



***How to benefit from team diversity, taking into account
Hermeneutic Horizons, by applying the concept of Hans George
Gadamer “Fusion of Horizons”
A philosophical approach towards managing diversity in teams.***

Bachelor Thesis by Lotte Fase
Supervisor: prof. dr. J. de Mul
Advisor: prof. dr. H. Krop

Date: January 6th, 2020
7666 words

Table of content

1. <i>Introduction</i>	3
2. <i>A brief history of globalization</i>	4
2.1. Globalization in the Netherlands.....	4
2.2. Diversity in Dutch companies.....	5
2.3. Different horizons	5
3. <i>What does it mean to be modern?</i>	6
3.1. Premodernity	6
3.2. Modernity	6
3.3. Postmodernity	6
3.4. Downside of modernity.....	6
4. <i>Implications</i>	7
4.1. Cultural approaches in the workplace	7
4.2. Interaction	8
5. <i>Hermeneutic Attitudes</i>	10
5.1. Closed attitude; closed horizons.....	10
5.2. Slightly open attitude; broadening of horizons	10
5.3. Partly open attitude; fusion of horizons	11
5.4. Completely open attitude; dissemination of horizons	11
6. <i>Diversity-matrix</i>	12
6.1. Variety of openness within an individual.....	12
6.2. Intergroup biases	13
7. <i>Diversity mindset</i>	14
7.1. Categorization-Elaboration model	14
7.2. Managing a diversity mindset	15
8. <i>Hermeneutics of horizons</i>	15
9. <i>Conclusion</i>	17
<i>Literature list</i>	18

1. Introduction

If there is one thing that distinguishes the human being from any other species, it is their exceptional networking and communication skills. Even our earliest ancestors already communicated and cooperated with one another using a common language. Simultaneously, from the very start of mankind, with the Homo Erectus spreading from Africa, the human species has been involved in globalization. Encountering and communicating with humans with different cultural or geographical backgrounds has thus always been part of human life. However, due to the rapid growth of transportation facilities and methods of communication over the past decades, globalization (defined as the spread of people, resources, and ideas across borders (Investopedia.com, 2019)) is now more prominent in our lives than ever before (de Mul, 2011).

The philosophical concept of hermeneutic horizons entails that every individual has their own cultural and personal background which affects their interpretation of their surroundings. This specific interpretation is what is called a hermeneutic horizon. This horizon is affected by all aspects of one's life, from their cultural heritage, to the place they grew up in, what school they went to, to the daily newspaper they read. All of this affects how they perceive their world (Gadamer, 2004, p. xiii). As a result of globalization and the growth of communication methods, people are increasingly dealing with other individuals, with views and opinions far different from their own.

Whilst affecting society as a whole, this radical growth of globalization greatly affects the workplace as well. With a diversifying workforce, diversity has entered the agenda of both research and practice, more than ever before (Knippenberg, van Ginkel and Homan, 2013). Throughout this study, the following definition of diversity will be hold on to:

“Diversity refers to differences between individuals on any attribute that may lead to the perception that another person is different from self.” (Van Knippenberg, De Dreu, and Homan, 2004).

Although diversity in teams is often advocated for, as it promises to enhance creativity within teams, it can also be disruptive and consequently lower performance. In order for diversity in teams to be effective, Knippenberg, van Ginkel and Homan (2013) proposed that an accurate diversity mindset is needed among the team members. Such that they are aware of their differences. However, at the same time it is important that team members are able to identify themselves with the group; i.e. they should be aware of the similarities they share.

My goal within this thesis, is to create a greater understanding of what a diversity mindset actually consists of, by linking it to Hans-George Gadamer's idea of the fusion of horizons. Before doing so, I will elaborate on three different cultures; pre-modern, modern and post-modern and define different degrees of openness.

Specifically, I will hypothesize a possible solution for the question: *In an ever-diversifying society, how can the fusion of horizons, as proposed by Gadamer ensure that diversity in teams positively affects performance, whilst negative outcomes are prevented?* This entails that whilst using a conceptual approach, I will predict possible outcomes of diversity, which can later be tested empirically.

2. A brief history of globalization

About 70,000 years ago, the Homo Erectus spread from East Africa across the entire Eurasian landmass, where they encountered other humans. In a timespan of 55000 years, humankind had spread across the entire globe (Harari, 2016). The concept of globalization, i.e. the spread of people, resources, and ideas across borders (Investopedia.com, 2019), is thus as old as mankind itself. Evidently, for as long as they existed, human beings have been involved in encountering other people with cultures, traditions, and lifestyles that differ from their own. However, it has only been for the last few decades, that globalization is occurring at such a rapid pace, that it has a prominent impact on nearly every society worldwide. The main causes for this rapid growth of the phenomenon are the rise of new modes of transport, thanks to which nearly the entire world is just a plane-flight away. And, even more recently; the rapid growth of communication methods, thanks to which the entire world is just a WhatsApp message away (De Mul, 2011).

2.1. Globalization in the Netherlands

As a consequence of the before mentioned developments, people became aware of the opportunity and chances of a wealthier life elsewhere. Although immigration is something of all times, the first massive stream of immigration in the Netherlands occurred during the Golden Ages, as the Dutch fleet participated in worldwide trading, and the Netherlands was perceived to be one of the most prosperous countries. In the years to follow, immigration numbers remained rather consistent, and during the 1800s, a great amount of people left the Netherlands for North America to chase the American Dream. But then, migration numbers rapidly accumulated after the second world war. Due to decolonization, starting in 1945, a massive stream of immigrants from Indonesia entered the Netherlands. A few years later, starting in the 60s, immigration numbers peaked again, as “guest workers” originating from Suriname, Dutch Antilles, Turkey and Morocco came to the Netherlands. Then, during the 70s and 80s immigration numbers kept growing as a result of so called “chain-migration”, i.e. due to family reunification and later, during the 90s, family formation (Zorlu and Hartog, 2001). Another prominent stream of immigrants during the 90s in the Netherlands, arrived from former Yugoslavia. During the civil war, which started in 1992 in Bosnia and Herzegovina, approximately 25 thousand Yugoslavian citizens fled to the Netherlands. In the years to follow, the Yugoslavian immigrants had a great impact on Dutch crime as they often gained attention for above average crime rates among the ethnic group (Hessels 2005).

The latest trend regarding immigration to the Netherlands, is that of war refugees, mainly originating from Syria and Eritrea. This trend has been going on for a few years now, and peaked in 2015, when an estimated 56.900 refugees entered the Netherlands (CBS, 2016). This latest influx of immigrants caused a great debate throughout the whole of Europe, on how to deal with these large numbers of immigration.

Nowadays, globalization has led to a diversified society in which people with different geographical, religious and cultural backgrounds live closely together. In 2019, 23.6 percent of the Dutch population has a migration background (CBS, 2019). These developments have far reaching implications for all of society. The Dutch society has adopted a variety of new traditions over the years, and also had to let go of some of their own. Although some communities are still holding on to their own traditions, people are also increasingly adopting new traditions, and different cultures are slowly mingling.

2.2. Diversity in Dutch companies

Considering the previous mentioned movements within Dutch society, it is not surprising that diversity is a hot topic in business. As the society diversifies, companies are increasingly dealing with diversity as well. Although the previous paragraphs mainly focus on diversity in terms of ethnicity. Diversity in teams can also be defined in terms of religion, gender, education, age or occupational area. Increasingly more companies are striving for an inclusive workforce, and movements such as *Diversiteit in Bedrijf (Diversity in Business)* come to life which strive for equal chances and treatment of every person in the employment market (diversiteitinbedrijf.nl).

Despite the efforts made over the past few years, companies still have a long way to go before being completely inclusive. Whether consciously or unconsciously, due to prejudgments and stereotypes, discrimination in (recruitment) processes is still an existing problem in the Netherlands (Inspectie SZW, 2019). Consequently, it has been established that immigrants and refugees often have an economically disadvantaged position in societies (De Vroome, and Van Tubergen, 2010).

In order to contribute to the goal of reaching inclusive companies, it is important to highlight the benefits of having diverse teams. Over the past years, lots of research has been done on the impact of diversity on business. It has been established that diversity within teams can create great advantages for companies, for example by enlarging creativity. However, diversity can be disruptive as well, if not managed right. More specifically, it is proposed that diversity is a double-edged sword which can either lead to intergroup bias, which hinders group identification, decreasing the group performance. The other option, is that diversity leads to a more elaborate form of information processing, increasing the group performance (Van Knippenberg, van Ginkel and Homan, 2013). It is therefore critical that companies are provided with suggestions on how to deal with diversity, enabling them to utilize diversity as a means to create competitive advantage, rather than a burden.

2.3. Different horizons

As established, diversity can be defined in a multitude of ways. All of their personal differences influence an individual's hermeneutic horizon. A hermeneutic horizon can best be explained as someone's implicit framework for interpreting their surroundings. This horizon is affected by both their cultural and personal identity. More specifically, this entails that everything that shapes one's cultural or personal identity defines how they perceive the world around them. This horizon is not merely defined by your ethnical background, but specifically by your personal history. From the friends you hang out with to the television program you watch at night, these things highly influence your horizon. However, these moments should not be perceived as isolated moments, but as an ongoing process in which what we encounter shapes our horizon (Gadamer, 2005, xiii). Cultural and personal identity is thus not self-contained but is reflexively constructed (de Mul, 2015).

This study will focus not so much on the classical forms of diversity, rather, this study will focus on how people deal with diversity. First, three different types of culture will be distinguished, namely, pre-modernity, modernity, and post-modernity. After elaborating upon these different cultures in the next chapter, the implications of having team members that differ in how they approach diversity, will be thoroughly discussed throughout the rest of this study.

3. What does it mean to be modern?

Throughout the following chapter, three different cultures will be defined; premodern cultures, modern cultures, and postmodern cultures. Although these different cultures appear to exist sequentially, they are actually coexisting; not solely in the sense of having one part of the world being premodern, and another part being modern; but also, in the sense of having different types of cultures within one society. Actually, the different types of cultures can even exist within one individual. Before explaining more about this coexistence, the different types of cultures will be elaborated upon.

3.1. Premodernity

Premodern cultures are characterized as monocultures. This entails that people are hardly interacting with other cultures. Their traditions are by custom, meaning they are considered as self-evident and are unlikely to change. These people stick with their tradition as they do not know a (better) alternative (de Mul, 2018).

3.2. Modernity

Modern cultures are characterized as multi-cultures, meaning that people with different cultures are living closely together and are increasingly becoming aware of other cultures. Their traditions are by choice, meaning that people can choose to adopt other traditions. People can even choose to change their culture at whole, and adopt a completely new culture. In modern cultures, people can adopt different cultures and create new traditions (de Mul, 2018).

3.3. Postmodernity

Postmodern cultures are characterized as inter-cultures. This entails that distinct cultures no longer exist. Traditions are by commodity, meaning they are free from engagements of obligations (de Mul, 2018). *“Postmodern traditions by commodity are characterized by their non-binding and short-lived character; they are being 'shopped together' because they are useful or pleasant for the time being, but they are easily replaced by the next 'tradition' that makes its appearance in the media. Because of their extremely flexible character, these traditions often have the character of a hype. As a result, in the postmodern era mobility becomes hypermobility.”* (de Mul, 2015, p. 106).

3.4. Downside of modernity

Although modernization is often self-evidently associated with progression and perceived as something positive. It is important to make a side-note at this point. Admittedly, the tone of the previous paragraphs might be misleading. Someone being open towards other cultures, actively trying to understand and adopt towards one another, does sound more progressive than someone isolated in their own society and culture. However, modernity also comes with a burden. Gray (2007) boldly stated in his book *Al Quada and what it means to be modern*; *“They also define themselves as anti-modern, but it should by now be evident that radical Islam is a by-product of late modern globalization”* (Gray, 2007, p. xvii). How comes? Grey argues against the idea that modern societies are becoming more alike as a result of globalization. Alternatively, he argues that in societies where different identities mingle, some people actually long for a redefined distinct culture: *“Al Quada has a strong appeal to deracinated Muslims in westernized societies: it provides meaning and purpose in lives that lack them and recreates an identity where one has been lost.”* (Gray, 2007, p. xix).

A similar although less radical movement, can be found in contemporary Dutch politics, as well as nearly every other Western country. Politicians are increasingly using and reinforcing people's worries about losing their Dutch identity with their campaigns. For example, the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) use their "*the Netherlands ours again*" slogan, referring to the incoming influences of (Islamic) immigrants (pvv.nl). And the Forum for Democracy (FvD), who promise to redefine and impose Dutch values within society, again referring to incoming (Islamic) influences of immigrants (forumvoordemocratie.nl). These political influences have led to increases in polarization within the Netherlands, as they install a feeling of "we" versus "them" (Silva, 2018).

In sum, the goal of exposing these byproducts of modernity, is to shake up the idea that modernization is necessarily associated with progression. Referring to a deeply rooted movement in African Culture; Ubuntu: "*Motion is the principle of be-ing*". Being is an endless movement. This motion goes nowhere. There are directions in between, but eventually there is no direction to motion, it goes nowhere. The key principles of this philosophy are that being consists of never-ending streams of exchanges with all beings being mutually dependent (Bohlmeijer and Ramose, 2018). This has implications for the rest of this thesis, in the sense that a value-free approach will be installed, such that the (post-)modern view will not be perceived as a more desirable approach opposed to a pre-modern approach.

Moreover, it might even be questionable whether it would be possible to establish full post-modernity. As pointed out in the before mentioned examples, people still seem to be longing for some form of a distinct culture. It could inherently be part of being a human being to want to be part of a group. In accordance, van Knippenberg (2011) established that having the feeling of being part of the team, and sharing an identity with your team members, is essential to be able to work productively together. Expressing a shared identity and installing a sense of "we", even in a highly diversified group, is therefore an effective leadership method. Based on these findings, the goal of this thesis will not be to find a way to reach complete (post-)modernity. Rather, the goal will solely be to define a way to manage and combine these different approaches towards diversity.

4. Implications

4.1. Cultural approaches in the workplace

In the previous chapter, a brief explanation has been given of the three distinct cultures. This chapter will elaborate upon the hypothesized implications of these different cultures. Specifically, what it means for the interaction within a team to have team members with a different culture. As mentioned before, although pre-modernity, modernity, and post-modernity appear mutually exclusive in theory, they are actually coexisting in practice both across individuals as well as within individuals. This entails that within one organization you can have different employees with different types of cultures. Before discussing the interaction between these employees, hypotheses will be given on how their type of culture affects their work.

Premodern; someone with a pre-modern approach towards diversity, will be likely to hold on to their old patterns, as they are not aware of other views. Although they might be willing to learn from employees with a different approach than theirs, they will not give up on their own views, as those views are the only thing they know. When a new management tool is announced, they will likely be resilient. Moreover, they will likely prefer to work with people who are similar to them, as there will be no need to adjust or be an uncomfortable situation.

Modern; someone with a modern approach towards diversity, will likely be willing to let go of some of their old habits, and replace them with new ways of working. When a new management tool is announced, they will take some time to adjust, and implement the new tool. They will likely be open for working with people who are different from them, although it might be difficult for them to feel part of the team, as they perceive the other as “other”.

Postmodern; someone with a post-modern approach towards diversity will quickly move on from one approach to the other. As soon as they think of another management tool to be better than the current one, they will be the first to implement it. They will have little trouble to work with others as there will be no distinct differences in identities. However, there might be a lack of team spirit, as there is no shared identity.

4.2. Interaction

In order to gain understanding of how employees with a different cultural approach will interact with one another some hypotheses have been conducted. An overview of these hypotheses will then be presented in a matrix.

Premodern attitude towards premodern culture:

E.g. one team of employees with a premodern mindset originating from France, has to cooperate with a Dutch team of employees with a premodern mindset. They have only ever worked at one company with one method. Both teams will stick to their own way of working as they consider that to be the best way. Conversations between the teams will be one-sided, and hence a divide between the teams will remain.

Premodern attitude towards modern culture:

E.g. someone with a premodern Dutch culture who worked in a company for a long time, has to work together with a new employee who originates from Suriname with a modern culture. Whereas the Dutch employee was used to working according to a specific timeline, the new employee is used to deciding how to spend his worktime by himself. Although the premodern employee will try to understand this way of working, he will not be willing to let go of his own timeline, nor to adopt this way of working. A divide between the employees will occur.

Premodern attitude towards postmodern culture:

E.g. someone with a premodern culture originating from Syria enters a diversified Dutch company with postmodern employees. There is no clear culture among the employees to be defined. The premodern employee will try to understand the way of working within the company, and try to learn their culture. However, there is no clear culture to be understood. The premodern employee will cling on to his own habits and will have difficulty to adopt to the company.

Modern attitude towards premodern culture:

E.g. someone with a modern culture, who grew up in the Randstad (urban area within the Netherlands), starts working at a company in a rural area in the Netherlands within a team of premodern employees. Whereas the modern employee will try to adopt, he will also try to reach a common understanding with the other employees. This conversation will, however, be one-sided as the other employees will not be willing to adopt to his view. Again, a divide between the employees will occur.

Modern attitude towards modern culture:

E.g. an American student from New York with a modern culture joins a Dutch firm in Amsterdam as an intern. The student joins a team of employees who also have a modern culture. Although the student might have an opposing view compared to the other team members as to how the work should be done. They will be able to have a two-sided conversation and reach a common ground as their horizons fuse. Despite the common ground they reach, the student is still likely to perceive the other team members as “other” as he looks at them from his own perspective.

Modern attitude towards postmodern culture:

E.g. someone with a modern culture working at a Dutch company, will gain new team members who just obtained their degree. These new employees have a clear idea of how the work should be done for the time being. Although this time the modern employee will be able to have a two-sided conversation with the postmodern employees, it will be difficult for them to reach a common ground. As the modern employee cannot detect a distinct approach among the new employees.

Postmodern attitude towards premodern culture:

E.g. when a Dutch student with a postmodern attitude works as an intern in a family company, which have a premodern culture. Whereas the student will have little trouble to adopt their traditions and working ways, her own input will not be adopted by the premodern employees. This can be troublesome, especially if the premodern employees have traditions that are too far from the student’s beliefs. For example, when the employees refuse to hire immigrants in the company, and the student is highly convinced that every candidate should have an equal chance to be hired.

Postmodern attitude towards premodern culture:

E.g. when a postmodern philosopher enters a well-established company, and joins a team with modern employees. The philosopher will be open to their current ways of working, and will adopt their traditions. However, the philosopher will not be looking for a common ground. And might want to change the work ethic, once she notices points of improvement.

Postmodern attitude towards postmodern culture:

E.g. two employees who recently graduated from their philosophy studies, jointly work on a project at a firm. Both employees are open to the other’s ideas, and even seamlessly adopt each other’s working habits. Little effort is needed for the two to reach an understanding of how the work should be done, however, there will be little common ground between the two employees as they encounter constant revolution.

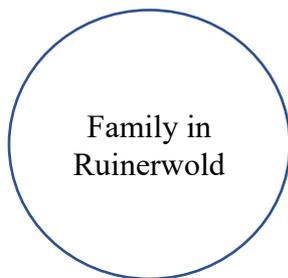
5. Hermeneutic Attitudes

The beforementioned forms of modernity can provoke certain attitudes towards diversity. Specifically, this can be linked to the theory of hermeneutic horizons. These different attitudes will be presented in this chapter. Importantly, these attitudes are not specifically linked to one form of modernity. I.e. a person with a pre-modern approach, could have an open attitude towards one thing and have a closed attitude towards another. This will be further elaborated upon throughout the chapter.

5.1. Closed attitude; closed horizons

A closed attitude resembles a hermeneutic horizon which is fully closed. It does not interact with other horizons, and is resilient to change. There is no dialogue. An example of this, is the family in Ruinerwold, who were found in an abandoned farm in Drenthe in 2019. The family had lived in the farm for several years, without any contact with the outside world (RTV Drenthe, 2019). Their horizon had not changed over the years, as they did not encounter any other horizons.

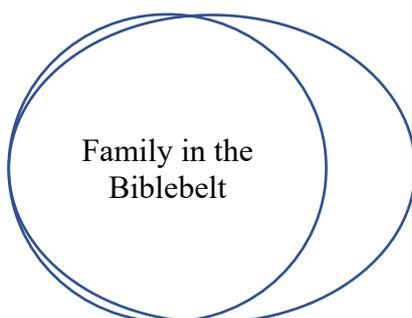
Closed horizon:



5.2. Slightly open attitude; broadening of horizons

People with a slightly open attitude are capable of broadening their horizon by paying attention to, and learning from other horizons. However, they are unlikely to change their horizon and will hold on to their views (de Mul, 2018). Such a horizon is thus mainly closed for other horizons, however, is able to adapt. There is a dialogue, however, this dialogue is one-sided it is a monologue. An example of this, would be a family living in the Biblebelt, who are surrounded by people with different cultures. Although they might be aware of these other cultures, they will stick to their own traditions. They might try to learn something about another culture, but only from their own perspective.

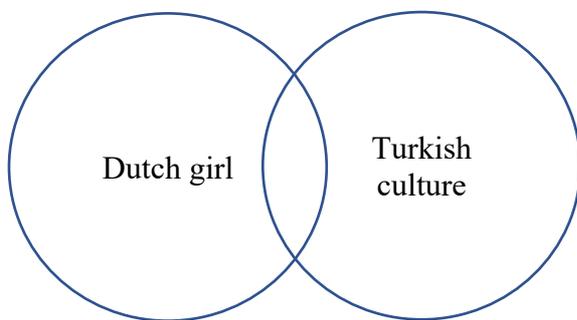
Broadening of horizons:



5.3. Partly open attitude; fusion of horizons

A partly open attitude is linked to Hans George Gadamer's theory of fusion of horizons. People have an open attitude towards other horizons, whilst partly holding on to their own horizon. Gadamer states that interpretation does not lead to understanding, alternatively understanding is a precondition for interpretation (Gadamer, 2004, p. 294). This understanding is defined by the fusion of horizons; a horizon is never isolated in itself. Old and new horizons are ever mingling and changing (Gadamer, 2004, p. xiii). A dialogue is occurring, the dialogue is two-sided. An example of this, would be a Dutch girl in Rotterdam who goes to school in the city, where she meets other girls from Turkish origin. As the Dutch girl befriends the Dutch-Turkish girls and spends more time with them and their families, she starts to adopt some of their traditions. Such as their choice of music, clothing and food. Her own horizon fuses with another.

Fusion of horizons:



5.4. Completely open attitude; dissemination of horizons

A completely open attitude can be linked to Jacques Derrida's deconstructivism. Derrida argues that one should not aim to naturalize what is not natural. The conditions that bound one's hermeneutic horizon should not be perceived as natural, nor should they be held on to. This implicates that a hermeneutic horizon should not exist at all; horizons are disseminating (Dick and Ziering Hofman, 2002). The dialogue that occurs resembles a polylogue. An example of this would be a non-religious Dutch woman, with a Buddhist statue in her garden, as she likes the design of it for the time being. For dinner she might eat a halal dish she found on the internet, whilst having a glass of red wine. There is no longer a distinct culture, but just a variety of traditions which are rapidly changing.

Dissemination of horizons:



6. Diversity-matrix

In the previous chapter, a variety of openness was presented. One's degree of openness greatly impacts how one acts in an encounter with someone else. How this affects the dialogue is presented in the matrix below.

Attitude towards diversity	Closed attitude	Slightly closed attitude	Partly open attitude	Completely open attitude
Closed attitude	No dialogue	No dialogue	No dialogue	No dialogue
Slightly closed attitude	No dialogue	One sided monologue	+ Open for the dialogue - Perceives other as "other"	+ Open for the dialogue - No clear horizon to understand
Partly open attitude	No dialogue	+ Tries to come to a common vision - One sided	Two-sided dialogue	+Two-sided dialogue - No common ground to be found
Completely open attitude	No dialogue	+ Is open for the others perspective - Other's perspective might be too far from their believes	+ Is open for the others perspective - Not looking for a common ground	Polylogue

6.1. Variety of openness within an individual

As briefly mentioned, the degree of openness cannot be linked to one specific culture, neither can a degree of openness be linked to one individual. The same individual could have an open attitude towards one subject, and a completely closed attitude towards another. An example of this, would be a Dutch hospital that obeys to the wishes of their Islamic employees to provide them with a prayer room in the hospital. Having an open attitude towards their horizon, and even fusing their horizons. However, not allowing the female Islamic employees to refrain from examining male patients. Being closed towards this topic, as it is non-discussible for the hospital, and they are not willing to change this view.

Importantly, this example shows that the hypotheses earlier in this study concerning the interactions between people with different cultures, are highly affected by the degree of openness as well. Someone with a modern culture could have an open attitude towards one topic, and a closed attitude towards the other. Given that one individual could vary both in culture as well as attitude, the combinations of different interactions are endless. And although empirically testing the before mentioned hypotheses and further elaborating these would be

very interesting, the rest of this study will merely focus on setting ground for a theory on how to manage these different encounters.

6.2. Intergroup biases

Intergroup biases are more likely to occur when intergroup differences easily lead to division of the team in subgroups. This would entail, that a team which consists of three employees older than fifty years old with a pre-modern culture and two employees in their twenties with a postmodern approach will likely lead to a division in the group and decrease their performance. Such a group holds a “faultline”, meaning a line that divides one group of team members from another (Thatcher and Patel, 2012).

Based on the previous noted theory and hypotheses, this could lead to the following situation in practice:

If a similar group of **premodern** employees works together with a similar group of **modern** employees; the premodern employees will hold on to their old ways of working. For example, when you have a group of premodern team members who have been in the company for a long time, and a young group of new team members enter the firm. They might be open to learn something from the modern team members, but they will not give up on their old ways. The modern team members will likely be open for the working habits of the premodern employees and even adopt some of their standards. However, the modern team members, might have different views on how to do the job, which they would want to implement in the team. As the premodern group will remain resilient to adopt this new method, the modern group will still perceive the premodern members as “other” and hence a faultline will occur leading to group division.

Alternatively, a team which constitutes of a thirty year old male with a post-modern approach, a girl in her twenties with a pre-modern approach and a fifty year old male and female with a modern approach, will less likely lead to group division, and actually lead to increased performance (Thatcher and Patel, 2012).

In practice this could then lead to the following situation:

- If a heterogenous group of **premodern** employees works together with a heterogenous group of **modern** employees; the premodern employees will again hold on to their old ways of working. However, in this example, all of the premodern employees come from different companies and join a group of modern employees. Due to the high difference among the employees, adoption will be necessary. Although the premodern employees will hold onto their old habits, they will all learn from the other team members and broaden their horizon. The modern employees will again be open to the views of the premodern members, and perhaps even adopt some of their ideas. This time, the modern team members will not see the premodern team members as distinct other and no group division will occur.

7. Diversity mindset

As previously explained, team diversity can be seen as a double-edged sword, which can either lead to increased team performance or be disruptive for team performance. In the previous chapter it has been established that team composition can contribute to enhancing the chance of benefiting from team diversity, by preventing the occurrence of fault lines. Knippenberg has proposed a method to benefit from diversity, which will be discussed throughout this chapter.

7.1. Categorization-Elaboration model

The categorization-elaboration model represents this so-called double-edged sword, where diversity either leads to Social Categorization or Elaboration. Social categorization entails that, based on similarities and differences, groups are formed within the team. Elaboration entails that group members elaborate upon task-related information and perspectives.

The occurrence of social categorization does not necessarily disrupt team performance. However, under the occurrence of identity threat, social categorization hinders elaboration and negatively affects performance, by lowering creativity, innovation and decision quality. Identity threat entails that, due to social categorization, an in-group and out-group arise in the team, where the in-group is often more liked. This distinction within the team threatens the identity of the group. Consequently, this threat of the group identity could lead to intergroup biases, hindering elaboration.

Elaboration, however, has the opposite effect and consequently positively affects performance, by having team members elaborate upon task-related information and perspectives, increasing creativity, innovation, and decision quality within the team. Knippenberg et al. proposes that diversity is more likely to lead to elaboration when the group is both highly motivated and well capable to perform the task. (Van Knippenberg, De Dreu, and Homan, 2004).

A simplified version of the model presented by Knippenberg is shown below:

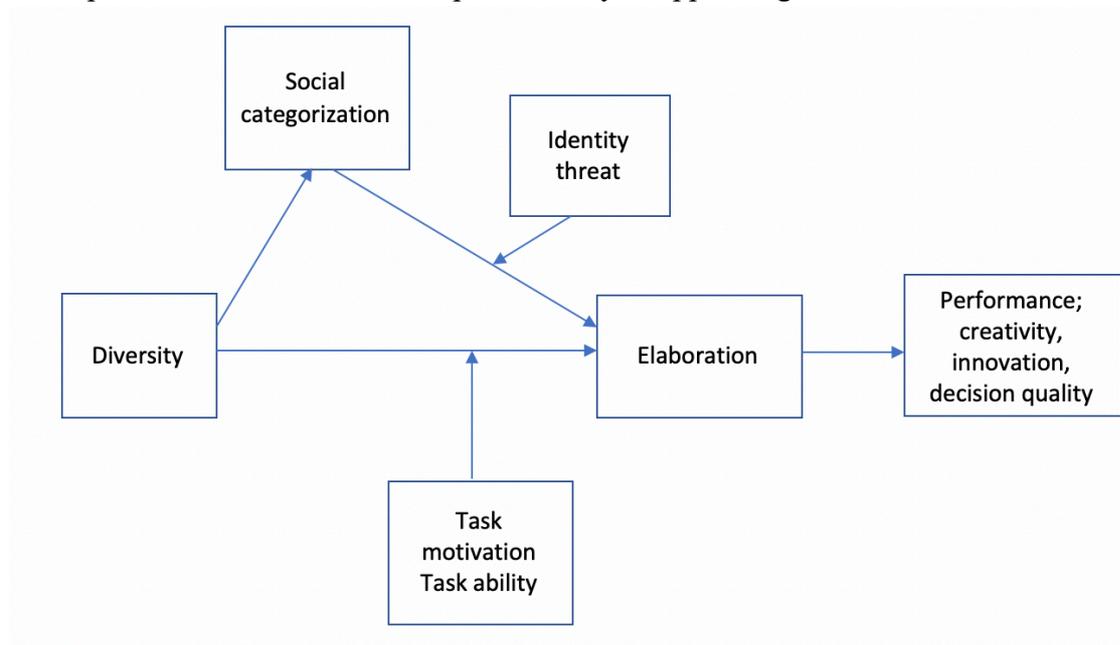


Figure 1 Categorization-Elaboration model

7.2. Managing a diversity mindset

What can be learned from the Categorization-Elaboration Model, as explained above, is that social categorization is not necessarily a bad thing. If managed right, elaboration among team members can occur despite social categorization. In order to do so, it should be prevented that social categorization threatens the group's identity. In other words, diversity should not be perceived as something that divides the group. Alternatively, the group's identity should be warranted.

A defining component of how a team member views the group's identity is its diversity mindset. A diversity mindset can be defined as; *"team members' mental representations of team diversity."* (Van Knippenberg, van Ginkel, and Homan, 2013). More specifically, it has been established that team members who share a positive mindset towards diversity, will more likely benefit from diversity, in the sense that this leads to increased team performance.

A key aspect of developing an accurate diversity mindset, is to develop an accurate understanding of both the team and its task. An important method for this, is team interaction, i.e. team members should actively interact with one another to define what their differences are, but also, and perhaps even more importantly, through interaction they can define their similarities. As a manager, you can play an important role in this process, by guiding your team members through it. These active forms of interactions will, namely, often not occur spontaneously. E.g. when people have a certain prejudgment about another team member, they will be less likely to approach them and interact with them.

Van Knippenberg et al. propose that a manager guides team member in the following activities:

1. Elaborate diversity-related information
2. Reflect about the diversity experience
3. Discuss diversity mindsets

By doing so, managers can guide team members in learning from their experiences with the other team members. They can help them establish both differences and similarities.

8. Hermeneutics of horizons

"Conversation is a process of coming to an understanding. Thus, it belongs to every true conversation that each person opens himself to the other, truly accepts his point of view as valid and transposes himself into the other to such an extent that he understands not the particular individual but what he says. What is to be grasped is the substantive tightness of his opinion, so that we can be at one with each other on the subject. Thus, we do not relate the other's opinion to him but to our own opinions and views" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 387)

What became clear in the previous chapter, is that in order to benefit from diversity, it is important that team members actively interact with one another to define both their differences as well as their similarities. Throughout this chapter, I will demonstrate how this can be linked to George Gadamer's idea of *fusing horizons*.

As previously explained, every individual has their own hermeneutical horizon, through which they perceive their surroundings. This horizon is defined by one's cultural and personal identity. Importantly, one's hermeneutic horizon is not fixed. Oppositely, hermeneutic horizons are

constantly changing (Gadamer, 2004, p. xiii). An important cause for hermeneutic horizons to change, is through the encounters we have with other people. Specifically, with people whose horizon is far different from our own.

As established in the previous chapter, in order for people to become more positive towards one another, it is important that they actively engage in interacting with one another. As Gadamer wrote; *Conversation is a process of coming to an understanding.* (Gadamer, 2004, p. 387). Through interaction, two different horizons encounter. By this encounter, both horizons can change; they can fuse together and reach a common ground. This does however not entail that every encounter leads to such a fusion of horizons. In order for this to happen, it is needed that both people open themselves up towards the other. Importantly, you should not perceive the other as an individual, but rather, truly consider their view and opinion and how it relates to your own. Once you reduce the other to an individual, the conversation is no longer a process of understanding (Gadamer, 2004, p. 387). Importantly, it should be noted that Gadamer does not define understanding as coming to an agreement. Two people can come to an understanding without reaching an agreement; *agree to disagree*. The emphasis of this theory is merely on the dialogue, not the outcome of this dialogue.

To further explain what it means to avoid perceiving someone as an individual, Gadamer refers to texts. Whereas in speech *“Our understanding remains curiously unsure and fragmentary”* (Gadamer, 2004, p. 391), in writing *“The meaning of what is spoken exists purely for itself, completely detached from all emotional elements of expression and communication.”* (Gadamer, 2004, p. 394). Opposed to speech, in writing, repeatable and identifiable meaning can be found. By being both repeatable and identifiable, this knowledge creates the opportunity to change and widen one’s horizon. Distancing one’s view and opinion from the individual can therefore enrich one’s world by a new and deeper understanding (Gadamer, 2004, p. 391).

“Writing is the abstract ideality of language. Hence the meaning of something written is fundamentally identifiable and repeatable.” (Gadamer, 2004, p. 394).

But then why not let people have conversations, instead of just writing their thoughts down? Plato once said: *“the specific weakness of writing was that no one could come to the aid of the written word if it falls victim to misunderstanding, intentional or unintentional.”* (Gadamer, 2004, p. 394). In speech people can guide each other through their thoughts, trying to avoid misunderstanding. Again, for this matter, it is important that the people who interact open up towards each other and truly listen to what the other says, independent of the person saying it.

Although Gadamer highlights the importance of having an open attitude, he suggests that this attitude should only partly be open. Specifically, despite the fusion of horizons, an individual still holds on to their own horizon. Understanding does not equal acceptance. One can hold on to their fundamental principles, not accepting the others view, but still come to an understanding.

Closely related to understanding, is questioning. In order to understand, one must question; understanding is the answer to a question. However, questioning also imposes, that understanding does not always entail finding the truth. What someone else says, can be considered as meaningful, without neglecting the possibility of its truth remaining unsettled (Gadamer, 2004, p. 361).

Understanding is thus the fusion of two horizons, supposedly existing by themselves. In order to reach understanding, both people should be open towards the other, truly listening to what the other says, not paying attention to who says it. Understanding does not entail reaching complete truth but involves questioning. Understanding is thus more than recreating the other's ideas.

9. Conclusion

As a result of the rapid growth of transportation facilities and methods of communication, globalization has become more prominent in human lives than ever before. Consequently, Dutch society is diversifying as well as Dutch businesses. Given the impact this is having, the effect of diversity within companies has been researched thoroughly over the past years. It has become clear that diversity is a double-edged sword which can either enhance or disrupt performance.

Despite broadly shared goals of having an inclusive workforce, with equal chances for every employee, immigrants and refugees are still at an economic disadvantage. A reason for this, could be the potential disruptiveness that could come along with a diversified workforce. It is hence of great importance that managers gain the knowledge of how they ensure to be able to benefit from diversity, such that diversity will no longer be seen as a threat.

Throughout this study, hypotheses were conducted on how people who differ in types of culture will interact. Although an empirical research will be needed to define whether these scenarios are actually representative for reality, a method to manage such differences was presented. The different types of cultures which were distinguished are; pre-modern cultures, which are defined by a closed horizon; people hold on to traditions by custom; modern cultures, which are defined by an open horizon; people adopt new traditions by choice; post-modern cultures, which are defined by disseminated horizons; traditions are perceived as commodity.

In order to assure that employees who have different approaches towards diversity are able to work together productively, their diversity mindset should be managed. More specifically, all employees should develop a positive attitude towards diversity, actively interact with one another, and define their differences and similarities. Consequently, the identity of the group will be warranted, enabling the employees to elaborate together, enhancing team performance.

The most important factor in ensuring that employees have a positive attitude towards diversity, it to have different team members actively interact with one other. It is however of great importance that employees are guided through these interactions. Specifically, this can be linked to Gadamer's fusion of horizons; ensuring that the employees adopt a specific attitude during the interaction, by which they purely listen to what the other has to say, independently of who that person is. Without the mere goal of coming to an undoubtable truth, this interaction should focus on questioning, because only questioning can lead to understanding. This process of reaching an understanding is what Gadamer calls "the fusion of horizons", where both people change their previous horizon for a new one. I would say that exactly this process, is what helps bringing people closer together and becoming more positive towards one another.

Literature list

Bohlmeijer, L and Ramose, M. (2018, January 27th) Lex Bohlmeijer – In gesprek met Mogobe Ramose (Podcast). In *De Correspondent*. Spotify. Retrieved from:

https://open.spotify.com/episode/3fgAmAQSfH8gzcfAnkoK90?context=spotify%3Ashow%3A0lcm41E37AFqyOBXBf1Asv&si=LY1ORwiDToqcM_KSyZH6Xg

Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2019, September 24th). Bevolking; kerncijfers. Retrieved from: <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/37296ned/table?ts=1571223822486>

Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek (2016, January 27th). In 2015 twee keer zo veel asielzoekers en nareizigers als in 2014. Retrieved from:

<https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/nieuws/2016/04/in-2015-twee-keer-zo-veel-asielzoekers-en-nareizigers-als-in-2014>

De Mul, J. (2011). Horizons of hermeneutics: Intercultural hermeneutics in a globalizing world. *Frontiers of Philosophy in China*, 6(4), 628-655.

De Mul, J. (2015). Database identity: Personal and cultural identity in the age of global datafication. In *Crossroads in New Media, Identity and Law* (pp. 97-118). Palgrave Macmillan, London.

De Mul, J. (2018, October 17th). *Quest for Man Lecture 3*.

De Vroome, T., & Van Tubergen, F. (2010). The employment experience of refugees in the Netherlands. *International Migration Review*, 44(2), 376-403.

Dick, K. (Director) and Ziering Hofman, A. (Director). (2002). *Derrida*. Zeitgeist films.

Diversiteit in bedrijf. Retrieved from: <https://diversiteitinbedrijf.nl>

Gadamer, H. G., Weinsheimer, J., & Marshall, D. G. (2004). *Truth and method*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

Globalization. (2019, May 9th). Retrieved from:

<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/globalization.asp>

Gray, J. (2007). *Al Qaeda and what it means to be modern* (Vol. 2). Faber & Faber.

Harari, Y. N. (2016). *Sapiens*. Bazarforlag AS. Page 15

Hessels, T. (2005). *Voormalig Joegoslaven in Nederland*. Centraal Bureau van de Statistiek.

Inspectie SZW (2019, October 1st). Checklist om discriminatie bij sollicitatie te voorkomen. Retrieved from: <https://www.inspectieszw.nl/actueel/nieuws/2019/09/30/checklist-om-discriminatie-bij-sollicitatie-te-voorkomen>

RTV Drenthe (2019, October 15th) Vader met zes kinderen zit jaren in kelder. Retrieved from:

<https://www.rtvdrenthe.nl/nieuws/153029/Vader-met-zes-kinderen-zit-jaren-in-kelder-Ruinerwold-familie-wachtte-op-einde-der-tijden>

Silva, B. C. (2018). Populist radical right parties and mass polarization in the Netherlands. *European Political Science Review*, 10(2), 219-244.

Thatcher, S. M., & Patel, P. C. (2012). Group faultlines: A review, integration, and guide to future research. *Journal of Management*, 38(4), 969-1009.

Van Dick, R., Van Knippenberg, D., Hägele, S., Guillaume, Y. R., & Brodbeck, F. C. (2008). Group diversity and group identification: The moderating role of diversity beliefs. *Human Relations*, 61(10), 1463-1492.

Van Knippenberg, D., De Dreu, C. K., & Homan, A. C. (2004). Work group diversity and group performance: an integrative model and research agenda. *Journal of applied psychology*, 89(6), 1008.

Van Knippenberg, D. (2011). Embodying who we are: Leader group prototypicality and leadership effectiveness. *The leadership quarterly*, 22(6), 1078-1091.

Van Knippenberg, D., van Ginkel, W. P., & Homan, A. C. (2013). Diversity mindsets and the performance of diverse teams. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 121(2), 183-193.

Verkiezingsprogramma. Retrieved from: <https://www.pvv.nl/visie.html>.

Wet Bescherming Nederlandse Waarden. Retrieved from: <https://forumvoordemocratie.nl/standpunten/wet-bnw>.

Zorlu, A., & Hartog, J. (2001). Migration and immigrants: the case of the Netherlands (No. 01-042/3). Tinbergen Institute Discussion Paper.