‘DOING IDENTITIES?’ THROUGH SELF-EXPRESSIVE TELEVISION PRODUCTION: A visual ethnographic study

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ABSTRACT

This working paper highlights the results of a visual ethnographic study with diaspora adolescent girls living in Belgium (age 14-16). It gives an elaborate outline of the methodology, the research process and the results. This study apprehends how second generation girls from Turkish descent negotiate and construct identities through the making of a trailer for an ideal television program. It starts from an intersectional approach to identity and adds up to the academic fields of feminist media studies and girl studies, identity and media studies. It explores what happens when diaspora girls ‘do or make television’, contributes to knowledge on what young females ‘do’ with media texts, and moves beyond the traditional interview methods within audience research. Results show that when participants collectively produce a trailer of their ideal television programs, they reflexively engage in collective identity formation and self-representation. Moreover, the girls took up a broad spectrum of shifting subject positions, which often transgressed gender and ethnicity. The most important methodological advantages of video production as research method is that producing media actually tells us more about a) intersecting identities and regulating discourses, b) media reception in terms of use and consumption and c) the media language and literacy of the girls than about the production an sich.

Keywords

Visual ethnography, Diaspora, Girls studies, Identity, Ethnicity, Gender, Reflexivity, Media language
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PREFACE

This research is part of a broader research project ‘The forgotten audience? A research project on the role of television fiction in the identity construction of diaspora youngsters: A reception analysis from a visual ethnographic perspective (FWO 2008-2012). This doctoral project aims at providing better insights in television use, television consumption and identity construction of diasporic youth. Within the scope of my PhD project, this article focuses on the crossroads between ‘gender’ and ‘ethnicity’ while acknowledging other possible and (often more) important identity traits.

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Second generation diaspora teenagers are persons who are born in Belgium and have the Belgian nationality, but of whom at least one of the parents or both grandparents were born in a non-European country.

The thinking in terms of ‘new ethnicities’ relates to the everyday life experiences of second generation diaspora.

The performance approach allows looking at the processes of negotiating meaning between performer and audience. Furthermore, it asks about the participants’ intentional meanings while acknowledging that these meanings are dynamic since they are shaped in interaction with audience and discourse (Duits, 2008).

INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly multicultural society, where ‘ethno cultural divisions’ are complicating everyday life situations, there is a great need for research that offers a contextually nuanced exploration of diasporic adolescents’ identities and the role of media in these construction processes. This article reports on the results of an ethnographic audience research project with adolescent diaspora girls. It aims to understand how second generation girls (age 14-16) from Turkish descent living in Belgium negotiate and construct identities through the visualization of their ideal television program. This article focuses on ‘ethnicity’ as an important axis of identity while acknowledging intersections with other significant identity traits (e.g. age, gender, education, nationality, religion, etc.). ‘Ethnicity’ provides sources for negotiating identities and entails orientations towards a common descent, history and culture (such as language, ritual practices and religion) (De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007: 448). As a consequence of (feminist) post structuralist epistemologies (e.g. Lotz, 2000; Kearney, 2011) and experiences of diaspora themselves, essentialized and monolithic notions of ‘ethnic’ and ‘cultural’ identities are challenged. For instance, the notion of ‘new ethnicities’ (Hall, 1992) and associated terms as ‘hybridity’ (Kraidy, 2002) and ‘hybrid identities’ (Gillespie, 1995; Barker, 1997; Wise and Velayutham, 2009) have been taken up recently in accounts of diasporic experiences with the media which confront essentialized notions of ethnicity. So-called ‘ethnic’ groups are clearly diverse and heterogeneous and it is vital to avoid collapsing the great diversity of diasporic experiences into one single diasporic identity (Hall, 1990).

In cultural media studies, identities are conceived as dynamic, variable and context-dependent and are “constituted within, not outside representation” (Hall, 1996b: 51). In late modernity, identity is no longer a given, but a reflexive project as it is “something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual” (Giddens, 1991:52). Identities can never fully be embodied and hence it is more useful to speak about identification as a temporary point of attachment to a subject-position (Hall, 1996b; Duits, 2008: 53). This suggests that identity is something that you ‘do’ or ‘perform’ within available repertoires and representations. Media, as important representational machines are thus useful means capable of constructing both individual and collective identities (cf. Madianou, 2005; De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007). Therefore, scholars started to employ visual ethnographies where participants produce their own media in order to give explanations for the role of media in everyday life and their construction of identities (see Niesyto, Buckingham and Fisherkeller, 2003; De Block and Buckingham, 2007; De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007; Noor, 2007; Gauntlett, 2007, Awan 2007). Especially adolescents’ identities are subject of this stance of research because “if somebody – in nowadays media society – wants to learn something about youth’s ideas, feelings and their ways of experiencing the world, he or she should give them a chance to express themselves also by means of their own self-made media products” (Niesyto, 2008: 137). However, very few studies looked in any detail at the media experiences of diaspora
5 The evolution of girls’ studies within cultural studies can be traced down to the influence of McRobbie at the Birmingham school in the 1970s who argued for the need to study girl culture as distinct from youth culture (Kearney, 2011).

6 Rather than understanding media culture as sites of agency and pleasure, such researchers (e.g. research psychologists) more typically construct youth audiences as potential victims of mass media (Kearney, 2011).
children and youngsters (De Block and Buckingham, 2007), especially second generation diaspora teenagers.

This article fits within the feminist endeavour to hear silenced voices (McRobbie and Garbner, 1976; Lotz, 2000; Duits and Van Zoonen, 2011) as it concentrates on diaspora adolescents who are often rendered invisible in the public and academic sphere. These youngsters are particularly interesting to study because they are perceived as being caught between different cultures and therefore negotiate hybrid identities (Aksoy and Robins, 2000; Hall, 1996). Moreover, by focusing on the lived experiences of diaspora, diversity and hybrid identities from below, this study accords with the practices of ‘everyday multiculturalism’ (Wise and Velayutham, 2009: 21) As the participants were solely female, this study resides within the tradition of feminist media studies (Ang, 1985; Radway, 1988; Lotz, 2000) and ‘girls’ studies⁵ (see Mazzarella and Pecora, 2007; Duits and Van Zoonen, 2009; Duits and Romondt, 2009; Kearney, 2006, 2011), which are studies that focus exclusively on girls and the gendered specificities of youth. These fields of research refute empirical investigations that theorize girls as victims⁶ or objects unable to author their own ‘girl culture’ through letting young females speak for themselves and accordingly give them agency (Duits and Van Zoonen 2009; Duits 2010). Moreover, Duits and Van Zoonen (2009: 113) contest the lack of ethnographic and interpretative research that aims at giving girls a voice instead of letting researchers speak for themselves. In requesting scholars to move beyond studying girls merely as media consumers, Kearney (1998: 286) reminds that studying girls’ media production is crucial:

“If scholars involved in the field of girls’ studies desire to keep current with the state of female youth and their cultural practices, we must expand the focus of our analyses to include not only texts produced for girls by adult-run mainstream culture industries, but also those cultural artefacts created by girls” (1998: 286).

In her book ‘Girls make media’, Kearney (2006: 13) asserts that through the production of media, girls can enter a male-dominated field, become cyborgs and as such engage in feminist agency: “Invading domains of adult male power and privilege using not just pens and paper, but computers, video cameras, and musical instruments, young female media producers are the newest generation of cyborgs, the interfaced human/machine organisms whom Donna Harraway boldly predicted would lead the feminist movement in the twenty-first century” (Kearney; 2006: 13). However, she points out that ‘making media’ does not mean that girls are not inundated by the social and psychological problems related with female adolescence, nor that they are unaffected by the diverse oppressions that result from a deprivileged status associated with race, class, ethnicity, sexuality or ability.

New methodologies are important in the light of the complexity and diversity of ethnic and diaspora communities within globalisation of media and culture. This visual ethnographic study contained four creative research stages, was performed among a natural peer group in cooperation with a local youth organization (‘Meisjeswerking VZW Jong’ – Ghent) and lasted about three months (November 2010 – January 2011). In the first exploratory phase, the participating girls (N=12) were asked to
make a collage representing their ideal television program by using magazines and drawing material. Afterwards, collages were individually presented and discussed. In the subsequent phases, the participants got an introductory course on camera techniques where basic filmmaking principles were learnt. Every participant received time to practice her film skills. Respondents were then divided in two groups and asked to write a script for a trailer of their ideal television fiction program where they presented characters, themes, the title, genre, music, etc. The week after, the trailer was shot. Afterwards, the films were edited based on choices made by the girls themselves. In the end, the videos were presented to each other and their families and all girls received their own DVD. During all research stages, conversations, negotiations and discussions are audio-taped and field notes were taken. This ‘action’ research thus provides rich, various and in-depth material that is not solely verbal but provides non-verbal, creative artefacts as well.

Before elaborating on the methodology and results of the visual ethnographic research, it is necessary to provide some contextual information on second generation diasporic youths’ media use in a Flemish context without losing track of its heterogeneity and diversity (Adriaens, 2010). Media use must be captured in the context of other social activities and needs to be understood in the light of broader social and cultural differences (Livingstone and Bovill, 2001). Second generation diasporas are often perceived having a ‘pick and mix approach’. In other words, where they have access, they watch transnational satellite, but not as intensively as their first generation parents. ‘Diasporic’ television use is mainly mundane and entertainment-oriented. Moreover, it entails practical advantages because of the bigger spectrum of channels available. Other reasons to use media products from the ‘country of origin’ are to maintain cultural, emotional or linguistic links with past and current changes. But watching (satellite) television is also a way of bringing the family together, spending family time and strengthening family relations (Adriaens, 2010). In general, diaspora youth makes no distinction between content delivered by satellite and by cable broadcasters and their viewing preferences need to be situated within the context of global youth culture. National and global programmes are watched because they facilitate language acquisition, mediate friendships (e.g. TV talk at school), help negotiating new identities and accessing global youth culture. A complex interaction between global and local processes is thus visible and the use of media can be considered threefold as it is diasporic, national and – global at the same time (cf. Buckingham, 2008; Adriaens, 2010). The use of these multiple televised articulations helps constructing ‘hybrid identities’ or what Hall (1992) would call ‘new ethnicities’ (Durham, 2004). This article tries to get deeper insights into these ‘hybrid’ identities by means of visual ethnographic research.

First, this working paper will elaborate on the use of visual ethnography in media studies and then will focus on the specific research questions and research context. Then, it expands on the data collection and analysis. In the results section, key outcomes regarding identification, performance, identity construction and media reception and literacy will be highlighted.
In the 1990s gender became a central theme in discussions of ethnographic research methodology (Pink, 2001: 21).

And is in favour of the idea (inspired by feminist standpoint theories) of ethnographic knowledge as ‘situated knowledge’ (Haraway, 1988) (see: Forsey, 2010).

Feminists have criticized both qualitative and quantitative researchers for their tendency to use participants as mere suppliers of data (see Gauntlett, 2004).
1. METHODOLOGY

“As researchers, we have sought to use the media not simply as a topic of study, but also as a method in itself. We have sought to enable children to represent themselves and their experiences rather than simply speaking on their behalf” (De Block and Buckingham, 2007)

1.1. Visual Ethnography in Media Studies

Since the 1980s, cultural and media studies are characterized by an ‘ethnographic turn’. Rather than privileging the idea of powerful media or – the opposite extreme – powerful audiences (e.g. Fiske, 1987; Morley, 1988), media ethnography is said to have contributed to a more sophisticated understanding of the relationship between media and audiences (Ong, 2009: 162). As Gillespie (1995: 170) puts it: “ethnographic studies contribute to a rich understanding of what people actually do with the media, rather than predictable findings about what media do with people”. Developing an ethnographic approach to media reception, Radway argues that we should seek to explore “the endlessly shifting, ever-evolving kaleidoscope of daily life and the way in which media are integrated and implicated within it” (1988: 366). Radway believes that this undertaking could be best realized by scholars focusing on diverse aspects of media as manifested in daily life (Hine, 2011: 569).

Ethnography is a form of participatory, qualitative research that emphasises audiences and pays attention to the meanings of events within the context of a single common system of representation (e.g. city, youth gang, rock band...). The main premise of ethnography is that all behaviour, including our own behaviour as researchers, is to be framed in a broader cultural context and as such rejects the idea of objective scientist observing (Pink, 2001). Thinking ‘ethnographically’ is to reflect on all behaviour as being accomplished through culturally accepted meanings. Access to how people’s actions, beliefs and behaviours are significant to them in their own terms, rather than researchers’ preconceived frame (Ong, 2009). In this way, the ethnographer is a surveyor and interpreter of culture from the ‘emic’, or the insiders view of reality. Since ‘seeing’ is always filtered through our own ideas, capturing the insiders perspective is always complicated and never straightforward (Riemer, 2008:205). That is why feminist ethnography calls for writing strategies and methods that expose the power relations between researcher and ‘participant’ and pleads for self-reflexivity on behalf of the researcher (Lotz, 2000; Pink, 2001: 19).

In their seminal work on research methods in media studies, Wester, Renckstorf and Scheepers (2006) point out that the main characteristics of the ethnographical approach are its focus on cultural elements, its long-term observation of activities of the group, and the active role of the researcher. It is because of its intensive and long-term character that ethnographic work affords important insights into the nature of the researchers’ relationship with its informants (Christensen, 2004: 166).
10 Visual sociologists have largely concentrated upon photography whereas anthropologists became interested in video technologies in the 1980s (Pink, 2001: 77).

"The ethnographic fieldwork is a form of qualitative research in which the researcher participates in situations that need to be researched. The research is considered as a learning process through which the researcher becomes familiar with the attitudes, actions and behaviour of the group that is being researched (...). It is participatory research, meaning that the researcher participates in the environment of the researched for a more or less long period of time, in order to become familiar with the situations that need to be researched." (Wester et al. 2006: 427; my translation from Dutch original)

Observation is a key tool for ethnographers, either as participant observer or as non-participant observer. In the first situation, the researcher takes part in activities on the site to better understand the emic experience. In the latter, the researcher is not a participant in the field. In most ethnographies, researchers engage in a mix of both participant and nonparticipant observation, as was the case for me (Riemer, 2008: 207). Also, all kinds of in-depth interviews are ingredients for an ethnographic field work. Ethnographic interviews are less formal than traditional interviews and resemble more of a conversation which does not mean that ethnographers do not prepare their interviews (Riemer, 2008: 208). Next to observation and interviews, site documents are also examined. These documents can involve texts, photographs, videos and film as well (Riemer, 2008: 208).

Influenced by a feminist critique on traditional research methods (for an overview of these critiques, see Lotz, 2000) and inspired by research from visual sociology and anthropology, media scholars recently started to employ visual ethnographies to examine the social practices and identities that media help to constitute across contexts (Pink, 2001; Jenssen, 2002). Visual ethnography is a specific form of ethnography where, over an extended period of time, participants engage in creative production of visual materials and media in order to give explanations for the role of media in everyday life and their construction of identities. It is a qualitative, participatory, ‘action’ research method for in-depth studies where next to visual material production, traditional ethnographic procedures are followed (e.g. participant observation, interviews). The value of this kind of ethnographic research lies in its ability to place (young) people centre stage with a focus upon ‘doing’ and ‘action’. Examples of visual ethnographies are David Gauntlett’s Video Critical project (1997) in which children were asked to make videos about the environment; Niesyto, Buckingham and Fisherkellers broad-based ethnographic study (2003) on the video production of youngsters in several countries; De Block and Buckinghams (2007) CHICAM project (children in communication about migration) used a wide variety of methods in their analysis including observations, interviews, surveys, migrant children’s creations of and reflections upon their own media productions; Noors (2007) microanalysis of news production of Muslim girls and De Leeuw and Rydins’ (2007) video production study among adolescent refugees. From these examples it is clear that children and adolescents are the main subjects in this kind of research. Niesyto et al (2003) argue that there is very little documentation on youngsters as media producers and on youths’ understandings of other youth’s media products. Moreover they emphasise that verbally based methods, dominantly utilized in youth research, often create a tension between the language of young people and that of the researcher. Audiovisual communication on the contrary
This method thus fits within sociological interaction studies (Goffman, 1959) which point at three stages for performance and interaction: front stage, back stage and outside.

Here we use the term 'language' to include the visual and audio-visual languages of the modern media.
is significant in the lives and experiences of youngsters and offers new perspectives on youth research: "to learn about young people’s views and perspectives, we should give them opportunities to express themselves through their own media productions, as well as share their creations with other youth" (Niesyto et al, 2003: 463).

Nowadays, the availability and user-friendliness of video production technologies make video making a useful and convenient audience research method (Pink, 2001; Buckingham and Willett, 2009). Although alternative forms of visual production such as collages (cf. pilot study), photography, drawings etc. are often used, scholars primarily made their participants produce their own films (e.g. Niesyto et al, 2003). One of the biggest methodological advantages of visual ethnography is its richness in material. Processes of video production involve negotiation and interaction with others which contributes to social identity performances and constructions\textsuperscript{12}. The moments when participants are just chatting and hanging out, also provide important ethnographic data (Hine, 2011:570). Furthermore, participants are given time to reflect on their thoughts and feelings about representations on television before producing a response which can help engender more insightful results (Buckingham, 2009: 645). Visual ethnography thus provides the opportunity to integrate verbal as well as non-verbal forms of communication and expression and leaves space for reflection and discussion. Next to methodological relevance, this stance of research empowers young people who risk social and political disempowerment and are under or misrepresented in dominant media discourses as it gives them the power to create alternative, anti-hegemonic representations (Gauntlett, 2007; Adriaens, 2011). Also, it enables youngsters to develop technical skills and experiment with different forms of representation which can result in augmented media literacy (Buckingham, 2007). Nevertheless, it would be naïve to assume that young people could simply use media as a means of ‘self-expression’ or a way of making their inner thoughts and feelings find an outer form. Buckingham (2008) asserts that the media are not neutral tools and young people will advance media production with a repertoire and a history of precedent media experiences that inevitably lead them in certain directions. Furthermore, they have to learn how to use media language, just as they have to learn how to write. The media do not merely present their experiences and viewpoints: they represent them using particular conventions, repertoires, genres and forms of language\textsuperscript{13} that are by no means simply natural or spontaneous (Buckingham, 2008). Thus, children and youngsters do not simply mimic or copy existing forms of media, but actively use, negotiate and recombine them in various ways (Buckingham and Harvey, 2001; Neuss, 1999; Niesyto, 2001a, Belgrad and Niesyto, 2001). Moreover, Buckingham warns against the pitfall of overlooking the role of the skilful researcher in the analysis: "if participants are seen to ‘speak for themselves’, analysis would seem merely redundant" (Buckingham 2009: 11). Put differently, acknowledging the particularities of a research situation, the material – both visual and verbal – has to be reflected upon in the framework of theory building (Buckingham 2009; Wagner 2002).
Subject positions are those positions that individuals take up in discourses: “By taking up a position, a subject ‘subjects’ itself to the meanings, power and regulation of that discourse” (Hall, 2003: 56).
1.2. Research Questions

In this working paper, I am concerned with how gender and ethnicity intersect with age, class, sexuality and other complex dynamics. Therefore, I am motivated by an inquisitiveness to understand how gender and ethnicity are experienced, enacted and embodied in everyday life. In relation to this, I will look at gender and ethnic practices which entail an understanding of gender and ethnicity as lived processes rather than a fixed essence (Nayak and Kehily, 2008). Exploring gender and ethnic practices sheds light on the production, regulation, consumption and performances of gender and ethnicity in late-modernity.

The main goal of this visual ethnographic study was to find answers to the following research questions:

- How do young diaspora girls construct their own ideal television program by using video material?
- How does the ideal television program look like in terms of themes, characters, genres for young diaspora girls?
- Are gender and ethnicity articulated in their discursive practices? And if so, how are they articulated and represented? How do different identity traits intersect with each other?
- Which subject positions do the girls take up in terms of gender, class, ethnicity and age? How do girls use appearance and media to perform these subject positions?
- How do categories such as ‘gender’ and ‘ethnicity’ (as part of someone’s identity next to other identity markers) impact upon young people’s formulations of their ideal television programs?
- Can we speak of a ‘priority list’ of identifications? And if so, were are ‘gender’ and ‘ethnicity’ situated then?
- Do the girls represent ‘themselves’ in their television program or do they identify with certain characters in their television program? And if so, how?
- How do personal frameworks (self-identities), ideological frameworks and everyday life ‘lived’ experiences affect girls’ ideas of an ideal television program?
- How are processes of ‘reflexivity’ structured?
- Do respondents use existing media language? Can we say something about media consumption through the analysis of media production?
- Can experiences of cultural identities or ‘ethic accents’ be traced in their media production? How do they relate themselves to others e.g. Religion, nationality, ethnicity… (cf. De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007).
- How did the production process allow for ‘resistance’ (Spivak 1988; Hall 1996a, 1997a)? Or did the texts imply ‘conformation’ with the image given of migrants and ethnic minorities? (How) did working with video empower them, as people, as media makers?
- Methodological question: how can creative and visual research facilitate a greater understanding of young people’s conceptualizations of their identities and relationships with the media?
15 Participating girls are: Hatice, Hazan, Nazli, Derya and Esma.
1.3. Participants, organization and location

The visual ethnographic research was effectuated in cooperation with a local youth organization ‘VZW Jong (VZW Young)’ that is localized in five so-called ‘deprived or underprivileged neighborhoods’ in Ghent (a large city in Northern Belgium). More specifically, I worked together with the ‘Meisjeswerking’ or ‘teenage girls division’ of the organization, located in the district of Sluizeken-Tolhuis-Ham. VZW Jong is an organization that aims at increasing personal and societal emancipation of children and youngsters and pays special attention to underprivileged, socially vulnerable youth, mainly from diasporic descent. The members of the ‘Meisjeswerking’ (all aged between 13 and 16 years old) are second generation diaspora girls with Turkish ancestors and diaspora girls from Bulgarian descent who only recently migrated to Belgium. The girls form a stable and natural peer group constituting the research unit in this visual ethnographic study. Natural groups in social research are those groups formed voluntarily (in both formal and informal contexts) by members with a common goal that has not been imposed on them (Wester et al. 2006). Not all girls who are member of the ‘Meisjeswerking’ (that counts in total approximately 18 regular members) took part in the research. Since the only eligibility condition for participation in the study was participants’ consent to the minimum requirements of a systematically registering process (pilot study, individual and group interviewing, visual and audio recording, participant observation), the people who were not included in the study are those who were either reluctant or unable to fulfil that criterion. In total, twelve girls participated, from which five are second generation diaspora girls from Turkish ancestors and seven are migrants with Bulgarian roots. All girls describe themselves as Muslims. As they are born and raised in Belgium, second generation diaspora girls from Turkish descent speak the Dutch language fluently. Contrastingly, the girls from Bulgaria had difficulties speaking (only one girl could speak Dutch) the language and understanding the assignment which led to poor data quality. That is why this report only discusses five case studies within the highly contextualized group of second generation girls from Turkish descent (N=5). All girls were asked to create a pseudonym in order to protect their privacy.

Before elaborating on the research process, the data collection and data analysis, it is relevant to give more contextual information on the research location and organization since they (in this case ‘Meisjeswerking) encompass distinct discourses and practices and provide certain repertoires to its members. The aim of the ‘Meisjeswerking’ is to provide a ‘safe’, easy accessible, friendly environment away from boys. The club house is an ‘open house’ where girls come together and take part in all sorts of organized activities and projects (ranging from homework guidance, study coaching to educational group discussions (e.g. about sexuality, wearing hijabs...), sports, cultural activities and summer camps...). These activities and projects are prepared by two full time enthusiastic female youth workers who maintain personal and confidential bonds with the girls (and their parents). The ‘meisjeswerking’ is an informal place (as opposed to school) where girls are encouraged to speak
VRT is the public broadcaster in Flanders (Belgium).

Forsey (2010) argues that for ethnographers, next to participant observation, participant ‘listening’ or ‘engaged listening’ is as important.

Figure 1: The neighbourhood ‘Godshuishammeke’ (Ghent) – the red building is the club house of the ‘meisjeswerking’
about themes they cannot speak about anywhere else. Besides an entertaining and educational function, the small-scale organization has an empowering function as well as it helps girls in their self development and stimulates them towards better/good results at school, challenging them to work on their future career chances.

The ethnographic study took place in the ‘club house’ of the ‘meisjeswerking’. The building has three floors and is only accessible for female members meaning that boyfriends and male family members or friends cannot enter in order to provide a ‘girls only’ environment. The office of the two youth workers is located on the ground floor and serves as a meeting point for activities. Here, the girls can buy a drink or snack, can browse the internet, consult magazines or make their homework. The second floor is decorated as a cozy living room and is filled with bright coloured items. There is a bar, a soccer table, a little library and a lot of colourful cushions. On the top floor, the girls can watch cable television (no satellite television) and DVD’s, listen to music, experiment with make-up at the two little make-up tables with mirrors, or just chat with each other in the welcoming sofas. Overall, the club house leaves a homely, warm impression as a lot of photo’s, posters, mirrors and personal things are decorating the walls.

1.4. Research Process / Outline

The ethnographic study contained four large research phases which are outlined (see below) as they were presented to the participating organization. Next to the ‘visual research phases’ and in order to become familiar with the girls and the organization of the ‘meisjeswerking’, I participated – as a participant observer – in most activities from November 2010 till the end of January 2011. My first encounter with the girls was when I joined them to the VRT studios and attended a recording of a talkshow: ‘De Laatste show’ (één). This visit was purposely organized as a first acquaintance with media production. Other activities involved healthy cooking, playing games, doing homework, shopping, movie night, party etc.

As in most ethnographies, I engaged in a mix of both participant and nonparticipant observation (Riemer, 2008: 207). Also, I interviewed the participants and youth workers to get more insights into their everyday lives and social contexts. These ethnographic interviews were less formal than traditional interviews and resembled more of a conversation (cf. Riemer, 2008: 208). Overall, the conventional identity categories of gender, age, ethnicity and class directed my attention in observing and listening to the participating girls. Next to visual material, observation notes and interviews, site documents were also examined such as the annual report of the Meisjeswerking. For a detailed description of the ethnography, I refer to the field notes in the ethnographic logbook or researcher’s diary.
See research report on pilot study.
An extensive outline of the first research phase is to be found in a CIMS-research report (2011). The latter phases are discussed below.

**PHASE 1 (PILOT STUDY\(^{18}\)): COLLAGE MATERIAL (3/11/2010)**

- 1 afternoon (4 hours)
- Individual exercise
- Participants are asked to make collages with magazine material. They can also make use of pencils, crayons, paint… that represent their ‘ideal’ television programme.
- Television programme = TV fiction (soap, telenovela, teen series) (not news, game, show…)
- They are asked to elaborate on the themes and storylines of the programme, at least 6 characters (how do they look? Language, clothes, age, ...).
- Here, the use of metaphors can be helpful and will be explained; For example, participants use pictures of a book to indicate that one storyline happens in a library setting…
- All collages are presented to me and reflexively discussed.

**PHASE 2: AUDIOVISUAL MATERIAL: TRAILER (10/11 and 17/11 2010)**

- 2 afternoons (2x 4 hours)
- Group exercise (max. 5 participants/group)
- Participants are asked to write a script/screenplay for a trailer for a television fiction programme (define genre!), where they present characters (at least six), storylines, situations, settings, etc.
- Basic filming principles are explained and participants are asked to shoot the trailer of their ideal television programme
- Therefore, we go out in the city (accompanied by at least one researcher) – time limits!

**PHASE 3: EDITING (24/11/2010)**

- 1 afternoon at university
- The girls come over to the editing room of our department and watch and discuss the video material. They choose the scenes, the music, the intro, the credits…they want to incorporate in their television trailer.

**PHASE 4: EVALUATION OF VIDEOS (24/01/2011)**

- Participants present their trailer to the participants of the other group and their families and evaluate and explain their choices.
1.5. Data Collection

“One of the strong sides of ethnographic research is relating data that have been gathered in a variety of ways – through observation, interviewing and/or document analysis – in other words triangulation of sources. This procedure allows the quality of the data to be tested in multiple ways.” (Wester et al. 2006: 427; my translation from the Dutch original, emphasis in original)

The visual part of the ethnographic study took place from November 2010 till January 2011 on Wednesday afternoons at the organization. Each session lasted for about four hours. Next to the trailer making activities, I participated in activities (cf. supra) and was very often present in the club house (e.g. after school, in the weekends) to ‘hang out’ with the girls. By observing them and engaging in activities, I pieced together a picture of social interactions and the connections between the girls. Through getting to know about their codes of conduct and communications and context, I learned how to interact with and listen to them. I think that my readiness to join in with respect to the girls’ communicative forms established reciprocity between us. This created a way to gain trust and enter into a dialogue (cf. Christensen, 2004: 170). At the end of the study, all girls received a gift voucher for H&M (15 euro). In this report, research phases 2, 3 and 4 will be discussed (for an overview of the pilot study – see CIMS report).

The week after the pilot study, three colleagues joined me to the club house in order to help with the organization of the ‘trailer-making part’ of the study. I asked the girls to form two groups which existed out of the girls from Turkish descent and the girls from Bulgarian descent. Each group was coached by two researchers and one youth worker. Here we will only focus on the procedure among the group with Turkish roots (see appendix 1 for a detailed outline). First, we asked the girls if they are familiar with ‘trailers’ and if they know which elements a trailer must contain. Most girls knew what a trailer is and does, but for those who did not, we showed an example of a trailer of a Flemish film ‘Zot Van A’. Thereafter, the respondents were asked to imagine that they are television makers and are able to collectively make their ideal television series trailer. They were invited to brainstorm about their ideal characters, themes, location, title and ‘feeling surrounding the program’. After an elaborate brainstorm and discussion, the girls were asked to find a consensus and to cough their thoughts and ideas into a feasible and specific screenplay making use of a format (see appendix 2 and 3). Parts and roles were casted, settings, costumes and accessories were discussed. During these reflexive group processes, interesting interactions between the respondents occur and group dynamics and identities are performed. After the construction of the trailer narrative, girls were encouraged to experiment with digital video cameras and were taught basic filming techniques (e.g. zoom, close-up). All group conversations and discussions were audio-taped and observation notes were taken.

The second afternoon of the second research phase, we gathered for the shooting of the trailer. The girls were very enthusiastic and brought a lot of clothing, accessories and make-up. The first scene was filmed in front of the new court house which had to represent the library in their narrative. The
For a clear overview of ethics within visual ethnography see 'doing visual ethnography' (Pink, 2001).
girls who did not act, stood behind the camera and took care of the sound. The other scenes were shot in the club house which was transformed into a movie studio. The girls obviously enjoyed performing in front of a camera and directing, except for one girl (Nazli) who did not want to play a role but preferred to be the camerawoman. Between the scenes, girls checked their make-up, changed costumes, and transformed the settings. Hatice took the lead and functioned as director as she urged the other girls to hurry up, to recapitulate a scene by saying ‘Cut’ or ‘three, two, one, start’. Throughout the whole process, the girls guarded over the authenticity and realism of their performances and the quality of their filming. My role (and that of my accompanying colleagues) was mainly observational but sometimes shifted into ‘participant observer’ as I needed to help them out with technical problems (e.g. sound that did not work) or organizational issues (e.g. timing). Since the trailers were made in group, they are a product of group consensus and interaction which has the advantage that it develops understandings of how media texts contribute to the structuring of social relations and everyday group dynamics. Moreover, researcher and participants often engage in casual and informal talks. During this phase, field notes were written down and pictures and video material of the filming process (in between scenes) were taken.

The third research phase encompassed the editing of the video material into reasonable television trailers. To this end, the participants came over to the editing room at our university department. Since the girls did not have experiences with Final Cut Pro (the editing program) and I lacked the time, space and means to explain it to them, I decided to let the girls select which material they want to incorporate in the trailer, as well as the music, the opening and ending credits. The girls watched and evaluated all material and gathered the appropriate scenes. Also they decided on which songs and images had to be integrated for every sequence as well as on the content of the credits. Since no recording material was available, I could not audiotape conversations, but I sat with the girls during the reflexive process and took observational notes. During this third phase, field notes were formulated and pictures were taken.

During the fourth afternoon, the finished trailers were presented to each other and to some of their family members. The trailers were projected onto a large screen and the club house was decorated as if it was a real movie premiere (with red carpet, drinks and cake). At the end of the afternoon and following Pink’s (2001: 43-45) ‘giving something back’ ethical principle, each girl received a copy of the trailer on DVD. During this phase, field notes were recorded.
This critique is influenced by feminist critique on traditional research (e.g. Seiter, 1990; Lotz, 2000).

Since I, as a (young) adult (age 25 at the time of the study), engaged in interactions with adolescents, it is relevant to question the power relations between 'child' and 'adult' (for an overview see Christensen, 2004); That is why, following Mandell (1991), I took on the 'least adult role' by not exercising authority over the adolescent participants and engaged as a participant in their adolescent activities.
1.6. Data Analysis

“(…) ethnography does no lend itself to neatly systematic research designs, but rather to posthoc reconstructions of what is in practice a messy process of piecemeal inductive analysis based upon continually incoming data.” (Gillespie 1995: 61)

The data discussed in this report are gathered during the visual ethnographic study and exist out of group discussion and individual interview transcripts, field notes, side documents, visual material such as ‘the making of the trailer’ and the edited trailer itself (for an overview of the data, see appendix 4). The data accordingly allow for triangulation (cf. Wester, et al., 2006). Sara Pink (2001: 94-114) suggests to translate ethnographic videos systematically into written words or ‘text’. The visual material produced by the young females in this study is ‘text’, in the same way as the field notes or interviews are texts. As Alan McKee (2003: 15) points out “texts are the material traces that are left of the practice of sense-making – the only empirical evidence that we have of how other people make sense of the world”. All texts should be considered as complementary and equally important. Both ‘textual’ texts and ‘visual’ texts are included in the triangulation of data and help placing these data and findings in perspective.

In this study, participants were actively producing audiovisual material and were engaged in an ongoing process of analysis throughout the course of the project. Traditional qualitative methods for audience research (e.g. focus groups and in depth interviews) often get the critique that participants have no impact on the direction or agenda of the research and instead are merely acting as passive subjects or data-providers (Gauntlett, 2007). Creative ethnographies help to overcome these limitations by proposing a more dialogic model which enables participants to shape and influence the research itself, thereby ensuring that they are represented more effectively, rather than having researchers’ interpretations projected upon them (cf. Christensen, 2004: 170). It is however important to acknowledge that any analysis requires the researcher to take on an interpretive role: “all research data need to be analysed in terms of the context is which they were gathered, the social relationships among the participants, and the ‘expressive’ resources (whether linguistic or visual) that are employed” (Buckingham, 2009: 648). Furthermore, one of the most crucial strategies for feminist ethnographers is paying attention to the interrogations of subjectivity constructions – on the part of the researcher as well as of those studied (Lotz, 2000: 461). During the research process, my role as (‘adult’, ‘white’, ‘Belgian’ female) researcher shifted from media coach, to observer, to ‘one of the girls’, to friend depending on the situation.

Data from creative research cannot be taken at face value but need to be interpreted and analyzed since “it is only through the interpretative framework of the researcher that understandings of the empirical come about” (Ang, 1996: 46). According to Alan McKee, the only meaningful way for researchers to interpret texts is through ‘educated guesses’, since no ‘scientific’ method is available for visual analysis in the humanities (McKee, 2003). However, in this study we have more than just
Grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1974) is a reflexive approach that clusters data on the basis of repetitive, reoccurring repertoires in the research material. Moreover, it pays attention to the complexities of the participants' lived experiences embedded in unique social contexts (Qin, 2009: 45; Fassinger, 2005).
the television trailer texts; we have the people who created them. This makes our educated guesses more plausible, since the researcher’s findings and reflections can be constantly checked with the creators of the texts. My analysis, therefore, is based on continuous feedback between text and creator. Since there is no uniform approach for visual ethnographic data-analysis, I decided to adopt a hermeneutic approach by immersing myself within the interview data, reading and re-reading the transcript, field notes, side documents and ‘visual texts’ in order to become familiar with the participants’ voices and their social contexts. During this analysis process, based on grounded theory\textsuperscript{22}, sensitizing concepts derived from literature were used (for a list see below) and consequently recurrent themes were identified – by means of ‘open coding’ (Burnard, 1991). By means of ‘axial coding’, these themes were grouped into higher level conceptual categories (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) such as a) content of the ideal program (characters, themes, title etc.), b) identifications, c) ethnicity, ethnic practices and ‘ethnic accents’ (see De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007), d) gender and gender practices, e) adolescence and puberty, f) class, g) media language, h) media production, i) media consumption, j) girl culture.

**SENSITIZING CONCEPTS**

**IDENTITY as a narrative**

In cultural studies, identities are conceived as dynamic, variable and context-dependent and are “constituted within, not outside representation” (Hall, 1996: 51). Identity is no longer a given, but a reflexive project as it is “something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual” (Giddens, 1991:52). Identities can never fully be embodied and hence it is more useful to speak about identification as a temporary point of attachment to a subject-position (Duits, 2008: 53). This suggests that identity is something that you ‘do’ or ‘perform’ within available repertoires and representations.

**ETHNICITY/ ‘new ethnicities’**

This article focuses on ‘ethnicity’ as an important axis of identity while acknowledging intersections with other significant identity traits (e.g. age, gender, education, nationality, religion, etc.). ‘Ethnicity’ provides sources for negotiating identities and entails orientations towards a common descent, history and culture (such as language, ritual practices and religion) (De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007: 448). Recently for instance, the notion of ‘new ethnicities’ (Hall, 1992) and associated terms as ‘hybridity’ (Kraidy, 2002) and ‘hybrid identities’ (Gillespie, 1995; Barker, 1997; Wise and Velayutham, 2009) have been taken up in accounts of diasporic experiences with the media and confront essentialized notions of ethnicity.

Making media turned out to be a useful expressive means capable of constructing notions of both individual (the different roles one plays at different moments) and collective (emphasizing common
cultural values and standards such as in terms of nationality, religion or ethnicity) identities.” (De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007: 461).
De Leeuw and Rydin (2007) define ‘ethnic accents’ as references to homeland, religion, history and descent. These accents are intimate and powerful markers of group identities as well as of individual difference and personality. In their visual ethnographic study among diaspora children, De Leeuw and Rydin found that it is through these accents that the children voiced a personal experience and perception of themselves.

GENDER/ ‘new femininities’
“Gender is a situated accomplishment of societal members, the local management of conduct in relation to normative conceptions of appropriate attitudes and activities for particular sex categories” (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 134-35). As scholars of gender have demonstrated, gender is accomplished through day-to-day interactions (Pascoe 2005: 332). In this sense, gender is the “activity of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one’s sex category” (West and Zimmerman, 1991:127). This ‘doing’ of ‘gender’ means creating differences between men and women, girls and boys. These differences are not natural, essential or biological and once they are constructed, they are recurrently used to reinforce the essentialness of gender.

META: WHAT GIRLS DO WITH MEDIA

MEDIA LANGUAGE (Generic knowledge, camera positions etc.) MEDIA LITERACY
According to Buckingham (2003: 56-57) every medium has its own languages (e.g. genre, codes, choices etc.) to communicate meaning. Television for instance uses verbal and written language as well as moving images and sounds. Producing own media texts and experimenting with media language can offer new insights and increase media literacy.
Symbolic language (De Leeuw and Rydin) in video’s: influenced by education, gender, ethnicity, class, and available media characters.

REFLEXIVITY
In late modernity, identity is no longer a given, but a reflexive project as it is “something that has to be routinely created and sustained in the reflexive activities of the individual” (Giddens, 1991:52). Identity work is no longer aimed only at a unitary self, but also at an authentic self (Duits, 2009: 52). Authenticity is central to the reflexive project, because people aim to achieve a coherent narrative through time.
EVERYDAY MULTICULTURALISM

“Everyday multicultural perspective [that] explores how cultural diversity is experienced and negotiated on the ground of everyday situations” (Wise and Velayutham, 2009: 2). The authors use an ethnographically oriented approach ‘to looking at the everyday practice and lived experience of diversity in specific situations and spaces of encounter’ (2009:3), a form of ‘multiculturalism from below’ (p. 21) concerned with hybrid identities and everyday racism.

DOING DIFFERENCE

While race, class and gender can be seen as different axes of social structure, no individual person can experience gender without simultaneously experiencing race and class. All social exchanges, regardless of the participant or the outcomes, are simultaneously ‘gendered’, ‘raced’ and ‘classed’ (West and Fenstermaker, 1995: 13). In short, West and Fenstermaker argued that societal members ‘do difference’ by creating distinctions among themselves – as incumbents of different sex categories, different race categories and different class categories. Once these distinctions are constructed, they are employed to establish different category incumbents ‘essentially different natures’ and the institutional arrangements based on these.

GIRL CULTURE

Girlhood studies are not new, but are an established field that is in severe crisis. The history of girls studies indicates that the designation ‘girls studies’ appeared some 20 years ago (Van Den Zander 1991: 10). It seems legitimate to identify the start of girls’ studies as early as 1976 with McRobbie and Garbner (1976) seminal chapter on the marginality of girls in subcultures and youth studies. Their intervention put the gendered specificities of youth studies on the research agenda (e.g. bedroom culture, nice girl construct). Girls’ studies proliferated rapidly in the early 1980s (see Duits 2008). Much of this ethnographic work was part of the feminist academic project to empower girls and women, and make their experiences and voices heard. Girl culture suggests that girls have their own subculture and share patterns of belief, values, symbols and activities (Duits, 2010: 244).

REPERTOIRES

The term ‘repertoires’ stems from discourse analysis and is a coherent way of speaking about certain choices and behaviours. The concept was first used by sociologists Gilbert and Mulkay (1984) and further developed by social psychologists (Potter and Wetherell, 1987). Within social psychology interpretative repertoires were defined as “recurrently used systems of terms used for characterizing and evaluating actions, events and other phenomena” (Potter and Wetherell, 1987: 21).
Discourse is dissimilar from repertoires as discourse is concerned with power and the ways discourse subjects people whereas repertoires are “smaller and more fragmented” and “place more emphasis on human agency within the flexible deployment of language” (Edley, 2001: 202 in Hermes, 2005).
Individuals draw from available interpretative repertoires as these provide a basis for a shared understanding. Edley (2001) says that discourse is not similar to repertoires as discourse is concerned with power and the ways discourse subjects people whereas repertoires are “smaller and more fragmented” and “place more emphasis on human agency within the flexible deployment of language” (Edley, 2001: 202).

Hermes (2005) describes repertoires as repeatedly employed systems or terms used for characterizing and assessing actions, events and other phenomena. Repertoires are thus coherent ways of speaking about certain choices and behaviours and provide a basis for a shared understanding among individuals.

**PUBERTY/adolescence**

Adolescence is “a socially constructed and multiple identity whose relations to other social formations are constantly in flux” (Austin and Willard, 1998:3). Teenagers’ cognition levels are approaching the sophistication of an adult, but there are key developmental trends that occur during adolescence that impact the ways in which teenagers use and interpret media content. One central milestone of adolescence is the process of identity construction that is shaped through, among a variety of other things, mediated experiences such as listening to music, watching television (aimed at teens), using social network sites such as Facebook. “Adolescents experiment with identity, and those teenagers who are socialized in a ‘bicultural’ environment have many versions of ‘self’ to experiment with” (Moran, 2011: 30). When a child reaches adolescent years, real life experiences, including gender, ethnicity and family values all become part of how they process media contents (Moran, 2011: 30).

**MEDIA CONSUMPTION/MEDIA RECEPTION**

“Media consumption is the interpretation of media representations and texts” (Siapera, 2010: 181) and can, together with studies on media use, be positioned under the umbrella term of audience reception which is the “empirical inquiry into audiences activity, people’s engagement with the media” (Siapera, 2010: 181). Hall (2003) defines reception as “a practice of people who are actively involved with the contents they receive from the media and who interpret these representations in a process of signifying practices”. Reception research looks into how spectators understand representations, negotiate meanings and code texts (Hall, [1973]1980). Through this process of interpretation, individuals reflect on themselves and on the world (Hall, 2003). As such, reception research considers audiences to be active rather than passive.

**IDENTIFICATION**

Identification (Ang 1985): recognition of a fictional character, as representative of ourselves as we are of as we would like to be, or as representative of a type.
24 Because the main language during the study was Dutch (sometimes the girls spoke Turkish among each other), the analysis (see research report) was discussed in Dutch.

25 For a systematic overview of the trailer, please consult the sequence analysis and the thematic and cinematographic analysis.

26 This suggests an emphasis on strong pathos, heightened emotionality and moral polarization (Singer, 2001: 7).
2. RESULTS

Below, the most important research findings will be discussed\textsuperscript{24}. For a complete overview of the analysis, I refer to the research report. First, I analysed the transcripts of the group discussions and brainstorm session (TGT1 – TGT2 en TGT3). Then, I took a closer look at the conversations during the filming process (TTD), afterwards I analysed the field notes (V) of the whole study, the transcripts of the individual interviews (TI) and the side documents (SD). Finally, I examined the ‘making of the trailer’ and the trailer itself (F). For the analysis of the trailer, I primary did a sequence analysis where ‘sequences’ were systematically distinguished (see appendix 5). Then, every sequence was closely studied on the basis of several thematic and cinematographic parameters (narrative, mise-en-scène, visual elements, sound elements, identity and role other media) (see appendix 6).

In the analysis, I am concerned with how identity traits as gender and ethnicity interact with age, class, sexuality en other complex dynamics. I am motivated by inquisitiveness to understand how gender and ethnicity are experienced, enacted and embodied in everyday life. In relation to this, I will talk about gender and ethnic practices which entail an understanding of gender and ethnicity as lived processes rather than a fixed essence (Nayak and Kehily, 2008). Exploring gender and ethnic practices sheds light on the production, regulation, consumption and performances of gender and ethnicity in late-modernity.

Before elaborating on the results in terms of identifications, performances, identities and regulating discourses and media reception and language, I first give a description of the narrative of the constructed television trailer\textsuperscript{25}.

2.1. The Narrative: ‘Sinemiin süçü neydi?’ – ‘Wat was de schuld van Sinem?’

*Sinemiin süçü neydi?* (Turkish for: *What was the guilt of Sinem?*) is the title of the constructed television series trailer (see sequence analysis – appendix 5). The series can be categorized within the melodramatic genre\textsuperscript{26} and teen fiction genre. The story tackles several main themes such as puberty, love, friendship, depression, cultural clash and class struggles. It tells the story of a 16-year old adolescent girl Sinem. Sinem is a girl from Turkish descent who is born in Belgium and who migrated to the United States to study. She lives with her family in a small apartment in New York. Her father died and she is raised by her mother Meryem who struggles to gather enough incomes. Despite their financial problems, Sinem has a warm and caring family and has five brothers and sisters. She is a rebellious teenager who struggles with puberty, experiments with drugs and falls in love with Fernaldo, a rich but arrogant 17-year old boy. Her best friend Ayseguł, who also has Turkish roots, tries to keep her on the right track and is always there for Sinem. Fernaldo comes from an
This also says something about the girls’ conceptions of being a mother and its related gender roles.

The authenticity of the narrative is crucial to the girls – cf. infra (Media reception and media language).
upper class, rich American family and has one sister Marilyn who is very fashionable. There is a clear
distinction between Sinem’s close-knit family and Fernaldo’s cold and more distant family.

The story initiates when the protagonist Sinem, who is studying in the library with her best friend
Aysegul, first meets Fernaldo, a rich, handsome American boy. She immediately falls in love with him
but she does not tell him. She then gets depressed and starts to experiment with drugs. When her
mother finds out, they get into a big fight. Sinem runs away to Aysegul who immediately tries to com-
fort her. Sinem spends the night at Aysegul’s home. The next day, Aysegul tells her that she saw on
facebook that Fernaldo has a new girlfriend which he calls ‘the love of his life’. That is the last straw
which leads Sinem to commit suicide by cutting her wrists.

2.2. Identification and performance

All through the making of the trailer script, it is clear that the roles are written just right for the girls.
Each character that is invented is cut out for some girl in particular and fits within her personality and
position in the group. Esma for instance, is attributed the part of the mother Meryem. In real life, Esma
is a very timid and obedient girl whose mother died recently and who since then takes care of her
father, sister and brothers. In the group of girls, she is considered the mother figure. She enjoys tak-
ing care of the other girls by cooking and sewing their clothes and is proud to play the role of the
mother in the series27. Hazan says: “Esma is cut out for the role of the mother! My mother! [Cuddling].
She is the best cook and she is very sweet and caring.” Hazan allocates herself the role of the pro-
tagonist Sinem, a troubled teenager who is in love with an unattainable boy. She says to identify with
several of Sinem’s characteristics such as her adolescent age, the fact that Sinem is second gener-
ation from Turkish descent, etc. In real life, Hazan is a cheerful, dominant, rebellious and stubborn
person. She has a very big say in the writing process of the script and repeatedly emphasizes that
she would like to become an actress. That is one of the reasons why she wants to play the leading
role. Similar to Sinem, Hazan has fallen in love with a boy who has broken her heart which made her
very depressed. However, she underlines that she would never experiment with drugs and that this
storyline is only incorporated because it causes sensation and suspense: “I think it is really exciting
to see problems at home, depressions, problems with drugs. And this corresponds with reality
because depressions are typical of puberty!” Hazan asserts that depressions are characteristically of
puberty and therefore considers their storyline as authentic28 and credible. Furthermore, she says to
identify with Sinem because she also has a lot of discussions with her parents about ‘bad friends’ and
‘going out’ and rebels against them. Another resemblance with real life is the strong, unconditional
friendship between Aysegul (Hatice) and Sinem (Hazan). Hatice strongly self-identifies with Aysegul
as she says: “I AM Aysegul, I like being a good, reliable and loyal friend. Here [meisjeswerking], ev-
everyone comes to talk to me when they have problems. I like to listen and to comfort people”. The other
girls and youth workers confirm Hatices social identity as helpful, emphatic, mediating and with a great sense of justice. Derya chooses to play the supporting part of the ‘rich, beautiful American’ sister of Fernaldo which mainly is an aspirational identification. By performing as Marilyn, she can be someone she would like to be in real life. First, as the character Marilyn is 18 years old, Derya can perform as a mature woman, which, according to the other girls, is realistic since Derya looks and dresses ‘older’ than her real age. Derya does not match the picture of the contemporary Western beauty ideal but appropriates a lot of meaning to her physical appearance. She likes to put on make-up and what she calls ‘feminine’ and ‘adult’ clothes and shoes. Moreover, Derya values social status in terms of material wealth. When she performs as Marilyn, she can dress up elegantly and mature as according to her “rich people always wear stylish clothes and makeup that glitters!” Nazli is the only girl who does not want to perform at all. She hates standing in front of a camera and prefers to take care of the filming. In real life, she likes to stay out of the spotlight as well.

When the trailer is shot, the girls primarily have a lot of fun preparing, performing and acting. Each girl tries to enter herself in her role and takes her part very seriously. They want their acting performances to be as realistic and credible as possible and are very critical towards each other acting. Also, they endeavour to look ‘good’ on screen and are very aware that they are filmed. In between each scene, make-up, hair and outfits are carefully inspected and changed if necessary. Even though the narrative is fictional, some participants strive towards an ‘authentic’, coherent representation of the self as central to the reflexive project (Giddens, 1991; Duits, 2009: 52).

2.3. Intersecting identities and regulating discourses

When producing a television trailer in group, diaspora girls thus engage in self-representation but also in collective identity formation. The construction of collective identities is inspired by interplay of discursive practices such as personal frameworks, lived experiences and available (media) repertoires. The context of the ‘girls youth club’ in this research for instance offers certain repertoires that play a regulating role in the lives of the girls. When building up the script of the trailer, each girl took up a broad spectrum of shifting and various subject positions in order to negotiate on a consensus for the final trailer screenplay. Here, group dynamics are important and determine this negotiation process. Hatice and Hazan for instance, can be considered as the driving powers behind the narrative whereas Esma, Derya and Nazli are more accommodating and obedient.

Two major themes can be distinguished in the ideal program of the girls which reflect their everyday life concerns and occupations. The first theme is related to age and includes the experience of puberty and its interrelated search for identities and societal positions. The second theme is connected to gender and entails the common search for the articulation of femininity or how to ‘be female’. In other words, age and life phase, in intersection with gender are the key markers of identity
for the girls in this study (cf. Kearney, 2006). The characters in ‘Sinemiim süçü Neydi’ are in the first place teenage girls, experiencing difficulties growing up (broken heart, drugs, rebellion against parents...) and the same time ‘being a woman’. Additionally, as diaspora girls from Turkish descent living in a rich American society, these characters experience what the girls call a ‘cultural clash’. This cultural clash is mainly caused by ‘class distinctions’ instead of ‘ethnic distinctions’. By constructing these class and cultural differences in their narrative, the girls ‘do difference’ at a micro level (cf. West and Fenstermaker, 1995: 13). Although gender, age, class and ethnicity cannot be separated as they are intersecting identities, I will discuss and exemplify each marker of identity in what follows.

**AGE**

It is apparent that all girls identify as adolescents facing the specific difficulties of puberty. Hazan for instance says: “I am an adolescent girl in the first place”. Her primary identification is her age (in intersection with her gender). In feminist literature (e.g. Durham, 2004; Kearney, 2011), female adolescence is considered as more intricate than male adolescence. This stance of research has shown that around the age of twelve, and often earlier, girls are encouraged to privilege the traditional practices of femininity over all other activities available to them. Moreover, studies demonstrate that female adolescent youth is encouraged to identify as heterosexual beings and to position procreation and the attraction of male attention as the primary goal of their adult lives (Kearney, 2006: 5). In this context, Durham asserts that “adolescence, as experienced by girls of immigrant diaspora groups, is complicated by issues of race, culture and nation that intersect with discourses of sex and gender” (p 140). This complication of adolescence by ethnicity and gender is exactly what the girls in this ethnographic study also refer to. Hazan says: “I think it is even more difficult to be a teenager with Turkish roots living in Belgium. Belgian youngsters are educated in a much more liberal way, they can come home when they want, they can have boyfriends... We can’t!” Other participants – except Hatice – agree with the difference in education between male and female adolescents and indicate that their adolescence is complicated by their ethnicity. Nazli for instance specifies that puberty is different for girls with Turkish roots as they cannot have boyfriends and go outside the house for instance. Hatice disagrees and thinks that when parents have different rules for boys than for girls, this mainly has to do with trust, not with ethnicity or gender. She argues that “when you gain the trust of your parents, they will not restrict you or make differences between boys and girls.”

An important subject position that surfaces among the girls – which exemplifies the intricateness of being a female adolescent – is being or wanting to be a ‘good girl’. The discursive concept of ‘good girl’ has been launched by Greer Fox and connotes both a standard for and a goal of feminine behaviour during adolescence. A ‘nice girl’ is chaste, gentle, gracious, indigenous, good, clean, kind, virtuous etc. (Fox, 1977: 805). Esma for instance explicitly says: “a teenage girl has to be neat, well-cared for and polite”. Hatice strongly disapproves Sinem’s behaviour in the trailer as she stresses that she
In the end, one of my male colleagues decides to play the part of ‘Fernaldo’ in the trailer.
is a teenager as well but she would never try to conquer a boy, or do drugs or run away from home. She repeatedly emphasises that she really wants to do well at school, be a nice friend to her girlfriends, and stay away from boys. In this context, Hazan adds ‘ethnicity’ to the complex triangle ‘age-gender and ethnicity’. She says “For Turkish teenage girls, it is different and even harder because when you go outside the house too much, they will say that you are a slut, that you are not a good girl!” In the girl’s daily lives, age, gender and ethnicity are obviously intertwined.

**GENDER (and SEXUALITY)**

Numerous examples from the ethnographic research show that femininity and masculinity in this case, are understood and enacted in hegemonic, traditional and fixed terms. The styling of the body through gestures, actions and utterances is a primary technique through which gender can be performed (cf. Nayak and Kehily, 2008). A first example that illustrates this hegemonic performance of gender and sexuality is in the discussion of the trailer script. When ‘love’ is chosen as an important theme for their ideal program, Hatice points at the ‘issue’ that they consequently will need a boy-actor. The girls instantly refuse to play ‘the boy’ because they do not want to look ridiculous or butchy. Hazan states “I don’t want to dress like a boy; I don’t want to look ridiculous. I am no butch!” Hence, gender is understood in fixed terms and gender play is not accepted. Moreover, gender is connected with sexual identity as the girls inherently link ‘masculinity’ to ‘homosexuality’. Hazan’s quote illustrates her fear of being labelled as a ‘butch’ by displaying a lack of femininity. The failure to comply with the severe bodily regime of ‘femininity’ leads in this context to homophobic comments. Their discourse is thus clearly inscribed within the heterosexual matrix (Butler, 1990).

Another example that demonstrates the application of traditional ‘fixed’ gender roles is when the character of the mother ‘Meryem’ is invented. Being a mother is naturally associated with ‘being a housewife’ and duties as cooking, cleaning and characteristics such as being sweet, caring and anxious. The character Sinem is also constructed in a more traditional way: dependent, ‘weak’, emotional and at some point even hysterical. The male character Fernaldo on the contrary is immediately described as sturdy, independent, cool, popular among girls, rich, powerful and arrogant which are traditionally masculine features. Even when the settings and stage properties of the program are discussed, this gendered pattern is highlighted. Hatice argues that Aysegul’s bedroom has to be a “typical girly bedroom with a typical girly bed – with colourful cushions and stuff” whereas Derya pones that Fernaldo needs to drive a fancy sports car playing loud music. The hegemonic gender discourse is also reflected in the choice of costumes and make-up. In the trailer, Marilyn (Derya) elegantly wears a lot of make-up and ostentatious jewellery, high heels, a closefitting jeans and a pink silky top. Fernaldo nonchalantly wears a dark jeans, a dark grey blazer and a tidy vest. His hair is styled with wax. Gestures and facial expressions are performances of gender as well.
The social context of the ‘girls club’ can be considered as an important provider of gender and sexual scripts which are important in the construction of feminine identities. It is a place where diaspora girls come together and ‘gender competence’ or ‘how to be female’ (Connell, 2002:81 in Nayak and Kehily, 2008) is learned. This ‘girls discourse’ is inscribed in a hegemonic order of binary gender divisions and within a heterosexual matrix which is clearly articulated in the entire production process as well as in the final television trailer but also in the individual interviews and daily practices. Esma for instance says that being feminine is “being neat, polite and modest, wearing skirts and make-up and doing girlie things”. Hatice argues “I think it is important that you actually SEE: this is a woman and this is a man.” Derya even thinks that men should be “bigger and stronger, they have to be the boss actually”. Gender divisions – which include how femininity and masculinity are mapped onto identities and how gender are displayed, enacted and understood, naturalize, reinforce and support sexuality (see Schippers, 2000). Nevertheless, despite the hegemonic understanding and enactment of femininity and masculinity, the girls undoubtedly deconstruct gender roles. All girls criticize that boys enjoy more freedom of movement and that girls face more restrictions in terms of going out, having a boyfriend etc. Some girls even have a (liberal) feminist project as they point at the lack of gender (and also ethnic) equality in our. Hatice for instance argues: “Men and women should have the same rights. It is not okay to make distinctions between a man and a woman. It is not ok that women are restricted in their behaviour and daily lives. Every human being has to be treated the same way.” She continues by saying that women are still too often victim of patriarchal practices: “I think men are still too often the boss over women and treat them unrespectfully. I think it is time that some men get a better education and learn how to respect females.” The girls often refer to the imbalances in their lives based on gender differences (e.g. double sexual standards) but at the same time criticize and distance themselves from the dominant discourse of ‘hyper sexuality’ among ‘Belgian’ teenagers. Hatice for instance says that some ‘Belgian’ girls have different values when it comes to sexuality and virginity (see Adriaens, 2011; Durham, 2004) or Derya who argues “I think that Belgian girls can do anything, they can have sex before marriage, we cannot, and that sometimes makes a big difference”. However, these convictions do not translate into alternative empowering gender representations on television, since their self-produced trailer mainly represents hegemonic gender roles (cf. supra). The girls thus deconstruct imbalanced power relations but still inscribe their narrative within hegemonic discourses. This can be elucidated by the fact that the trailer is the result of a group process. When a consensus needs to be negotiated, hegemonic discourses are more easily adopted. Girls were often scared to be rebuked for ‘displaying a lack of femininity’. In the individual interviews, a different picture is sometimes visible and resistance against hegemonic gender practices is foregrounded. As a result, the participating girls compromise on positions of hegemony and agency and as such construct reflexive identities (cf. Giddens, 1991).
This closeness to everyday life realities shows that the girls value authenticity when making the trailer (cf. infra).
ETHNICITY

As was already mentioned, female adolescent diaspora lives are often complicated by ethnicity (cf. Durham, 2004). Nevertheless, age and gender are considered primary identities. In the trailer, ‘ethnic accents’ (see De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007) are displayed but in a less prevailing way than age and gender traits. The creation of the characters and storylines are prompted by banal real life situations. They are familiar to the girls in terms of ‘culture’ (e.g. everyday life, gender relations, language…) and ‘ethnicity’ (e.g. phenotype, Turkish roots, religion…) but are certainly not limited to these components. The fact that the main line is about a teenage girl falling in love implicates identifications with life phase (puberty), gender and conceptions of love. Visualized ‘ethnic accents’ are the use of the Turkish language (next to the Dutch and English language), the use of Turkish names, the representation of a headscarf, the selection of a title based on a Turkish television series (cf. infra). However, this representation of ethnicity primarily propagates hybridity which is distinctive for second generation diaspora teenagers who are perceived to negotiate between different cultures (see Sinardet and Mortelmans, 2006; Durham, 2004; Moran, 2011). The dialogues for instance often alternate between the Turkish language and Dutch language. In the final scene where Aysegul and Sinem sit on the bed and talk about Sinems problems, they use Turkish as well as Dutch words. This mirrors their daily life conversations among friends which also mix the two tongues. In the scene where Sinem fights with her mother, Turkish is spoken as this reflects real life situations between first generation diaspora parents and their children. Another example of ethnic hybridity is the choice of music that accompanies the images. Mainstream pop chart music of ‘Jay Z’ is followed by the German-Turkish diaspora music of ‘Muhabbet’, succeeded by film music from a Turkish series/film Küçük Sırlar. It is noticeable that through the reflexive process of the trailer production, conceptions and understandings of ethnicity and culture are foregrounded. For our girls, ethnicity is the same as ‘culture’ which is linked to religion, family values, language, nationality, traditions (e.g. eating habits) and phenotype. Hatice says: “religion depends on culture which has an impact on family life” on which Derya replies that nations within cultures vary. Hazan gives an example and says: “Morocco is not the same as Albany or Turkey”. On which Esma says “in Morocco they eat rice with their hands” on which Hazan says: “no, they eat couscous with their hands, we don’t do that.”. Their bottom-up conceptualization is basically the same as the scholarly definition of ethnicity which puts emphasis on descent; history and culture (such as language, rituals, practices and religion) (cf. De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007). This sometimes leads to practical considerations when making the trailer script. Derya for instance wonders how she will play an American girl since her skin colour reveals that she is from Turkish descent.

The development of the ‘mother character’ is an interesting case that shows the construction of ethnicity (in intersection with gender) through reflexively constructing the trailer script. While discussing whether or not the mother should be veiled, the girls produce understandings of ethnicity in relation to gender and consequently perform gendered and ethnic identities. Hatice argues that the mother
Figure 2: Turkish television series: Küçük Sırlar
definitely needs to wear a headscarf because in real life, married Muslim women with children always wear one. Hazan supports this and supplements: “but only the mother wears a hijab, not us [refers to Aysegul and Sinem] although we are clearly Muslim because we are Turkish. But we are teenagers, we like to dress up, go shopping, make up, be in love,… a headscarf is only worn when a girl enters adulthood.” This quote again illustrates the intersectionality of age, gender and ethnicity. Esma and Derya agree that in real life, they do not wear hijabs unless it is a special occasion (e.g. marriage, funeral), Hatice completes by saying she only wears one when she goes to the Quran school or when her parents read from the Quran at home. What follows is a discussion on the role of culture, religion and gender in the choice to wear hijabs in daily life. Hatice – who strongly identifies as a Muslim girl – argues that veiling is a cultural phenomenon that symbolizes female maturity and proves a woman’s virtuousness. According to her, this entails a personal choice which (in her case) is not pushed from home. Hatice waits for “the right moment” to wear a hijab but has no problems with Muslim women who decide not to wear one. For Esma – for whom practicing religion is of low importance – a headscarf is principally a fashion symbol as she admits: “I have no problems wearing one on special occasions, I have a very beautiful green silky scarf. It goes well with my hair and skin tone.” It is clear that when talking about the headscarf, the participating girls negotiate on gender, age and ethnicity.

**CLASS**

Class and class differences are represented in *Sinem Süçü Neydi*. By reflexively constructing the script, the girls pronounce their understanding of class. For them, class is associated with financial/material status, glamour and wealth. Also, they acknowledge that class differences can have implications for social relations in daily life. Importantly, their denotation of class and stratification is largely based on the representation of class in a very popular Turkish soap opera ‘Kücük Sırlar’ (Star TV). This dramatic series – which is very fashionable among the girls – tells the story of extremely rich youngsters versus less wealthy teenagers and their experiences. Existing media repertoires are thus employed to construct their narrative and negotiate the class concept.

During the brainstorm session it is clear that the participants associate the United States with wealth and affluence. The American, glamorous boy Fernaldo is extremely rich in contrast with diaspora girl Sinem whose family has financial troubles. This class divergence is made visible through the mise en scene and the editing (light, choice of music) in the trailer. Costumes, makeup and accessories for instance clearly connote social class which give an indication of the participants understanding of social status. Hazan argues that the theme of class dynamics in their trailer is principally chosen to create suspense and sensation which shows her awareness of the audience.
2.4. Media reception and media language

Alongside articulations of identities, media repertoires such as previous media experiences and media language (e.g. generic knowledge of melodrama) are frequently enunciated by the respondents. Through the making of their own television trailer and the reflexive talk encircling this process, the girls tell something about their media reception and what they like to see on television (cf. De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007). The title of the television trailer for instance is inspired by the title of a very popular Turkish series ‘Fatmagülün suçu ne’ which is broadcasted on Kanal D. The class struggle theme (cf. supra) is based on the subject matter of the Turkish soap ‘Küçük Sırlar’ (Star TV). Furthermore, the respondents’ choice for the melodramatic genre was chiefly motivated by a wish to attract broad audiences. Hazan for instance utters: “when we choose the theme of ‘love’ and ‘family problems’, everyone will look! Because when I ask my classmates what programs they watch, it’s always about love! Even my mother and her friends like to watch this!”.

Despite their initial wish to attract diverse audiences, they assert later on that their core audience are teenage viewers and therefore develop a ‘teen series’ with soap elements. Hatice states: “It needs to be a program that appeals to youngsters, just like Küçük Sırlar, a little bit soapy.” Although they do not use the concept of ‘melodrama’ but rather employ ‘soap’, they demonstrate that they have knowledge on the conventions of storytelling and the generic characteristics of the melodramatic genre. In the editing phase for instance, the girls point at the importance of dramatic music to enhance the emotional involvement of the audience. During the shooting of the trailer for example, Nazli often suggests to capture a close-up of the actors’ face in order to enlarge the dramatic potential. Another result is that the respondents clearly have a comprehensible notion of ‘audiences’ that they keep in mind when writing/producing a trailer script. The production process shows that the girls prefer to see a melodramatic teen series that departs from their own lived realities as second generation diaspora teenagers. To create this narrative, they employed elements from existing and well-liked television series in combination with contributions from their own daily life experiences.

Also noteworthy is the fact the participants are quite familiar with the concept of a ‘trailer’. They recognize that a trailer has the purpose of convincing audiences to watch a series and present the most important characters and storylines. In this context Derya says: “I often check out trailers on Youtube, they help me decide whether or not I should go watch a movie or a television program.” On which Hatice replies: “that’s true, I think that a trailer should persuade audience to go watch a movie. The moviemakers generate suspense by for instance only showing short scenes”. The assignment of making a trailer also has implications for the development of the story. For the last scene where Sinem would initially commit suicide by shooting herself, the girls decide not to make use of a gun as a means for suicide since this would be too revealing and would not fit within the trailer concept as it leaves no space for surprise or curiosity among the audience. They choose to alter the storyline by letting Sinem cut her wrists instead. Hatice argues: “It would be better if Sinem cuts her wrists
‘The notion of authenticity of self has been acknowledged within postmodern identity theory (Giddens, 1991).
instead and that Aysegul enters the room,...then the viewers are not sure whether or not Sinem died, it’s more dramatic and thrilling! If she shoots herself, she is dead for sure....no more suspense! No more viewers!"

Another outstanding feature in the production process is the importance of music. The ethnography demonstrates that music is vital in the girls’ daily lives as well. Popular mainstream music channels such as MTV, Jim TV and TMF play an important role in their day to day interactions. Music, as integral part of youth culture, is very present in the club house. Very often, the girls listen to or exchange songs via their mobile phones, Iphone etc. Frequently, Youtube is consulted in order to play songs to sing or dance to. This significance of music is mirrored in the final trailer. The girls spend a lot of time contemplating on which song is right for which scene. Hereby, they recognize that certain song facilitate emotional identification among viewers. Hazan pones: “When I commit suicide, the music has to be threatening and dark!” on which Derya replies: “and when Marilyn and Fernaldo are in his room, it has to emanate glamour, like the Black Eyed Peas.” The final decision of songs is a hybrid mix of mainstream American music (e.g. Jay Z), diaspora music (e.g. Muhabbet) and music from existing Turkish television series (e.g. Küçük Sırlar).

Next to attracting young audiences, one of the main pursuits of the participants is to bring a realistic, authentic and coherent narrative. Authenticity is a necessity to create and visualize their story. At numerous times, discussions surrounding the authenticity of the narrative, the filming or the acting are brought up. This authenticity is also central to the reflexive project of the girls as they try to achieve a coherent story of themselves through time (cf. supra), which, according to postmodern identity theory (Giddens, 1991) is typical for late modernity. The choice to veil the mother for instance, is basically made on the assumption that this is plausible and authentic in the situation of a first generation diaspora mother. Settings and props are required to be authentic as well as a heated discussion between Hazan and a youth worker shows. When the scene is shot where Sinem is being caught with drugs by her mother, Hazan want to hang in the sofa and hold a remote control to show her indifference towards her mothers’ anger. But yet the remote control of the television is missing. When Vere suggests holding a porcelain statue instead, Hazan argues that this is unprofessional and unrealistic. She refuses to act further until they find the original remote control. Other examples that illustrate the value of a coherent narrative is when scenes are shot anew because the acting is not ‘serious’ enough, or when stage-properties are inconsistent. The use of the English language among Fernaldo and Marilyn is also illustrative of the authenticity claim as Hatice utters: “Fernaldo and Marilyn need to speak English if they want to be credible as American.” The girls also insist on continuity editing where the scenes are organized in a logical order. This again highlights their media-savvyness as they make use of existing media language – Hollywood editing in this case.
This challenges the hegemonic, reified presumption – that is present in societal as well as in academic debates – that a ‘national’, ‘cultural’, ‘ethnic’ or ‘religious’ identity is always chosen as the primary identification among diaspora youth (see El Sghiar and d’Haenens, 2011).
CONCLUSION

In 1998 Mary Celeste Kearney described the emergence of girls as cultural producers as “one of the most interesting transformations to have occurred in youth culture in the last two decades” (1998: 285). By giving voice to underprivileged, diaspora young females in Belgium, this report attempted to subvert the white, middle-class framework of youth studies and contributed to the public knowledge about what female adolescents do with media texts and as such refute the stereotype of girls as passive consumers. Thereby, it added up to the academic field of feminist and girl studies (Kearney, 2011; Lotz, 2000). By letting participants produce a television trailer, this study also enriched the body of knowledge on ‘doing identities’ and visual ethnographic methodologies. Visual ethnography proved to be an enabling and holistic method to approach complex issues such as identity construction. Also it provides rich and in-depth data that allow for triangulation (Wester et al., 2006). The ethnographic component accorded to a better contextual understanding because of the participant observation while the visual part added more time for reflexivity and short-term empowerment for the participants, alongside the verbal outcomes. During the process of television production it was clear that most girls preferred to stand in front of a camera instead of behind it. Acting and performing on the ‘front stage’ (Goffman, 1959) were experienced as more pleasant than the use of camera technologies. With this self-performance and self-representation, the girls authored their own perspective on television through speaking audiovisual language – which is very significant within everyday youth culture (cf. Niesyto, Buckingham and Fisher-keller, 2003). Overall, the most important methodological advantages of media production as research method is that producing media actually tells us more about a) intersecting identities and regulating discourses, b) media reception in terms of use and consumption (e.g. hybrid program preferences, television watching motivations) and c) the media language and literacy of the girls (e.g. notion of the audience, generic knowledge) than about the production an sich. Visual ethnography proofed to be a valuable and rich methodology for audience researchers in media, youth and cultural studies. It challenges and complements traditional audience research methods.

When producing a television trailer in group, diaspora girls engage in collective identity formation and self-representation. When building up the script of the trailer, each girl took up a broad spectrum of shifting and various subject positions in order to negotiate on a consensus for the final trailer screenplay. Two main themes emerged in the ideal program of the girls – which can be defined as a teen drama: First, the experience of puberty and its related search for identities and societal positions during adolescence; second the common search for the articulation of femininity or how to ‘be female’ which can be referred to as ‘new femininities’. In other words, age and life phase, in intersection with gender are the key markers of identity for the girls in this study (cf. Kearney, 2006)32. Femininity and masculinity in this case, are understood and enacted in hegemonic, traditional and fixed terms. Class, class conflict and ethnicity are also articulated in the trailer but less prominent than the identity
“Girls reactions to sexualized culture should be considered as discursively and socially situated which, of necessity, will lead to different understandings and appropriations of sexualisation and not necessarily contribute to ‘an internalization that produces self-sexualisation’” (Duits and Van Zoonen, 2011: 495).
traits gender and age. The characters in ‘Sinemiim süçü Neydi’ are in the first place teenage girls, experiencing difficulties growing up (broken heart, drugs, rebellion against parents...). Additionally, as diaspora girls from Turkish descent living in a rich American society, these characters experience what the girls call a ‘cultural clash’. This cultural clash is mainly caused by ‘class distinctions’ instead of ‘ethnic distinctions’. By constructing these class and cultural differences in their narrative, the girls ‘do difference’ at a micro level (cf. West and Fenstermaker, 1995: 13). In terms of identification with the characters in their television program, the girls point at several similarities in their everyday life and their own circle of friends. Esma for instance, who plays the mother in the series is in real life also perceived as the mother figure who is very caring and patient and who likes to cook and clean (this also says something about the girls’ conceptions of being a mother and its related gender roles), or Hatice who plays the role of the comforting, sympathetic ‘best friend’ is representative of herself. (cf. Ang, 1985). Some respondents thus strive towards an ‘authentic’ representation of the self as central to the reflexive project, even though the narrative is fictional (Giddens, 1991; Duits, 2009: 52).

The construction of collective identities is inspired by an interplay of discursive practices such as personal frameworks, lived experiences and available (media) repertoires. The social context of the ‘girls club’ – for instance, which has a lot of resemblances with McRobbie’s (1978) concept of bedroom culture – is a place where diaspora girls come together, where ‘gender competence’ or ‘how to be female’ (Connell, 2002: 81 in Nayak and Kehily, 2008) is learned and feminine identities are constructed. This ‘girls discourse’ is inscribed in a hegemonic order of binary gender divisions and within a heterosexual matrix which is clearly articulated in the entire production process as well as in the final television trailer (e.g. boy-girl love story) but also in the individual interviews and daily practices. Gender divisions – which include how femininity and masculinity are mapped onto identities and how gender is displayed, enacted and understood, naturalize, reinforce and support sexuality (see Schippers, 2000). Nevertheless, despite the hegemonic understanding and enactment of femininity, some girls (e.g. Hatice and Hazan) undoubtedly deconstruct gender roles. They have a (liberal) feminist project as they point at the lack of gender (and also ethnic) equality in everyday life. They often refer to the imbalances in their lives based on gender differences (e.g. double sexual standards) but at the same time criticize and distance themselves from the dominant discourse of ‘hyper sexuality’ among ‘Belgian’ teenagers (cf. Adriaens, 2011). This creates space for the construction of new gendered identities or “new femininities” with empowering potential what Durham (2004: 257) would call “new imaginings of gender and sexuality”. However, these convictions do not translate into alternative empowering gender representations on television, since their self-produced trailer mainly represents traditional gender roles (e.g. soft, sweet girl versus dominant, though boy). The girls thus deconstruct unequal power relations but still inscribe their story within hegemonic discourses. This can be explained by the fact that the trailer is the result of a group process where hegemonic discourses are more easily adopted when a consensus needs to be attained. Girls were for instance scared to be perceived as ‘displaying a lack of femininity’ or unmasked as ‘butchy’ by the others. A
suitable example of this performance of femininity in group is when the roles are casted and no one wants to play ‘the boy’ because they do not want to be labelled as ‘butch’. In the individual interviews, a different picture was visible and resistance against hegemonic gender practices was often foregrounded. Consequently, participants negotiated between positions of hegemony and agency and as such constructed reflexive identities (cf. Giddens, 1991) which are typical of late modern societies. These findings align with Kearney’s (2006: 9-11) assertion that contemporary female youth continues to privilege the roles and practices of traditional femininity while avoiding those related to males, principally girls who are invested in heterosexual patriarchy.

Next to the articulations of identities, media repertoires such as media language (e.g. generic knowledge of melodrama, teen series) and previous media experiences (e.g. Fatma süçü Neydî, Kuçuk Sırlar, MTV programs) were regularly introduced by the respondents. This elucidates their familiarity with the conventions of storytelling, their media-savvyness and hybrid television consumption. In the editing phase for instance, the respondents pointed at the importance of dramatic music to enhance the emotional involvement of the audience. Also, their choice for the melodramatic genre was chiefly motivated by a wish to attract broad audiences. To construct their television program, the girls employed elements from existing and well-liked television series in combination with contributions from their own daily life experiences. Noticeably, their main pursuit was to bring a realistic, authentic and plausible narrative aimed at a young, mainly female audience.

Also, through the making of their own television trailer and reflexive talk surrounding this process, the girls tell something about what they like to see on television and in doing so enter the process of identity construction (cf. De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007). They prefer to see dramatic teen series that depart from their own lived realities as second generation diasporic girls where typical ‘teen themes’ are represented such as: drugs, troubles with parents, disappointments in love, close female friendships, depression and suicide complemented by themes such as wealth, luxury, class conflict (typical for telenovelas) and cultural differences. The luxury/wealth theme however is said not to be that important in real life but is mainly integrated in the trailer because of its escapist and entertaining potential. The cultural differences theme is made visible through ‘ethnic accents’ such as the use of the Turkish language, the representation of a headscarf, the selection of a title in the Turkish language. Though it needs to be remarked that this representation of ethnicity primarily propagates hybridity (e.g. use of Turkish words alternated with Dutch words, the use of mainstream pop chart music ‘Jay Z’ followed by German-Turkish diaspora music ‘Muhabet’ which is distinctive for second generation diaspora teenagers who are perceived to negotiate between different cultures (see Sinardet and Mortelmans, 2006; Durham, 2004; Moran, 2011). It is salient that through the reflexive process of the trailer production, conceptions and understandings of ethnicity, culture, gender, class, age are foregrounded. Ethnicity for instance is for our girls the same as ‘culture’ which is linked to religion, family values, language, nationality, traditions (e.g. eating habits) and phenotype. Their bottom-up conceptualiza-
tion is remarkably enough the same as the scholarly definition of ethnicity (cf. De Leeuw and Rydin, 2007).

Although this ethnographic study did not appeal to claims of generalizations but rather searched to provide deep understandings of a few case studies, this small scale study has limitations. It needs to be recognized that this research is inevitably restricted to the youth club context and that the girls’ identities are negotiated at numerous other sites as well (e.g. school, family context) which would be interesting cases for follow-up studies. Also, as I told the participants I was looking for the construction of an ideal television trailer, there is a possibility that they have generated performances for my benefit. In terms of video making, only filmable objects/situations were included and discussed. Finally, the trailer is a product of group interaction and thus represents negotiated identities, individual trailers would have had different, probably more ‘resisting’ outcomes (for an overview of individual media production: see pilot study). Nevertheless, the creative production of televised narratives stimulates the negotiation of reflexive intersecting identities, the voicing of everyday life experiences, the imagining of audiences and shows that teenage diaspora girls foremost identify with their gender and age while adding some ‘ethnic’ touches.
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

1. Praktische Outline 10 november 2010

Begeleiders: Fien Adriaens, Elke Van Damme, Sander De Ridder & Frederik Dhaenens

Vere en Tanya

Locatie: VZW Jong I STH, Godshuismemke 17, 9000 Gent, 09/ 268 29 70

Participanten: 2 groepjes (Bulgaarse +- 7 meisjes en Turkse meisjes +- 5)

14u – 14u30: Introductie

- Groepjes verdelen (Sander & Elke: Turkse meisjes – Fré en Fien: Bulgaars meisjes)
- Handtekening laten zetten voor aanwezigheid
- Doelstelling: trailer voor een televisieserie maken
- Voorbeelden trailer tonen (Zot van A)
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WitX9D0qo28
- Vragen/uitleggen wat een trailer is:
  - Beperkt aantal scènes
  - Personages worden voorgesteld
  - Thema’s worden voorgesteld
  - Titel wordt voorgesteld
  - Doel van een trailer: publiek overtuigen naar de serie te kijken
  - Wordt achteraf gemonteerd – er wordt m.a.w. veel meer gefilmd dan ook effectief wordt getoond
- Nodig:
  - Dvd met trailers
  - Naamkaartjes

14u30 – 17u: Trailer opstellen

- Brainstormen in groep over televisieserie
- Kernvraag: ‘Wat is voor jullie een ideaal televisieprogramma?’
- Personages, thema’s, locaties, titel, muziek en gevoel van de serie bepalen (zie opgaveblad)
Vertaling in praktisch ‘storybord’ – schema (zie blad) – concrete uitwerking
Verloop volgende week (17/11) bespreken (eventueel vragen om aantal attributen mee te brengen)
Nodig:
– Opdrachtblad
– Storybord
– Google maps
– Opname-apparatuur
– Fotocamera
– Versnaperingen
– Notitiemateriaal en vragenlijst

Belangrijk
Deze fase wordt volledig op band opgenomen
‘Sfeer’ foto’s nemen voor logboek etnografisch onderzoek
Hier worden ‘focusgroepgewijs’ ook aantal diepgaandere vragen gesteld mbt bepaalde keuzes (link met identiteit!) – WAAROM vraag

Hoe zien jullie hoofdpersonages er uit? (leeftijd, geslacht, etniciteit, gezinssituatie)
Welke zijn de belangrijkste karaktereigenschappen van je hoofdpersonage?
Welk geloof, welke achtergrond heeft je hoofdpersonage? (Is dit belangrijk? Moet dit in de verf worden gezet of net niet?)
In welke mate gelijk je zelf op je hoofdpersonage (of ander personage) / in welke mate verschilt je van dit personage? Herken je jezelf in een bepaald personage?
Wat zou er aan het personage moeten veranderen opdat het beter op jezelf zou lijken?
THEMA’s: waarom vind je die thema’s net belangrijk?
Op welke zender zou je je programma willen uitzenden?

17u – 18u: Cameraoefening
Instellingen camera tonen
Camerastandpunten/camerabeweging uitleggen
Geluidopties + extra micro voor interviews
Iedereen mag eens filmen
Nodig:
– Camera’s
– Fotocamera (foto’s nemen van eerste ervaringen met camera)
2. Assignment ‘making of a trailer’

Maak een TRAILER voor jullie TV serie...

ALGEMEEN
- 5 scènes
- Max 4 a 5 minuten (wordt achteraf gemonteerd)

PERSONAGES
- Minimum 4
- Geef hen een voornaam
- Belangrijkste ‘uiterlijke’ eigenschappen
- Belangrijkste ‘karaktertrekjes’
- Welke taal spreken je personages? Hoe oud zijn je personages? Welke religie hebben ze?
- Waar komen je personages vandaan?

GEBEURTENISSEN / THEMA’S
- Wat maken je personages mee in jouw programma?
- Wat zijn de 3 belangrijkste thema’s in je verhaal
  - Welke gebeurtenissen ga je filmen?

WAAR? (LOCATIE)
- Waar speelt je programma zich af?
  - Waar (locatie) gaan jullie filmen?

TITEL
- Wat is de titel van je programma?

MUZIEK
- Welke muziek wil je graag in jouw programma?

GEVOEL
- Welke ‘gevoel’ hangt rond je programma: is het spannend? Triest? Grappig? Dramatisch?
### 3. Script – Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITEL</th>
<th>Personages</th>
<th>Thema'(s)</th>
<th>Locatie (Waar)</th>
<th>Wat gebeurt er? (korte inhoud)</th>
<th>Muziek? Gevoel?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scène 1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Scène 2</td>
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<td>Scène 3</td>
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<td>Scène 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scène 5</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Overview research material

TRANSCRIPTIES (T):
- T Collages
  - TC1 Filiz
  - TC2 Hazan
  - TC3 Mervé
  - TC4 Hatice & Derya
- T Groepsgesprek
  - Turkse meisjes
    - TGT1 SCRIPT brainstorm 10/11
    - TGT2 opname tussen filmen 17/11
    - TGT3 SCRIPT trailer
- T Individuele interviews
  - TI1 Derya
  - TI2 Esma
  - TI3 Hazan
  - TI4 Hatice
  - TI6 Vere & Tanya
- T Tussendoor
  - TTD1 27 april
  - TTD2 27 april

VELDNOTA’S (see LOGBOEK) (V)

VISUEEL MATERIAAL (F):
- Collages (see pilot study)
- Trailer Turkse meisjes
  - FT1 deel 1 17 nov TG
  - FT2 deel 2 17 nov TG
  - FT3 deel 3 17 nov TG
  - FT4 deel 4 17 nov TG
  - FT5 FINAL Wat was de schuld van Sinem

SIDE DOCUMENTS (SD):
- Annual report ‘Meisjeswerking’
- Pictures of the research process
5. Analysis visual material: trailer

SEQUENTIEVERDELING
‘SINEMIIN SÜÇÜ NEYDI?’ – ‘WAT WAS DE SCHULD VAN SINEM?’

Regie: Hazan, Hatice, Derya, Esma en Nazli
Camera: Hatice, Derya, Esma & Nazli (afwisselend)
Jaar: januari 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SeqID</th>
<th>Tijdsduur</th>
<th>Tijdstip</th>
<th>Plaats</th>
<th>Personages</th>
<th>Omschrijving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>00:00 – 00:05</td>
<td>DAG</td>
<td>/</td>
<td></td>
<td>Titel ‘Sinemiiin süçü neydi?’ – Wat was de schuld van Sinem – Op de Amerikaanse vlag (wapperend) met de blauwe lucht als achtergrond (Zowel in Turks als in het Nederlands)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>00:05 – 00:50</td>
<td>DAG/AVOND</td>
<td>Publiek: New York</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>Begingeneriek – situatieschets – beelden van New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>00:50-01:10</td>
<td>DAG</td>
<td>Publiek: Bibliotheek (buiten)</td>
<td>Fernaldo</td>
<td>Sinem Fernaldo komt toe aan de bibliotheek. Sinem komt toe aan de bibliotheek.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>02:26-03:28</td>
<td>AVOND</td>
<td>Privé: Huis Aysegul slaapkamer</td>
<td>Aysegul Sinem</td>
<td>Sinem is na de ruzie met haar moeder naar haar beste vriendin Aysegul gevlucht en blijft daar logeren. Ze lacht haar hart over de ruzie over drugs. Aysegul zegt dat ze een foto van Fernaldo en zijn nieuw lief gezien heeft op facebook. Sinem stort volledig in. Wanneer Aysegul terug in de kamer komt, vindt ze Sinem terug met een mes in haar hand, haar polsen in bloed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>03:28-04:35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eindgeneriek. Eerst zien we de titel, dan de namen van de personages en acteurs (Sinem, Fernaldo, Meryem, Marilyn, Asegul). Daarna de naam van de cameravrouw, de regie en met dank aan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. **Analyse-instrument**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narratief</th>
<th>Mise-en-scène</th>
<th>Beeldelementen</th>
<th>Geluidselementen</th>
<th>Identiteit</th>
<th>Rol media/ reflexivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wat gebeurt er? Door wie? Thematiek?</td>
<td>Personages</td>
<td>Camera-afstand</td>
<td>Paralinguïstische codes</td>
<td>Sekse</td>
<td>Interferentie van andere mediateksten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Kinetische codes</td>
<td>• Extreme close-up (ECU):</td>
<td>• Toon/volume</td>
<td>M/V</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mimetische codes</td>
<td>• Close-up (CU)</td>
<td>• Muziek</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vestimentaire codes</td>
<td>• Medium close-up (M CU)</td>
<td>Taal?</td>
<td>• Mannelijkheid</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make-up</td>
<td>• Medium shot (MS)</td>
<td>Akoestische tekens (niet-linguistisch)</td>
<td>• Vrouwelijkheid</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>//haartoori</td>
<td>• Medium long shot (MLS)</td>
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<td>Seksualiteit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achtergrond</td>
<td>Camera-hoogte</td>
<td>• Long shot (LS)</td>
<td>• Hetero (He)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Grondhoogte (G)</td>
<td>• Extreme long shot (ELS)</td>
<td>• Homo (Ho)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Menshoogte (M)</td>
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<td>• Ongedefinieerd (O)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Luchthoogte (L)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Etniciteit</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Taal</td>
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<td>Zoom?</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Religie</td>
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<td>Tradities</td>
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<td>Fenotype</td>
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<td>Klasse</td>
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<td>Andere?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**A. Narratie**

- Wat/wie gebeurt er?
- Tekst?
- Thematiek? Welke zijn de belangrijkste thema’s

**B. Mise-en-scène**

1. **Figuurlijke expressie en beweging**

*Kinetische codes*: hoe gedragen de personages zich?

- Bewegen de personages? Lopen of wandelen (L) ze, staan ze recht (S), zitten ze (Z) of liggen ze (L)?
- Gestische codes: hoe bewegen de personages hun lichaam? (zithouding: benen toe? Gespreid?, rechte rug, houding of nonchalant?)
- Proxemische codes: hoe gedragen ze zich in de ruimte? Hoe verplaatsen ze zich? Hoe bewegen ze? (Zachte, vloeiende beweging? Of harde bruuske beweging?)
**Mimetische codes:** Welk is de gelaatsuitdrukking, de mimiek van de personages?
- Is de blik eerder verleidelijk, zacht, onderdanig, opwaarts, lachend, verlegen?
- Is de blik eerder boos, stoer, dominant, neerwaarts, recht naar publiek, ernstig, zelfzeker?
- Waar kijkt de persoon naar als hij spreekt? (naar de persoon zelf; de ogen (P), naar de grond (G) of naar het lichaam van de andere (L).

Werd de *lichamelijkheid* van een personage door de camera benadrukt?

### 2. Uiterlijke verschijningsvorm van de acteur

**Vestimentaire codes**
- Wat voor kledij dragen de personages? (Rok, jurk, panty, hakken, dunne stoffen? Of broek, kostuum, das, zware schoenen, zwaarder materiaal).
- Hoe wordt de kledij gedragen? (Losjes, stijf, nonchalant, voorzichtig...)
- Is de kledij kleurrijk of juist niet? Zijn het zachte of donkere kleuren?
- Zijn er opvallende overeenkomsten of verschillen tussen de personages?
- Verbergt de kledij lichamelijkheid of accentueert zij deze juist? Is de kledij aansluitend of juist los?
- Hebben bepaalde kledingattributen een opvallende functie (b.v. hoeden, brillen, schoenen, juwelen...)?

**Codes van make-up en haartooi**
- Is de make-up opvallend of eerder natuurlijk?
- Accentueert de make-up de lippen, de ogen, de jukbeenderen, wimpers?
- Is er sprake van een zachte of eerder ruwe (litteken, donkere wenkbrauwen, ongeschoren) huid?
- Heeft het personage kort of (half-) lang haar?

### 3. Ruimtegebruik door acteurs/camera
- Hoe is de achtergrond?

#### C. Beeldelementen

**1. Afstand van de camera ten opzichte van de gefilmede objecten:**
- Extreme close-up (ECU): erg dichtbij, detail van gezicht of voorwerp
- Close-up (CU): bijvoorbeeld: gezicht en schouders, soms met borst.
- Medium close-up (MCU): ongeveer vanaf het middel
- Medium shot (MS): ongeveer vanaf het kruis of de dijen
- Totaal shot of medium long shot (MLS): totale persoon, enkele mensen, beperkte ruimte
- Long shot (LS): veel mensen, huis, deel van straat of landschap
- Extreme long shot (ELS): massa’s op straat of plein, weids landschap
2. Hoogte van de camera ten opzichte van de objecten in de omgeving
- Grondhoogte (G): camera staat laag bij de grond
- Menshoogte (M): camera op de hoogte van de staande mens
- Luchthoogte (L): camera ver boven menselijk niveau

3. Wordt er in- of uitgezoomd?

D. Geluidselementen

1. **Paralinguïstische codes: de manier waarop de tekst wordt overgebracht**
   - Volume (zacht, hard?)
   - Toonhoogte (hoge, fijne, schelle stem? Lage stem?)
   - Muziek (zachte instrumenten b.v. viool, fluit, harp of harde instrumenten b.v. gitaar, harde drum)
   - Zorgt de muziek voor een emotionele waarde?
   - Voice-over?

2. **Akoestische tekens: niet linguïstische (cfr. tekst, taal, betekenis van woorden) en niet-muzikale tekens**
   - Huilen, giechelen, gillen
   - Roepen, brullen

E. Identiteit

- Sekse (M/V): is het personage een meisje of een jongen?
- Gender: performed het personage mannelijkheid (Ma) of vrouwelijkheid (Vr)?
- Seksualiteit: Is het personage heteroseksueel (He), homoseksueel (Ho) of ongedefinieerd (O)
- Etniciteit: welke taal spreekt het personage (T)? Wordt religie of elementen van religie gereduceerd (Re)? Worden er culturele tradities voorgesteld (CT)? Welk fenotype (F)?
- Klasse: worden er klasse-elementen, klassenongelijkheid getoond?
- Andere? Zijn er andere identiteitsassen zichtbaar?

F. Rol media/Reflexiviteit