze dat wel.  
by train, but in principle they should be able to come back on time.

Bernd [v]  
((3 Sec.)) Dat is een GOEIE vraag.  
That’s a good question.  
((8 Sec.))

Bernd [v]  
Ja, achsó ja  
Yes, well yes.
Gerard [v]  
Maar/ ik hou/ wat ik in de/  
But/ I keep/ what I keep in mind
(4 Sec.)

Gerard [v]  
Mijn plan is om. goed in de gaten te houden.  
My intention is to keep well in mind that I
Gerard [v]  dat ik die aantallen ook inderdaad VOOR receive the number of participants indeed before

Gerard [v]  Koninginnedag DOORKRIJG. Dus voor eind van de Queensday: That is, before the end of

Gerard [v]  komende week. Dan moeten we weten hoeVEEL. the coming week. Then we have to know how many

Gerard [v]  kandidaten. Want dan weten we ook hoeveel mensen candidates. Because then we will also know how many

Gerard [v]  we nodig hebben voor dat mondelinge examen, people we need for that oral exam, how many teams.

Gerard [v]  hoeveel teams daar moeten zijn. ((4 Sec.)) Dan kunnen have to be present. Then we can

Gerard [v]  we hier meteen intern organiseren wie daar naartoe immediately organise internally who will go there.

Bernd [v]  Meteen? At once?

Gerard [v]  gaan. Ja, RUIM van tevoren, (zodat mensen) Yes, long before so that everybody here

can take that into account.

Gerard [v]  zich daar echt op in kunnen stellen. ((5 Sec.)) Ik zal het I will

Gerard [v]  er nog een keer extra inzetten hier write it down here once again. ((7 Sec.)) Eh... Ehm.

Bernd [v]  Hahaha Da sind schon Bücher geliefert von Hahaha, there are already books delivered


If we reconstruct the traversal of the pattern of interactive planning, we notice that Bernd brings up the coincidence of the examination and the farewell party in segment 93 (s93). In the following, both colleagues assess the institutional relevance of this coincidence and agree on it having negative consequences. In s102–105, Gerard expresses a proposal for a plan by asserting: "Mijn plan is om goed in de gaten te houden dat ik die aantallen ook inderdaad VOOR Koninginnedag DOORKRIJG, Dus voor eind van de komende week. Dan moeten we weten hoeVEEL kandidaten. Want dan weten we ook hoeveel mensen we nodig hebben voor dat mondelinge examen, hoeveel teams daar moeten zijn." (‘My intention is to keep well in mind that I receive the exact number of participants indeed before Queen’s day... That is, before the end of the coming week. Then, we have to know how many candidates.’). A four second pause (s106) follows, which can be considered as an acceptance of Gerard’s proposal. Gerard specifies his proposal by uttering (in s107): “Dan kunnen we hier meteen intern organiseren wie daar naartoe gaan” (‘Then we can immediately organise internally who will go there.’) Thereupon Bernd reacts (s108) with the Dutch question “Meteen?” (‘at once?’). Gerard explains his proposal by saying (in s109) “Ja, RUIM van tevoren, (zodat mensen) zich daar echt op in kunnen stellen.” (‘Yes, long before so that everybody here can take that into account’). After a pause (s110), which can be interpreted as an acceptance on the part of Bernd, Gerard notes down the deadline for subscription in the team agenda (s111–113). This marks the fulfilment of the pattern purpose, the achievement of a consensus.

Fragment 2 is a typical example of the discourse which takes place in the language teaching team at the Goethe-Institute. It is striking that the patterns of interactive planning and reporting are realised so frequently. Within these patterns, the German expatriate and the Dutch local both take up the positions of the author and the critic. On the basis of this equal distribution of the positions, we can conclude that the two colleagues have a symmetric institutional relationship. It is furthermore quite striking that the code switching between Dutch and German seems to coincide with the turn taking. As we observed in fragment 1, the Dutch proposal for a plan is evaluated in German. In fact, the traversal through the pattern is not realised in one language. Therefore, the question arises as to whether one action pattern of interactive planning functions as a kind of underlying action structure for both realisations in German and in Dutch, or whether these action patterns are language-specific. Seen as both actants have a high competence in both languages and are experienced in both cultures, we cannot answer this question just on the basis of this case study. We can, however, conclude that the realisation of the purpose of these patterns is achieved in the receptive multilingual mode. This language constellation has become the standard for multilingual communication in the language teaching team.

In the next paragraph, we will focus on one linguistic means used by the interactants to ensure (a more or less unproblematic) understanding within the receptive multilingual mode.
5. Institutional keywords

In the following, we will elaborate on institutional keywords, one of the special means that are applied by the colleagues Bernd and Gerard at the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam in order to ensure mutual understanding. As Koole and ten Thije (1994) reveal, institutional keywords are an important prerequisite for institutional cooperation. They discuss three characteristics of the relationship between keywords and cognitive structures. First, “institutional keywords represent shared knowledge of qualified institutional actors” (ibidem; 140). Second, “the cognitive structure connected with institutional keywords is an abstract frame whose slots are filled with concrete knowledge elements. The abstract frame and the concrete knowledge elements are both interactively produced” (ibidem 140). Third, “the elements of knowledge are structured according to the institutional purpose of the keyword” (ibidem; 141). Keywords actualise common institutional knowledge and, consequently, make it easier to establish mutual understanding.

Keywords help to characterise the institution in question. They can be composed of words or phrases that only exist within the particular institution, but can also contain vocabulary that is used outside the institution as well. Within the internal communication of the organisation, however, these keywords receive a special, institution-specific meaning. Table 1 contains a list of keywords used at the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam. As can be seen in the table, most keywords are German notions or abbreviations, which are used both by the German and by the Dutch team members in all the departments of the Goethe-Institute in Amsterdam. A possible explanation for this is that the Goethe-Institute is a German organisation operating on a worldwide basis. If the employees wish to refer to central aspects regarding the general institutional knowledge, it is most likely that they will choose German keywords. The frequent use of German keywords, therefore, influences the receptive multilingual communicative mode, meaning that the Dutch employees have to adapt to the foreign language more often.

Some keywords such as intensiv/intensief, Saal/zaal und Sommer/zomer, however, are cognates in Dutch and German and can therefore not be precisely attributed to one of the two languages. The same holds true for abbreviations, which in a lot of cases can be derived from either of the two languages. The keywords in table 1 refer to important institutional knowledge. In fact, these words instantly activate quite specific institutional knowledge. By this procedure efficient teamwork is facilitated. In the following, we will illustrate the use of keywords by discussing an excerpt from the case study by Roelands (2004). The excerpt shows the use of a Dutch keyword by the German employee Bernd. Although some instances of code switching can be found, the discourse takes place in the receptive multilingual mode with both speakers using their first language.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German keywords</th>
<th>Team-specific meaning</th>
<th>Dutch keywords</th>
<th>Team-specific meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kurs 1–7 Niveau 1–7 N5/6</td>
<td>Course on seven different levels</td>
<td>Toetsje</td>
<td>Language-assessment test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinderkurs</td>
<td>German course for children</td>
<td>Z1, Z3, Z4</td>
<td>Courses on business communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensivkurs</td>
<td>Two-week crash course</td>
<td>Zaterduitsdag</td>
<td>Saturdays German training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sommerkurs</td>
<td>Summer course</td>
<td>Zaalagenda</td>
<td>Memo pad for room reservations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wochenplan</td>
<td>Week planning for the whole institute</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TestDaf</td>
<td>Test for German as foreign language</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZOP</td>
<td><em>Zentrale Oberstufen prüfung</em> (central assessment for upper school)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWD-Protokoll</td>
<td><em>Prüfung Wirtschaftsdeutsch International</em> (record on the assessments for international business communication)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDV</td>
<td><em>Elektronische Datenverarbeitung</em> (data processing)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KDS</td>
<td><em>Kleines Deutsches Sprachdiplom</em> (First German language certificate)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDS</td>
<td><em>Großes Deutsches Sprachdiplom</em> (Advanced German language certificate)</td>
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</table>
The Dutch keyword *Toetsje*

In the excerpt ‘toetsje’ (see fragment 3), the employees Bernd and Gerard discuss the situation of a student who has requested to participate in a language course without having undertaken the required language assessment. The word ‘toetsje’ is an ordinary Dutch word that, however, activates specific institutional knowledge when mentioned by the team members of the Goethe-Institute. It refers to a short oral test in which the language competence of a student can be determined on the basis of a spontaneous conversation between an applicant and a Goethe-Institute employee. In a feedback interview, Gerard explained how the word came into use in the institute’s external communication with possible future Dutch students. The word ‘toetsje’ is used in its diminutive form in order to make it sound less threatening for a future student to undergo an examination. A word like ‘test’ or ‘examination’ would most likely frighten people pointlessly. In fact, diminutives are a typical Dutch morphological phenomenon. After having proven its function in external communication, the word ‘toetsje’ has consequently become an institutional keyword also in internal communication. Both the German and the Dutch employee are aware of its specific institutional meaning. The German team coordinator therefore uses the Dutch keyword in his German discourse. The word ‘toetsje’ which originates from external communication has thus succeeded in becoming a characteristic of the internal communication at the Goethe-Institute. Whereas the word initially only had an everyday meaning, it has turned into an institutional keyword for the language teaching team (see fragment 3).

The keywords we found are, apart from a few exceptions, used in one language by both interactants. In order to make sure that the same institutional knowledge is activated, the participants thus change the language code when using institutional keywords. The translation of institutional keywords is not appropriate, since a translated word may imply a change of meaning. Only when the keywords are applied in one language, all employees can be certain that the same institutional knowledge is activated.

With respect to keywords, two types of code switching have been defined in the literature, namely intersentential and intra-sentential code switching (Milroy and Muysken 1995). Intersentential code switching does not occur within the contributions of the participants. However, it is found at every change in turn, since, in the case of receptive multilingualism, every switch of turn also results in a switch of code as illustrated above. Intrasentential code switching can be found more often in the discourse of the Dutchman, since he has to integrate more German keywords into his speech than his German counterpart.

The analysis carried out reveals that institutional keywords enable and facilitate a certain understanding between the participants in the receptive multilingual mode. The peculiarity of keywords in receptive multilingualism is that these words do not follow the standard rules for language choice. Although the speakers choose to com-
Receptive multilingualism in team cooperation

Since these keywords inevitably activate institutional knowledge, the speakers decide not to endanger the mutual understanding by translating the keywords into their first language. Institutional keywords activate the same institutional knowledge among all interlocutors. Therefore, they help to build a common basis that is especially needed in intercultural and multilingual communication, where misunderstandings are far more likely to occur than in monolingual and monocultural discourse.

Bernd [v]  Das kann gut sein. Das kann gut sein.  
That could well be the case. That could well be the case

Gerard [v]  Dit is vanavond Gudrun en daar staat is geen probleem.  
This evening it is Gudrun and it says here 'no problem'

Bernd [v]  Es was so einer wo eh am Telefon 'snel snel' und dann  
There was someone where, on the phone 'fast fast' and

Gerard [v]  

Bernd [v]  habe ich gedacht ohne Toetsje und vom Telefon passt er  
then I thought without the exam and judging by the

telephone conversation, he might fit in the course with

Bernd [v]  respect to his previous knowledge  
Then I found

Gerard [v]  Dann habe ich  
Ok.

Bernd [v]  das so gelöst.  
the following solution

Gerard [v]  Er kommt heute zur Probe dann  
He's coming to the class to try it

Bernd [v]  sehen wir weiter, weil die Z3 is niet vol.  
out today and then we’ll see, because the Z3 is not complete.
Finally, we would like to discuss the relation between institutional discourse and intercultural communication (Bührig and ten Thije 2006; ten Thije 2002, 2003). This relation can best be illustrated by means of an analysis of another fragment from our corpus from the Goethe-Institute.

In fragment 4, Bernd and Gerard discuss which deadline should be decided on for the enrolment for a test that is to be carried out at the Goethe-Institute. Bernd enters the planning mode by saying “So, dann PWD, wie sieht’s denn da aus mit der Terminleiste, Anmeldung ist bis circa zwei Wochen van tevoren” (“Well, coming to PWD, what about the list of dates, enrolment is possible until approximately two weeks before”). Again, an institutional keyword is used, namely PWD, meaning ‘Prüfung Wirtschaftsdeutsch’ (Test on German for economic purposes). The keyword PWD is based on the employees’ specific institutional knowledge. We also observe a code switch within Bernd’s utterance. He begins the fragment in his mother tongue German, but then switches to Dutch. By means of this intrasentential code switch to ‘van tevoren’ (‘before’), he most likely signals that he is quoting a Dutch colleague. If we read through the planning pattern that underlies this discourse, it becomes fairly obvious that the two colleagues do not agree on which deadline should be given for the exam. Bernd suggests (segment 5) that they should not be too strict on the deadline, whereas Gerard insists on handling the deadline quite strictly. According to him, enrolment shouldn’t be possible anymore after May 10th. The planning pattern comes to an end in segment 113 when Bernd accepts Gerard’s proposal by saying: ‘Ja, gut’ (‘Yes, that’s ok.’).

With respect to the intercultural apparatus at work, we would like to draw attention to the segments 108 to 114, in which Bernd states: “Die soll tien mei kommen. Eind van de maand. Einunddreißigster? April. Das sind zehn. Ach so. Stimmt. Wir sagen immer zwei Wochen. Ja gut. Hasse Recht.” (They should be there by May 10th. End of the month. April 31st. That’s 10. Oh, yes. That’s true. We always say two weeks. Okay, you’re right.)

Now consider fragment 4. According to Hoffmann (1997), expressions such as ‘day’, ‘week’, and ‘year’ belong to the so-called metrical system. These expressions refer to consistent time intervals. Throughout the fragment, the actual range of these time intervals remains unclear. It finally becomes evident from the discourse that the two weeks discussed do not stand for 14, but rather ten days. A common fact, that would seem to be self-evident, is thereby put into question. This difference in the perception of everyday facts could result from cultural knowledge, as will be argued in the following.

One might expect the misunderstanding regarding the length of the time interval to be solved with the use of the word ‘circa’ (approximately), but there are other hints indicating that the discourse is structured interculturally. We can observe an interesting contrast with respect to the use of the personal deictic procedure we/wir (we) in the segments 105 and 112. In segment 105: “Machen we es immer noch ganz locker”,

6. Receptive multilingualism and intercultural discourse
### Fragment 4. 130504: vantevoren

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>100</th>
<th>101</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>Was ist mit der Terminliste? Anmeldung ist bis circa zwei</td>
<td>What about the list of dates? Enrolment is until approximately two</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>102</th>
<th>103</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>Wochen van tevoren.</td>
<td>weeks before.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gerard [v]</strong></td>
<td>Ja, tot eind van de maand. Dus de komen-</td>
<td>Yes, until the end of the month That is, they</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>104a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>de week kunnen ze zich nog aanmelden can still enroll during the coming week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gerard [v]</strong></td>
<td>Und dann machste ganz And then you close the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>104b 105</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>gr/ äh äh Schluss enrollment?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gerard [v]</strong></td>
<td>Ja, 10 mei Yes, 10th of May</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>108a 108b 108c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>locker, lassen we das dann laufen We let it go then.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gerard [v]</strong></td>
<td>Ja, 10 mei Yes, 10th of May</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>109 110 111 112</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>Die soll tien mei kommen, he/she should come the 10th of May</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>113 114 115 116</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>Das sind 10 Ach so. That is 10. Oh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gerard [v]</strong></td>
<td>Wir sagen immer zwei Wochen We always say two weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>118</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>Ja gut Hasse recht Das heißt, was haben wir heute? Okay You’re right That is, what’s the date today?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gerard [v]</strong></td>
<td>hm Hm Hm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>118</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>Einundzwanzig? Dann müsse Dir nur 21th Then you just have to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gerard [v]</strong></td>
<td>Énentwintig. 21th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>114</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bernd [v]</strong></td>
<td>überlegen ((5 Sec.)) think about</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the Dutch (or colloquial German) deictic procedure ‘we’ refers to the group of speakers that includes both the speaker and the hearer and maybe even other employees of the Goethe-Institute as well. Bernd refers to a general maxim in the Goethe-Institute, namely that deadlines are generally treated fairly loosely. Bernd’s utterance could also be understood as an allusion to the proverbial Dutch informality (see e.g. Shetter 1997).

In segment 112, the disagreement on the exact duration of the two weeks is brought up by Bernd. He utters: “Wir sagen immer zwei Wochen” (“We always say two weeks”). The personal pronoun ‘wir’ in this case refers to a group to which the speaker, but not the hearer belongs (‘exclusive we’). In this context, the expression ‘two weeks’ can be interpreted as a language-specific formula used by Bernd. Bernd refers to the German language community to which the hearer Gerard does not belong. This contrasting of the two groups of speakers with respect to one group-specific maxim (cf. the combination of we/wir and immer (always)) indicates that the institutional discourse is structured interculturally.

Bernd’s remark suggests that he assumes that the Dutch and the German metric temporal system apparently work in a different manner. He furthermore interprets the misunderstanding relating to the time interval of two weeks as a cultural difference. Thereby, he indirectly refers to the concepts illustrated in ‘The silent Language’ by Stuart Hall (1959, 1981), which highlights the different time standards in various cultures. Gerard does not join this discussion. He acknowledges the elaborations made by his colleague by uttering the interjection ‘hm’ twice. The question now arises as to how we can account for (the discursive elaboration of) this cultural difference within a discourse-theoretical framework. For this purpose, we would like to introduce Rehbein’s (2006) concept of a Cultural Apparatus. Cultural apparatuses are discursive instruments that start to come into play when apparently self-evident cultural facts are put into question, or when problems or intercultural misunderstandings arise and remain (first and second position of the cultural apparatus, figure 2). After having reflected on a discourse problem, the interactants can either change their standard solutions and perceptions (fourth position), or stick to their original cultural standards. The outcome becomes visible in the post-history (fifth position).

Scheme of the cultural apparatus (Rehbein 2006: 74):

(i) the underlying form of standard action (with action systems) contains a problem;
(ii) negating action, which consists of two parts, suspension of discourse and identification of the problem, calls the presuppositions of (one or more of) the participants into question;
(iii) there follows a (partial) restructuring of mental processes such as action practices, thought structures, forms of imagining and/or social experiences (téχων) (“third position”);
Receptive multilingualism in team cooperation

(iv) this results in new forms of (speech) action through an alteration of the relationship between surface and deep structure, i.e. through the act of reflection ("fourth position");

(v) finally the post-history of the apparatus manifests with consequences etc.

We would like to put forward the hypothesis that the segments 108 to 114 in fragment 4 contain the application of the cultural apparatus, leading us to the question of what happens in the fragment. Bernd reflects on Gerard’s suggestion concerning the deadline for the enrolment for the test. It is interesting to observe that he identifies the data in Dutch. He states: “tien mei” and “eind van de maand” and therefore concludes that the closing date for the deadline should be April 31th. In s109 he utters ‘das sind zehn’ (that is ten). Speaking in terms of the cultural apparatus, there is a problem being formulated. In this case, it is related to the precise interpretation of the Dutch temporal expression ‘van tevoren’ (‘before’) which was used by Bernd. The question arises as to which time interval ‘van tevoren’ exactly covers (first position). In the following, a discussion on the precise handling of the deadline for the enrolment for the test (second position) arises. After that, we can observe how knowledge is restructured with respect to the mentioned interval of time by at least one interactant, in this case Bernd. This could be interpreted as the third position of the cultural apparatus with the actual restructuring of knowledge as a result being the fourth position. However, the question arises as to whether we are really dealing with cultural knowledge that is being restructured, or whether we are merely facing a misunderstanding that could also have occurred in mono-cultural discourse. We will argue in the following, that at least Bernd interprets the misunderstanding as being due to intercultural miscommunication. He considers the German and the Dutch interpretation of the term ‘two weeks’ to be different and thus responsible for the problem. Bernd reflects on the exact period of two weeks (i.e. fourteen days) in an exothesis\(^5\) (Ehlich and Rehbein 1986) which he ends with: ‘ach so’. He then explains what the misunderstanding was based on according to him (‘Stimmt’ (s111) That’s true. ‘Wir sagen immer zwei Wochen’ (s112). We always say two weeks.). He finally accepts Gerard’s planning suggestion by uttering: \(Ja, gut\). (Yes, okay). \(Hasse recht\). (You’re right).

If we take a look at the post-history (the fifth position of the cultural apparatus), it is interesting to find that Bernd (once again) asks what the present date is. In segment 116, he notices that the present date is April 21st, which is confirmed by Gerard in segment 117 by him repeating it ‘eenentwintig’ (21st) in Dutch. The cultural apparatus has analysed the different weighing of time as a potential misunderstanding, which results in a successful traversal of the institutional planning pattern. The receptive multilingual mode of interaction is re-established back to the institutional team standard.

With respect to the general cultural system of Dutch and German presuppositions, it is striking that the two colleagues typify the exact opposite of the cultural stereotypes of the German and the Dutch (see e.g. Westheide 1997). The German proposes to handle the deadline for the enrolment quite loosely, which by no means corresponds to
the cultural stereotype of the German punctuality/precision. The Dutchman, on the other hand, wants the deadline to be handled precisely, which also does not correspond to the stereotype of Dutch informality. It is possible that the interactants adjust themselves to their perception of the other’s culture. This, however, would have to be investigated in more detail in future analyses.

7. Discussion and conclusions

At the end of this paper we discuss the specific characteristics of the case study in the Goethe-Institute Amsterdam and formulate future research possibilities. We structure these considerations according to the three perspectives we introduced in section 2, namely the language contact, the institutional constellation and the interactants’ perspective.

From a language contact perspective, this case concerns language contact between two closely related languages. A comparison of this case to the various situations in other Goethe-Institutes situated all over the world would make it possible to learn more about multilingualism among speakers of different languages. If other languages and nations are considered, the impact of the socio-political status of the languages and nations on the occurrence of receptive multilingualism could be analysed in more detail as well as the impact of the receptive multilingual mode on the general attitude of the speakers of the one language towards the speakers of other languages. Moreover, the changing attitudes of the neighbour countries towards Germany could be studied (Fremdling et al., 1992; Trautmann 1991) along with the changes within small language communities in Europe (Arntz 1997). In this context, receptive multilingualism may even lead to a reduction of the use of dialects in border regions (Hinskens 1993).

With respect to the second, institutional, perspective we would like to state that our observed case exemplifies a language contact type that Ehlich (1992) denotes as ‘Intektion’. With this neologism Ehlich refers to the type of language contact that comes into being when a new super-structure is constituted above two or more nation states involved such as the European Union. This language constellation is referred to as ‘sophisticated multilingualism’ (ibidem: 68). In actual fact, this multilingual communication results from the establishment of supra-national institutional structures corresponding to European unification. In this context a comparison with, for instance, the other institutional communication in German–Dutch contact would be very interesting. Since 1999, the German–Dutch border cities Dinxperlo and Suderwick have, for instance, established a joint police station that is in charge in both countries (ten Thije 2003). In this context, multilingual communication is an essential prerequisite in order to realise the main institutional purposes. Whereas the Goethe-Institute case concentrates only on internal communication, the study of this police station might expand our knowledge about the specific institutional preconditions applying to this communicative mode in external multilingual constellations (Clyne 2003).
Another restriction relating to the institutional perspective concerns the specific purpose of the Goethe-Institute. The Goethe-Institute aims at promoting German language and culture abroad. Therefore, this organisation might be generally more willing to develop alternative modes of multilingual communication. We have shown that the language teaching team realises its mean institutional purposes efficiently using the receptive multilingual mode. By expanding this case study to other Goethe-Institutes we could not only measure the effect that factors of linguistic and cultural distance between the two language communities involved have on the occurrence and development of receptive multilingualism, but we could at the same time shed light on the effect of the language policy of the Goethe-Institute on the completion of the action space in local institutes.

Finally, from the interactants' perspective, we wish to stress the fact that in this case the language competence of both interactants was comparatively high and, consequently, the receptive multilingual mode was just one of the alternatives they were able to apply within their team communication. They always had the opportunity of switching to one of the two languages involved. It would be interesting to focus on interactants with different second language skills in order to detect the minimal language competence that is needed to perform receptive multilingualism.

The restrictions mentioned above prevent us from formulating general claims about receptive multilingualism that go beyond its implementation in the Goethe-Institute in Amsterdam. The perspectives for receptive multilingualism beyond the Goethe Institute have to be elaborated on in future research.

Notes

* This chapter is an English elaboration of the German articles by Roelands and ten Thije (2006) and Ribbert and ten Thije (2006). We would like to thank the Goethe-Institute in Amsterdam for participating in our research. The names of the participants have been changed. We also thank Nicky Burke and two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments on a previous version of this article.

1. The Dutch Rudy Carrell and Linda de Mol became famous as TV-presenters/actors in Germany.

2. In a recent manual the B2 level is described as follows: “Can use the language fluently, accurately and effectively on a wide range of general, academic, vocational or leisure topics, marking clearly the relationships between ideas. Can communicate spontaneously with good grammatical control without much sign of having to restrict what he/ she wants to say, adopting a level of formality appropriate to the circumstances” and “Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction, and sustained relationship with native speakers quite possible without imposing strain on either party. Can highlight the personal significance of events and experiences, accounts for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanation and arguments.” (Council of Europe, 2003: 56)
3. In a recent manual the C2 level is described as follows: “Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning. Can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of modification devices. Can backtrack and restructure around a difficulty so smoothly the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.” (Council of Europe 2003: 56)

4. The article ‘Discourse-Pragmatic Description’ by Bührig and ten Thije (2005) contains a survey of the different approaches to discourse and conversation analysis.

5. Ehlich and Rehbein (1986) define exothesis as the verbalization of a mental state of affairs.

References


Receptive multilingualism in team cooperation


