A dynamic, usage-based approach to communicative language teaching of Dutch as a second language

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0. Abstract

Language teaching follows trends in theory of second language development (SLD). In recent years, a dynamic usage based (DUB) approach to SLD has gotten a firm foothold. A DUB approach to SLD holds that language learning is a dynamic process in which all relevant factors to language learning interact dynamically over time and that language is lexically driven (if driven at all), rather than grammatically. In addition, Langacker (2008:81) points out that mastering a language requires the specific, usage-based learning of a vast array of conventional units. Frequent exposure to such units is needed, ideally occurring in meaningful context exchanges, approximating socially and culturally normal usage events.

With DUB principles in mind, Hong & Verspoor (2013) developed a communicative language teaching program for Vietnamese learners of English, based on a popular movie. In this replication study we developed a similar like communicative language teaching program for advanced, German learners of Dutch at university. This method was tested by means of pre-/post-test design, in a semester long experiment. Results show that the method proved to engage learners and had significant effects in increasing language proficiency.
1. Introduction

In recent years publications in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) have shown a marked trend towards dynamic, usage-based approaches to describe the development of linguistic knowledge (Robinson & Ellis, 2008). A dynamic, usage-based approach is a blend of Dynamic System Theory (DST) as applied to language development in the field of applied linguistics and usage-based theory in theoretical linguistics, mainly as proposed by Langacker (2000). A dynamic, usage-based (DUB) approach to language learning holds that language learning is a dynamic process in which all relevant factors to language learning dynamically interact over time. In addition, it holds that meaning is central, that lexicon and grammar form a continuum and that grammar subserves meaning. A usage-based approach thus, in opposition to linguistic nativism, does not postulate an innate grammatical system (i.e. Universal Grammar) to explain the eventual outcome of successful language acquisition. Further, Langacker (2008) has pointed out that mastering a language requires the specific usage-based learning of a vast array of conventional units, which calls for frequent exposure to such units. This exposure should ideally occur in meaningful context exchanges, approximating socially and culturally normal usage events.

The new insights gained in the field of SLA have pedagogical implications for second language learning programs, which since the seventies have been heavily inspired by communicative language teaching (CLT). CLT is an approach to language teaching that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of study. However, Hong and Verspoor (2013) point out that CLT has not always been successful in training communicatively competent second language learners, as has been the case with learners of English in Vietnam. They seek a plausible explanation for this in the fact that current CLT approaches, including task-based learning approaches, prefer a strong emphasis on "output" and "interaction", rather than taking Krashen's notion of "comprehensible input" as a starting point. In other words, listening skills have tended to become over-shaded by an emphasis on speaking skills in CLT. This movement towards a stress on output can at least be called peculiar, since the fundamental source of linguistic data for acquisition is the input the learner receives (VanPatten, 2004). In addition, in her personal communication with Hong and Verspoor, Swain (October 18, 2012) points out that output and interaction were never meant to replace input in a CLT approach, but meant to be used in addition to input. Why the emphasis on input has been replaced, rather than complemented, with interaction and output, is not clear. There is no empirical evidence that output and interaction-only approaches are effective in long-term experiments, but there is evidence that input-only approaches can be quite effective for teaching general language knowledge (Verspoor & Winitz, 1997; Ligthbown, 1992; Lightbown et al. 2002).

Hong and Verspoor (2013) decided to develop a communicative language learning program for Vietnamese learners of English at university, wherein quality input is brought back into the classroom, and wherein DUB principles are central. In addition, the program heavily relied on a sociocultural approach to teaching and empirical findings in the L2 literature. Moreover, the program of Hong and Verspoor attempted to address not only linguistic but also sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence by addressing language more holistically as it occurs within (almost) natural usage events. The program was based on a popular movie and tested in a semester long experiment. A total of 169 university students aged between 18-20 years participated, of which 74 control participants and 95 experimental ones. Results showed that students in the experimental DUB condition outperformed the students in the control condition significantly in proficiency gain scores. The experimental group, which had exposure to authentic language, no speaking practice, and no grammatical explanations, performed better in the General English Proficiency test than the control group,
which had more interaction and grammar lessons (Hong & Verspoor 2013).

The notable results of the study of Hong and Verspoor and a related study of Kempees (2011) led to wonder whether a replication study could attain similar results in proficiency gains. In addition, Hong and Verspoor pointed out that their method had a positive effect in engaging learners, which led to wonder whether significant effects of a DUB method on motivation and willingness to communicate could be found. An experiment was set up, this time working with advanced, German students learning Dutch as a second language, to find an answer to the following research question:

**What effect does a set of lessons based on a dynamic usage-based approach to second language development have in increasing motivation, willingness to communicate and language proficiency, for advanced, German learners of Dutch?**

To find an answer to this question, a language teaching program based on DUB principles, similar to that of Hong and Verspoor, was developed. The program was based on a popular Dutch movie and tested on German university students of Dutch in a semester long experiment. Students were tested for their motivation, willingness to communicate and language proficiency at the beginning of the semester and again at the end of the semester, to determine the effect of the lesson plan.

In the following chapter the theoretical premises on which the current approach is based are discussed. Thereafter, I will report on the 10-week intervention study that tests the hypothesis that authentic input, repetition and scaffolding to help learners understand the meaning of all forms at all levels, has a positive effect on motivation, willingness to communicate and language proficiency.
2. Theoretical background

This section presents the theoretical framework that has been adopted in our approach, based on insights from a Dynamic Systems Theory approach to language and usage-based linguistics. Pedagogical implications of these insights will be discussed and linked to other empirical findings in L2 literature, relevant in the context of this study. At the end of the section, the literature will be linked to the research questions and purpose of this study.

2.1 A Dynamic Systems Theory approach to language

In recent years several researchers in the field of applied linguistics have adopted the view that language is multivariate and dynamic, which is most clearly carried out by proponents of a dynamic systems theory (DST) approach to language (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2010; Verspoor, De Bot, Lowie, 2011). DST started as a branch of theoretical mathematics, and its initial aim was to model the development of complex systems. Systems are groups of entities or parts that work together as a whole, consist of subsystems and they are themselves part of a larger system. Systems change through forces and are therefore “dynamic”. Sometimes the system changes continuously, sometimes discontinuously or even chaotically. Because there are systems at every level in the physical world, DST has found applications in a wide range of fields and it has been used to solve various practical problems. What all these fields and applications have in common is that the phenomena they want to study or to change do not seem to follow predictable patterns of development (Verspoor, De Bot, Lowie, 2011).

A DST approach to language development holds that language is a complex, dynamic system, of which all parts are completely interconnected. All variables are interrelated, and changes in one variable will have an impact on all other variables that are part of the system. The outcome of development over time is therefore highly unpredictable – variables keep changing over time and the outcome of these interactions is non-linear and cannot be calculated exactly. Further, the language system is constantly changing either through external input or internal reorganization. Consequentially, growth and decline of knowledge are normal characteristics of a system. The dynamic language system is highly dependent on internal and external resources and its initial state. Minor differences at the beginning may have dramatic consequences in the long run. This has also been referred to as ‘The butterfly effect’, a term proposed by meteorologist Lorenz, who wanted to account for the huge impact small local effects may have on global weather. In DST, iteration of simple procedures may lead to the emergence of complex patterns (Verspoor, De Bot, Lowie, 2011). The idea of emergentism is often presented as an alternative to theories based on innateness of language, and in particular Chomsky’s universal grammar, although some believe these theories are not incompatible (Plaza Pust, 2008).

It has been argued that DST is in line with Vygotsky’s (1987) sociocultural theory of human learning (De Bot et al, 2005). This theory describes learning as a social process and the origination of human intelligence in society or culture. The major theme is that social interaction plays a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Vygotsky believed everything is learned at two levels: first, through interaction with others, second, through integration into the individual’s mental structure. A second important theme in Vygotsky’s theory is the idea that the potential for cognitive development is limited to a "zone of proximal development" (ZPD). This "zone" is the area of exploration for which the student is cognitively prepared, but in order to fully develop it, the student needs help and social interaction. Therefore, a teacher or more experienced peer needs to provide the learner with "scaffolding" to support the student’s evolving understanding of knowledge domains or development of complex skills. This “scaffolding” includes collaborative learning, discourse and modeling. The implication of Vygotsky’s theory is that learners should be provided with
socially rich environments in which to explore knowledge domains with their fellow students, teachers and outside experts (Vygotsky, 1987).

DST and sociocultural theory are in line in the sense that both state that development or learning should be seen as emergent: individuals change and transform through interaction with their social and material environments. Language, as well as the social environment and its individuals, is a dynamic system, because its subsystems (phonology, vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, writing, reading, semantics, pragmatics, etc.) continually interact with each other over time. This means that learning in general and learning a language in particular are dynamic processes (De Bot et al, 2005).

**Pedagogical implications of DST**

The theory discussed so far contains several aspects that are relevant to language pedagogy. First of all, language development depends critically on initial conditions. Initial conditions are the state at which the learner is at the moment the teaching begins. At this point, the state of the learner will be the combined result of all previous states and experiences in L1 learning, L2 learning, aptitude, context and so on. For example, in the present study, the learners’ L1 (German) and L2 (Dutch) both belong to the Indo European language tree and are both Germanic languages. As a consequence, many similarities can be found in grammatical structure and morphology, but many differences can be found as well, not in the least in the phonological area. After following at least two semester long L2 language courses with a standardized communicative method and following some lectures on linguistics and literature in the L2, the learners can be considered as relatively advanced learners. However, despite being relatively advanced, on average, the learners have not that often been exposed to spoken Dutch in natural, or natural-like situations. Taking these initial conditions in mind, the teacher needs to make sure not to dwell on grammatical constructions or words that are similar in the L1, but to pick out those challenging cases that are different and therefore interesting for students. In addition, students need to be exposed to enough authentic input that enables them to establish new form-meaning pairs of expressions and become entrenched with L2 phonology.

Second, L2 learning depends on internal and external resources. Internal resources are those within the learning individual, such as the capacity to learn, memory capacity, problem solving skills, aptitude, motivation, self-confidence and willingness to communicate. External resources are those outside the individual learner, such as the linguistic input the learner is exposed to in and outside class (teacher talk, textbooks, movies, music, TV, etc.), teacher personalities and school facilities. These resources not only have an impact on the ways a learner learns an L2, but also interact with each other over time, and since resources are limited, they may compete. For example, at early stages, paying attention to what a native or target language speaker says may compete with trying to produce language in the L2. From this follows that at intermediate or advanced stages, wherein learners produce language in L2 with relative more ease, there are more resources for paying close attention to what an L1 speaker actually says and how he says it. In the present study, we therefore take advantage of these resources and put a primary focus on paying attention to authentic input, which is “scaffolded” or made meaningful with the help of the teacher. In addition, output should occur naturally when the learners ask questions or react to the content.

Third, language is a complex system consisting of many different sub-systems that are interconnected and continually changing. In various uses and contexts, sentence patterns can be found, which in turn consist of clauses, words and syllables, with all their associations and collocations, which in their turn consist of sounds. These sub-systems are in continuous change, since a change in one particular sub-system could cause a change in another one, which causes another change. All sub-systems develop over time, but not at the same rate. Some sub-systems will compete for attention; some may develop at the same time, without
competition. Keeping the different sub-systems that may compete in mind, the teacher should still present the whole system with all its subsystems of sound, meaning and form together. However, s/he should not expect the learner will be able to process them all equally at once. The teacher should also keep in mind that the same type, whether aural or written, and amount of input is likely to have significantly different effects for different learners, with respect to their initial conditions and the differences in interaction of resources over time. VanPatten (2004) as well points out the dynamically changing in input processing, saying it is likely that the input a student receives, while interacting with the environment, may be processed differently at different times. In addition, he postulates that learners, because of working memory constraints and because they pay attention to prosodic cues (that signal content or more meaningful words), are only able to process input for meaning before they can process it for form. This means that in processing input after the learner has processed input for meaning, and has been able to make form-meaning connections for the content words, he or she will have more resources available to process the same input (or similar input) for less meaningful forms.

Fourth, in DST, complex patterns may emerge through iteration of simple procedures. Larsen-Freeman (2012) has pointed out that this iteration in DST connects to pedagogical repetition. In her view, repetition should be seen as revisiting the same territory with a slightly different stance, every time resulting in another mutable state. Repetition should thus not be seen as exact replication. With respect to pedagogy, this means that iterating a particular language event (e.g. showing the same movie scene several times in a row) does not mean the same thing every time:

Because of limited resources, the learner may first only be able to get the gist of the general event, the second time the learner revisits the scene s/he may note some of the expressions used, the third time s/he may begin to really understand what some of the expressions mean in the context, and not until later will the learner be able to focus clearly on each of the form-meaning-use mappings.

(Hong & Verspoor, 2013:7)

At the production level, iteration or repetition plays a role in internalizing expressions. Through imitation, especially as it occurs in private speech, the learner internalizes features of the L2 (Lantolf, 2006). In addition, in sociocultural theory, imitation is seen as an intentional and potentially transformative process rather than as rote mimicking. Therefore, in this approach, we consider repeating lines as helpful in internalizing expressions.

The idea of iteration is related to self-organization. By iterating simple procedures, the system (in our case the student’s L2) undergoes phase shifts, in which the cognitive system self-organizes. In this way, new, complex patterns of understanding may emerge. With respect to language pedagogy, Hong and Verspoor point out that this means that a language teacher cannot really “teach” language, but can only create conditions in which the learner recurrently visits and engages with the language so that self-organization will develop in the learner’s mind.

2.2 Usage-based linguistics

In addition to a DST approach to language, in recent years a new view of language and human linguistic competence has begun to emerge, represented by a group of theories most often called cognitive-functional linguistics, or usage-based linguistics. In line with Langacker (2000), we call our approach a dynamic, usage-based approach to emphasize the link between DST and usage-based linguistics.

The central idea in usage-based theories is that language structure emerges through repeated language use (e.g., Langacker, 2000, 2008; Bybee, 2002; see Tomasello, 2003, and
Barlow and Kemmer, 2000, for similar approaches). Further, seen from a usage-based perspective, language is not a set of syntactic rules but a vast array of conventional units that have sounds, meanings, and forms that are interconnected. Schematic patterns may emerge through use, or in other words, the dynamic language system self-organizes into form-meaning pairs at many different levels (word, phrase, clause, sentence, discourse). New pairs emerge through humans general learning mechanisms such as association, categorization and abstraction. This notion of language learning is in contrast with traditional linguistics, which holds that a learner already knows the general rules of language (UG), which s/he progressively refines and applies to his/her own language. Because words are probably the most meaningful elements in a language, usage-based approaches pose that language –if driven at all – is driven lexically, rather than syntactically (Tyler, 2010).

Words are combined with other words and form collocations, formulaic sequences and conventionalized patterns. Many of these patterns are schematic clause constructions, but others may become so conventionalized that they become rather fixed and become a “conventionalized way of saying things” (Smiskova et al. 2012). Langacker (2008) poses explicitly that mastering a language requires the specific, usage-based learning of a vast array of these conventional units. The more frequent a linguistic pattern to convey a certain concept is used, the more likely it is for such conventions to come into being. This suggests the importance of providing the learner with sufficient exposure to representative uses of a given unit, ideally in the context of meaningful exchanges approximating socially and culturally normal usage events. In general, longer conventional units are difficult for the L2 learner to acquire, as the learner may not be exposed to them on regular basis and as they are often not entirely predictable, nor translatable. However, relevant to our context of teaching Dutch as a second language, very small units, like modal particles, might be difficult for the L2 learner to acquire as well. Modal particles are uninflected words, which reflect the mood or attitude of the speaker and change the mood of a verb. They are often used to indicate how the speaker thinks that the content of the sentence relates to the participants’ common knowledge, but their translation is often not straightforward and depends on the context. Languages that use a lot of modal particles in spoken form are Dutch, German, Indonesian and Japanese. Despite being small in token, Tom van der Wouden points out modal particles are the “lubricating oil” of communication and when a L2 speaker manages to use them, s/he no longer speaks in a strange, ‘un-Dutch´ and stilted way (Van Maris, 2001). However, due to their lack of presence in non-verbal reality and communicative L2 methods and classes, it is difficult for non-native speakers to learn them.

In usage-based approaches to L1 acquisition, strong evidence has been found that what children produce is very much in line with what they have heard. For example, data from Tomasello (2000) and Diesel and Tomasello (2001) show that there is a rather close relation between the two. Further, Bybee and Hopper (2001) report on evidence from natural conversation, diachronic change, variability, child language acquisition and psycholinguistic experimentation and conclude that frequency with which certain items and strings of items are used has a profound influence on the way language is broken up into chunks in memory storage, the way such chunks are related to other stored material and the ease with which they are accessed to produce new utterances. Detailed studies that focus on the relation between L2 development and frequency and type of input are rare. However, Ellis (2002) gives an extensive and convincing review of the literature concerning frequency effects in all components of language learning, in a whole issue in Studies in Second Language Acquisition on frequency effects in language processing (2002:24[2]). This shows that many aspects of second language learning can be accounted for in terms of their relation to frequency of occurrence, ranging from word segmentation and word recognition to formulaic utterances and syntax.
Pedagogical implications

Taking dynamic, usage-based theory into account, again we can point out certain aspects of importance to language pedagogy. First, we will assume that meaning is central, and because words are probably the most meaningful elements in language, in our approach we focus mainly on exposing the learners to whole conventional meaningful units, from which the learner, with help of the teacher, infers meaning and schematic patterns. Therefore, instead of focusing on grammatical forms, our approach focuses almost entirely on the use of lexical items and “the company they keep.” This approach is very much in line with the lexical approach by Lewis (1993). Second, we assume that lexicon and grammar form a continuum and that grammar is only a very small part of language that subserves meaning. Therefore, our approach focuses on the meaning of all forms of the continuum: sounds, intonation, words, phrases, conventional units, grammatical and sentence patterns etc., presented in meaningful context exchanges, approximating socially and culturally normal usage events. We will take L2 spoken language, derived from a movie, as a starting point in our approach, which will also enable speakers to get in touch with language specific particles. Third, we will assume that the more frequent an item is brought into attention, the more likely it will be to be learned. Therefore, repetition of forms in the input is seen as helpful in making the form-meaning mappings.

However, according to Swain (1998) mere input may not be enough: "[...] noticing a form in input must occur in order for it to be acquired.” In addition, VanPatten and Cadierno (1993) point out that the more linguistic forms are noticed, the better the chance to establish the form-meaning connections, thus the better the chance that learners will develop their ability to comprehend the meaning in spoken or written messages (Schmidt, 1990). Some have argued that negotiated interaction facilitates acquisition. Gass (1997), for example, has said “negotiation is a facilitator of learning; it is one means but not the only means of drawing attention to areas of needed change. It is one means by which input can become comprehensible and manageable” (pp. 131 - 132). By interacting, the learner gets crucial data from another interlocutor, and in addition, s/he may notice that what he or she says is not the same as what was just heard in the input. “Thus, the immediacy of juxtaposing one's output with another's input may trigger noticing that is useful for making form-meaning connections.” (Van Patten, 2004) Therefore, in our approach, we will highlight lexical items and “the company they keep”, discuss their meaning and provide descriptions in L1, and if necessary in the L2.

Wong’s (2004) ideas about structured input (SI) activities, based on the VanPatten model of input processing (2004) are of relevance as well to our teaching method. Although her discussion of SI mainly applies to grammar instruction, which is not applicable to our situation, and we do not claim that our activities are SI activities in the strict sense she takes up, several of the aspects she mentions are very much in line with our activities. For example, Wong states that one should present one thing at a time, which will not drain learners’ resources and that one should use both oral and written input. In this way more “visual” learners will benefit from seeing written input. In our approach we do this, by first presenting the learners oral input and thereafter written input, in manageable portions (two till three sentences per PowerPoint slide). Further, Wong poses that learners have to do something with the input, so that they have a reason for attending to the input. In our approach we do so, by asking learners general and language specific questions about the content of a movie scene.

Studies on vocabulary acquisition show that engagement, a term proposed by Schmitt (2008), encompassing all involvement possibilities leading to more exposure, attention, manipulation, or time spent on lexical items, adds to vocabulary gains. Hong & Verspoor (2013) therefore pose that “promoting engagement is therefore the most fundamental task for teachers and material writers, and indeed, learners themselves” (p. 10). The use of multimedia is an excellent way to do so, since next to providing authentic input and exposure to target
2.3 A dynamic, usage based approach to communicative language teaching

Taking the theoretical insights and their pedagogical implications provided just now, we conclude that an effective CLT approach should take a great amount of quality input as a starting point. This input should preferably be in the form of naturally occurring usage events, so that utterances can be understood within their social, cultural and pragmatic context. The language should be within the learners’ zone of proximal development and through interaction with learners, the teacher should scaffold the text until the learner can understand it independently. There should be a linguistic focus on form-meaning pairs at all levels (sound, morpheme, word, phrase, chunk, and sentence). The learner needs to be exposed to these form-meaning pairs repeatedly and the goal should be to revisit them about four till five times. Not more, since our advanced learners are expected to process the input faster than the beginning learners in the study of Hong and Verspoor (whose goal was to repeat about eight times), and over-exposure could then have a negative effect on motivation, as learners feel they have understood the language and want to move on. Not less, since we view repetition as helpful in internalizing expressions, and maximum exposure to the input, as still useful to the learners, should be strived for. Finally, the language the learner is exposed to should be of interest to the student, in order for him/her to be engaged with the language.

With respect to this last requirement, the authentic input in our approach is provided by means of a popular movie, which appeals to our students. The movie needs to be selected based on its content (whether it interests the students, contains interesting cultural aspects) and language use (whether it is appropriate, has enough language, enough different speakers, enough day to day conversations in different contexts, and so on).

Hong and Verspoor (2013:10) point out several good reasons for the choice of a movie rather than other video material:

1. In a good movie, actors will act as naturally as possible, coming as close as foreign language learners can get to “real life”.
2. The language of movies is usually very close to everyday, natural language (Tatsuki, 2006; Schmitt, 2010) and therefore provides authentic models.
3. The characters have natural conversations in meaningful context exchanges, approximating socially and culturally normal usage events.
4. By including the context, the visuals, the facial expressions and so on, the learners will have clues that aid in their understanding. Also, these extra clues will form associations, and as Anderson and Reder (1979) point out the more associations, the easier it can be to remember.
5. The movie will provide examples of cultural, social or pragmatic issues that can be elaborated on by the teacher.
6. The scenes can be repeated as often as needed, giving learners the benefit of exact repetitions.
7. Cut up in two-two-three minute scenes, the whole movie works as a “soap opera” in that the learners are curious about what happens next.
8. The movie often provides a natural context for conversations to emerge among the students and teacher in class, because students want to know or share their opinions about the characters or events in the movie.

An important question we need to ask when using video material is whether movie scenes should be showed with or without captions, i.e. onscreen text in the same language as audio. Sydorenko (2010) has examined the effect of input modality (video, audio, and captions) on (a) the learning of written and aural word forms, (b) overall vocabulary gains, (c)
attention to input, and (d) vocabulary learning strategies of beginning L2 learners. In this study, one group saw video with audio and captions (VAC), group two saw video with audio (VA) and group three saw video with captions (VC). All participants completed written and aural vocabulary tests and a questionnaire. Results of this study indicate that captioned video tends to aid recognition of written word forms and the learning of word meaning, while non-captioned video tends to improve listening comprehension as it facilitates recognition of aural word forms. Further, results from the questionnaire suggest that learners paid most attention to captions, followed by video and audio, and acquired most words by associating them with visual images. In our method we choose to show videos without captions, since we discuss the text in written form after looking at and listening to the movie scenes (see method section for full details). Further, we are working with advanced, and not beginning learners here who have not that often been exposed to natural, spoken L2 language and therefore, training of listening skills is preferred over recognition of written word forms.

Hong and Verspoor pose that the movie approach is very much in line with early communicative approaches in the use of input and authenticity (Abbs, Cook and Underwood, 1980), in the focus on meaning and communication as in the natural approach (Krashen and Terrell, 1983), TPR (Asher, 1965) and use of dialogues to develop strategic competence (Roberts 1986). The movie approach is also very much in line with Krashen’s view of language acquisition, in the sense that he believes “The best methods are therefore those that supply “comprehensible input” in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. […] recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production.” (Krashen, 1982: 6-7)

2.4 Statement of purpose

Now the theoretical framework that has been adopted in our approach and its pedagogical implications have been discussed, we turn to our research question and purpose of this study. Our goal is to find an answer to the following research question:

What effect does a set of lessons based on a dynamic usage-based approach to second language development have in increasing motivation, willingness to communicate and language proficiency, for advanced, German learners of Dutch?

By means of a 10-week intervention study we will try to find an answer to this question and test the hypothesis that authentic input, repetition and scaffolding to help learners understand the meaning of all forms at all levels, has a positive effect on motivation, willingness to communicate and language proficiency.
3. The study

This semester long, (predominantly) quantitative study investigated the effect of a CLT inspired method focusing especially on meaningful input, over the course of ten sessions of ninety minutes. The main research question was what effect the method would have on motivation, willingness to communicate and language proficiency.

3.1 Student participants
A total of 19 German university students aged between 21 and 39 (average age 25), following the program of Dutch studies at the University of Münster in Germany in the second semester of the academic year 2012-2013 participated in this study. It was agreed with the University of Münster to give the DUB course instead of the obliged course ‘Verbal and written Dutch language skills’ (5 ECTS), which is part of the study program. The DUB course was thus obligatory, and students had to attend at least 80 % of the lectures in order to be able to participate in a final test and earn their ECTS. The students enrolled themselves in two groups, which resulted in one group consisting of 8 students (6 female, 2 male) and a second group consisting of 11 students (9 female, 2 male).

The students were rather advanced language learners and their level was estimated to be somewhere in between level B1 and level B2, in terms of the Common European Framework (CEF). Half of the students had lived for a certain amount of time in The Netherlands, had lived in the border area between The Netherlands and Germany or had Dutch relatives. These students appeared to be somewhat more proficient than the students who had not been in an environment with much Dutch input outside classes.

3.2 Teacher involved in the study
The researcher (female, 23 years old) took part in this study as language teacher. During her studies into Dutch Language and Culture and Applied Linguistics she had gained practical experience as a language teacher of Dutch as a second language. She had provided for several language courses for groups as well as for individuals, for a number of institutions, like the University of Groningen (The Netherlands). She had mostly been working with highly educated, beginning learners, including German learners, and had been piloting the DUB video method in her courses from September 2012 and on.

3.3 Treatment
The classes received movie instruction, with use of a popular Dutch movie: Alles is liefde (2007, 116 minutes). This romantic comedy is about the ups and downs in the lives of six love couples, taking the Dutch tradition of Sinterklaas, the celebration of Saint Nicholas’ birthday, as a starting point. Said to be the origin of Santa Clause, Sinterklaas is one of the most typical traditions one can experience in the Netherlands. On December 5th, Dutch families get together and exchange gifts. If the family has young children, who believe in Sinterklaas, Sinterklaas and his helpers bring the gifts in a big bag to the door or through the chimney. When Sinterklaas is in the country in the weeks leading up to the 5th of December, the children are allowed to put their shoe under the chimney twice a week or so, depending on the parents’ generosity (and willingness to spoil their kids). In addition, Dutch children are taught, that if they behave badly, they will not get any gifts from Sinterklaas. In Alles is liefde, all movie characters find out that love is everywhere, but that it is like Sinterklaas: you have to believe in it, otherwise it will not work. A record number of visitors in the Netherlands attended the movie in cinema and the movie received several prices. Aside from its popularity, the movie was thought to be interesting for our students, since it contains many day to day conversations, by a range of different characters (amongst many well-known
Dutch actors), with different registers, varying from conversations between friends, lovers, colleagues, parents and children. These conversations take place in a range of different situations, including a wedding, a funeral, at school, at home, at work in a department store, in a hotel, a café etc. The fact that Sinterklaas has such a prominent role in the movie, provides multiple opportunities for the teacher to elaborate on Dutch culture. Further, as the movie was shot in Amsterdam, it provides as well the option of elaborating on interesting and well-known sites and architecture in the capital of the Netherlands.

Movie lessons were presented in PowerPoint format and were meant for meaning-based, implicit learning. Forms at all levels (sounds, morphemes, words, phrases, and clauses) were heard and seen repeatedly, with focus on teaching chunks or multi-word units. At the beginning of the course, students were made aware of chunks in Dutch, and chunks in a movie scene were underlined to raise learners’ awareness of these multi-word units. Because of the DUB perspective, in which frequency of exposure is important, two- till three-minute movie segments were shown repeatedly, with three to four segments shown per class session. Discussing one segment would take about 15 minutes, depending on the amount of and difficulties in the language. The goal was to first help students understand the scene as a whole and second understand every single utterance. To help commit the language to memory, the aim was to revisit the utterances about four or five times per session. There were five to six steps in which the teacher with the help of the text on the PowerPoint scaffolded to full understanding. The language of instruction was exclusively L2 Dutch. Each movie segment was treated as follows in about five or six steps.

1. Students watch the movie segment without subtitles and no specific directions (first exposure). This way they can focus on the entire scene and get a gist of what is happening.

2. The teacher checks whether students have understood the main events in the particular scene, by asking two general questions. If students did not fully understand the scene, they get the opportunity to ask questions and discuss meaning with teacher and peers. For example, sometimes a scene would evoke questions like ‘Why did Character1 react so strangely in that situation?’, and another student would say ‘I think it’s because of…’

3. Students watch the movie segment again (second exposure) and are asked to pay attention to what the characters said, by means of two questions about specific events or very specific language use. The teacher for example asked ‘What do we get to know about the marriage of Character 1 and Character 2?’ or ‘What does Character1 say when Character2 has hit him?’ These kinds of specific questions are asked so that learners have a reason for attending again to the input.

4. Students are shown the actual text of the movie segment on a PowerPoint sheet (third exposure), and the teacher or students themselves read aloud the lines (fourth exposure). The text on the sheet consists of no more than two or three lines, to not drain learners’ resources and ensure full attention on the language. The purpose here is to give students the opportunity to process the language in a different mode (written) and at a slower pace (as pronounced by the teacher or themselves). In the latter case, the goal was to give students an opportunity to try saying the sentences the way actors did, thereby practicing pronunciation and intonation. Students were given handouts of the text so that they could take notes when necessary. When needed or interesting, the teacher elaborated to explain exactly what the characters meant by saying what they said, and, where applicable, why. Words and chunks were highlighted and their meaning discussed, while the teacher asked students to share their thoughts about or explain a certain word or expression. Explanations and synonyms of words and chunks in L2 were provided on the PowerPoint sheets. Visuals were included where
appropriate. For example, a picture of a field of heather was showed, as it both refers to the little plant itself, and the area where it grows [Appendix 1]. Note: as the course progressed the teacher sensed that sometimes, the spoken language occurring in the movie scenes did not contain enough interesting cases to discuss with the students. Therefore, she occasionally included scene descriptions, derived from the original movie transcript (Van Kooten, 2007), which proved valuable to discuss interesting words and cases in written language, in addition to the spoken language occurring in the scenes.

5. If students indicated they needed to see the fragment again, the students watched the movie segment for the third time (fifth exposure). The purpose was then to expose the learners to the language again and see if they could actually understand all the utterances in the scene. However, most of the time students indicated they had understood everything and therefore the class moved on to the next scene, or

6. For a change of pace, there would be an activity after one or two segments had been shown. For example, sometimes the students role-played a movie scene with the whole class or in pairs; other times they were asked to fill in the blanks of a telephone conversation in the movie or to put cut-out pieces of the scene transcript in the correct order and thereafter read the text out loud. Goal of these assignments was to give students again an opportunity to be exposed to text in relation to the movie scene and try saying sentences the way actors did, thereby practicing pronunciation and intonation. The assignments gradually got more difficult and less focused on repetition. For example, at the end of the course, students would write their own dialogue and story line, based on screenshots from the next scene to be watched. Goal of these assignments was to challenge students in producing the target language in a free and creative manner themselves [Appendix 2]. Linguistic feedback was now and then given to students’ spoken and written performances, but always in a constructive manner. Positive remarks and compliments were made to keep learners motivated.

After each movie session, the PowerPoint presentations were uploaded on the E-learning system for learners to review as homework. At the end of each presentation a number of ten words or chunks was presented, with the option to add a L1 description and/or L2 translation. The goal of this was to revisit these items again and give learners an opportunity to ‘test’ their just gained language knowledge themselves.

3.4 Instruments

In order to gain knowledge of students´ motivation, willingness to communicate and overall language proficiency, it was decided to take a number of material independent tests. An online survey was conducted, by means of Survey Monkey software, consisting of a series of statements to be rated, a fill in the blanks exercise and a writing assignment. This survey was piloted on three German learners of Dutch, with levels of proficiency comparable to those of our participating students. In addition, student participants made an online vocabulary test and filled in an evaluation after the DUB course.

3.4.1 Motivation and willingness to communicate

Teachers, learners and researchers will all agree that a high motivation and a positive attitude towards a second language and its community and a high willingness to communicate, help second-language learning. Although a causal relation is difficult to prove, it has been suggested that learners who are motivated learn faster and better, and that better learners who have good results may become more motivated (Verspoor, de Bot, Xu, 2013). It is interesting to find out how motivated our students are exactly, and whether our teaching method can motivate them even more. Further, previous research has shown a positive effect for out-of-school input (cf. Verspoor et al 2011) on foreign language development. It is thus interesting
to see to what degree our students differ in terms of out-of-class contact.

*Questionnaire*
To measure motivation and willingness to communicate, the participants responded to 27 statements by means of a four point Likert scale [Appendix 3]. There were fifteen statements about motivation and eight about willingness to communicate. Participants indicated whether they (A) strongly disagreed, (B) disagreed, (C) agreed or (D) strongly agreed with a statement. The statements were derived from a questionnaire used in a large-scale study of Verspoor, De Bot and Xu (2013). The constructs behind the questions about motivation were instrumental motivation (f.e., Dutch is beneficial for my future), integrative motivation (f.e. Dutch gives me access to Dutch culture and people) and attitude towards the L2 (f.e. I like the Dutch language). The constructs behind the questions about willingness to communicate were anxiety while speaking and self-confidence. In addition, students were asked about their out-of-class language contact, in terms of reading Dutch, speaking Dutch and listening to Dutch music and television, by means of four statements. Students indicated whether they (A) never had this sort of contact, or (B) 0-2 hours, (C) 2-4 hours, (D) 4-6 hours or (E) more than 6 hours per week.

*Course evaluation*
To gain more specific knowledge on how the students had experienced the DUB method and classes, students filled in a course evaluation at the end of the last class. In this evaluation students first reflected on their own learning process and responded to the questions (1A) what do you think you learned in the *Alles is liefde* classes?, (1B) from what did you learn most? and (2) what do you think you should do to increase your Dutch language proficiency even further? Second, students reflected on the course and responded to the questions (3A) what did you like about the *Alles is liefde* classes? (3B) what did you like about the assignments in the *Alles is liefde* classes? and (4) what suggestions would you make to improve/further develop the course? Finally, students had the option to leave additional or concluding remarks, when desired.

### 3.4.2 Language proficiency
Language proficiency is a broad and complex notion, which has been interpreted and operationalized in various ways. In the past an implicit conception of language proficiency, as it has been operationalized in second language classrooms, has entailed viewing proficiency as little more than grammar and lexis. However, since the movement towards communicative language teaching, it has been associated with a broader view of language that includes not just its grammatical aspects, but also “the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts and the ability to organize one’s thought in a language” (Harley, 1990:7). It was this notion, in combination with limited time and means available in this study, which led to test proficiency by means of a fill in the blanks exercise, a writing assignment and a vocabulary test.

*Fill in the blanks*
The fill in the blanks exercises were based on exercises in the 2001-2002 and 2003-2004 *Staatsexamen Nederlands als tweede taal (programma 2)*. This standardized test is intended for high-educated learners of Dutch at B2 level, according to the CEF. Participants see eight pieces of text. In each piece of text a whole sentence or a part of a sentence has been cut out. The participant is asked to write down a sentence at the place of the blank part. This sentence should logically fit in the context of the whole piece of text [Appendix 4]. The fill in the blanks exercises can be seen as a somewhat more challenging version of a cloze test and
shows the capability to use the L2 appropriately in different contexts.

Writing assignment
The writing assignments were also based on assignments in the 2001-2002 and 2003-2004 Staatsexamen Nederlands als tweede taal (programma 2). In the writing assignments the participant was asked to write a letter, in which certain aspects had to be touched upon [Appendix 5]. The writing assignment shows the capability to organize one’s thought in the L2.

Vocabulary test
The vocabulary tests consisted of 52 multiple choice items. The student is presented a Dutch sentence with one underlined word and subsequently has to indicate its correct meaning by choosing one of the three options presented below [Appendix 6]. The vocabulary tests were pilot tests (called ‘Diawoord’) of Diataal, which is an undertaking that develops L1 and L2 language tests for secondary schools in the Netherlands. The language tests of Diataal are scientifically-based and linked to the Dutch Referentieniveaus Taal. The Referentieniveaus Taal contain descriptions of what students in Dutch secondary schools should be able to understand or perform for language subjects at certain moments in their school career. They form a legally required guideline for secondary education in the Netherlands. The Referentieniveaus Taal (consisting of level 1F, 2F, 3F and 4F) can be linked to the CEF (consisting of level A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2). The Diawoord tests were developed for testing L1 vocabulary knowledge of high school students at level 2F/3F, which can roughly be linked to level B1/B2 of the CEF. The test was therefore estimated to be appropriate for measuring receptive vocabulary knowledge of our students.

3.5 Procedure
The pre-test was administered in the first week of class (week 16). The post-test as well as the course evaluation were administered in the last week of class (week 26). This was two weeks before students had to make a final exam for a grade to complete the course. All tests were conducted via the internet, so that students were able to make them in their own pace, without pressure, in their home environment. Before making the tests, students were explicitly instructed to make the tests without the aid of dictionaries, books or other aiding means.

3.6 Analyses
The study investigated the effect of a set of lessons based on a DUB approach to SLD in increasing motivation, willingness to communicate and language proficiency. Data of three students were eliminated, since two dropped out of the course, and one failed to fill in the post-tests. This means that analyses were performed on data of 16 students.

Motivation and willingness to communicate were measured by a questionnaire. Independent variable was instruction, dependent variable was degree of motivation and willingness to communicate, measured on a 4-point Likert (ordinal) scale. In addition, students filled in course evaluations, which were qualitatively analyzed. Language proficiency was operationalized as the ability to use language appropriately in different contexts and the ability to organize one’s thought in a language. Independent variable was instruction and dependent variables were the scores on the pre- and post-test of a fill in the blanks exercise, writing assignment and vocabulary test.

Spearman’s Rho and Pearson correlation’s analyses were conducted to examine the relationship between the pre- and posttest scores. Wilcoxon signed rank tests and a paired samples t-test were conducted to ascertain whether or not differences in scores on pre- and posttest were significant.
3.6.1 Motivation and willingness to communicate

**Questionnaire**
By means of the questionnaire we measured whether an increase in motivation and willingness to communicate could be found at the end of the DUB course. The ordinal data were renamed into numbers, which meant the higher the number (maximum 4), the more strongly participants agreed with a statement, and the lower the number (minimum 1), the less strongly participants agreed with a statement. We looked at the average rating of statements.

**Course evaluation**
A qualitative analysis of the filled in course evaluations was performed by the researcher. Per question, all responses were listed. Then, all similar responses were taken together and labeled, to find general tendencies in responses.

3.6.2 Language proficiency

**Fill in the blanks exercise**
The rating of the fill in the blanks exercise in the pre- and posttest was partially in line with the judgment prescriptions of the *Staatsexamen Nederlands als tweede taal (programma 2)*. This means that students´ answers were rated based on (1) whether an utterance was understandable/proper (0-1 point) and (2) whether an utterance was grammatically correct (0-1 point) and (3) spelling and appropriate use of words (0-1 points). The possible minimum score was 0, the possible maximum score was 24. The exercises were rated by the researcher. Difficult cases were discussed and rated with aid of another native speaker of Dutch.

**Writing assignment**
The pre- and post-writing samples were also rated in line with the judgment prescriptions of the *Staatsexamen Nederlands als tweede taal (programma 2)*. This means that students´ texts were rated based on the following aspects (1) whether the text was understandable/proper (0-5 points), (2) whether the text was grammatically correct (0-2 points), (3) spelling (0-2 points), (4) appropriate use of words (0-2 points) (5) text cohesion (0-2 points) and (6) text construction (0-2 points). The possible minimum score was 0, the possible maximum score was 15. The samples were separately rated by the researcher and the native speaker of Dutch before mentioned, and then compared. In most cases ratings corresponded, but there were some deviating ratings. By means of discussion the raters reached correspondence, sometimes leading to the ascription of half points.

**Vocabulary test**
The number of items correctly answered formed the final score, with a minimum score of 0 and a maximum score of 52.
4. Results

4.1 Motivation and willingness to communicate

Questionnaire

The ordinal data was renamed into numbers, which meant the higher the number (maximum 4), the more strongly participants agreed with a statement, and the lower the number (minimum 1), the less strongly participants agreed with a statement. We looked at the average rating of statements. On the first fifteen statements about motivation, ranking in the pretest was, on average, already quite high. Differences in ranking between pre- and posttest were very small. In the post-test, the ranking of eight statements was slightly lower, the ranking of one the same, and the ranking of six statements was slightly higher than in the pre-test. Table 1 shows the mean scores on pre- and posttest of statements with the same or higher ranking in the posttest.

Table 1: Mean scores on pre- and posttest statements about motivation, that were ranked the same or higher in the posttest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Pretest</th>
<th>Mean Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ik ben goed in Nederlands in vergelijking met mijn medestudenten.</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Nederlands stelt mij in staat te communiceren met mensen van verschillende taalgroepen.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Het is belangrijk voor mij om Nederlands te leren.</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Nederlands is een belangrijke taal van communicatie in de wereld.</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ik vind mijn colleges Nederlands leuk.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Ik begrijp alles gedurende de colleges Nederlands.</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Ik zou graag veel Nederlandssprekende vrienden willen hebben.</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 presents the mean scores and standard deviation on the ranking on all fifteen statements about motivation.

Table 2: Mean scores and standard deviation on ranking of statements about motivation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>0.39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A (nonparametric) Wilcoxon signed rank test showed that the difference in ranking of motivation statements in pre- and posttest was not significant, with $z = -0.28$, $p > .05$.

Of the eight statements about willingness to communicate, there were four statements where we would like to see an higher ranking in the post-test (case A), and four where we would like to see a lower ranking in the post-test (case B). Differences in ranking in pre-and posttest were small. Case A did not receive a higher ranking in the post-test. Three of four statements in case B received a lower ranking in the post-test, which can be derived from table 3.
Table 3: Mean scores on pre- and posttest statements about willingness to communicate, that were ranked lower in the pretest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Pretest</th>
<th>Mean Posttest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18. Ik word nerveus als ik Nederlands spreek.</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Als ik spreek, voel ik mij niet op mijn gemak.</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Ik maak me zorgen als ik Nederlands moet spreken.</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the four questions about language contact outside class, post-test scores were slightly higher than pre-test scores. This indicates that at the time the DUB course ended, students apparently had a little bit more language contact outside class.

Course evaluation

The qualitative analysis of the evaluation responses showed that, answering to question (1A) what do you think you learned in the Alles is liefde classes?, most students (9) reported thinking to have learned new words and constructions. In addition, they reported to have learned typical Dutch expressions (8), to have a better understanding of spoken, everyday Dutch (7), better listening skills (5), knowledge of Dutch culture (4) and better speaking skills (4) and pronunciation (2). One student indicated to have gained in “smoother” reading skills. Answering to question (1B): from what did you learn the most? students reported to have learned most from the highlighting and discussing of words, chunks and expressions (8), watching and listening to (language in) the movie (7), talking and interacting about the movie scenes (4) and reading and discussing the movie script (2).

Answering to question (2): what do you think you should do to increase your Dutch language proficiency even further?, most students (9) indicated that they thought it necessary to speak more Dutch, preferably with native speakers. Other responses included living for a period in the Netherlands (6) and getting more in contact with the Dutch language (6) by watching movies (3), reading books (3) and listening to music (1). One student wrote that “the DUB course has inspired me to watch more Dutch movies.”

To question (3A): what did you like about the Alles is liefde classes?, all but one student responded that they appreciated the movie approach (15). They did not only like the approach, but also the movie itself. Some quotes: “This interesting, authentic movie was well selected”, “With this approach, it was easy to keep interest. If you try to discuss language without help of movie material, music or media it quickly becomes boring for me” and “the story was exciting, I was curious to see the next scene.” Other responses varied from remarks with respect to content: appreciation of discussing words and chunks (2), discussing and repeating movie scenes (2) and reading aloud the movie text (2); to remarks with respect to the course set up: there was a pleasant, enthusiastic atmosphere in class (3), the pace was good, with enough space and time for questions (2), there was a varied lesson program (1) and use of different learning strategies (1). To question (3B): what did you like about the assignments in the Alles is liefde classes?, students responded that they appreciated that the assignments were creative (3), involved working in couples or in groups (3), that they were varied (3), that they put learning responsibility with the learner him/herself (2), that they caused students to speak (2) and gave opportunity to repeat and practice (1). Some students named their favorite activity, like putting screenshots in the right order and describe what is happening, writing your own text under screenshots and making a transcript of a movie scene (7). Some students only gave an evaluative response, saying the assignments were playful, good, nice or funny (4).

Students responded to question (4) what suggestions would you make to improve/further develop the course?, indicating what they would add or change to the course.
Some students indicated they would have liked to do more oral presentations themselves and speak even more (4). Others indicated they wanted more homework (2) and wanted to do ‘more’ with the new vocabulary (2). In addition, some students indicated that sometimes there were too difficult questions on the PowerPoint (2). One student said to want more questions on the PowerPoint. Another one mentioned that the teacher did not need to read aloud the movie text at all, but should let students read aloud and correct their pronunciation. Further, one student indicated the assignments could be more difficult and another one mentioned the assignments should be less creative, “since I am not creative myself”.

4.2 Language proficiency

Fill in the blanks
The histogram of proficiency gain scores did not look normal, with values for skewness and kurtosis exceeding -1 and 1. It was therefore chosen to use nonparametric tests for further analyses. Spearman’s Rho analysis showed that there was a significant positive relationship between pre- and posttest scores, Rho(16)= 0.58, p = 0.05 (two-tailed), showing that the higher the participants scored on the pre-test, the higher they would score on the post-test.

Figure 1: Pre- and posttest scores on fill in the blanks exercise

Figure 1 shows the pre- and posttest scores of our students. This figure shows that students improved in filling in the exercise after the DUB classes. Table 4 presents the means and standard deviations of proficiency gain scores.

Table 4: Mean gain scores and standard deviation on fill in the blanks exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>17.75</td>
<td>3.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>20.78</td>
<td>3.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the means, we can see that students have gained on proficiency. A Wilcoxon test showed that the differences in pre- and posttest scores were significant, with z = -3.13, p < 0.01.
Writing assignment
A Cronbach analysis showed that the reliability of the ratings of the writing assignments was high, $\alpha = 0.993$ on the pre-test writing samples, $\alpha = 0.986$ on the post-test writing samples. The histogram of proficiency gain scores looked approximately normal. Pearson correlation analysis showed that there was a significant positive relationship between the pre-test and post-test scores, $r(16)= 0.63; p = 0.01$ (two-tailed), showing that the higher the participants scored on the pre-test, the higher they would score on the post-test.

Figure 2: Pre- and posttest scores on writing assignment

Figure 2 shows the pre- and posttest scores of our students. This figure shows that students improved in writing after the DUB classes. Table 5 presents the means and standard deviations of proficiency gain scores.

Table 5: Mean gain scores and standard deviations on writing assignment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>9.03</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>12.81</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the means, we can see that students have gained on proficiency. A paired samples t-test revealed that the difference in pre- and posttest scores was significant, $t(15) = -4.88 ; p = .00$.

Vocabulary test
Three of our students failed to fill in the post-test and their data were therefore eliminated from the dataset. Diawood reported that the vocabulary tests had a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.849 (N=1842) and 0.821 (N=1348), for Dutch high school students in year 3 of their school career, at all different education levels. The histograms of the scores for our students did not look normal, with values for skewness and kurtosis exceeding -1 and 1. Spearman’s Rho analysis showed there was no significant relation between pre- and posttest scores. Table 6 presents the mean scores and standard deviations of the dataset.
Table 6: Mean gain scores and standard deviations on vocabulary test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>44.38</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posttest</td>
<td>43.08</td>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the means, we can see that students did not gain in vocabulary scores. In fact, looking more closely at the dataset, 9 of 13 students had a lower score on the posttest, than on the pretest. A Wilcoxon test showed that the differences in pre- and posttest scores were not significant, with $z = -1.56$, $p > 0.05$. 
5. Discussion

The results suggest that the movie program benefited the learners in several ways. With respect to motivation and willingness to communicate, little crucial information could be derived from the questionnaire, since ranking scores were already quite high in the pretest. As a consequence, the ranking scores of statements did not differ much between pre- and posttest and differences turned out not to be significant. However, it was interesting to see that on a number of statements on motivation, there was a higher score in the posttest, for example, (1) ‘Ik ben goed in Nederlands, in vergelijking met mijn medestudenten’ [I am good at Dutch, in comparison with my fellow students], indicating a greater confidence in one’s own language performance, and (12) ‘Ik begrijp alles gedurende de colleges Nederlands’ [I understand everything in my Dutch classes], indicating that all what was discussed in the DUB course was well understood. Further, it was also interesting to see that a couple of statements on willingness to communicate got a lower ranking in the posttest, for example, (18) ‘Ik word nerveus als ik Nederlands spreek’ [I get nervous when I speak Dutch] and (22) ‘Ik maak me zorgen als ik Nederlands moet spreken’ [I worry when I have to speak Dutch], indicating decreased fear of speaking, and thus an increased willingness to communicate. It could be that the natural, non-forced way of speaking promoted in the DUB course attributed to this. From the course evaluation more detailed information of the effect of and experience with the DUB course could be derived. It appeared that all students appreciated the movie approach and a number of students even got inspired by the approach to get more in contact with the Dutch language. Amongst others, students thought they had learned typical Dutch expressions and gained in listening and speaking skills. The assignments in class were appreciated as well, but some students mentioned they would have liked to give more oral presentations in class. Overall, results from the evaluation indicate that the method had a positive effect in engaging language learners.

With respect to language proficiency, for the fill in the blanks exercise and the writing assignment there were significant differences in pre- and posttest. This indicates that there had been a positive effect of the method in increasing language proficiency. Students scored lower on the post vocabulary test, but these scores turned out not to be significant.

It appeared that two of five instruments, namely the questionnaire and the vocabulary test, proved not to be as informative as was expected. Since it appeared that students were already quite motivated and willing to communicate from the pretest questionnaire, the results on the posttest questionnaire were not strikingly different. Fortunately, the course evaluation proved to provide more detailed and valuable information on the evaluation of the DUB method. With respect to the vocabulary tests, it could be that the tests, which were not specifically meant for second language learners, but for Dutch high school students, were after all not perfectly fit to test development in language proficiency of our second language learners. In addition, a material independent vocabulary test might have been good to determine initial language proficiency, but less fit for determining development of receptive vocabulary knowledge in our material dependent study. Fortunately, the fill in the blanks and writing assignment proved to provide for more detailed information on the language development of our students. This development could clearly be seen in the raw material, and was confirmed by the statistical analysis of the data. Despite getting less information than desired from the questionnaire and the vocabulary test, this does bring up the opportunity to highlight an important matter: the importance of (selecting) good, fine-grained language tests for testing language proficiency of second language learners. This holds especially when working with advanced language learners, while their language development has passed beyond the rapid learning phase which beginners experience, and moves in a slower, more
subtle way, with periods of less great fluctuations and gains in development. Good language tests and fine-grained studies are needed to be able to paint a detailed picture of this process.
6. Conclusion

The main goal of this study was to see whether a teaching method based on a DUB approach to communicative language teaching, as proposed by Hong and Verspoor (2013), could prove to have an effect in increasing motivation, willingness to communicate and language proficiency. Communicative language teaching has not always been successful in training communicatively competent language learners, which, as Hong and Verspoor (2013) point out, could be due to a lack of quality input in the language classroom. They therefore developed a teaching method based on DUB principles, taking a high amount of quality input derived from a popular movie as a starting point. This method was tested on beginning Vietnamese learners of English and proved to have significant effect in increasing language proficiency and presupposed effects in engaging learners.

A replication study was set up, this time working with advanced, German learners of Dutch, whose level was estimated to be at the B1 CEF level. We developed a similar like course as that of Hong and Verspoor (2013), which included a high degree of meaningful input, provided by a popular Dutch movie. The movie was cut in scenes of 2-3 minutes and repeatedly shown in steps, with the teacher scaffolding until the learners understood every single utterance of every character. In one of the steps, students would read aloud the lines themselves and the teacher would explain or elaborate on form-meaning mappings of constructions at all levels. There was implicit focus on all form-meaning pairs at all levels: sound, intonation, word, formulaic sequences, conventionalized expressions, idioms, and sentence patterns. These were presented in the context of real “usage events” with their L2 cultural and pragmatic features. The aim was to revisit the language used in each scene about four times, to be sure that students were frequently exposed to the language.

In this study we compared the pre- and posttest scores on motivation and willingness to communicate and (general) language proficiency over a 10 week intervention. The results were quite convincing. Although no significant differences in ranking on statements about motivation and willingness to communicate could be found, the course evaluation results showed the method had been successful in engaging learners. Further, students showed a significant increase of language proficiency on two of three language proficiency tests.

An important question to ask is what contributed most to the positive effects. From a dynamic usage based perspective, we will point to a combination of interacting factors, instead of one single factor. First, the current approach is very much in line with many of the earlier CLT approaches, in the sense that it is based on the principle that learners need to be exposed to language forms and their meanings, instead of being forced to produce the language. Second, the current approach is based on the assumption that frequency of occurrence is a strong determiner for what is acquired. This holds especially when applied to learning expressions and conventionalized ways of saying (Langacker, 2008; Smiskova et al., 2012). Therefore, in our approach we did not only focus on meaningful input, but also revisited the form-meaning pairs, to help commit them to memory. Third, taking a usage based perspective, form-meaning mappings occur at all levels of language and all need attention. Therefore, whole utterances in meaningful contexts are shown and we focus on lexical patterns in specific, since words are probably the most meaningful elements in language and lexical patterns are most arbitrary and difficult to acquire. Fourth, to learn language learners need to be genuinely engaged. In this way, they will pay attention and are willing to invest the effort to discover form-meaning mappings. In order to engage our learners, we chose to take a popular Dutch movie as a starting point for our classes, estimating that with this popular movie, there was high chance of L2 learners enjoying the film.

An interesting additional question was whether the method would be appropriate for advanced learners, instead of the beginning learners in Hong and Verspoor’s experiment. It
appears the method was indeed appropriate, although some alterations had to be made. First, with these advanced learners, it was not needed to show a movie fragment as often as with the beginning learners. After approximately two classes, students managed with watching a movie scene two, sometimes three, or in the end sometimes one, time(s) to answer the general and language-specific questions on the sheet. Second, as discussed, the working assignments in class got less focused on repetition soon after the start of the course, since the teacher sensed students did not need and want this much repetition, but were ready for more challenging assignments wherein they could produce their own language. Further, towards the end of the course, the teacher found that there was not always enough ‘new’, interesting language in the movie scene to discuss. In order to still provide new challenges to the students, she therefore included some text from the original movie transcript, mostly scene descriptions and descriptions of feelings of characters, in the PowerPoint slides. This was not ‘spoken language’, but rather ‘written language’ and it was therefore providing new, interesting cases to discuss, still related to (the language in) the movie scene. For example, students found it quite useful to learn from the written script that the movie location where a funeral was held, is called ‘uitvaartcentrum’ [funeral parlour].

An advantage of applying the DUB method on our advanced learners, was that these learners already had knowledge of Dutch grammar and therefore did not indicate that they missed explicit, grammatical instruction in class. Beginning learners are, from the researchers own experience, more eager to get explicit grammatical instruction, which could turn out into a conflict of interests when applying the DUB implicit learning method in a general language course. Despite beginning learners often wanting explicit, grammatical instruction, it still remains to be seen whether this really is effective in increasing language proficiency. I once again point out to the results of Hong & Verspoor (2013), who have showed the benefits of a DUB approach with extensive listening exercises and focus on meaning over an approach with focus on form, and to the study of Lightbown et al. (2002), who found that an extensive reading method was very effective early on, but that effectiveness had worn off after a few years.

It would be interesting to keep adding to research into the effects of a DUB approach to communicative second language teaching. More replication studies could be performed, working with other languages, other students (beginners, intermediate, advanced, young and old) and control groups, wherein development in all language areas, listening, writing, speaking and reading is thoroughly tested. In addition, it would be highly interesting to measure the effect of a high input (focus on meaning) method in the long term. Another interesting, but difficult to investigate, issue would be to look at what effect plot line and characters of a movie have on language learners. Could it be that students getting adjusted to the story line and characters plays a role in language comprehension, or is their development of language comprehension applicable to other listening situations as well? The following can already be said. The students in this study made a final exam two weeks after the last DUB class, listening to fragments from another Dutch movie, *Liever verliefd* (2003, 87 minutes). The language in this movie was estimated at the same difficulty level of the *Alles is liefde* classes, but there was a different story line and there were different characters. All students passed the exam without much trouble.

To conclude, it has not been my intention to state that a DUB approach to communicative language teaching is the only or best way for second language teaching. However, I do believe that this study has added to the strong evidence that a DUB approach has positive effects on motivation and language proficiency and can be at the least an important and valuable gain to the set of methods second language teachers have at their disposal. A benefit for language teachers, also pointed out by Hong and Verspoor (2013), is that the approach relieves the teacher from the responsibility to be the sole provider of input. Teachers often struggle to provide adequate amounts of authentic and interesting input,
especially when there is not another fluent speaker to interact with. A movie can provide far
more authentic input than one single teacher would ever be able to provide in one classroom.
When giving a presentation of the method to German language teachers of Dutch in training,
at the institute of Dutch philology of the university of Muenster, all responded
enthusiastically. Although the teachers-to-be said in all honesty that in practice, they did not
see it happening that the DUB method would replace a method of learning with a
standardized, communicative language learning book, they all indicated that they certainly
wanted to use the method in addition to a standardized book. But most importantly, they
recognized the importance of using recent insights from language theory to improve second
language teaching and giving quality input, which appeals to students, a prominent place in
the second language classroom.
References


Hoeve, van P. (2003). *Liever verliefd* [Film]. Amsterdam: Nijenhuis & de Levita Film & TV B.V.


Appendix 1: PowerPoint presentation *Alles is liefde* (movie scene 24, class 8)

Sheet 1

![ALLES IS LIEFDE – SCENE 24
1:11:13 - 1:14:22](image)

Sheet 2

**VRAGEN**

- Waarom ontstaat er een ongemakkelijke situatie tussen Dennis, Klaasje en Daniel?
- Waarom is Jan op de begraafplaats?
- Wat zegt Dennis precies om bij het gesprek met Klaas en Daniel weg te komen?
- Wat voor advies geeft Jan precies aan Kees?
Klaasje: Het zijn bijna allemaal acteurs. Dat zijn van nature hele uitbundige mensen. Dit is hun manier. Dat moet je ze ook gunnen.

uitbundig
= zeer enthousiast, (van personen) op drukke, opgewonden wijze zijn gevoelens uitend

Klaasje: Hij ligt er vredig bij.

Dennis: Klaas.
Klaasje: Wat kom jij nou weer doen?
Dennis: O, ik kwam je **steunen**.
Klaasje: (-) Bedankt.

**steunen**
= helpen staande of in stand te blijven
of ergens mee door te gaan

Dennis: Zeg, Klaas, ik heb er nog eens
even over nagedacht en als je het fijn
vindt, dan kan ik Boris nog wel een
paar dagen bij mij blijven. Kun jij het
even **rustig aan doen**.

**rustig aan doen**
= zich niet te veel inspannen of
opwinden
Klaasje: O... Nou, ja.
Dennis: Ja. En als je wilt, het hoeft natuurlijk niet, maar als je je alleen voelt ofzo, dan ben jij natuurlijk ook van harte welkom.

Dennis: Bij mij, thuis. Of, nou, thui..., het is nog steeds ons huis.
Klaasje (meer tegen Daniel dan tegen Dennis): Neeneenee, het is jouw huis. Ik heb mijn huis, jij hebt jouw huis.

Klaasje: We hebben allebei heel erg ons eigen huis. Omdat we uit elkaar zijn. We hebben allebei heel erg ons eigen leven. Los van elkaar, omdat we niet meer samen zijn.
Dennis: Nou. Die man heeft stiekem toch nog een vrolijke begrafenis gehad. Dat is vaak bij die joodse mensen zo'n ongezellige, goedkope aangelegenheid.

stiekem
synoniem: heimelijk (vlg. heimlich)
Stilte. Dennis slaat zijn glas sterke drank achterover.

achteroverslaan (informeel)
= snel of achter elkaar uitdrinken

Dennis: Zo. Ik moet hollen. Ik doe deze week de schooltuintjes.
Klaasje: Zo gek. Ik zag er heel erg tegenop vandaag, maar het valt me honderd procent mee.

er tegenop zien
= sich scheuen vor, zurückschrecken vor
ergens als een berg tegenop zien

meevallen
= beter bevallen dan verwacht werd

Uitvaartcentrum - begraafplaats – namiddag

Jan: Zware dag?
Kees: (-) Ik heb twee lijken verwisseld.
Jan: (-) Dat kan gebeuren. (-) Ik heb hier een bloemetje neergelegd. (-) Mijn vrouw ligt hier.

het bloemetje
1. kleine bloem
2. het boeket

Kees: O God... Ik ben vanochtend weggelopen bij mijn eigen bruiloft...
Jan: Waarom? Hield je niet genoeg van haar?
Kees: Ik heb nog nooit zoveel van iemand gehouden.
Jan: Hoe heet ze?

Kees: Victor.
Jan: (-) Ja, dat kan natuurlijk ook.
Jan: Zeg, luister nou eens vriend, als jij van die Victor houdt en die Victor houdt van jou, dan zou ik me maar als een dolleman aan hem vastklampen.

de dolleman
= krankzinnige, onbesuisd, wild mens

zich vastklampen
= zich met inspanning vasthouden (aan – )

---

Kees: Ja. En dan gaat 'ie dood, of weg...
Jan (onderbreekt vinnig): Ja, natuurlijk gaat 'ie dood of weg!

vinnig
= venijnig, bits, bijtend,
scherp
(van woorden)
Jan: We gaan allemaal dood of weg!
Dat willen we niet, maar dat gebeurt toch.

(-) Mietje.

het mietje (informeel)
= de bangerd, ook wel niet of homo synoniem: het watje
**WOORDENSCHAT**

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Appendix 2: List of working assignments (per class)

Class 1
Assignment 1: Role play the scene
Process: Students get the scene text and role play the scene in couples.

Assignment 2: Put the dialogue in the right order
Process: The text of the next scene to watch is cut up in five pieces of text. These five pieces of text are again cut up in sentences and put in an envelope. Students are coupled and each couple gets an envelope and the task to put the sentences in the right order. In the end, all couples read aloud their dialogues, so that all get a gist of what will be said in the next scene. Then, we watch the next scene to find out whether everybody has put their pieces in the right order.

Class 2
Assignment 3: Fill in the phone conversation
Process: In the movie scene there is a phone conversation, but we can only hear one side of the story. Students are coupled, get the phone conversation text and the task to write down what the person on the other side of the phone line could have said. Thereafter, two or three couples are asked to share their conversations with the group.

Assignment 4: Describe and draw
Process: A volunteer, an ‘artist’, stands by the board, and the class sees a screen shot from the movie scene just watched. The class is invited to describe the picture and tell the volunteer how to draw it. The aim is to help the artist to make a good copy of the picture.

Class 3
Assignment 5: Write your own dialogue
Process: Students are coupled and get a piece of paper of the size of a dialogue in the next movie scene to watch. The task is to write their own dialogue. It is given which character speaks when, but the lines of the dialogue are blank. However, after each blank line a word from the original transcript is written, that the students have to use in their dialogue. A screenshot from the scene is given, to give students some inspiration. When finished, two or three couples are asked to share their dialogues with the group. Thereafter, we watch the movie scene to find out what really was said.

Class 4
Assignment 6: Put the scene shots and descriptions in the right order
All students get a screen shot and a scene description. Students get the task to walk around in class and find the student that has got the scene description that matches his screen shot and reverse. However, students are not permitted to show their screen shots or pieces of text and thus have to describe what they see on their screen shot or read aloud their scene description. When all shots and descriptions have been matched, we try to find out the right order of the pairs with the whole group. Thereafter, we watch the next scene to find out whether the students got the story line right.

Class 5
Assignment 8: Speed dating with actors
Process: In class 4, each student got to pick an actor from the movie and is asked to find as much information as possible on this actor and prepare a short oral presentation about him or her. In class, students sit in pairs and share their stories. After every five minutes a bell rings...
following the principal of ‘speed dating’), and students move over to the next student to share their story. In this way, students are able to practice their presentation several times, and in addition get to know about all the different actors in the movie.

**Assignment 7: Fill in the blanks**
Process: Students get a piece of paper with a part of the movie transcript of the next scene to watch. However, a lot of words disappeared and students are asked to fill in these blanks. After everybody is finished, we discuss in class what different options there are to fill in the blanks and thereafter watch the movie scene, to find out what really was said.

**Class 6**
**Assignment 9: Run and tell**
**Process:** Text of the next movie scene to watch is cut up in five or six pieces. The teacher pins these pieces of text on different places on the walls of the classroom. Students are coupled and are explained the ‘run and tell’ exercise: one student cannot stand up from its seat, but needs to write down exactly what is on his piece of text somewhere in the classroom. Therefore, the other student, who is allowed to move, but not to write, will ‘run’ and dictate what can be read on the piece of paper. When all couples are done, they read aloud their texts, so that all students get a gist of what is being said in the next scene to watch. Then, we watch the next scene, to find out whether everybody has written down the correct text.

**Assignment 7: Fill in the blanks**

**Class 7**
**Assignment 10: Joint reading and discussing of an article about modal particles in Dutch**
Process: Since modal particles are abundantly present in spoken Dutch language, it was thought to be helpful to pay explicit attention to these little words that add emotion to a sentence. We therefore read and discussed the newspaper article ‘Gewoon eigenlijk best wel – modale partikels zijn de smeerolie van de communicatie’ (Maris, van B., 2001) in class.

**Assignment 2: Put the dialogue in the right order**

**Class 8**
**Assignment 5: Write your own dialogue**

**Assignment 6: Emotional dialogues**
Students are coupled and get a part of a dialogue out of the movie scene next to watch. However, the dialogues stops halfway. Each pair gets a different emotion (joy, sadness, fear, anger, surprise, disgust etc.) and the task to complete the dialogue inspired by this emotion. When finished, three or four couples role play their dialogue for the whole group. Thereafter, we watch the scene to find out what really happened.

**Class 9**
**Assignment 11: Story telling**
Process: Students are divided into groups of two or three. Each group gets eight screen shots of the movie scene to come and the task to write a piece of text under each screenshot and make a fitting story. Students may put the screen shots in the order they like and write a dialogue or a descriptive piece of text. Each group shares his story with the group. Thereafter, we watch the scene to find out how the story really went.
Class 10
Assignment: Make your own transcript with a movie scene
Process: Students are divided into groups of three or four. Each group gets a laptop and the possibility to listen to the selected movie scene as often as desired. The task is to make a transcript of the movie scene. When students think they got the transcript text right, they are provided with the original transcript to check whether their text matches with the original. Thereafter, they get the task to look up unfamiliar words and constructions, which are finally discussed with the whole group.
Appendix 3: Questionnaire motivation and willingness to communicate

Geef aan in hoeverre jij het eens bent met de stelling.

Motivatie
1. Ik ben goed in Nederlands in vergelijking met mijn medestudenten.
2. Ik vind het leuk om Nederlands te spreken.
3. Ik vind de Nederlandse taal leuk.
4. Nederlands stelt mij in staat te communiceren met mensen van verschillende taalgroepen.
5. Het is belangrijk voor mij om Nederlands te leren.
6. Ik zal Nederlands nodig hebben na mijn studie.
7. Nederlands studeren is belangrijk, omdat het me zal helpen bij het vinden van een baan.
8. Ik spreek graag met moedertaalsprekers van het Nederlands.
9. Nederlands helpt mij nieuwe contacten te leggen op vakantie.
10. Nederlands is een belangrijke taal van communicatie in de wereld.
11. Ik vind mijn colleges Nederlands leuk.
12. Ik begrijp alles gedurende de colleges Nederlands.
13. Ik zou graag veel Nederlandsprekende vrienden willen hebben.
15. Ik ben geïnteresseerd in de culturen van Nederlandstalige landen.

Willingness to communicate
16. Ik voel mij op mijn gemak als ik Nederlands spreek in een groepsdiscussie.
17. Ik geef altijd antwoord in het Nederlands tijdens college.
18. Ik word nerveus als ik Nederlands spreek.
19. Ik ben bang dat mijn studiegenoten mij uitlachen als ik Nederlands spreek.
20. Ik voel mij op mijn gemak als ik Nederlands spreek in een kleine groep mensen van mijn leeftijd.
21. Ik voel mij op mijn gemak als ik Nederlands spreek in een grote groep mensen van mijn leeftijd.
22. Als ik spreek, voel ik mij niet op mijn gemak.
23. Ik maak me zorgen als ik Nederlands moet spreken.

Taalcontact buiten studie
Geef aan hoeveel tijd jij besteedt aan de volgende activiteiten.
1. Nooit 2. 0-2 uur 3. 2-4 uur 4. 4-6 uur 5. Meer dan 6 uur per week

1. Hoeveel uur luister jij naar Nederlandstalige muziek?
2. Hoeveel uur per week kijk jij naar Nederlandstalige televisieprogramma’s?
3. Hoeveel uur per week lees jij Nederlands (GEEN Nederlands huiswerk)?
4. Hoeveel uur per week spreek jij Nederlands (BUITEN colleges)?
Appendix 4: fill in the blanks exercise post-test (derived from Staatsexamen Nederlands als tweede taal (programma 2), voorbeeldexamen 2003-2004)

Zinnen aanvullen
Hier komen acht korte tekstgedeelten. In elk tekstgedeelte is een hele zin of een deel van een zin weggelaten. Schrijf in het tekstvak een zin of een deel van een zin. Wat je opschrijft, moet goed passen bij de andere zin(nen) van het tekstgedeelte. Er zijn verschillende mogelijkheden voor een goed antwoord. Maak alsjeblieft GEEN gebruik van hulpmiddelen.

1. Sommige mensen kunnen zich nog herinneren dat ________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

2. Door de toenemende belangstelling voor vliegreizen naar het buitenland _______________
___________________________________________________________________________

3. Toen alle aanwezigen geteld waren ____________________________________________
__________________________________________

4. Wij raden u aan het formulier zo spoedig mogelijk terug te sturen, zodat _______________
___________________________________________________________________________

5. Tot zijn grote verbazing slaagde Victor voor het examen, hoewel _____________________
___________________________________________________________________________

6. Vanwege het feit dat ________________________________________________________, zijn wij helaas genoodzaakt de theatervoorstelling uit te stellen.

7. De fabrikant wilde weten of de consumenten tevreden waren over de nieuwe groentesoep.
Hieruit bleek dat de meeste mensen de groentesoep lekker vonden.

8. Jessica heeft de afgelopen tijd al heel vaak gesolliciteerd.
Daarom heeft ze besloten om te beginnen met de een vervolgopleiding.
Appendix 5: writing assignment post-test (derived from Staatsexamen Nederlands als tweede taal (programma 2), voorbeeldexamen 2003-2004)

Bezwaar aan de examencommissie
Raymond Rudinger volgt een opleiding aan de Hogeschool Leeuwenhoek. Hij zit in het eerste leerjaar. Op het prikbord van het secretariaat wordt altijd elk tentamen aangekondigd. Vorige week hing er de volgende notitie:

Leerjaar 1
Naam tentamen: CHEMIE 1
Leerstof: Chemische verbindingen, deel 1
Datum: maandag 21 juni
Plaats: zaal 2
Bijzonderheden: geen

Vandaag heeft Raymond dit tentamen gedaan. Hij is erg kwaad want de helft van alle vragen van het tentamen ging over Chemische verbindingen, DEEL 2! Hij pakt zijn studiegids erbij. Daarin staat:

Een student is gerechtigd bezwaar aan te tekenen tegen de uitslag van een tentamen.
In het geval van een bezwaar moet duidelijk vermeld worden:
1. om welk tentamen het gaat;
2. op welke dag het tentamen heeft plaatsgevonden;
3. een omschrijving van het bezwaar.

De bezwaarbrief moet worden gericht aan de voorzitter van de examencommissie, de heer A. Sloos.

Raymond stuurt een bezwaarbrief aan de voorzitter van de examencommissie.

Opdracht: schrijf de bezwaarbrief voor Raymond volgens de aanwijzingen in de studiegids. Maak hierbij alsjeblieft GEEN gebruik van hulpmiddelen. Er is geen woordlimiet.
Appendix 6: screenshot of Diawoord vocabulary test item