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The impact of negative appreciations on the integration of refugees in the Netherlands

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Abstract

Since 2015, a lot of refugees from among others Syria and Eritrea came to the Netherlands. This is also referred to as the “refugee crisis”. In times of crises, everyone has an opinion, and is not afraid to express this opinion. Besides all the research about these opinions and the causes of these opinions, the question remains what effect it has on the refugees and their integration process. This research answers the question: “How do the refugees in the Netherlands perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community and what consequences do negative opinions have on the willingness to integrate?”. It has been hypothesized that when confronted with negative opinions, refugees’ willingness to integrate is not affected. To answer the research question, refugees have been interviewed about how they perceive and appreciate these opinions, and how it affects their willingness to integrate. The interviews are analyzed with the help of critical discourse analysis, in which the focus lies on different themes relevant for this research. The result of the critical discourse analysis indicates that the refugees’ willingness to integrate is not affected by negative opinions, due to a pragmatic way of framing their emotions. The outcome of this research will be relevant for both sides, for the refugees, as well as for the Dutch host community, as it can improve the integration process.

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1. Introduction

Europe has a long history of hosting migrants and in particular refugees. People try to reach Europe for several reasons and in different ways, mostly in legal ways but also in more dangerous ways to escape from war, poverty and for political reasons. According to the European Commission, “in 2015 and 2016 the EU experienced an unprecedented influx of refugees and migrants. More than 1 million people arrived in the European Union, most of them fleeing from war and terror in Syria and other countries” (European Commission, 2017). The increase in refugees coming to Europe is also referred to as the “European refugee crisis”. The EU came up with a set of solutions for this crisis. These solutions are set to try to resolve the causes of the crisis, and at the same time they declare to try to help the refugees in need. “Steps are being taken to relocate asylum seekers already in Europe, resettle people in need from neighbouring countries and return people who not qualify for asylum” (European Commission, 2017, p.1). Besides that, the European Union is protecting its borders, trying to tackle migrant smuggling, in order to offer refugees safe ways to go to the EU (Frontex, n.d.).

As indicated by the European Commission (2017), one of the solutions to the refugee crisis is the reallocation of the refugees in Europe. One of the countries responsible for the shelter of these refugees is the Netherlands. To give an indication of the amount of refugees coming to the Netherlands, in 2017, 14.716 people applied for asylum in the Netherlands (Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland, 2017). In 2016 this number was 18.171. The biggest amount of these refugees are coming from Syria and Eritrea. Another 14.490 people arrived later to reunite with their family members, already in the Netherlands (Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland, 2017).

Once refugees are settled in a country of refuge, the process of integration begins. The integration of refugees is a process first introduced during the 1951 Convention about the Status of Refugees, and is further emphasised at the 1967 Protocol (UNHCR, 2007). Currently a lot of refugees are coming to European countries, which makes integration a very important process, as it can help them with not only the reception of refugees, but also with “maximising the opportunities of legal migration and making the most of the contributions that immigration can make to EU development” (European Commission, 2018). This indicates the importance of a successful integration process. So also in the Netherlands, the country this thesis focuses on, a successful plan for the integration of refugees is process which gets a lot of attention. An example of the effort the Netherlands puts in integration is a civic integration course (“inburgeringscursus), for all the refugees to follow in order to integrate in the Netherlands. In this course, first and foremost refugees are encouraged to learn the Dutch language. Besides the Dutch language, the emphasis lies on learning basic Dutch culture and work ethic (Dienst Uitvoering Onderwijs, n.d.).

However, besides the fact that integration is an opportunity to maximise the opportunities of migration, it is also seen as “one of the most complex challenges of our era” (Gurría, 2016). From an

everyday live perspective the manner in which a society chooses to look at integration has an impact on all of its members. An effective integration process can positively influence the lives of not only the refugees, but also the people in the host community. However, looking at the recent political discussions and the overall election outcomes in Europe, the last few years the discussion about refugees and their integration process escalated. There is a popular right wing opinion in Europe, according to which refugees are threatening “the social fabric” of many countries (Gurría, 2016). An argument opposite from this view, is the fact that refugees are often vulnerable people who come from a situation of war or violence (Gurría, 2016). Nonetheless, people in the host communities can have a profound opinion by viewing refugees as a threat, driven by the fear about the burden refugees could cause for the citizens who pay taxes, the local norms and values, and the cultures of the host communities (Gurría, 2016). One could even argue that this negative opinion towards refugees could be decisive when it comes to the integration of those refugees.

This thesis focuses on the negative opinions of the Dutch host community about the refugees coming to the Netherlands. A significant amount of literature is already existing on the opinions and attitudes of host communities about refugees. An example is the work of Dempster & Hargrave (2017), whose research was to discover what drivers exist for public attitudes towards refugees. Taking this slightly further, this thesis is interested in the question whether negative opinions of the Dutch host community have an impact on the integration process of refugees. Until now research predominantly focused on one side of the story, namely the attitudes of the host communities towards refugees (Di Saint Pierre et al., 2015; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009; Montgomery & Foldspang, 2007). Media and researches alike have written about the negativity of the Dutch host community towards refugees. An example is a newspaper article which explains that the Netherlands is one of the most negative countries towards refugees (AD, 2015). What remains unknown, and what is key according to this thesis, is the impact of these negative opinions on the integration process of refugees. First of all, the importance of the integration of refugees is already stressed, as it is significant for both the host community and the refugees. Secondly, a lot can be researched about the negative opinions of the Dutch host community, however, this discussion is more relevant when considering the impact of these negative opinions on the integration process of refugees, it is argued. This thesis will try to fill this literature gap based on critical discourse analysis of five semi-structured interviews with refugees about the topics: the Netherlands as a host society, issues and frustrations during the integration process, the refugees’ understanding of the concept of integration, and opinions of the Dutch host community.

Besides the scientific relevance, discussed in the previous part, this research aspires to address the social relevance of this topic. As already stated before, members of host communities can have a profound opinion by viewing refugees as a threat. This often happens without considering any consequences it may have on the integration process of refugees. Furthermore, the integration process can be regarded as essential in order to have a society living in harmony, on the principles of equality,

respect, and human rights. An analysis about the impact of negative appreciations of the Dutch host community towards refugees is therefore very important, and accordingly socially relevant. This analysis will be made according to the following research question: “How do refugees in the Netherlands perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community and what consequences do negative opinions have on the willingness of refugees to integrate?”

To answer this research question, this thesis will begin with providing a theoretical framework in which relevant literature will address the integration process of refugees and the issues and frustrations which can affect this process. This literature review will lead to two hypotheses concerning the Netherlands as a host society for refugees and the impact of negative opinions of Dutch people towards refugees on the integration process of these same refugees. After the theoretical framework, a description will be given of the methods used in the research. The fourth chapter of this thesis will focus on the analysis of the data collected. In this chapter the opinions of the respondents will be analyzed on several topics like their understanding of the concept of integration, encountered negative opinions of the Dutch community, and the effect of these negative appreciations on their integration process. In the concluding chapter, the most relevant information of the analysis will be summarized and reflected on. Furthermore, this final chapter of this thesis will reflect on this research and will give suggestions for future researches.

2. Theory & Hypotheses

In this chapter a theoretical discussion will be provided, using relevant literature on the relationship between the integration process of refugees and their perception and appreciation of opinions of the Dutch host community. At the beginning, the important terms and concepts of this research will be discussed and a conclusion will be drawn about which definitions are going to be used in this research. Afterwards, with the help of the work of among others Van Heelsum (2017), an overview will be provided of the issues and frustrations during the integration process of refugees. A more thorough discussion will result out of this about one of these issues, namely the negative opinions of the host communities towards refugees. At the end, a hypothesis will be derived from the discussion whether these negative opinions affect the integration process of refugees.

2.1 Terms and concepts

The term refugee is a term which is unclear for a large audience. Mainly the difference between a refugee, an asylum seeker, and a migrant is not well-known. In this part the term refugee is further explained. According to the United Nations, a refugee is “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to.” These rules are set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention (UNHCR, 1951, p.14). For the reason that this definition is known worldwide and is clear and specific, it will be applied in the remaining part of this paper.

A second concept which needs to be defined, is the concept integration. “In the context of refugee studies literature, integration is mainly understood in terms of its practical or functional aspects” (Korac, 2003, p.3), which means that integration can be interpreted in different ways, depending on the participant him or herself and his or her environment. Anja van Heelsum (2017) tried to frame the term integration by using two perspectives in her research about how refugees have managed their lives in the Netherlands. The first perspective is the “integration perspective”, the second is the “aspirations perspective”. According to this first perspective, the host country mostly decides what integration means and what integration entails, which is for example about cultural adaptation. A common view which is generally better known about integration and which adds up to the first perspective of Van Heelsum (2017) is that it is a one-way process, where refugees should adapt to the society they enter. The host community has no obligation to adapt to the refugee in this case (Da Lomba, 2010). The second perspective of Van Heelsum (2017) is a perspective “of the refugees themselves who have migrated to fulfil certain life aspirations and

who compare the starting point of their trip with their destination in terms of freedom in fields of life” (Van Heelsum, 2017, p.2137). “This perspective of integration claims that both refugees and host society members play a crucial role in making sure that refugees have access to jobs, education, housing, health, culture and language and they feel part of the new environment, instead of problematizing refugees” (Alencar & Deuze, 2017, p.2). Especially this second perspective is regarded to be important for this thesis, as it addresses the relationship between the refugees and the host community in a more cooperative way. In both perspectives, the “knowledge of the local language, having a job, and becoming part of a local community are in the long run essential” (Van Heelsum, 2017, p.2148), when it comes to the integration of refugees.

Different actors try to give a clear definition of the term integration. An important actor who is increasingly involved in the process around integration is the United Nations. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, “the integration of refugees is a dynamic and multifaceted two-way process which requires efforts by all parties concerned, including a preparedness on the part of refugees to adapt to the host society without having to forego their own cultural identity, and a corresponding readiness on the part of host communities and public institutions to welcome refugees and meet the needs of a diverse population. The process of integration is complex and gradual, comprising distinct but inter-related legal, economic, social and cultural dimensions, all of which are important for refugees’ ability to integrate successfully as fully included members of society” (UNHCR, 2007). By arguing that efforts by all parties are concerned, the United Nations also refers to the second perspective of Van Heelsum (2017), in which the process integration is the responsibility of the refugees, as well as the members of the host society.

However, as argued by Korac (2003), the understanding of integration is depending on the person and his or her environment. This thesis concerns a qualitative study, in which respondents are asked what their understanding of integration is. The qualitative study of Sleijpen et al. (2017), which is a study about young refugees’ resilience strategies in the Netherlands, asked the same question to its respondents. This resulted in a definition of integration according to people with the same environment as the participants of this thesis. According to Sleijpen et al. (2017), “integration refers to young refugees’ act of amalgamating with the Dutch community with at the same time maintaining aspects that they found important of one’s own culture” (Sleijpen, Mooren, Kleber, Boeije; 2017, p.357). According to a statement of one of the respondents of the study of Sleijpen et al. (2017), refugees have to adapt. In order to stay in the Netherlands, refugees should understand the Dutch rules, and when a refugee has children, “they have to go to school because that is required here in the Netherlands” (Sleijpen et al., 2017, p.357). This is a possible way to define integration, when it comes to the integration of refugees. However, the understanding of the term is still complex, diverse, and depending on someone’s situation, which makes it difficult to give one clear definition. Therefore, the understanding of integration for this thesis, will be up to the respondents, as every respondent has different experiences and lives under different circumstances.

2.2 Issues and frustrations

Integration is seen as a process, and Van Heelsum (2017) argues that certain frustrations of refugees are visible when looking at integration. These are “caused by both disappointments and the particular characteristics of the receiving society” (Van Heelsum, 2017, p.2137). Certain studies are conducted in the area of issues during the integration process of refugees. A relevant research, where these frustrations and disappointments are visible, is the survey of “eenvandaag”, which is about the opinions of refugees about their integration and about their life in the Netherlands (1V Opiniepanel, 2017). According to this survey, 24 percent of the refugees are feeling lonely in the Netherlands, because they are barely in contact with Dutch people. However, most refugees feel welcome in the Netherlands, with a percentage of 76 percent. Unfortunately, ten percent does not feel welcome, due to a negative attitude of the Dutch community towards refugees (1V Opiniepanel, 2017). Van Heelsum (2017) further researched the aspirations and the frustrations by stating that an important aspiration of refugees is that they will get a job in the Netherlands, while focussing on income rather than working conditions. These aspirations are often far from the truth. If they are in the possession of a refugee status, it depends on the municipality whether they will get working opportunities or not. In smaller municipalities, “refugees are advised to first fully concentrate on the language training and get their citizenship diploma” (Van Heelsum, 2017, p.2145), where in big cities it is rather normal to start immediately with working, however, the working conditions and work hours are often different than expected, in a way that the working conditions are worse than expected and the work hours are less than expected. Besides that, “structural factors in the asylum system, the high number of removals, and the pre-arranged slow start with language learning and work are frustrating them” (Van Heelsum, 2017, p.2148).

Four researchers from the University of Utrecht (Vroome, Coenders, Tubergen, & Verkuyten, 2011) examined refugees’ self-identify as members of the host society. They used survey data of more than 2,500 Somali, Iraqi, Afghani, Iranian, and ex-Yugoslavian refugees in the Netherlands. The results show that economic participation in the host country is positively related to refugees’ national self-identification, which is in line with the aspiration of refugees of getting a job in the Netherlands. This national self-identification is further explained by Ashmore and colleagues (2004), who state that the national identity of a person is mostly based on that person’s self-identification. This national self-identification “concerns identification of oneself as a member of the host society, which is a first and necessary step for identification with the host society” (Verkuyten, 2005). This means that the more a refugee is participating in the economy of a country, the more that refugee considers him or herself as a member of the host society. In addition, they found that “refugees’ social ties with Dutch natives are associated with national self-identification and that the relationship between economic participation and national self-identification is partially explained by these social ties” (Vroome et al., 2011, p.615).

An interesting and surprising empirical finding of Vroome et al (2011), which contradicts with the results from the survey from “eenvandaag” (1V Opiniepanel, 2017) was that discrimination the refugees perceive does not have a direct impact on the integration of refugees. It can be stated that there is a certain discussion whether negative opinions of the host communities towards refugees, and accordingly discrimination, are regarded as part of a set of frustrations and issues during the integration process of refugees. And as already explained in the introduction, this discussion is the main topic of this thesis.

2.2.1 Negative opinions towards refugees

The discrimination the refugees perceive belongs to a set of negative opinions of the host community about refugees, and in this case the effect of these opinions on the integration process will be researched. Accordingly, a more distinctive picture should be drawn of the negative opinions, as they will be used to research the effect on the integration process of refugees. Dempster and Hargrave indicate (2017) that the most striking opinion of the host communities is that “most foreigners who want to get into my country as a refugee aren’t really refugees, they just want to come here for economic reasons, or to take advantage of our welfare services” (Dempster & Hargrave, 2017, p.10). This opinion can be split into two parts. Namely that refugees come here for pure economic reasons, and secondly that they come here for the welfare services only. These are of course two of the negative opinions, and it represents only a part of the host society.

A positive opinion could be that refugees “bring skills and knowledge with them that can be utilized to the benefit of local people. These skills vary, but do often include those of the more educated group, such as health professionals and teachers, who, even in limited numbers, can make a significant contribution” (UNHCR, 1997). bring other cultures to the host society, for example other languages, other music, and other traditions. Here we can recognize a clear distinction between economy and welfare where the opinions are rather negative and when it comes to food and art and other cultural aspects, the opinions are rather positive. Another positive opinion, that has recently come up in the media again, is that migrants, and accordingly refugees have a positive impact on the economy of a country (Huffington Post, 2018). Despite what is mentioned in the previous sentence, according to the OECD, “international migration has both direct and indirect effects on economic growth” (OECD, 2014, p.3). This mainly has to do with four aspects. First, “migrant workers make important contributions to the labour market in both high- and low-skilled occupations”. Second, “free movement migration helps address labour market imbalances”. Third, “migration contributes to spur innovation and economic growth”. Fourth and last, “migrants contribute more in taxes and social contributions than they receive in individual benefits” (OECD, 2014, pp. 2-3). As already stated in the introduction, it is clear that the host community is mostly conflicted, which means that the opinions of the Dutch population about refugees are divided. On

the one hand tolerating, but on the other hand hostile. The drivers of these opinions are very complex and diverse. One of the main drivers is someone's economic situation. According to Hatton (2015), public opinion is likely to become negative in times of economic stress. "When labour markets become slack, concern about competition for jobs intensifies. At times when public budgets come under pressure, concerns about the fiscal impact also increase." (Hatton, 2015, p.1). A different driver is a very sensitive topic. Namely that someone's religion affects that same person's opinion. According to a research of Bansak, Hainmueller, and Hangartner (2016), European people are more welcoming to Christians than Muslims. This opinion is purely based on someone's prejudices about a certain group of people. What can be concluded regarding this theoretical framework, is that the host communities are mostly conflicted when it comes to their opinions about refugees, but the remark has to be made that a negative attitude towards refugees represents only a certain part of a host community. Now that we have a better understanding of the negative opinions and their drivers, the theoretical framework builds further on what the implications of these negative opinions are on refugees.

2.2.2 Impact on the integration process

As stated in the previous part, the question, and accordingly the subject of this research is: "How do the refugees in the Netherlands perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community and what consequences do negative opinions have on the willingness of refugees to integrate?". There are certain scientific articles on this subject, which for the biggest part address the same side of the discussion. This refers to the previous statement that this thesis addresses a knowledge gap in academic literature. As explained in the introducing chapter of this thesis, Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind, and Solheim (2009) researched the "psychological and attitudinal consequences of perceived ethnic and national identification among immigrants" (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009, p.105). Concluded here was that perceived discrimination caused negative integration which also increased the refugees' hostile attitude towards the host community. A different point of view was provided by Vroome et al (2011), who concluded that refugees did not perceive negative opinions in a way that they were affected by it. Vroome et al (2011) substantiate this conclusion with the explanation that refugees come from an origin country where the situation is most likely worse than the destination country, which results in the possibility that they "perceive the social context in the destination country as less negative" (Vroome et al, 2011, p.634). Following the reasoning of Vroome et al (2011), it can be hypothesized that (1) *refugees perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community as positive*, due to the socially negative situation in their country of origin.

Di Saint Pierre, Martinovic, and De Vroome (2015) examined the wishes of refugees to return to their home country. They extended the existing research "by considering two social psychological experiences – host country identification and perceived discrimination – as

mediators". In their research, they highlighted the importance of cultural integration and social integration. Refugees who could speak the language of the host country experienced less discrimination and were discouraged of returning to their country of origin. And the more refugees are socially integrated in the host country, the less there is the will to return. Accordingly, it can be concluded that Di Saint Pierre, Martinovic, and de Vroome (2015) argue that refugees who have a strong will to integrate, and accordingly integrate in a good and effective way, experience less discrimination, which then results in a even better integration. A study which supports this point of view is the research of Montgomery and Foldspan (2007). Argued here was that "perceived discrimination among young refugees from the Middle East is associated with mental problems and weakening of social adaption" (Montgomery & Foldspang, 2007, p.160). However, Montgomery & Foldspang made some interesting remarks regarding the reaction of refugees on negative opinions of the host community. According to their discussion, "victims of discrimination can react in different ways, e.g. by withdrawal (internalizing) or by aggression towards externally blamed agents (externalizing)" (Montgomery & Foldspang, 2007, p.160). An explanation of Montgomery & Foldspang (2007) here could be that refugees do not want to show their aggression towards the host community, because that could show the negative representation of refugees, which accordingly causes an increase of xenophobia. This internal reaction of refugees, together with the theories provided by Di Saint Pierre, Martinovic and de Vroome (2015) result in the hypothesis (2) that *when refugees are confronted by negative appreciations of their position in the Netherlands, their integration process will not be affected by these opinions.*

3. Methodology

In this part of this thesis, the way in which the research is conducted will be addressed. During the part about the research design, the choice of research method will be explained, and a motivation will be given why that research method is the best choice for this research. Furthermore, the data collection method chapter will explain in detail in what way the data is collected which is going to be used in the research design of this thesis.

3.1 Research Design

As research method, this research used a critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis includes analyzing “texts, interactions and social practices at the local, institutional and societal levels” (Mogashoa, 2014, p.104). The aim of this analysis is to understand relevant social issues, like migration, which is a first motivation to use this particular research method. In critical discourse analysis, the emphasis lies on the meaning behind the words. As McGregor (2012) explains that critical discourse analysis “challenges us to see our words as having meaning in a particular historical, social and political condition” (Mogashoa, 2014, p.105). Mogashoa (2014) makes a remark about critical discourse analysis, which indicates an interesting link with the theoretical framework of this thesis. He does this by saying that critical discourse analysis “aims to systematically explore often opaque relationships of causality and determination between discursive practices, events and texts, and wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles of power (Mogashoa, 2014, p.105)”.

For this research, a specific type of critical discourse analysis has been used, namely “thematic analysis”, in which a certain number of relevant themes, in other words categories, were identified, which were used to analyse the data, in order to understand the meaning behind the words. Furthermore, this thematic analysis did not only focus on separate wordings and arguments, it was also used to identify and analyse certain coherences in the data, which results in a more convincing argument for a certain case, and accordingly a more reliable discussion and conclusion. The themes that will be used in the analysis are: the Netherlands as host society, the understanding of the meaning of integration, issues and frustrations during the integration process, and the opinions of the Dutch community. Throughout the thematic analysis, useful references are made to the theoretical framework. Furthermore, the analysis of every theme is linked with the main research question of this thesis: “How do refugees in the Netherlands perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community and what consequences do negative opinions have on the willingness of refugees to integrate?”

3.2 Data Collection Method

As already explained, the subject of this research is what effect the negative opinions of the Dutch host community have on the integration process of refugees. In order to discover this, semi-structured interviews were conducted as data collection method. The main reason to choose this data collection method is that interviews are mostly used to collect information about someone's beliefs and opinions. In qualitative research like interviews, the contact with the participants is more personal, and this is important when the researchers need to study a topic thoroughly (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Next to that, they are used to get an insight into the behaviours and experiences of a person. In this research, the beliefs and opinions of refugees are central, which is why the choice for an interview is obvious. There are multiple types of interviews. A distinction can be made between structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. This research will use semi-structured interviews as its data collection method. Semi structured interviews are interviews in which "open, direct, verbal questions are used to elicit detailed narratives and stories" (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p.317). In a structured interview, the interviewer controls the interview. In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer gives more room to the participant, which shows more respect for the participant and for his or her role. With qualitative research, it is always important to create a comfortable situation in which the respondent is willing to give as much information as possible. As refugees are mostly fragile people because of experiences, this is something to pay extra attention to. The data collection method in this research is therefore a semi-structured interview.

For this interview the focus lied on refugees in the Netherlands, regardless of where they came from. Next to the status of refugee, they should have had the age of eighteen or higher. The sample of this research consisted of five respondents. Four of these respondents were male refugees, and one was a female refugee. All interviewed refugees came from Syria, mostly from Aleppo and Homs. All five respondents were in the Netherlands for longer than half a year and maximum two years. The author of this thesis came in contact with them via the organization "Vluchtelingenwerk", and interviewed them at their homes across the Netherlands. In order to ensure the privacy of the respondents, the author of this thesis constructed an informed consent form for the respondents to sign (Appendix 2, p.41).

Regarding the content of the interview, a certain template was used with the themes which have to be addressed during the interview (Appendix 1, p.37). For these themes, certain questions were prepared, but it was not necessary to follow exactly these questions, as it is a semi-structured interview. The questions slowly built up to the main and final question: "do negative opinions of the Dutch community affect your will to integrate?" (Appendix 1, p.37). The first questions were about simple issues to create a comfortable situation for the respondent. These are questions like: "how old are you", "how long are you in the Netherlands now?", and "what does a normal day look

like for you?” (Appendix 1, p.37). The first theme which was addressed is about the Netherlands as a host society. An example of a question posed to discover the respondents’ opinion about this theme is: “why did you choose for the Netherlands?” (Appendix 1, p.37). Afterwards, the term integration was addressed, and what kind of issues the respondents encountered during their integration process. By steering the conversation into the direction of issues and frustrations during the integration process, at a moment in time, the negative appreciations of the Dutch host community came up, either by the respondents’ or by the interviewer’s initiative. And with this technique, the semi-structured interview did build up to the main research question in the form of a conversation, addressing all the themes one by one.

The interviews were transcribed and all the lines were numbered in order to refer to the transcriptions in the clearest way. When performing the critical discourse analysis on the interviews, the five transcriptions were analyzed per theme. As all the respondents were asked about the same questions so it was clear where to look in the transcriptions for which themes. The result of this analysis is provided in the next chapter.

4. Analysis

In this thematic analysis, the data was analysed with the help of several themes, namely the Netherlands as host society, the concept integration, issues and frustrations, and reactions of the Dutch community. Every part will consist of the analysis of quotes of the respondents, which will then be linked with the theoretical framework. Every part will end with how that theme connects with the main subject, and accordingly the main research question, which is about the effect of the negative opinions on the integration process of refugees.

4.1 The Netherlands as host society

4.1.1 Why the Netherlands?

At the beginning of the interview, the respondents were asked about why they chose the Netherlands and what impression they got from people in the Netherlands. One of the respondents' reason to come to the Netherlands is that they get the impression that Dutch people are nice to them. One of the reactions was: "I meet so many people in Europe, in special in Denmark, in Germany, but I didn't find that nice feeling, they are laughing first and say: hello, how can I help you? So people here are very friendly. For me this is maybe I'm very lucky that I meet so many people here that want to help me" (Participant A, 01-05-2018: 3-6). This reaction indicates that he travelled to other countries first, before coming to the Netherlands, and that he prefers the Netherlands over Germany or Denmark. This opinion about Germany was shared by another respondent, who indicated that she believed that there would be a lot of racism in Germany because of Germany's history with the Nazi's , and for that reason, they did not want to live in Germany. The driver behind this idea could be interpreted as the same driver people in the Netherlands with negative opinions about refugees have. In both cases, the driver behind this opinion is most of the times not based on facts, but rather on preconceptions. However, when someone has never been to a certain country most of the times it is logical to assess that country based on stories.

However, when this same person (Participant D, 08-05-2018) expresses her opinion about the Netherlands, it is again positive, and focused on how nice the Dutch people are ("We hadden gehoord dat Nederlanders aardig zijn, met veel niet Nederlandse mensen", Participant D, 08-05-2018: 745-746). Besides the opinion that Dutch people are nice, participant D (08-05-2018) expresses her interest in the amount of migrants in the Netherlands which shows a certain hope for people who are in the same situation as her, with whom she can share experiences and deal with new situations in a better way. Furthermore, participant D (08-05-2018) brings in another dimension to the question why

refugees chose for the Netherlands. She argues that the Netherlands is a good country to go to when it comes to the level of education, which is important for her children (“En het studeren is goed hier voor de kinderen, de diploma’s zijn goed hier”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 746-747). This can be seen as a very pragmatic way of looking at the country of refuge, by only taking into account the practical implications for her and her family. Participant A (01-05-2018) did also feel the urge to explain why he wanted to express that the Dutch people are nice to him. He felt it like “it is my duty to say it, because if you don’t say that, you are not human, you don’t have feeling. People here, they want you to be happy, to be in safe, so it is a nice feeling to say it” (Participant A, 01-05-2018: 8-10). This is remarkable for two reasons. First of all, he considers it like it is his duty to say that the Dutch people are nice. One could argue that he feels that there are certain negative appreciations towards refugees in the Netherlands, and he wants to show with this statement, that these negative appreciations are false. A different interpretation can be considered when looking at the reference he makes to some refugees who don’t say that Dutch people are nice, and by arguing that those people are not human. In this way it can be argued that he feels dependent on other refugees in a way that refugees who do not say that Dutch people are nice, can put the group “refugees” in bad daylight. According to this line of thinking, he wishes to take distance from a certain part of the refugees, in a way that he does not want to be put in the same basket. This was also explained by the reasoning of Montgomery & Foldspang (2007), as addressed in the theoretical framework, who gave an explanation that refugees do not like the negative representation of refugees, and accordingly they will not criticize the host community in any way. It could be argued that participant A (01-05-2018) wants to show his aversion towards refugees who do not say that the people in the Netherlands are nice, because these refugees could confirm the negative representation of refugees, which accordingly causes an increase of the negative appreciations towards refugees.

All in all, this section states that the opinion of refugees about the Netherlands as a host society is positive. Most of the respondents state that the Dutch people are nice for them, and that the overall reception of refugees is good. This part also reflected on the first hypothesis of this thesis, which is: “refugees perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community as positive”. The analysis of the opinions of the respondents confirm this hypothesis. However, this thesis questions the sincerity of the opinions of the refugees as it is argued that refugees will not criticize the host community in any way.

4.1.2 Social Community

A decisive factor for the opinion of refugees about the Dutch host community is the social community they arrive in. Participant B (02-05-2018) explains that people in the village are helping him with for example paperwork, or when he needs to make a doctor’s appointment for his children (“Ook heb ik in dit dorp mensen help mij altijd, ik heb probleem met papier, of ik wil afspraak voor vaccinatie voor

mijn kinderen bijvoorbeeld, ik heb hier veel mensen helpen mij”, Participant B, 02-05-2018: 342-344). This is a good example of the practical benefits of living in a social community which is willing to help you. However, not every social community is this welcoming towards refugees. Participant D (08-05-2018) explains that she does not have a lot of contact with their neighbours (“Onze burens niet zoveel, alleen 1 buurman hier niet helpen ons, maar wel contact met hun af en toe”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 765-766). In this case, participant D does have other social contacts different from one neighbour with whom she does not have a good relationship (“Maar we hebben andere Nederlandse kennissen. Alleen niet buurvrouw.”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 766). On the other hand, there is the possibility of having no social contacts with Dutch people at all, which is the case with participant E (17-05-2018), who explains that he only gets help of his nephews who are also refugees (“Nee, ik krijg alleen hulp van mijn neven, die hier al woonden, maar meer mensen, Nederlandse mensen heb ik nog geen kennis gemaakt”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 971-972). A difference in the willingness to integrate can be witnessed here, due to the difference in approaching the host community. Participant D (08-05-2018) clearly showed initiative in approaching the host community, by saying that she has Dutch friends with whom she is in contact. However, participant E (17-05-2018) explains that he did not make contact yet with Dutch people within the year he already lived in the Netherlands (“Sinds een jaar ben ik naar Nederland gekomen”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 941), which could suggest less initiative of the refugee to integrate. This initiative was explained by the literature of Van Heelsum (2017) and Ager & Strang (2004). According to the first integration perspective of Van Heelsum (2017), the initiative to integrate lies with the refugee only, which would mean that participant E (17-05-2018) should show more initiative in order to have a successful integration. On the other hand, there is the possibility that the difference in social relations between participant D (08-05-2018) and participant E (17-05-2018) is explained by the surrounding community. It could be the case that the surrounding community of participant D (08-05-2018) was much more open and welcoming towards refugees than the surrounding community of participant E (17-05-2018)

An interesting person who seems to agree with this integration perspective of Van Heelsum (2017) is participant A (01-05-2018), in his words he explains his opinion by saying that “Everybody has his opinion, I have friends here and they say: “oh it’s difficult life, I can’t understand Dutch paper”. No, you must meet your neighbours, you must find somebody, of course a lot people can help you with many issues. So some people say: “it is a Dutch letter and it is difficult to read it”, but for me it is easy, you must ask your neighbours, you must learn English or Dutch. Or you must go back , it is not easy. The government does not give it to you, you should look for it, you should find it, to learn, to study, to do your job. It’s not only that you are on a vacation” (Participant A, 01-05-2018: 238-244). This opinion suggests that the willingness of the refugee to integrate is essential, and that the role of the host community is not that important. The fact that this person agrees with this view on integration is interesting because it indirectly means that he needs to do more in order to integrate successfully. This

suggests that there is a certain motivation which drives these opinions of participant A (01-05-2018), which will be further addressed in a later stage of this analysis.

Another way to interpret the opinion of participant A (01-05-2018) is by arguing that such an opinion is heavily depending on what kind of person it is who gives the opinion. Clearly participant A (01-05-2018) is someone who has a realistic and pragmatic way of looking at his life and his integration process. And in this case, the integration process is influenced in a positive way by this pragmatism. He indicates that he has a lot friends in the Netherlands, and a warm relationship with his neighbours (“but for me I meet a lot of people, so my neighbours, my friends, I have so many friends in the Netherlands, not just only in B.”, Participant A, 01-05-2018: 18-20). Furthermore, he got interviewed at least twice for his help to the Dutch community (“I have somebody interviewed me for a newspaper on Facebook. I have some pictures, it was on television, I can’t remember one time or two times, I don’t remember”, Participant A, 01-05-2018: 29-30), and due to this presumable fame, he even went to meet the king of the Netherlands (“but I want to make a surprise for you, I met the king”, Participant A, 01-05-2018: 26-27). This shows that the adjustment of participant A (01-05-2018) has a positive impact on his integration process. This research however, is interested in how refugees react to negative appreciations of the Dutch host community, which raises the question if participant A (01-05-2018) sticks to this pragmatism when confronted with the main question about whether he gets affected by negative opinions of the Dutch host community. By saying that “it is normal when you don’t meet some people they don’t accept you, it is normal for me. Because we are not, I told you last time, not copy people, everyone has his opinion.” (Participant A, 01-05-2018: 250-252), he confirms his pragmatic way of thinking. By accepting that people can have different opinions, negative as well as positive, it is easier to detach yourself from the negative opinions, and to focus on the positive opinions, which are in the majority. The opinion of participant A (01-05-2018) confirms the second hypothesis of this thesis, which is: “when refugees are confronted by negative appreciations of their position in the Netherlands, their integration process will not be affected by these opinions”, in a way that he detaches himself from negative opinions. However, an interesting question is whether there are certain issues or frustrations, which can affect the opinion about Netherlands as a host community. This discussion will be addressed in the next part.

4.2 Issues and frustrations

During the conversations about the integration processes of the respondents, the question was asked whether they encountered issues during their integration process. Two respondents addressed this question by giving practical examples of issues, causing difficulties for their integration process. In both cases, the location they are living was not suitable for a fast and good integration process. However, both gave different argumentations for this opinion. The opinion of participant A (01-05-2018) was offered in an informal way, which means it was not recorded, and accordingly

it will be presented without quoting. As already explained before, participant A is a very enthusiastic man who gives his very best to integrate in the most complete way possible. However, he lives in a very small village, which limits his integration process to a certain extent. In his own words, he wants to go out and meet a lot of people and help people with a lot of things, but sadly this is not possible in the village he lives in, because there are not that many people to meet and help. Participant D (08-05-2018) also feels limited by the village they live, however, her motivation for this feeling is different. In her home country, all of her children studied, and they are also studying in the Netherlands. In the small village they live in, there is no university close by, which means that her children should travel far to be able to go to university, which takes a lot of time and furthermore it creates extra costs (“Ja dit is niet geschikt voor ons want de universiteit is ver van ons, en dat kost ons veel, bijvoorbeeld (niet verstaanbaar), en reiskosten, en het kost tijd voor ons”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 750-751). In order to address their needs, she expects that higher educated refugees should be placed in bigger cities where universities are available for her children (“De mensen die hoge diploma’s hebben moeten naar een grote stad. Voor mijn kinderen is dat ook makkelijker, elke dag zij reizen naar H., en dat is niet echt dichtbij ons, bijna een uur voor ons”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 751-754). By seeing this travel to the university as an issue, she compares the situation in the Netherlands with the original situation in Syria, in which all her children studied in the city they lived in. She makes this same comparison when talking about her and her husband’s situation. As a response to the answer what she expects from the Dutch government, she indicated that she and her husband needed more help to go to work (“Ik verwacht meer helpen voor ons om naar werk te gaan”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 781). As already stated before, she saw work as a priority in the Netherlands, because she did not want to be dependent on social help. With an own dental practice and 23 years of experience in that branch, she is having a hard time finding job opportunities in the Netherlands (“Want ik heb ervaring met tandarts, ik heb een diploma voor tandarts in Syrië, 23 jaar, maar hier kan ik niet werken”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 781-783). This experience is not enough according to the Dutch laws, and now she has to do an internship at a dentist where she learns everything she already knew (“Ik heb nu alleen een stage volgen, maar met werk ik kan dat al goed genoeg”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 785-786). This constant comparison with the old situation in her home country can in this case cause a negative view on the situation in the Netherlands, even though it is very understandable. However, taking into account the level of education during the distribution of refugees over the Netherlands is an interesting topic to look further into.

An obvious and simple answer to the question whether the respondents encountered issues during their integration process is to argue that there are no encountered issues at all. Participant C (07-05-2018) followed this line by saying that he does not have any issues in the Netherlands (“No, I don’t have issues”, Participant C, 07-05-2018: 606). Participant E (17-05-2018) is the second respondent who argued that he did not notice any issues during his time in the Netherlands (“Nee

nog niet, en ik wil het niet doen”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 989). By saying the words “not yet” (Participant E, 17-05-2018) he gave enough indication to ask further whether he could give examples of possible issues in the future, with the hope that he would open up about these issues. However, also after the second attempt, he argued that no problem has arisen yet and that he does not expect anything with regards to issues (“Er is nog geen probleem gekomen maar ik denk dat er is niets”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 991). Certainly there is the possibility that no issues are encountered, but how realistic this is could be questioned due to the given fact that during an integration process it is most likely that certain issues are encountered, as also argued in the theoretical framework with arguments of among others the survey of 1vandaag (1V Opiniepanel, 2017). The results of the survey indicated that 24% of the refugees in the Netherlands are encountering issues and feeling lonely because of it. If these answers are analysed critically, one could argue for two reasons behind these answers. First, there is the possibility that these respondents did not encounter issues because for them, the word issue has another meaning. They came from a situation in their home country, in which the encountered issues were of much bigger seriousness. Compared to those problems, the small issues encountered in the Netherlands are not really seen as real problems. A second way to interpret these answers is by taking their emotions into account. The possibility exists that participant C (07-05-2018) and participant E (17-05-2018) do not feel the urge to talk about these issues because for them, it is spilled energy. As participant B (02-05-2018) explained previously, there is a choice to focus on stress or relax. By ignoring issues and frustrations, encountered during the integration process, one could argue that they make a choice to keep the positive energy, and to get rid of the negative energy.

This thesis seeks to discover whether both participant C (07-05-2018) and participant E (17-05-2018) are also making this choice when confronted with the main question whether their integration processes get affected by negative appreciations of the Dutch community. Participant C (07-05-2018) makes the difference between people who help him and people who do not help them, in a way that they have negative opinions about refugees. In coping with these negative appreciations he makes the choice to focus on the Dutch people who help them, moreover, he is working for them which means he is only working for a part of the Dutch host community (“No, because I see a lot of people who do not believe in this too, because they are helping us, and we work for them, not to be aggressive with us”, Participant C, 07-05-2018: 662-663). By making the choice to ignore the negative side of the Dutch host community, he makes the choice to stay unaffected. This way of coping with negative opinions is effective and noble, but the question is how far these negative opinions can go before it cannot be ignored anymore. Participant E (17-05-2018) gives an indication by comparing the situation in the Netherlands with the situation in Lebanon, the first country of refuge. He agrees with participant C (07-05-2018) by saying that it is logical that there are both positive and negative reactions to refugees. According to participant E (17-05-2018) it is not realistic to only have positive reactions, which is why he can accept all

opinions to a certain extent (“Als iemand van zijn land weggaat, daarna dit mening komt in de hele wereld. Altijd komt er negatieve mening en positieve mening, maar als ik wil die negative mening niet te krijgen en alleen die positieve, daarna het kan niet. Ik kan alle meningen begrijpen”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 1110-1113). With regards to the Netherlands, the amount of positive reactions is much bigger than the amount of negative ones, which means that participant E (17-05-2018) does not get affected. However, when he compares it with the situation in Lebanon, he argues differently, due to the large amount of negative opinions in Lebanon (“Ik heb negatieve mening in Libanon, het is meer dan dit”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 1113). Accordingly, these negative opinions do affect him and his integration process in a way that he felt sad, and even depressed about the situation (“Ik voel een beetje triest van dat. Ik werd depressief van deze situatie”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 1115). So if the situation in the Netherlands would be the same as the situation in Lebanon, he would feel affected, and accordingly he would not stay in the Netherlands (“Dan zou ik vluchten uit Nederland [laughing] naar een ander land”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 1122).

In this way, the research question about the impact of negative opinions on the integration process of refugees is further answered. However, as already mentioned in the theoretical framework, integration is a difficult term which can be interpreted in a lot of ways. This term, and its understanding according to the respondents, will be addressed in the next part.

4.3 The refugees’ understanding of the meaning of integration

4.3.1 The concept of integration

As discussed in the theoretical framework, integration is a complex concept, which can be interpreted in a lot of ways. For this research, the perspective was chosen that claims that refugees and the host society members both play a role in the integration process of refugees, which indicates a two way process, in which the willingness of the refugee to integrate is essential. The analysis of the respondents’ opinions about this two way process will be given in the next part. This part is about the respondents’ understanding of the concept integration, which is open for their own interpretation. One of the ways of describing integration was that refugees should fit in the Dutch society, which means that you should be able to have a good relationship with all Dutch people. Moreover, for integration you should speak Dutch, rather than English or Arabic, in order to understand everything the Netherlands as a country wants from you as a refugee. An example is a letter she receives from the Dutch government, which is in Dutch where it is very convenient, if not necessary, to be able to read the Dutch language (“Dat betekent ik woon in Nederland, passen met Nederlandse mensen, met cultuur, met alles van Nederlandse mensen, ik moet ook Nederlands praten, niet Engels, niet Arabisch. Ik moet begrijpen alles, voor brieven, wat die van ons willen”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 776-778).

An important aspect of this opinion is that she argues that the Dutch language is a very important part of integrating in the Netherlands. This opinion is shared by participant C (07-05-2018), who says he needs to “learn the language, that is the first fix work” (Participant C, 07-05-2018: 594), because he thinks that when he has the opportunity to speak with everyone in the same language, it will help him a lot during his integration (“when I learn the language, I will speak with everyone, in the same language, so that will help me a lot”, Participant C, 07-05-2018: 594-595). Participant A (01-05-2018) goes further on this opinion by arguing that he does not only want to learn the Dutch language, he has to learn it, which, in his case, brings a lot of difficulties due to his physical conditions (“my age is 53, so I have to learn Dutch of course, but the problem is that right now I can’t study Dutch language, it is difficult for me, at the same time most people here they can speak Dutch very well”, Participant A, 01-05-2018: 72-74).

The will to speak Dutch can be interpreted in two ways. First, from the perspective of the host community, one could argue that it is positive that refugees who are coming to the Netherlands want to study the Dutch language, which shows the will to integrate. In the theoretical framework, Van Heelsum (2017) argued the very same by stating that “refugees are advised to first fully concentrate on the language training” (Van Heelsum, 2017, p.2145). It is uncontested that language training has a positive impact on the integration process. However, another interpretation could be that it is questionable why the knowledge of the Dutch language is that important for integration. During the analysis of the previous theme, the first integration perspective of Van Heelsum (2017) came up, in which the perspective of host societies on integration dominates the thinking. Accordingly, a comparison is made between the refugees and the people from the host society and a big difference is often detected there. Following this line of thinking, the refugee should adapt to the standards of the people from the host community, and the knowledge of the Dutch language is very important. The opposite view on integration, and accordingly the second perspective of Van Heelsum (2017) was that refugees, as well as people from the host society should be responsible for a good integration process. According to this point of view, it can be argued that it is incorrect that refugees should study the Dutch language before integration is possible. If the integration process really is a, so-called, two-way process, being able to speak the Dutch language would only be helpful, but not a condition for a good integration process. The opinions of the respondents about this two-way process will be further analysed in the next part.

4.3.2 The motivation behind integration

Besides the ability to speak the Dutch language, there is another practical aspect of integrating which is important to most of the respondents. Participant C (07-05-2018) argued that he needs to integrate “to be the same as Dutch people, and to work and to make the country better” (Participant C, 07-05-2018: 598) The motivation to make the Netherlands a better country is a practical motivation and in

the interest of the receiving country, so in the interest of others than yourself. This characteristic is admirable, but on the other hand it means that the participant is integrating in order to please the Netherlands as a country of refuge instead of integrating in order to find a new comfortable life for the participant himself. A better example of this practical motivation to help the country of refuge is provided by participant E (17-05-2018). He wants to learn and to study, in order to be able to work in the future (“ik ga leren, ik ga studeren, en ik kan vervolgens in de toekomst werken”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 984). The reason behind the will to work is that according to him, the Netherlands has an aging population, and accordingly there is a need for young workers, in which participant E (17-05-2018) could provide (“ik hoorde dat er niet veel mensen zijn, ik hoorde dat bejaarden is meer dan de jonge mensen daarom zij hopen ons te helpen”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 985-986). In this way, the motivation behind the will to work is not based on self-interest, but on the interest of the Netherlands as a country.

One could argue that the reason behind this motivation is that refugees feel indebted in the country of refuge, in this case the Netherlands, due to the help they receive in the form of for example housing and other social benefits. Participant A (01-05-2018) went further on this by explaining that the Netherlands gave him a lot of things, like the possibility to go to a hospital, or a doctor, and that he receives money (“of course I must respect the rules here, that is very important, because Netherlands gave me asylum, they gave me a lot of things, so I feel myself like every Dutch man. That’s all my rights and (inaudible), I can go to the hospital, I can go to the doctor, I got money from the government, everything here is the same, Dutch rights, there is no difference, just only nationality”, Participant A, 01-05-2018: 99-103). Accordingly, he felt the moral duty to respect the rules in the Netherlands, and accordingly to appreciate everything in the Netherlands (“that is why we have to appreciate everything, for all details, we say thank you very much, it is very important, or you are not human, that is my opinion”, Participant A, 01-05-2018: 122-123). However, these rights he is talking about are basic human rights, and still he feels indebted upon receiving them. Next to that, the comment that refugees have exactly the same rights as the Dutch people can also be questioned. It can be believed that the Netherlands is striving for this goal, however, in practice the situation is often different. Either way, participant A took distance from his pragmatic way of looking at his integration process. However, it can also be the case that there is a different motivation behind the will to work.

Participant D (08-05-2018) explained that in her home country, she had a good job in the form of her own practice, she had a car, a big house, and a garden. For this reason, it is hard for her to be dependent on social help in the Netherlands and accordingly, she wants to work to become independent of this social help (“niet alleen voor uitkering, ik hou niet van uitkering, is niet goed voor ons. Ik heb eigen praktijk in mijn land, we hebben auto, groot huis, tuin”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 917-918). In this way, work serves not only a moral goal, but it also serves the self-interest of the refugee. Her self-image in the Netherlands is not the same as her self-image she had in Syria. The emotional feeling behind this opinion can be interpreted as sadness, about the urge to leave her old life

behind, in which she had everything. This sadness is highlighted again when she talks about her old life in the present tense, by saying that she has everything, but corrects herself by saying that she had everything (“we hebben alles. We hadden alles”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 894). This is for her and her family a painful confrontation with the reality, and for her it is very important to return to her old status as fast as possible, and she does this by integrating in the best way possible. In this way, her sadness may work as a strong motivation for integration, seen as an exit strategy towards an improvement of her life conditions. A different emotional motivation behind integration is the fear of loneliness. Participant E (17-05-2018) explained his own understanding of integration by saying that integration means that you meet with other people, and that you learn to understand that culture, to refrain from loneliness (“integratie is dat jij met mensen kan kennis maken en kan je die cultuur van die mensen begrijpen en kan je in contact maken met hen, en niet alleen blijven”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 977-978). In a way that he does not want to stay alone in his situation, he looks for social relations. This social involvement in the host community is the third important aspect of integration according to Van Heelsum (2017), who concluded that the “knowledge of the local language, having a job, and becoming part of a local community are in the long run essential” (Van Heelsum, 2017, p.2148). The first two aspects, knowledge of the local language and having a job were already addressed earlier in the analysis, and now the third aspect, which is becoming part of a local community, has also been addressed by the respondents. This might suggest that the opinions of the respondents of this research are shared by participants of previous researches of, among others, the research of Van Heelsum (2017).

The explanation of participant E (17-05-2018) can also be interpreted as the fear for emotions, which in this case is the fear of loneliness. This fear for emotions can also be detected when addressing the main question of this thesis, which is about the possible influence of negative appreciations on the integration process of refugees. Participant B (02-05-2018) argues that when he focuses on the negative appreciations of the Dutch host community, he gets stress, and he is becoming nervous. Accordingly, he asks himself whether he wants to feel this stress, to which in most cases the answer is no, which is why he would rather focus on the positive reactions (“Ik heb altijd positieve reacties. Wanneer ik negatieve reacties krijg, die probleem voor mij, ik heb stress bijvoorbeeld, of nerveus. Maar waarom, ik heb stress? Ik wil niet stress. Hij zegt bijvoorbeeld slecht voor vluchteling, ik kan horen, maar waarom ik maak stress in mij?”, Participant B, 02-05-2018: 510-513). In this way the fear for stress and tension is a motivation to ignore the negative appreciations of the Dutch community, instead he will try to feel relaxed under the situation (“sommige mensen hebben stress voor jou, sommigen relax. Waarom ik houd van stress? Ik hou van relax”, Participant B, 02-05-2018: 517-518), and instead of stressing out, he will try to forget in order to be able to move on (“of ik hoor sommige mensen die negatief praten, ik ga naar mijn koelkast en pak een bier [laughing], Participant B, 02-05-2018: 523-524). This could be considered

as a self-soothing strategy, as he deliberately tries to calm himself, in order to feel relaxed instead of feeling stressed.

4.3.3 Integration as a two-way process

As already mentioned in the previous part, this part will address the opinions of the respondents about integration as a two-way process. This view on integration which meets with the second perspective of Van Heelsum (2017) is that refugees, as well as people from the host society should play a role in the adaptation of the refugees (Ager & Strang, 2004). The opinions about this two-way process are diverse, in a sense that for example participant A (01-05-2018) followed the perspective in which the initiative to integrate lies with the refugee only, by saying that “the government does not give it to you, you should look for it, you should find it, to learn, to study, to do your job” (Participant A, 01-05-2018: 242-243). With this statement he confirms the integration perspective in which the refugee only plays a role in his or her integration process. Participant D (08-05-2017) argues differently, by saying that there should be a balance between their culture and the culture of the Netherlands (“het moet passen met elkaar ja, we moeten een balans maken van onze cultuur en de cultuur van Nederland”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 819-820). She went further on this statement by giving an example of her initiative in this balance of cultures. She explained that in her culture it is not normal to eat fried meat, while that happens daily in the Netherlands. However, when they are in the company of Dutch people, and fried meat is on the table, she considers it no problem to eat it (“In onze cultuur, Arabische cultuur, bijvoorbeeld wordt gebakken vlees niet gegeten in ons land, in het algemeen. Maar hier, als wij vieren met Nederlandse mensen, te veel vlees gebakken, geen probleem om te eten met hun”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 823-825). This example can be interpreted as an indication of a refugee adapting to the people in the host society. However, in this case, it can be interpreted that participant D (08-05-2018) also expects such an attitude from the host community, which will then lead to an integration process where the initiative lies with the refugee as well as the host community.

A different way to look at integration as a two way process is to focus more on the government as a representative of the host community. So instead of looking at the individual social connections between the refugees and people from the host community, one could look at the relation between the help of the government on the one side, and the willingness to integrate of the refugee at the other. Participant E (17-05-2018) hints at this relation by saying that when the government does not help refugees, then the refugees cannot fully integrate, because for refugees a lot is unknown in the country of refuge. On the other side, this help of the government becomes useless in the case that the refugee does not show his or her willingness to integrate (“Als de overheid die mensen niet helpt om de integratie te doen daarna niet alle mensen kunnen de integratie doen. Want er zijn mensen die niet veel kent. En als er mensen zijn die niet integratie willen doen dan kan de overheid niks doen”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 1015-1018). Participant E (17-05-2018) hints at the role of the host society,

in this case the government, in the integration process. According to him, integration cannot be successfully realized without the help of the host society. Based on this line of thinking, it can be argued that a low amount of help of the host society could cause certain frustrations among refugees. As explained in the theoretical framework, Van Heelsum (2017) argued that when looking at integration, certain frustrations of refugees are visible, which are “caused by both disappointments and the particular characteristics of the receiving society” (Van Heelsum, 2017, p.2137). In the next part, a further analysis will be made about one of these particular characteristics of the host community, namely the opinions of the host community about refugees.

4.4 Opinions of the Dutch host community

In this part of the analysis, a more extensive picture will be drawn of the opinions of the Dutch host community about refugees. In the first part, the positive appreciations of the Dutch host community will be addressed, and in the second part the negative appreciations.

4.4.1 Positive opinions

When confronted with the question whether the respondents have encountered positive opinions about them in the Netherlands, the general reaction is that they encounter a lot of positive appreciations. In the words of participant E (17-05-2018), he gets a lot of positive reactions (“positieve reacties, ik krijg heel veel positieve reacties”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 996). Participant A explains the same by saying that Dutch people like to help them (“People like to help us”, Participant A, 01-05-2018: 138). Participant E (17-05-2018) gives two examples to explain what kind of positive reactions he received during his time in the Netherlands. A first example is the relation he has with the farmer he works with. He considers this farmer as a very sweet person who helps him a lot (“en die boeren ook ik vind hem heel lief”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 997-998). The second example is about the organisation Vluchtelingenwerk, which helps the refugees with integrating in the Netherlands. Participant E (17-05-2018) knows a person at this organisation which is very sweet and helpful for him (“bijvoorbeeld ik ken iemand ook bij vluchtelingenwerk die heel lief zijn”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 996-997). This certainly is an example of an encountered positive reaction of the Dutch host community towards a refugee. However, Vluchtelingenwerk is an organisation who helps the refugees, which means that it can be seen as logical that they are nice and kind towards refugees. And as participant E (17-05-2018) already explained before, he did not make contact yet with Dutch people, besides the people working at organisations like Vluchtelingenwerk. So both these examples are of a dependent nature, in a way that the first social contact was an employer, and the second social contact was the main contact organization. Besides that, these examples could cause a biased image of the positive opinions of the Dutch host community towards refugees, in a way that it only addresses the face to face, interpersonal relations, which are with respect to the respondents, for the biggest part positive.

Next to interpersonal relations, there are a lot of ways left, in which opinions can be given. One could for example consider the media, for example the television, radio, or social media like “Facebook”, where people can give their opinion about refugees.

Other respondents give examples of positive reactions in their daily life of people who are not that involved in helping refugees. Participant B (02-05-2018) explains that people are speaking slowly with him and are willing to translate for him, due to the fact that he still has to learn the Dutch language (“altijd mensen praten met mij langzaam, en zijn blij met mij, en ik niet begrijp, soms vertalen willen”, Participant B, 02-05-2018: 397-398). Concluding, he indicates that whenever he has a problem, people are willing to help him (“ik heb een probleem, die mensen helpen mij”, Participant B, 02-05-2018: 398). This can be interpreted as a good indication of a positive reaction of the Dutch people towards refugees. Besides that, by making this statement, participant B (02-05-2018) hints back at the importance of being able to speak the Dutch language for the integration process. In this example, the Dutch host community shows a certain initiative by adapting their way of talking to that of the refugee, which gives the refugee a feeling of togetherness. Participant C (07-05-2018) gave a different example, which is specifically about the initiative of the host community to get in contact with the refugees. He experienced this initiative in a way that when people do not know him, they come to him and say hallo (“like when I don’t know one, she came to and says hallo, that is very good”, Participant C, 07-05-2018: 614). However this positive initiative is not a characteristic of all the Dutch people. As participant D (08-05-2018) states it, some people are positive about her, but some people do not want to be in contact with her (“sommige mensen willen niet met ons omgaan, maar andere mensen is goed met ons”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 802). These negative reactions towards refugees will be further explained in the next part.

4.4.2 Negative opinions

As with the part about issues and frustrations during the integration process, a simple and safe answer to the question whether the respondents encountered negative opinions of the Dutch host community, is to argue that no negative opinions are encountered at all. Participant C (07-05-2018) followed this line of thinking by saying that he did not have any negative experiences in the Netherlands (“no, I don’t have any negative experiences”, Participant C, 07-05-2018: 618), however he failed to explain how that is possible. Participant B (02-05-2018) also argued that he did not have any negative reactions yet (“Negatieve reacties, nee. Alle mensen zijn goed met mij”, Participant B, 02-05-2018: 401). However, he did give an explanation of how this is possible. He believes that he needs to meet people while having a big smile, which will have the effect that people will like that smile, and accordingly smile back (“ik open deur, en ik smile. Alle mensen vinden smile mooi. Wanneer ik smile, moeten andere mensen smile met mij”, Participant B, 02-05-2018: 402-403). This smile is

metaphorically speaking for being nice to someone. Participant B (02-05-2018) believes that when he is nice to the Dutch people, the Dutch people will in return be nice to him. And the fact that he did not encounter any negative appreciations until now proves this belief to be right. Although participant B (02-05-2018) has an explanation for the fact that he did not encounter any negative appreciations, it can be seen as unexpected that a refugee does not encounter any negative appreciation. As participant E argues, there are always people who are in favour of refugees coming to the Netherlands and people who are against (“altijd komt er negatieve mening en positieve mening”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 1110-1111).

The other three respondents do indicate that they encountered negative opinions of the Dutch community. For participant E (17-05-2018) it was only one time where a person addressed him negatively for being a refugee (“ik heb alleen, ik ken die persoon niet. Toen hij zegt tegen mij: je bent vluchteling of zoiets. Alleen dit ene keer”, Participant E, 17-05-2018: 1005-1006). Unfortunately this was not the case for participant D, who encountered it several times. She explains it by saying that most people greet them, but there are some people who are reluctant of doing this (“Ja sommige mensen wij hebben voor hun hai of hallo, maar niet zij voor ons hallo”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 804). However, she immediately feels the urge to also address the people who are positive towards her (“Maar meeste mensen nee is goed”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 805). This same urge can be detected with participant A (01-05-2018) who first says that he encountered negative appreciations around three or four times (“Maybe three or four times”, Participant A, 01-05-2018, 150), but continues by saying that these things are normal for him, because some refugees cause problems and people are afraid of these problems (“but that is normal for me, because some refugees they do some problems and people are scared and afraid, that is normal”, Participant A, 01-05-2018: 150-151). By having the urge to address the positive people in the Netherlands, the respondents show their preference to focus on the positive opinions rather than on the negative ones. So most respondents do not want to go into detail about their opinion about these negative appreciations of people from the Dutch host community, in order to be able to ignore this negativity and focus on the positive opinions. Nevertheless, participant D does give her opinion, by arguing that it is not correct to be negative towards refugees. According to her, they did not choose to come to the Netherlands, they had to because of the war in Syria which is in fact fought by America and other countries in Europe (“dat is niet goed. Wij hebben er niet voor gekozen om hier te komen, wij hebben oorlog, en het is een oorlog van alle grote landen, Amerika, en sommige landen in Europa ook, fighten over ons land”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 891-893). This statement can be interpreted as an emotional one, because she thinks that it is unfair that sometimes she and her family are treated this way. However, this feeling of unfairness is not expressed out of the will to complain about her situation. It can rather be interpreted as if she is protesting on the unfairness because she believes that it is legally and politically true that it is not right that Dutch people are negative towards refugees. In this way her opinion can be seen as an adult claim on rights, and accordingly as a political statement instead of an emotional one.

However, she frames these emotions when she is confronted with the question whether these negative opinions affect her integration process, and the pragmatism which was addressed earlier on can be detected again. According to participant D (08-05-2018), these opinions do not have a negative influence on her integration, because integration is something which has to happen, no matter what stands in its way (“voor integratie niet negatieve invloed nee, dat moet”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 898). She has to integrate in order to become part of the Netherlands, after which she can work and accomplish things, with the result of becoming a positive woman like every Dutch woman, who can work and pay taxes (“dat moet, anders word ik niet deel van mijn land, ik moet passen hier. Ik moet werken en diploma, ik wil bereiken, ik moet hier worden positieve vrouw net als Nederlanders. En voor belasting voor alles, ik moet werken”, Participant D, 08-05-2018: 913-915). In this way she is very pragmatic, by framing her emotions in such a way that she is able to achieve her goal, which is successful integration.

6. Conclusion

In this thesis, the impact of negative opinions of the Dutch host community on the integration process of refugees was investigated with the help of five semi-structured interviews. These semi-structured interviews offered an interesting discussion about the integration processes of the respondents and the issues and frustrations during these processes. In general, the respondents perceived and appreciated the opinions of the Dutch community in a positive way. However, when analysing these opinions more thorough, these perceptions can be questioned. It can be argued that refugees feel the moral duty to respect the rules in the Netherlands, and accordingly to appreciate everything in the Netherlands. Following this way of arguing, refugees do perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community in a positive way. However, the reason for this positive appreciation does not necessarily have to do with the effort of the Dutch host community. According to the analysis of this thesis, the drivers behind the opinions of the refugees about the host community are emotional ones. Therefore the opinions of refugees about the Dutch host community are positive, regardless of how positive the Dutch host community actually is towards refugees.

Besides the discussion about integration, there are some issues and frustrations during the integration process highlighted by the respondents. One of these issues has to do with negative opinions of the Dutch host community towards refugees. The respondents indicated that not many negative appreciations were encountered in practice, in an interpersonal way. However, the general tendency of negativity towards refugees of a critical part of the Dutch society has been encountered by the respondents and reacted on in different ways. Although an emotional reaction is understandable and presumably obvious, the respondents seem to frame these emotions in order to achieve their goal, which is successful integration. A different way to describe this reaction is by referring to it as pragmatic, which indicates that refugees deal with integration in a realistic and practical way. In this way, this thesis can answer the main research question, which is: “How do refugees in the Netherlands perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community and what consequences do negative opinions have on the willingness of refugees to integrate?”. As discussed in this concluding chapter, the refugees included in this research perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community in a positive way, which confirms the first hypothesis of this thesis, which says that “refugees perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community as positive”. Furthermore, this thesis argues that refugees are not affected by negative opinions of the Dutch community, due to their own mindset of framing their emotions. Accordingly, the second hypothesis is also confirmed, which stated that “when refugees are confronted by negative appreciations of their position in the Netherlands, their integration process will not be affected by these opinions”. Concluding, the answer to the main research question can be explained by arguing that refugees in the Netherlands perceive and appreciate the opinions of the Dutch community as positive. However, the motivation behind this opinion can be questioned. Furthermore, there are no consequences of negative opinions on the willingness of refugees to

integrate recognized in this thesis. This can be explained by the refugees' mindset of framing their emotions, also referred to as pragmatism, in order to integrate in the Netherlands in a successful way.

As discussed in the introducing chapter of this thesis, existing research predominantly focused on one side of the story, namely the negative attitudes of the host communities towards refugees (Di Saint Pierre et al., 2015; Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2009; Montgomery & Foldspang, 2007). The media seems to follow this way of looking at the discussion about the integration of refugees (AD, 2015). This thesis suggested that the impact of these negative attitudes on the integration process of refugees is key, as the discussion about the integration of refugees becomes more relevant when both sides of the story are included. With the help of the discussion in this thesis, a better and more relevant view on the integration of refugees in the Netherlands is provided. As this research argues that refugees are not directly affected by negative opinions of the Dutch host community, the author of this thesis wants to question the relevance of the existing discussion in the Netherlands about the integration of refugees. There is a lot said and written about the opinions of Dutch people about refugees, and about the possible consequences these opinions could have on refugees (AD, 2015; NOS, 2015; RTL Nieuws, 2018). Now that this research concludes that these consequences are barely or non-existing, the author of this thesis suggests that the focus in the discussion about integration of researchers and media should no longer be put on the opinions of the Dutch community about refugees. This thesis suggests that this focus should be shifted to improvement of the integration process, in order to maximize the positive influence of refugees on the development of the Netherlands. Accordingly, this thesis hopes that further researches focus on how to maximize this positive influence. A suggestion has been raised by two of the five respondents of this research. Right now, refugees are randomly allocated in the Netherlands, without looking at preferences and without taking into account all characteristics of every refugee. When these preferences and characteristics are taken into account in the allocation of refugees in the Netherlands, refugees would have more opportunities to develop themselves. Accordingly, this would positively influence the development of the Netherlands as a country.

Therefore, the author of this thesis wants to go further on this by giving a policy recommendation about the topic of effective allocation of refugees in the Netherlands. As effective allocation of refugees is important for the refugee, as well as the host country, the author of this thesis wants to plead for a critical review on the allocation process as it is right now in the Netherlands. Therefore the government of the Netherlands, together with the "Centraal Orgaan opvang asielzoekers" (COA), should reflect on the allocation process of refugees in the Netherlands. Furthermore they should improve this process in order to maximize the positive influence of refugees on the development of the Netherlands. One aspect that needs to be included in the allocation process of refugees, is the factor educational attainment, in order to give refugees the possibility to study and work on a level they prefer. This will have a positive impact on the Dutch economy. Besides that, the COA should take the other preferences of the refugees into account. Instead of allocating the refugees randomly, the refugees should have a say in where they will be living.

Next to the provision of policy recommendations, the author of this thesis wants to give an indication of the weaknesses and strengths of this research, as they can have an impact on the relevance of this thesis. Certain weaknesses can be recognized. First, the sample of this research consisted of only five refugees, which can be regarded as low. Accordingly, one could question the conclusions of this research, as it is not based on many different arguments. Second, all respondents in this research came from Syria, which could mean that these respondents were more 'Western' in a way that they are more used to the norms and values in the Netherlands. Taking this slightly further, this could mean that the five respondents of this research had less difficulties with integrating in the Netherlands. In order to construct a reliable conclusion, relevant for all refugees coming to the Netherlands, the author of this thesis advises further researches to focus on a sample which is more diverse. Third, the author of this thesis was not an experienced interviewer, which could also be seen as a weakness of this thesis. This lack of training and experience could for example result in a wrong interpretation of certain comments, postures, or gestures of respondents. Accordingly, this could result in the missing of relevant information provided by the respondents.

The focus of this thesis on a particular literature gap which has not been researched yet, can be seen as a strength of this research. Besides this practical and scientific relevance of the study, this thesis has an obvious societal relevance in a way that the improvement of the integration process of refugees can be regarded as essential in order to have a society living in harmony, on the principles of equality, respect, and human rights. A different strength which can be distinguished is the use of a qualitative way of data collection, namely semi-structured interviews. A lot of existing literature used quantitative ways of data collection, for the biggest part surveys. The use of semi-structured interviews increases the feeling of comfort of the respondents, and accordingly the amount and relevance of the data.

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8. Appendix

Appendix 1 – Interview Template English/Dutch

ENGLISH - What to explain to the respondent:

- Assurance of confidentiality. → Informed Consent forms
- Purpose of digital recorder – ask permission to use it. Explain who will listen to the recording.
- Who am I?
- Purpose of the interview.
- Clarification of topic under discussion.
- Assure participant that he or she may seek clarification of questions.
- Assure participant that he or she can decline to answer a question.
- Assure participant that there will be opportunity during the interview to ask questions.

Some introducing questions

- How old are you?
- Where do you come from?
- How long are you in the Netherlands now?
- Does your family also live here?
- What does a day look like for you?

Questions, working towards the subject

Subject: Opinions of the Dutch people

- Can you tell me how you end up in the Netherlands? Why did you choose for the Netherlands?
- How did you establish yourself here, in this particular place?
- How did you find this house?
- Did you find help in addressing these needs from other people than the people working at (Vluchtelingenwerk) (only if they address the issue)? In what way?
- Can you describe to me your social relations and contacts in your daily life? (other than refugees)

Subject: Integration process

- All these relations are part of an integration process.

- What do you think integration means for you?
- What do you think that the Netherlands as a state expect from you, when it comes to integration?
- What kind of issues did you encounter during the integration process?

Subject: Integration process and influence of opinions

- How fulfilling is your social life at the moment?
- How do you experience the social contacts? (positive/negative)
 - o What kind of positive reactions do you encounter?
 - o Do you ever encounter negative experiences?
- Do you think integration is a two-way process? Which means that the initiative lies with both the refugees as the government.
- What role has the government? And what role has the refugee?
- Do you think the ‘will to integrate’ plays a big role in the integration process?
- Fill me in on your experience so far: does this will to integrate become more or less over time?
- Are there certain issues which can affect the will to integrate?
- A while ago we talked about positive and negative issues addressed by people around you, I researched certain scientific articles with certain opinions of the Dutch people. And to be clear, these opinions only represent a certain group of people.
 - o First the positive
 - Refugees bring cultural enrichment to the Netherlands.
 - Refugees bring new economic opportunities to the Netherlands, which means new jobs etc.
 - And most importantly: the Dutch people are most willing to help people in need, which is often the case for refugees. Whenever a person needs this help, a lot of Dutch people are willing to give this help.
 - o Unfortunately, there are also certain negative opinions about refugees coming to the Netherlands:
 - They take all our jobs / housing
 - They are only here for the economic and social benefits.
 - Together with refugees, terrorists are coming to the Netherlands.
- Did you ever hear these issues before? And what do you think of them?
- Before we talked about the “will to integrate”, to ask it straight away, do these opinions affect this will? (the positive, as well as the negative opinions)

What if:

- They are talking about a lot of things which are not very useful → try to find a link between the next topic.
- They are exaggerating, or not telling the truth, ask how they came to a certain conclusion? Be critical.

DUTCH / NEDERLANDS - Wat uit te leggen aan de geïnterviewde:

- Betrouwbaarheid van het onderzoek, geen schending van privacy → Informed Consent forms.
- Opname van het interview, vraag permissie. En uitleggen dat alleen jij ernaar luistert.
- Wie ben ik?
- Doel van het interview.
- Verdere uitleg over het onderwerp.
- Uitleggen aan de geïnterviewde dat hij of zij altijd uitleg mag vragen over vragen
- Uitleggen aan de geïnterviewde dat hij of zij altijd mag weigeren om te antwoorden op een vraag.
- Uitleggen aan de geïnterviewde dat hij of zij altijd vragen mag stellen tijdens het interview.

Introducerende vragen

- Hoe oud ben je?
- Waar kom je vandaan?
- Hoe lang ben je nu in Nederland?
- Woont je familie ook hier in Nederland?
- Hoe ziet een standaard dag er uit voor jou?

Vragen richting het uiteindelijke onderwerp

Onderwerp: meningen van de Nederlandse bevolking

- Hoe ben je terecht gekomen in Nederland? En waarom heb je gekozen voor Nederland?
- Hoe ben je op deze specifieke plek terechtgekomen? In dit huis, in deze wijk.
- Heb je hulp gekregen van mensen om je heen? (Vluchtelingenwerk OF andere Nederlanders)
- Kunt u voor mij beschrijven wat uw sociale relaties en contacten zijn in uw dagelijkse leven?

Onderwerp: Integratieproces

- Al deze relaties zijn onderdeel van het succesvol maken van een integratieproces.

- Wat betekent integratie volgens jou?
- Wat denk je dat de Nederlandse overheid verwacht van jou op het gebied van integratie?
- Ben je wel eens op problemen gestuit gedurende je integratieproces? Wat voor problemen waren dat?

Onderwerp: Integratieproces en de invloed van meningen

- We hebben het over je sociale leven gehad.
- Hoe ervaar je de sociale contacten?
 - o Wat voor positieve reacties heb je gehad?
 - o Heb je ooit negatieve reacties gekregen?
- Ben je van mening dat integratie een proces is die van 2 kanten komt? Wat betekent dat het initiatief bij zowel de overheid als bij de vluchtelingen ligt.
- Welke rol heeft de overheid in deze? En welke rol de vluchteling?
- Denk je dat de wil om te integreren een grote rol speelt in jouw integratie?
- Als je nu kijkt naar de je integratieproces, wordt de wil om te integreren dan soms groter of minder groot?
- Zijn er bepaalde specifieke issues die je hebt ondervonden gedurende je integratieproces?
- Een tijdje geleden hadden we het over positieve en negatieve reacties van de mensen om je heen. Ik heb verschillende onderzoeksartikelen gelezen over dit soort meningen in Nederland, en ik wil een paar van de meest voorkomende aan je voorleggen. Ter verduidelijking, het gaat hier over de meningen van een bepaalde groep, niet iedereen.
 - o Positief
 - Vluchtelingen brengen culture verrijking naar Nederland.
 - Vluchtelingen brengen nieuwe economische mogelijkheden naar Nederland, bijvoorbeeld banen etc.
 - En het meest belangrijke: de Nederlandse bevolking wil graag mensen helpen die de hulp nodig hebben, wat vaak het geval is met vluchtelingen.
 - o Negatief
 - Vluchtelingen nemen alle banen in.
 - Vluchtelingen nemen alle huizen in.
 - Vluchtelingen zijn alleen hier voor de sociale en economische hulp.
 - Met dat vluchtelingen naar Nederland komen, komen er ook terroristen/extremisme naar Nederland.
- Heb je al eerder over deze positieve en negatieve meningen gehoord? Wat is jouw mening hierover?
- Eerder hadden we het over de 'wil om te integreren', is het zo dat dit soort meningen, positief of negatief, deze wil beïnvloeden?

Appendix 2 – Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent

‘I hereby declare that I have been informed in a manner which is clear to me about the nature and method of the research. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree of my own free will to participate in this research. I reserve the right to withdraw this consent without the need to give any reason and I am aware that I may withdraw from the interview at any time. If my research results are to be used in scientific publications or made public in any other manner, then they will be made completely anonymous. My personal data will not be disclosed to third parties without my express permission. If I request further information about the research, now or in the future, I may contact j.r.veldhuizen@student.utwente.nl.

If you have any complaints about this research, please direct them to the secretary of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Behavioural Sciences at the University of Twente, Drs. L. Kamphuis-Blikman P.O. Box 217, 7500 AE Enschede (NL), telephone: +31 (0)53 489 3399; email: l.j.m.blikman@utwente.nl).

Signed in duplicate:

.....

Name subject Signature

I have provided explanatory notes about the research. I declare myself willing to answer to the best of my ability any questions which may still arise about the research.’

.....

Name researcher Signature