

Peer Tutoring in a Multiethnic Classroom in the Netherlands: A Multiperspective Analysis of Diversity

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Diversity from Multiple Perspectives in Educational Theory

Understanding diversity in classrooms is becoming more and more politically relevant and complex, at least in Europe and the United States. The reasons for this include the variable school achievement levels among students of different (ethnic) groups, the growing demographic disparity in background between the teachers and their students, and the increasing numbers of immigrants with non-Western European backgrounds.¹

Educational research has offered different explanations for why these differences in behavior and achievement exist. For instance, when we find that students in a multiethnic classroom adopt different discursive positions, do such differences exist because of differences in the students' prior socialization or because the students have constructed different identities in the classroom?² And are identity differences primarily related to cultural diversity or to structural power inequalities based on categories such as class, gender, and ethnicity?

In this article we propose a cross-context perspective on diversity by showing how diversity is shaped by local conditions—in this case, a particular institutional environment. But at the same time, we argue that local productions respond to, and are also formative of, structures and cultural patterns beyond the immediate context. We argue for a cross-context approach because we want to make a link between local and nonlocal processes. In the here and now of local practices, the broader and long-term social and cultural patterns are used as resources for responding to the demands of the institution. Here we use an observational study on collaboration in a multiethnic classroom as the basis for what a cross-context perspective looks like, using a multiperspective analysis that integrates both local and nonlocal aspects.

¹ Margaret Gallego and Michael Cole, "Classroom Cultures and Cultures in the Classroom," in *The Handbook of Research on Teaching*, ed. Virginia Richardson, 4th ed. (Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association, 2002), 951–97.

² "Discursive" here refers to both the positions students have developed as a communicative community and the sociocultural meanings and practices they refer to; see, e.g., Norman Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Cambridge: Polity, 1992).

In the recent literature, there is a tendency to see difference as contextually and situationally defined, as the result of local productions.³ Although it is crucial to look at how differences are mediated and shaped by local practice and local positions, we think that explanations of diversity would be severely limited if we did not analyze how local productions are also shaped by longer-term and broader structural and cultural processes. Thus, we argue that a link can and must be made between a local production perspective and the perspectives that older theories (i.e., those theories that have explained diversity in terms of cultural discontinuity or social reproduction) have brought to educational theory. We attempt to show that, by integrating these older perspectives into a local reproduction perspective, our analysis of practice, educational or other, can be enriched. This means that we favor a multiperspective and cross-context approach, since our approach combines a situated approach with one that considers longer-term and wider social and cultural processes.

Before going into the specifics of the study that we present here, we first deal with some of the theoretical issues and problems that are inherent to bringing together these theoretical approaches. We start with a brief outline of two influential and opposing explanations of diversity, cultural discontinuity, and social reproduction, and we then continue to discuss their relevance for a cross-context perspective.

Cultural Discontinuity

The cultural discontinuity approach sees diversity in the classroom as the result of diversity in home socialization practices. The argument is that the more socialization patterns differ from those of formal schooling, the more difficult it is for students to adapt and succeed in school. Diversity is defined in cultural terms, that is, as the result of a differentiation in culturally formed socialization process associated with particular ways of behaving, thinking, and feeling. Culture is seen here as “patterns in a way of life characteristic of a bounded social group and passed down from one generation to the next” and is generally considered to be relatively stable and permanent.⁴ In this perspective, cultural practices are seen to be relatively autonomous and not explicitly connected to features of the wider social and political arenas.

A classic example of the cultural discontinuity perspective is the study by Shirley Heath in which she demonstrated that the language patterns of a middle-class community were much more similar to literacy practices at school than were the language patterns of a white working-class community

³ Margaret Eisenhart, “Changing Conceptions of Culture and Ethnographic Methodology: Recent Thematic Shifts and Their Implications for Research on Teaching,” in *The Handbook of Research on Teaching*, ed. Virginia Richardson, 4th ed. (New York: Macmillan, 2002), 216.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 210.

and those of a black working-class community.⁵ Although this approach was developed in the 1960s and 1970s, it still continues to inspire much research and educational reform.⁶

Social Reproduction

A second perspective that explains diversity in classrooms comes from reproduction theories. Structural inequalities are stressed in classic accounts of reproduction theory, such as in the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron. In more recent accounts, the human agency side of reproduction is stressed, for instance, through using the concept of resistance as in Henry Giroux's work and the idea of a counterculture as in Paul Willis's work.⁷ Likewise, but focusing more on the institutional side of reproduction, Hervé Varenne and Ray McDermott have emphasized the everyday production of "school failure" and have claimed that school failure is a well-organized cultural fabrication.⁸ These theories see differences between social groups from a more critical, political perspective and in terms of power relationships and long-established inequalities being played out in school. School is seen as the place where the differences in class, status, or power that already exist are reconstructed or reconfirmed. In contrast with the cultural discontinuity perspective, no particular cultural pattern in itself is seen as responsible for the group differences in success at school. It is rather the meaning given to

⁵ Shirley B. Heath, *Ways with Words: Language, Life, and Work in Communities and Classrooms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). For other studies in a similar vein, see Susan U. Phillips, *The Invisible Culture: Communication in Classroom and Community on the Warm Spring Indian Reservation* (New York: Longman, 1983); Courtney B. Cazden, Vera P. John, and Dell Hymes, *Functions of Language in the Classroom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1972); Kathryn H. Au and Cathie Jordan, "Teaching Reading to Hawaiian Children: Finding a Culturally Appropriate Solution," in *Culture and the Bilingual Classroom: Studies in Classroom Ethnography*, ed. Henry T. Trueba, Grace P. Guthrie, and Kathryn H. Au (Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1981), 139–52; Frederick Erickson and Gerald Mohatt, "Cultural Organization of Participation Structures in Two Classrooms of Indian Students," in *Doing the Ethnography of Schooling: Educational Anthropology in Action*, ed. George D. Spindler (Prospects Heights, IL: Waveland, 1982), 132–75; George Spindler and Louise Spindler, *Pathways to Cultural Awareness: Cultural Therapy with Teachers and Students* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 1994). For overviews, see Courtney B. Cazden, "Classroom Discourse," in *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, ed. Merlin C. Wittrock (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 432–63; Hugh Mehan, "The Study of Social Interaction in Educational Settings: Accomplishments and Unresolved Issues," *Human Development* 41 (1998): 245–69; Eisenhart, "Changing Conceptions of Culture"; Gallego and Cole, "Classroom Cultures"; and Ed Elbers and Mariëtte de Haan, "Dialogic Learning in the Multi-ethnic Classroom: Cultural Resources and Modes of Collaboration," in *Dialogical Perspectives on Learning, Teaching and Instruction*, ed. Jos van der Linden and Peter Renshaw (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2004), 17–43.

⁶ See L. Scott Miller, *An American Imperative: Accelerating Minority Educational Advancement* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995); Evelyn Jacob and Cathie Jordan, eds., *Minority Education: Anthropological Perspectives* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1993); Lois Yamachi and Roland G. Tharp, "Culturally Compatible Conversations in Native American Classrooms," *Linguistics and Education* 7 (1995): 349–67.

⁷ Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture* (London: Sage, 1977); Henry A. Giroux, "Theories of Reproduction and Resistance in the New Sociology of Education: A Critical Analysis," *Harvard Educational Review* 53, no. 3 (1983): 257–93; Paul Willis, *Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

⁸ Ray McDermott, "Achieving School Failure: An Anthropological Approach to Illiteracy and Social Stratification," in *Education and Cultural Process: Toward an Anthropology of Education*, ed. George D. Spindler (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1974), 82–118; Hervé Varenne and Ray McDermott, *Successful Failure: The School America Builds* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998).

these differences induced by status differences that are decisive. From this perspective, the cultural discontinuity thesis is seen as romantic or naive. The idea that the problem could be solved if authorities and institutions could only understand the mismatches between certain cultural groups and mainstream culture and recognize the strengths of those cultural groups actually misses the point from a social reproduction perspective.

Local Reproduction and the Figurative versus the Positional

In order to connect these older explanations with a local production perspective, we have to deal with at least two different issues: the first, how cultural and structural dimensions are related (e.g., in the first explanation, the cultural dimension is stressed, while in the second the structural dimension is stressed); the second, how difference in one location can become relevant or take on a particular shape in another. Starting with the first issue, we could adopt Clifford Geertz's position that both the structural and the cultural are abstractions of the same interactional phenomena; the cultural refers to a "framework of beliefs, expressive symbols, and values in terms of which individuals define their world, express their feelings, and make their judgments," and the structural refers to the persistent form of the ongoing process of interactive behavior, the network of relationships that keeps the system going.⁹ It is in this last aspect that power inequalities can be conceptualized, although Geertz has been heavily criticized for not paying attention to these processes of power.¹⁰

More recent accounts of how culture and structure are related similarly distinguish them analytically by referring, respectively, to the figurative or the imaginative world (i.e., cultural aspects) and to the world of power, positions, status, and privilege (i.e., structural aspects).¹¹ However, in contrast to Geertz, more recent accounts, for instance, by Sherry Ortner, show how from an agency or production perspective the figurative is always expressed in a field of power relationships through stories of struggle, that is, through social relationships that are never neutral but reflect histories of power inequalities.¹² And, vice versa, people do not just submit, reject, or reconstruct power relations but, rather, work through these relationships in ways that work for their lives and give them a cultural expression.¹³ Therefore, one

⁹ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (London: Fontana, 1973), 144–45.

¹⁰ Sherry B. Ortner, *The Fate of Culture: Geertz and Beyond* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 4.

¹¹ See Dorothy Holland, Debora Skinner, William Lachiotte Jr., and Carole Cain, *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Hans Vermeulen, "Introduction: The Role of Culture in Explanations of School Mobility," and Joel Perlmann, "Introduction: The Perspective of Culture versus Structure in Recent Work; The Case of Modes of Incorporation," in *Immigrants, Schooling and Social Mobility: Does Culture Make a Difference?* ed. Hans Vermeulen and Joel Perlmann (Houndmills: Macmillan, 2000), 1–21, 22–33; Ortner, *Fate of Culture*, 9.

¹² Ortner, *Fate of Culture*, 9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 158.

needs a cultural perspective in addition to a perspective based on regimes of power or systems of domination, as the symbolic orders or cultures or discourses are part and parcel of these systems of domination. Moreover, these perspectives come together when considering how actual people live through the struggles and figurative patterns. Therefore, structural and cultural dimensions come together in a local reproduction perspective.

In a sense, John Ogbu's cultural ecology theory already argues for a perspective where cultural differences per se do not matter but only become relevant when we also look at larger processes of status production in society as a whole. He argues that in the United States some cultural groups are more successful in education than others despite the cultural differences that exist between them and representatives of mainstream culture. Ogbu states that what is important is the perception minorities have of their position in society and their views about the opportunities to change their (initial) disadvantaged position.¹⁴ Still, although processes of domination and discrimination are central to his theory, he claims that the adaptation patterns of ethnic groups are active and creative, and we would add figurative, responses to domination patterns. So, in fact, here academic identities are the result of particular figurative responses to struggles for domination.¹⁵

Locke Davidson draws on Ogbu's ideas but brings in a local production perspective, arguing that the academic identities students bring with them are reworked in institutional settings.¹⁶ In this line of thought, school and classroom practices are seen as cultural arenas that can reshape, resist, or nurture the meanings students bring into the classroom. However, these meanings are always expressed through stories of struggle and status relationships.

Local Reproduction: The Local and Nonlocal

The second issue is partly addressed in what we term here "identity work" studies and it emerges from a range of studies that stress the local and contextual constitution of differences while paying attention to cross-context relationships. Differences that exist in one context are not simply reproduced in another context, as each context has its own unique dynamics. These studies acknowledge that, although the culture in which students are raised is important for how they approach the classroom culture, it is far from being the only cultural experience students have. The experience of schooling does not only depend on cultural resources but is mediated by other social categories such as gender, ethnicity, and class. The concept of "culture" in these

¹⁴ John Ogbu, "Immigrant and Involuntary Minorities in Comparative Perspective," in *Minority Status and Schooling: A Comparative Study of Immigrant and Involuntary Minorities*, ed. Margaret A. Gibson and John Ogbu (New York: Garland, 1991), 3–33.

¹⁵ See also Mariëtte de Haan and Ed Elbers, "Minority Status and Culture: Local Constructions of Diversity in a Classroom in the Netherlands," *Journal of Intercultural Education* 15, no. 4 (2004): 441–53.

¹⁶ Ann Locke Davidson, *Making and Molding Identity in Schools: Student Narratives on Race, Gender, and Academic Engagement* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).

studies is generally replaced by the concept of “identity,” highlighting that cultural groups do not have clear boundaries, consist of coherent wholes, or share fixed funds of knowledge. These theories stress that individuals need to place themselves actively in between certain cultural positions in a constant struggle and movement between positions. Cultural heritage or past socialization patterns are regrouped, reproduced locally, and constructed under the influence of fields of power, contents, themes, and social relationships other than those the students brought with them when entering the classroom. Because difference is not given but made in particular contexts, identity formation in the school context is seen as a particular cultural-historical production that both responds to, and is formative of, the movements, structures, and discourses beyond the school.¹⁷

This perspective of classroom studies was developed and inspired by, among other things, critical ethnography, critical literacy studies, and resistance theories.¹⁸ The focus in this approach is on the local construction of difference that “occurs independently of, but enters in a complex relationship with processes of the social and cultural reproduction of class structures.”¹⁹

The present study builds on the local production studies approach but seeks to extend it by showing how, in a multiperspective analysis, explanations according to the old models (both social reproduction and cultural continuity) can come together in a cross-context explanation. We show in the analysis how cultural discontinuity explanations and social reproduction explanations can help us understand the local reproduction of diversity when we look at how diversity created elsewhere is shaped by local histories and conditions.

¹⁷ Bradley A. Levinson and Dorothy Holland, “The Cultural Production of the Educated Person: An Introduction,” in *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person: Critical Ethnographies of Schooling and Local Practice*, ed. Bradley A. Levinson, Douglas E. Foley, and Dorothy C. Holland (Albany: State University of New York, 1996), 12.

¹⁸ See Levinson and Holland, “Cultural Production,” and Eisenhart, “Changing Conceptions of Culture,” for an account on ethnography; see Shirley B. Heath, “Linguistics in the Study of Language in Education,” *Harvard Educational Review* 70, no. 1 (2000): 49–59, for an account on literacy studies; see Glynda Hull and Katharine Schultz, “Literacy and Learning out of School: A Review of Theory and Research,” *Review of Educational Research* 71, no. 4 (2001): 575–611, for a review of both ethnographic and literacy studies; and see Giroux, “Theories of Reproduction and Resistance,” for an overview of resistance theories.

¹⁹ Levinson and Holland, “Cultural Production,” 9. Examples of studies that explicitly apply this cross-context idea can be found in studies reported in Levinson et al., *The Cultural Production of the Educated Person*; and in *Linguistics and Education* 8, no. 1, a special issue on education in multilingual settings edited by Marilyn Martin-Jones and Monica Heller that deals with the reproduction of educational ideologies and structural arrangements in local discursive practice. A more explicit theoretical focus on the cross-context idea can be found in, e.g., George E. Marcus, “Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-site Ethnography,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24 (1995): 95–117; Eisenhart, “Changing Conceptions of Culture,” 221–22; and Jan Blommaert, James Collins, and Stef Slembrouch, “Spaces of Multilingualism,” *Language and Communication*, forthcoming.

A Study on Diversity in Strategies for Sharing Knowledge in a Dutch Classroom*Background Data on Migrants and Schooling in the Netherlands*

Since the 1960s, large groups of migrants have come to the Netherlands. The largest groups, which came for economic reasons, are from Turkey, Morocco, Surinam, and the Netherlands Antilles. In recent years, migrants have also come, mainly for political reasons, from other countries, including Somalia, Ghana, and the former Yugoslavia. If we include the children of migrants who were born in the Netherlands, 18.7 percent of the population in 2003 has a non-Dutch background, 8.8 percent has a Western background, and 9.9 percent is of non-Western origin.²⁰ Large-scale research has established that minority students are, in beginning and concluding primary education, 2 years behind their native Dutch counterparts in language skills and half a year behind in math skills in terms of national test scores.²¹ There are also large and systematic discrepancies between migrant students and native Dutch students when it comes to what students do after primary school. Twenty percent of Turkish and Moroccan students go on to attend higher secondary education, compared with 40 percent of native Dutch students. And only a small number of minority students attend university. In light of the Dutch policy to integrate migrants in important sectors of society, these differences are considered to pose a serious problem in the country.²² It is generally assumed that cultural differences as well as the nature of the integration process are responsible for the differences, although it is acknowledged that we lack knowledge of the exact nature of the construction of these differences.²³

Methodological Issues

The analysis presented here is part of a larger project whose main objective is to understand collaborative learning practices among students in multiethnic classrooms both in the classroom context and in out-of-school contexts. We are particularly interested in the kind of activities students develop in order to facilitate the joint construction of knowledge in these contexts, that is, the role divisions they set up; the norms on how knowledge should be constructed, and so on; and if these processes are related to (ethnic) diversity. We use a data set that was collected in the seventh grade in a multiethnic primary school in a large city in the Netherlands. Eighty percent of the students at this school have an ethnic minority background, mainly Dutch-Moroccan, and the school is therefore referred to as “black.”

²⁰ Central Bureau voor de Statistiek, *Kerncijfers van de allochtonenprognose, 2000–2050* (Heerlen: Central Bureau voor de Statistiek, 2003).

²¹ P. T. M. Tesser, J. M. Dagevos, and J. Iedema, *Rapportage minderheden 2001: Samenvatting Vorderingen op school en Meer werk* (Den Haag: SCP, 2001).

²² Paul Tesser, “Kansen voor onderwijsachterstandbeleid,” in *De multiculturele uitdaging*, ed. R. P. Hortulanus and J. E. M. Machielse (Den Haag: Elsevier bedrijfsinformatie, 2002), 63–78.

²³ Paul Jungbluth, “School Careers, Social Class and Ethnicity,” *Nederlands Tijdschrift voor Opvoeding, vorming en onderwijs* 15, no. 3 (1999): 182–96.

Although minority students are, on average, 2 years behind their Dutch counterparts in terms of national test scores, and in language skills in particular, the results of this school are above average when these background characteristics are taken into account. We were participant-observers in these and other classrooms at this school, and in particular in the math lessons over a period of several months. Furthermore, we established a long-term relationship with the school beginning in 1999. We were able to discuss our research findings with school personnel, focusing on particular issues that were seen to be of practical value to the team.

For the analysis presented in this article we selected four math lessons in which five different groups collaborated on math problems. The lessons were videotaped to give an overall idea of the classroom activity, and audio recorders were placed on the tables of each of the five groups. The audio material was transcribed. Our analysis is based on 20 hours of transcribed material. The class comprised 22 students: five native Dutch students and 17 from other backgrounds (12 Dutch-Moroccan, three Dutch-Turkish, one Dutch-former Yugoslavian, and one Dutch-Ghanaian).²⁴ The parents of the migrant students were born in their country of origin; therefore, we are dealing here with second-generation migrants. There were two groups consisting only of minority students, and three groups were mixed, that is, they were composed of Dutch and minority students. The teacher arranged the groups taking into account issues of good order and heterogeneity (gender, ethnicity, and skill level). Otherwise, the school does not have an explicit policy of difference other than that difference should be seen in terms of the amount of help students need.²⁵ The school has a philosophy that fosters collaborative learning and actively promotes students to help other students with their work (see also the section titled "A Local Production").

There were two parts to the analysis:

1. Qualitative descriptions of the discussions in each group during each lesson focused on (a) how students organize their activity to share knowledge and (b) the kind of social context that is created in their attempt to share knowledge, that is, norms and patterns with respect to collaboration and participation.²⁶
2. A quantitative scoring system was designed based on differences between Dutch students and minority students found in the qual-

²⁴ We use the terms "Dutch-Moroccan," "Dutch-Ghanaian," etc., for students with a migrant background, referring to both their background and their socialization in Dutch society, irrespective of nationality. When referring to the students with a migrant background as a group, for practical reasons we use the term "migrant students."

²⁵ Mariëtte de Haan and Ed Elbers, "Samenwerkend leren," *Zone 2*, no. 2 (2003): 4–6.

²⁶ On the basis of the transcriptions of each session, each of the points mentioned, *a* and *b*, were described. Additionally, the question of how diversity issues were present in these descriptions was answered. These descriptions were used to make a summary of the session descriptions that formed the input for the quantitative scoring system mentioned in part 2.

itative descriptions. First, going through the whole database, episodes were selected in which some form of explanation took place. We refer to these episodes as Collaborative Learning Episodes (CLEs). These episodes represent those parts of the transcript in which one student intended to or was asked by another student to share his or her knowledge about the task in hand. We then characterized these episodes according to the type of activity that was constructed by the students to make knowledge sharing possible, as well as the corresponding role division that followed from it.

We made a distinction between two different modes of explanation that also implied a different notion of how knowledge should be shared. We referred to them as (a) peer-tutor mode (based on a more asymmetric relationship) and (b) the peer-collaboration mode (based on a more symmetric relationship).²⁷ The peer-tutor mode was characterized by the fact that one student took on a teacher role and would structure the activity for the other student, ask questions, evaluate answers, take responsibility for the learning of the other student, be careful not to give the solution right away, and refrain from answering questions or doing tasks while he or she was explaining.²⁸ What typifies the peer-collaboration mode is that the student who is explaining would do so while he or she is actually doing the task, accepting solutions from fellow students as solutions to the problem at hand (and not as answers to a test).²⁹ Here the solutions from all participants are of the same nature, any questions posed are not known-answer questions but simply serve as a means to get information.³⁰

Furthermore, we also noted who was doing the explaining and to whom, using the following categories (some categories are not relevant because of the specific composition of the group):

1. Dutch student explains to minority student(s),
2. Dutch student explains to Dutch student(s),
3. Minority student explains to Dutch student(s), and
4. Minority student explains to minority student(s).

²⁷ See also Hugh C. Foot, Michelle J. Morgan, and Rosalyn H. Shute, "Children's Helping Relationships: An Overview," in *Children Helping Children*, ed. Hugh C. Foot, Michelle J. Morgan, and Rosalyn H. Shute (Chichester: Wiley, 1990), 3–17.

²⁸ This mode is similar to what has been called the child as performer principle, which involves the teacher structuring the activity so that the student is able to perform and the teacher refrains from performing (e.g., by asking questions such as "What do you think you should do next?"); see Claes Nilholm and Roger Säljö, "Co-actions, Situation Definitions and Sociocultural Experience," *Learning and Instruction* 6, no. 4 (1996): 325–44.

²⁹ This way of working is more similar to work than to learning; see J. V. Wertsch, N. Minick, and F. J. Arns, "The Creation of Context in Problem Solving," in *Everyday Cognition: Its Development in Social Contexts*, ed. B. Rogoff and J. Lave (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 151–71. Here, "work" is described as a different activity system than "learning."

³⁰ The scoring for the two modes proved reliable as the interobserver reliability (Cohen's kappa) was .84.

Results: Diversity in Sharing Knowledge

In this section we present prototypical examples of the peer-tutor mode and the peer-collaboration mode. Then we argue why we think these forms are local productions that need identity work. Finally, we show how both a cultural discontinuity and a social reproduction explanation are relevant in a multiperspective, cross-context analysis of the diversity in this classroom.

The Peer-Tutor Mode

In the episode presented here, which is a typical example of what we call the peer-tutor mode, the students are working on a task that requires them to calculate how many small boxes can be put into a larger box. The assignment consists of a picture of a store where candy can be bought either in small, regular packets or in a large, family-size pack. Episode 1 is the beginning of the interaction in this group immediately after the teacher has introduced the task and told the children to start working together. The group consists of Goran, a Dutch-Yugoslavian boy; Maktoub, a Dutch-Moroccan boy; Annelies, a Dutch girl; and Berend, a Dutch boy. In this example Annelies takes the initiative to explain to the others, although on other occasions the others would ask her to perform this role.³¹

- Episode 1 (Group 3, June 5, 2000)
- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 1. Annelies: | >OK<, >problem 4<, how many times does a standard packet fit into the family pack? Now? Work it out. |
| 2. Maktoub: | One, two, three? |
| 3. Annelies: | What? |
| 4. Maktoub: | Three times? |
| 5. Annelies: | No; (..) Think logically = . |
| 6. Goran: | ((reads)) = How many times goes = |
| 7. Annelies: | =Look. |
| 8. Goran: | How many times |
| 9. Annelies: | (..) >Yes<, (.) Look. Standard packet, three times like this (.) |
| 10. Maktoub: | and three [times |
| 11. Annelies: | [times like <u>this</u> . There you already have, just one packet you have already nine. And then you should take that <u>three</u> times because the three, that is <u>there</u> , is <u>also</u> here = |
| 12. Maktoub: | °Yes°. |
| 13. Annelies: | and three goes three times nine, so you should take it three times. Three times nine is twenty-seven. (..) |
| 14. Goran: | Twenty-seven times. = |
| 15. Annelies: | =Do you understand? |
| 16. Berend: | ((laughs)) Yes. |

This episode shows how Annelies takes on a tutoring role and becomes responsible for Maktoub's and Goran's learning—she gives them instructions, provides feedback, and checks that they understand. She does not work on the problem with Goran and Maktoub on an equal basis but tutors them as

³¹ The transcripts follow the transcription notation of Gail Jefferson; see her "Preliminary Notes on a Possible Metric Which Provides for a 'Standard Maximum' Silence of Approximately One Second in Conversation," in *Conversation: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*, ed. Derek Roger and Peter Bull (Cleveland: Multilingual Matters, 1989), 166–96. The original Dutch transcripts of these episodes are available as an attachment in the online version of this article.

she asks them to start working on the problem (line 1), encourages them to think better (line 5), corrects their answers (line 5), confirms their right answers (line 9), and checks that they understand (line 15). She makes sure that she is not the one who performs this assignment but gives this role to Maktoub or Goran in line with the child-as-performer principle. Typical of this mode is that the student who performs as the tutor calculates the problem first for herself, and only then does she explain to the others. The activity is divided up into working out the problem for themselves (the tutors) and explaining it to the others. For instance, in this group, Annelies tells Berend that he needs to slow down a bit as “the others need to understand too” and she herself needs time to explain. Generally, tutors take the initiative to adopt the tutor role but were also invited to adopt this role by other students.

The Peer-Collaboration Mode

Below is an episode portraying a group of only minority children (Feliz, a Dutch-Turkish girl; Samira, a Dutch-Moroccan girl; Assad, a Dutch-Moroccan boy; and Hassan, a Dutch-Moroccan boy) working on the same task as in episode 1. The interaction in episode 2 contrasts with that displayed in episode 1, involving a mixed group, in that, in episode 2, Hassan, although clearly explaining things, does not adopt a tutor position.

- Episode 2 (Group 1, June 5, 2000)
1. Hassan: One, two, three.
 2. Assad: One, two, three, is what?
 3. Samira: I am here.
 4. Assad: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. (. . .)
 5. Assad: ((counts up to twenty-seven))
 6. Hassan: For, here, is (.) twelve centimeters, and here it fits three times, so three boxes fit here like this, and =
 7. Samira: = Three boxes fit like this =
 8. Hassan: = And (.) going up three boxes also fit, isn't that right? =
 9. Samira: = Yes, because three times three is [nine, four times three is twelve.
 10. Hassan: [Here three, here three, and here three, and here twenty-seven and twenty-two, twenty-two boxes.
 11. Samira: How do you do that?
 12. Hassan: Just like that. (. . .) ((Hassan sits opposite Samira. He now walks to Samira's side of the table.))
 13. Hassan: Look here, twelve centimeters. () Three times, so, three, (.) three boxes like this >and then we look at the height<. Here it also fits three times, so three boxes up, three boxes like this, and here also three times, so three boxes up, here three.

What we see is that Hassan clearly adopts a leading role in this interaction by sharing his solutions with the group both on his own initiative and on the initiative of the others. He is acknowledged as a good math performer in this group, and his enthusiasm is clear from his eagerness to explain repeatedly to the others. However, he does not take on a tutoring role, as he does not take responsibility for the learning of the others but simply demonstrates how he is working, doing the job himself (instead of asking the

other students to do it). Pointing to the picture, he shows the respective steps he is taking (lines 6, 10, and 13) on an egalitarian basis. Leadership roles or the role of the expert in this group are, in principle, exchangeable. This is clear, for instance, from lines 7 and 9, where Samira contributes to the knowledge building while confirming the solution (line 7) and arguing why (line 9) that the solution Hassan has given is the right answer. However, immediately after that she takes on a more dependent role in line 11, when she invites Hassan to provide an explanation. Typically, the questions posed here are not known-answer questions but questions that make use of the other student's expertise, as in line 2 when Assad asks for the answer to a multiplication question. What is typical of this pattern is that all the participants in the group take the initiative, adopt leading roles, and are consulted for the specific skills they have.

Who Applies What Mode and When? A Pattern That Divides

Our analysis employing Mann-Whitney U-tests showed that Dutch students explained significantly more frequently than the minority students, irrespective of the mode ($U = 10.0$; $p = .011$, mean rank Dutch students = 18, mean rank minority students = 9.59) and that Dutch students used the peer-tutor mode relatively more frequently than the minority students ($U = 9$, $p = .003$, mean rank Dutch students = 17.2, mean rank minority students = 9.06), who used the peer-collaboration mode relatively more frequently ($U = 9$, $p = .012$, mean rank Dutch students = 4.80, mean rank minority students = 12.94).

With respect to gender, we found that girls do not explain more frequently than boys, except in the peer-tutor mode ($U = 29.0$, $p = .036$, mean rank girls = 13.6, mean rank boys = 8.64). The latter effect is mainly due to the Dutch girls. The sample does not have enough variation to separate the effects of gender and ethnicity: most Dutch students are girls (four out of five). However, we were able to conclude that for the minority students, there was no relationship between gender and explanation frequencies or modes.

We also checked for the effect of math skills and divided the group into "good performers" and "bad performers."³² These two groups did not differ in their explaining behavior. Also, within the group of minority students, no differences in explaining were found between high and low math performers. We could not make a similar analysis for the Dutch group as this group was small and the students were all high math performers.

Thus, gender and math skills cannot then be seen as alternative explanations; that is, they do not explain the overall variety in explanation in this classroom better than the distinction between Dutch and minority students. However, the results leave open the possibility that there is an interaction

³² On the basis of their scores on a national mathematics test, the students were divided into two groups that were equal in number.

PEER TUTORING IN A MULTIETHNIC CLASSROOM

TABLE 1
COLLABORATIVE LEARNING EPISODES PER MODE IN MIXED AND
MINORITY-ONLY GROUPS

	Peer-Tutor Mode	Peer-Collaboration Mode
Minority groups	8 (6.2)	122 (93.8)
Mixed groups	35 (25.4)	103 (74.6)
Total	43 (16.0)	225 (84.0)

NOTE.—Percentages are given in parentheses; $N = 268$, $\chi^2 = 18.34$, $df = 1$, $p < .00$.

effect between math skills, gender, and ethnicity in the sense that being a high math achiever, female, and Dutch together is related to frequent explaining and adopting a tutoring mode.

If we focus on how the use of the modes was distributed over the different groups and how group relations were related to collaboration patterns, it becomes clear that the Dutch versus minority distinction is more complex. Table 1 shows that, although the peer-collaboration mode was the mode that was most frequently used in all groups, the peer-tutor mode was used relatively more frequently in the groups where minority and Dutch students worked together.

Table 2 shows that, in the mixed groups in both models, it was the Dutch students who explained to the minority students. This was a relationship that was never reversed. Together, these two tables show that the use of the peer-tutor mode seems to be related to a particular ethnic relationship. It is not so much that Dutch students prefer or are assigned a tutor role per se but that they do so while they are working with minority students.

A Local Production

The particular shape of these knowledge-sharing modes, as well as the fact that they are, in this classroom, strongly linked with (but do not always go together with) particular ethnic relationships, is local productions—actively produced by students within the particular institutional environment of this classroom and this school. To clarify the local nature of these productions, we first describe the institutional conditions that have shaped these patterns and then turn to ethnographic data that show the students' own ongoing struggles with these modes and their ways of shaping and reshaping them.

Tutoring and Collaboration as Institutional Normative Practice

We learned from interviews with the school principal and teachers of the higher grades that collaborative learning is an important principle for this

TABLE 2
COLLABORATIVE LEARNING EPISODES IN THE PEER-TUTOR AND PEER-COLLABORATION
MODES, CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO DIRECTION OF EXPLANATION (Who Explains to
Whom) IN MIXED GROUPS

Who Explains to Whom/ Mode of Collaboration	Peer-Tutor Mode %/ within Mode %	Peer-Collaboration Mode %/within Mode	Total
Dutch to minority student	33 (94.3)	66 (64.1)	99 (71.7)
Dutch to Dutch student	1 (2.9)	14 (13.6)	15 (10.9)
Minority to minority student	1 (2.9)	17 (16.5)	18 (13.0)
Minority to Dutch student	0	6 (5.8)	6 (4.3)

NOTE.—Percentages are given in parentheses; $N = 138$ (mixed groups only).

school.³³ The educators have been trained in collaborative learning skills and have since then incorporated collaboration between students as a regular strategy. Central to this approach is that students need to take responsibility for their own learning and that of their peers. According to the school principal, the school fosters a view in which students should ideally learn to guide other students in their learning as a tutor (e.g., “What do you think the next step would be?”), rather than adopting a more demonstrative way of working (i.e., just telling them how to do it), although the school does allow a variety of strategies to develop. The math curriculum that the educators at this school use supports this vision as it builds on the notion that students should construct their own mathematical knowledge on the basis of student dialogues. The curriculum is called “realistic,” as it is influenced, like 90 percent of the math curricula in the Netherlands, by Hans Freudenthal’s theory on math education, in which students start to work from realistic contexts.³⁴

In this classroom, the teacher stresses her expectation that students engage in some form of collaboration and indicates that she does not value individual work during these group sessions. She does so at the beginning of the lessons but also when she occasionally intervenes in the group work to provide feedback or answer the students’ questions. This is illustrated in episode 3, which represents the beginning of the lesson before the group work starts:

Episode 3 (June 5, 2000)

Teacher: Think together. Then do problem one, [which] is also a very good problem for thinking together. ((She explains what this problem is about. Then she proceeds)) Think carefully about it. You do it together, of course.

³³ We interviewed the director of the school and two teachers of the higher grades (6 and 8), who could be considered to represent the school’s philosophy on collaboration, given their training and experience in collaborative learning in this school. In the interview, the director and teachers were asked for their vision on collaborative learning and how collaborative learning was applied given the variety in student population. For details, see de Haan and Elbers, “Samenwerkend leren.”

³⁴ Hans Freudenthal, *Revisiting Mathematics Education* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991).

It is clear from classroom observations that the students in the groups in this particular classroom are clearly aware of the teacher's expectations with respect to the collective nature of their work, as they regularly correct fellow students who want to work alone, reminding them that they are expected to develop a common activity at some level. Moreover, the teacher actively encourages explaining, in the sense that, when one student understands, the student is informed that he or she is responsible for the others to understand too (which certainly goes further than telling them what the answer is), as is shown in episode 4, in which one of the students (Feliz) tells the teacher that she does not understand how to solve a math problem, and the teacher directs her attention to another student of the group, Assad, who has already solved the problem.

Episode 4 (May 25, 2000)

Teacher: Well, if she doesn't understand, then you should make sure she does understand.

From the episodes, it is clear that the teacher encourages the students to work collectively, but she does not further specify this other than sharing knowledge with the others in order to help them understand. The teacher checks regularly whether the students are working together to see if solutions were reached collectively, although she asks the students to report the solutions individually in their exercise books. The fact that the teacher does not delineate how students should explain leaves room for a variety of collaboration modes to develop.

Tutoring and Collaboration as Student Work

The analysis showed that the students in this classroom do not just take on or invent the two different modes of collaboration as if they were ready-to-pick-up models, available for them to apply. We observed that, although there is not an explicit construction of these modes, in the sense that there is a process of active, conscious decision making beforehand on which mode to apply, there is a lot of negotiating that goes on during the process. This negotiating is mostly directed to norms on participation (who is entitled to participate, and how) and conditions for taking on certain roles, in particular the tutoring role. It is precisely this kind of negotiating that shows that these modes are local student productions, given certain institutional and cultural conditions.

Such negotiation was illustrated in episode 2 (above), which involved a group consisting only of minority students. This group has developed a strong preference for the peer-collaboration mode throughout the material, exchanging expertise on an equal basis. The point is further clarified in episode 5 (below), in which we focus on the end of a lesson in which this group has been working on several math problems, mainly by sharing their strategies for how to deal with the particular problem (e.g., "How do you have to do this one?") and for what to do ("You have to multiply this."). One of the students,

Feliz, seems at times to be one step behind the group, although she does contribute several times to the process by presenting her solution or giving feedback to the other students concerning their solutions. Toward the end of the 50 minutes' work, Feliz seems to lose the group's rhythm and stays a bit outside, occasionally checking on the group's results. The episode shows how the other students react to this. For example, in episode 5 (line 2), Feliz asks the others to inform her about the solution to the problem they have been working on for a while, but the others do not consider that she has been sufficiently part of this collective process (as they accuse her of copying in lines 3–4). Feliz's defense that she does not understand is not acknowledged by the group. Acting as tutee, someone who does not know and needs to have an explanation, is criticized, as is clear from the rest of the episode (e.g., in line 6 when Samira states that Feliz should work with them, in line 9 when Hassan makes the connection between being part of the process [doing] and being part of the solution [saying], and in line 13 when Assad does not acknowledge "explaining" and puts forward "working with the group").

Episode 5 (Group 1, June 5, 2000)

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1. Samira: | So the first is two thousand, two hundred, two thousand. |
| 2. Feliz: | Is the first two thousand? |
| 3. Hassan: | ((irritated)) Hey man. |
| 4. Samira: | ((irritated))>You only want to copy it<, come on↓ |
| 5. Feliz: | ((irritated)) >I don't understand, you understand<. |
| 6. Samira: | Yes, you don't <u>work</u> with us. |
| 7. Hassan: | Two thousand. |
| 8. Feliz: | I <u>do</u> . But you don't tell me <u>anything</u> . |
| 9. Hassan: | We say nothing. You do <u>nothing</u> . |
| 10. Samira: | Because you don't work with us. (. .) |
| 11. Hassan: | Do you know why we say nothing, because you should have your own (). |
| 12. Feliz: | Explain it, explain it to me. |
| 13. Assad: | Why do we have to explain? You should work with us. |

Episode 5 shows that their collaboration implies certain norms of participation and knowledge sharing and also that these norms are in contrast with the peer-tutor mode in which the tutor works on the solution for himself for a while and after that is ready to explain it to others. These norms become explicit in situations where someone does not play according to the rules, as in Feliz's case. Furthermore, these students fit the interactional pattern that we have described above, that is, the idea that each member's expertise is, in principle, valued and used, and the students share knowledge by doing or working (not by teaching). Episode 5 also illustrates that students defend this way of working, and with that it shows how it is, or has become, part of the students' own strategies to deal with this institutional situation.

Likewise, at times student conversations showed a struggle over when and how to apply the tutoring mode. This is portrayed in two episodes, 6 and 7, both involving a mixed group consisting of Lonneke, a Dutch girl; Ikram, a Dutch-Moroccan girl; Françoise, a Dutch-Ghanaian girl; Abdel, a Dutch-Moroccan boy; and Fahd, a Dutch-Turkish boy. Throughout the lessons we ob-

served, this group was engaged in a struggle about Lonneke's position as the tutor of the group. Lonneke is repeatedly both invited to take on and criticized for taking on the tutor role. The episode shows both how Lonneke is asked to be a tutor by Fahd (in line 1) and Abdel (line 5), tries to fulfill this role (lines 2–4, 7), but is criticized by one of the students for not explaining (line 8) and rather explicitly so by Ikram in line 9 (“She does not explain an ass”). Lonneke defends her position in line 11, referring to the fact that she was not explaining, but that she would if only someone were to ask her properly.

Episode 6 (Group 4, May 25, 2000)

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1. Fahd: | Four. (..) How do you do that? |
| 2. Lonneke: | With <u>this</u> one, I just have done twenty-five and ten thousand. |
| 3. () | |
| 4. Lonneke: | >Here it says<, here is says ((reads)) how many trees fit on the parcels A, B and C? () |
| 5. Abdel: | What do you have to write down, I don't don't know that. |
| 6. () | A, B and C. |
| 7. Lonneke: | Yes, you have <u>this</u> one. |
| 8. () | But how do you intend to explain that? |
| 9. Ikram: | °She does not explain an ass° ((translated literally from Dutch)). |
| 10. () | () |
| 11. Lonneke: | I(.) <u>do</u> (.) <u>no:t</u> (.) <u>explain</u> , I will explain only when I, when I have <u>finished</u> (the work) myself. Real good. And no one <u>asks</u> me (to explain it). |

In episode 7, a Dutch student, Lonneke, is criticized for not being smart enough to be the tutor of the group. After Lonneke attempts to show something to Ikram (line 1), Fahd states that Lonneke does not know how (i.e., to explain; line 4) and that she is acting stupid (line 10), picking up the “they are so stupid” in line 6, which probably refers to the Dutch students in general. They further discuss “explaining” (lines 9 to 13) and contrasting “giving the answers away” with “explaining,” while expressing a (principle) preference for explaining. Françoise criticizes Lonneke for giving away answers and Ikram for being an accomplice by copying Lonneke's answers. Therefore the criticism of Lonneke becomes a more general reflection of the group's way of working (lines 13–14).

Episode 7 (Group 4, May 26, 2000)

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1. Lonneke: | Look, here, hundred and seventy, uh.. hundred? |
| 2. Ikram: | Yes it is. |
| 3. () | Four. |
| 4. Fahd: | She just does not know how. She is just doing something (. . .) |
| 5. () | 1,2,3,4,5,6,7. |
| 6. Abdel: | They are so <u>stupid</u> . |
| 7. Lonneke: | <u>You</u> are stupid. |
| 8. Fahd: | <u>Yeah</u> . |
| 9. Abdel: | >Yeah, and she ((meaning Lonneke)) gives you all the answers<. |
| 10. Fahd: | Ye::s. But after that she acts <u>stu:pid</u> . |
| 11. Ikram: | Hello: But you don't have to give <u>all</u> the answers. |
| 12. Françoise: | Yes and you (. . .) You don't have to give all the answers. Yesterday you wrote down all the answers she ((Lonneke)) gave you. |
| 13. Ikram: | You could also (. . .) eh (..) it's better to <u>explain</u> . |
| 14. Lonneke: | Yes. |

Turning to how the peer tutor mode is evaluated by the students in the minority-only groups, we present an example of one of the few cases where this mode was used by these groups. In this example, we argue, the particular Dutch-Moroccan girl that takes on the tutor position is parodying this role. Episode 8 (below) is taken from a group of four Dutch Moroccan students—two girls, Fouzia and Ilham, and two boys, Ferit and Zakaria. The episode starts after 15 minutes of group work and is the ending of an intervention by the teacher who provides feedback to the group. In this intervention, Fouzia is the most active student who answers most of the teacher's questions. Finally, the teacher concludes that Fouzia has understood the problem on which they are working, namely, how many small boxes can be put into a larger box taking their volume into account.

- Episode 8 (Group 2, June 5, 2000)
1. Teacher: ((addressing Fouzia)) Explain it to your group, so that they understand too. ((she leaves))
 2. Fouzia: ((addressing the other students)) Do you understand the problems? (hhh) ((laughs))
 3. () No.
 4. Fouzia: You don't?
 5. () No.
 6. Fouzia: OK. Hmm, yes, OK. Uh, yes, OK, uh ((laughs)). U:hm, I don't know it either. >Oh yes<. Look, at this part. How many fit in there?
 7. Ilham: Three, three, three.
 8. Fouzia: No, take them toge†ther. Look ((laughs)).
 9. Ilam: Nine?
 10. Fouzia: Nine, yes.

The interaction continues and the students, led by Fouzia, solve part A of the problem. Later, in the same lesson, they start part B (as portrayed in episode 9).

- Episode 9 (Group 2, June 5, 2000)
1. Fouzia: Look, you do the le:ngth. OK, first we calculate the length. If you do it step by step, we will be finished in no time ((laughs)).
 2. ((Other students laugh))
 3. Fouzia: OK, uh, the length, what is the length? ((Laughs))
 4. () (. . .) Three centimeters.
 5. Fouzia: How much is it upwards? ((laughs))
 6. Zakaria: Four centimeters.
 7. Fouzia: ((laughing)) How lo:ng is it?
 8. Ilham: Three centimeters.
 9. Ferit: Three centimeters.
 10. Ilham: You should take this one.
 11. Student: OK, here three centimeters.
 12. Ilham: Three.
 13. Fouzia: Well done, and uh, what about the width?
 14. Ilham: Yes, uh, fifteen.
 15. Fouzia: Yes, how do you know?
 16. () Yes, how do you know?
 17. Fouzia: ((laughs)) That is the solution.

Episodes 8 and 9 show that Fouzia is taking on a teacher's role. However, although she does perform the role with certain fluency, she considers it a

temporary role which resembles play or parody more than a regular aspect of her behavior. The laughing of both Fouzia and the others is significant in this respect and shows a certain amount of embarrassment. This interpretation of Fouzia's behavior as a parody is affirmed by the fact that she performs this role on command (see line 1 in episode 8), that this is the only observed lessons in which she does so, and that, when Fouzia repeats her explaining about 10 minutes after episode 9, she is criticized by the others with a "don't talk like this."

These last episodes (6–9) show that the peer-tutor mode, like the peer-collaboration mode, is not a self-evident practice that students reproduce automatically in response to institutional norms but rather that it is an active, collective production of students. It is a creative response to the institutional demands to work collaboratively and explain things to each other. In particular, the struggle with group norms on participation and the conditions under which a student can take on a tutoring role prove that these are dynamic practices in which normative roles are tested and appropriated in particular ways. The Fouzia examples (episodes 8–9) and the Lonneke examples (episodes 6–7) show that, although peer tutoring is, in this classroom, related to Dutch-minority relationships, local conditions may change or challenge this pattern.

Discussion: Diversity from a Multiperspective Angle

In this section, we first present a number of arguments for the diversity found in the cultural discontinuity and the social reproduction perspectives. Then, we discuss how they become integrated in a cross-context perspective in which both figurative and positional aspects are acknowledged.

Arguments in Terms of Cultural Discontinuity

Looking at the students' previous socialization experiences with respect to peer-peer relationships, we found some interesting links in the literature on Moroccan socialization.³⁵ We contrast these experiences with what is said about Dutch socialization. However, similar contrasts are found between other white middle-class cultures and non-Western cultures.³⁶

In Moroccan socialization, learning is mostly fostered through modeling and participation in adult activities rather than through direct instruction of parents. Moreover, norms on speech roles define children as ineligible to

³⁵ Trees Pels, *Opvoeding in Marokkaanse gezinnen in Nederland: De creatie van een nieuw bestaan* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1998). For a review, see Trees Pels and Mariëtte de Haan, *Continuity and Change in Moroccan Socialization: A Review of the Literature on Socialization in Morocco and among Moroccan Families in the Netherlands* (Utrecht: Verwey Jonker Institute and Utrecht University, 1993).

³⁶ See Barbara Rogoff, *The Cultural Nature of Human Development* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); Ruth Paradise, "Interactional Style and Nonverbal Meaning: Mazahua Children Learning How to Be Separate-but-Together," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 25 (1994): 156–72; Mariëtte de Haan, *Learning as Cultural Practice: How Children Learn in a Mexican Mazahua Community; A Study on Culture and Learning* (Amsterdam: Thela Thesis, 1999).

join in the conversations between adults as equals (e.g., to exchange opinions or information) but who should behave modestly and should adjust their speech to their social position. This distance between parents and children and perhaps also the so-called lack of direct instruction from adults is compensated for by the relatively large amount of time that children spend outside parental control, that is, in the company of siblings and peers, and the learning opportunities that result from that situation. Many learning opportunities that in middle-class Western families are organized by adults take place here in the relative freedom in this peer-based domain of socialization.³⁷ The literature on Moroccan migrants in the Netherlands shows that peer socialization is relatively more influential for Moroccan children than for Dutch children, for instance, with respect to the support peers and siblings offer for children's schoolwork.³⁸

When applying these findings to the results of our analysis, we argue that from their home socialization experience, Moroccan students are more familiar with a peer socialization mode in which adult intervention is not common. Furthermore, in their home socialization processes, the explicit teaching situations characteristic of school and of many white middle-class homes are not common practice. Therefore, the fact that Moroccan students do not spontaneously take up tutor roles can be explained by referring to the idea that Moroccans would not readily adopt a role pattern in a peer-collaboration context that is based on an asymmetric, one-to-one adult-child relationship. What we know of their home socialization leads us to expect that these students would adopt the more symmetric peer-peer relationships that characterize peer socialization in their lives outside of school. This mode is based more on equal and collective responsibilities and same-status relationships. At the same time, it refers to a learning-in-practice approach in which the teaching role is more implicit.

However, the Dutch students, who are more familiar with one-to-one adult intervention in their play and in their socialization in general, are, given their deeper experience with this model, more willing to borrow from an adult-child role division model characterized by a certain asymmetry (mainly with respect to who is responsible for the teaching-learning event). They are also familiar with the explicit teaching implied in the peer-tutor mode.

Arguments in Terms of Social Reproduction and Ethnically Related Academic Engagement

Alternatively, the data can be understood from a perspective on how school mediates structural inequalities in Dutch society between migrants and mainstream groups. Here we focus on how structural inequalities become

³⁷ Trees Pels, *Marokkaanse kleuters en hun culturele kapitaal: Opvoeden en leren in het gezin en op school* (Amsterdam: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1991); Susan Schaefer-Davis and David A. Davis, *Adolescence in a Moroccan Town: Making Social Sense* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1989).

³⁸ Maurice Crul, *De sleutel tot succes: Over hulp, keuzes en kansen in de schoolloopbanen van Turkse en Marokkaanse jongeren van de tweede generatie* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 2000).

transformed into the academic engagement of migrants and translated into particular positions students take toward the institution (combining notions of resistance theory and minority status theory).

There are, of course, structural differences between the Dutch and most non-Western migrant groups as far as their participation in the labor force and the school system is concerned. A disproportionate number of migrant workers can be found in the lower segments of the labor force, and their children tend to be less successful at school, even when taking the lower educational level of their parents into account. With respect to their attitudes toward school, generally speaking, the literature indicates that migrant parents have high expectations for their children's school career and see education as an important means for social mobility in Dutch society. However, these expectations change as children grow older and parents develop a critical attitude toward Dutch schools in general, as Lotte Eldering has shown.³⁹ Parents consider that there is little discipline in Dutch schools and regret the seeming lack of equal opportunities for their children. Eldering made a distinction between the socialization function of school to which migrant parents have developed a critical attitude and the qualification function of school to which migrant parents attach much worth. In a similar vein, Trees Pels has documented that Moroccan parents tend to take a certain distance from Dutch schools, and Iris Andriessen and Karin Phalet found that minority students identify less with the institution of schooling compared to the Dutch students.⁴⁰

Taking this literature as a point of departure, we posit that migrant students' more limited use of the peer-tutor mode reflects that they are not fully identifying with school and the school's teaching-learning model. The explanatory mode that the migrant students create and the norms for working together that they develop when they work in the minority-only groups can be seen as the creation of a different working space in which more collective forms of sharing knowledge are developed and in which norms of peer group relationships are worked out for the school context.⁴¹

This would be in line with John D'Amato's view that all students somehow resist school and find ways to construct a rationale vis-à-vis their peers for being at school.⁴² However, when they believe that the meritocratic ideal does not work for them, the students are more likely to judge school and the lessons in terms of the standards of the peer culture. Viewed in the light of these theories, the almost exclusive use of the peer-collaboration mode based

³⁹ Lotte Eldering, "Ethnic Minority Students in the Netherlands from a Cultural-Ecological Perspective," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (1997): 330–50.

⁴⁰ Pels, *Opvoeding in Marokkaanse gezinnen*; Iris Andriessen and Karin Phalet, "Acculturation and School Success," *Intercultural Education* 13 (2002): 1–36.

⁴¹ Compare Giroux, "Theories of Reproduction and Resistance."

⁴² John D'Amato, "The Belly of the Beast: On Cultural Differences, Castelike Status, and the Politics of the School," *Anthropology of Education Quarterly* 18, no. 4 (1987): 335–56.

on equal peer relationships as well as the reluctance to use the peer-tutor mode can be seen as ways of establishing a distance between school standards and the school's models for learning and teaching, and the students' own version of school. Moreover, the fact that the tutor-tutee relationship is strongly related to the Dutch-minority relationship means that this pattern is not just a response of minority students to schooling but an interactive school-related pattern that reproduces (but cannot be reduced to) status relationships between Dutch and minorities. That these kinds of reproductions are no exception in heterogeneous classrooms is shown in Elisabeth Cohen's work on how status relationships based on ethnic background are reflected in unequal participation patterns in classrooms.⁴³

A Cross-Context Explanation: Integrating the Different Explanations

As noted in the introduction, we view classrooms as cultural arenas that can reshape, resist, or nurture the meanings students bring into the classroom, though these meanings are always expressed through stories of struggle and status relationships. The notion of local production of diversity is crucial as well as how these local productions relate to other social spheres, both in place and time, as two sides of the same coin. The local production side of the coin is evident when we consider the creative effort that participants make to appropriate and rework the institutional norms. The local (re)production side of the coin becomes visible when we consider the molding of the social and cultural patterns that the students bring along to this classroom so that they fit into an institutional setting.

Obviously, the tutor-tutee relationships in this class were not given as a means to express the status relationships between Dutch and minority children but are institutional constructions to which both the school and the students have contributed. Therefore, they are creative translations of something else that exists elsewhere in a different form. Likewise, tutor-tutee relationships are not given in the sense that they exist in that form in the students' home or in the schoolyard where status relationships between Dutch and migrant students can be completely reversed. They are institutional relationships, worked out locally, that is, in this particular school (although they might develop elsewhere given the similar conditions both in the school and outside). Both sides of the coin are essential as we think that these local productions would not have happened without the nonlocal resources that students have at their disposal that helped generate the local productions. And here is where the cultural discontinuity and social reproduction perspectives are helpful.

Moreover, the culturally different experiences with particular models of

⁴³ Elisabeth Cohen, *Designing Group Work: Strategies for the Heterogeneous Classroom* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1994), 36.

learning and socialization with peers constitute a resource students were able to draw on to develop these two modes of collaboration. The reluctance of minority students to use a peer-tutor mode in peer-peer interaction cannot be understood without referring to the norms minority students have been socialized in at home. Likewise, we think that the experience Dutch students have with direct teaching and one-to-one adult interventions are an important condition for the development of a tutor role in peer collaboration at school. However, these experiences cannot predict the kind of behavior that develops in another setting but are creatively reworked, according to local cultural conditions and social relationships. The original cultural patterns, that is, those that exist elsewhere, were reinterpreted in interaction with the social positions and relationships that were constructed as a result of the shared history of the students in this particular class. Similarly, the power relationships in Dutch society and how they shape the students' identification with school can be seen as a condition for the development of a more dependent position of minority students represented in the tutor-tutee relationship.

As Locke Davidson states, these status relationships do not determine but structure the possible field of action.⁴⁴ They are embodied and enacted in personal relationships as individuals make an active effort to place others into comprehensible categories, such as, in this case, tutor-tutee relationships. These power relationships and associated identification with schooling may be resisted in local creative reworking, but they define, as Davidson says, normality in advance. In this process of local reworking, the status relationships continue to change when they take on the characteristics of the local circumstances, such as the particular school identities and relationships that were constructed in this class. Likewise, the cultural patterns brought along keep changing through the local social dynamics and particular interpretations. This is how they can finally lead to new cultural patterns and social relationships. For instance, we think that it is the power structure in this classroom that has been a condition for the development of a new cultural pattern in the form of the peer-based collaboration for migrant students. And, vice versa, the reluctance by migrant students to adopt a particular culturally informed pattern as the peer-tutor role, as well as their readiness to adopt a tutee role, has also been a condition for the (further) development of specific local power relationships between the migrant and the Dutch students.

In order to understand local and enduring practices, we need to relate several historical *durées* and a variety of social realities in addition to the ones

⁴⁴ Locke Davidson, "Making and Molding Identity," 5.

that are apparently most relevant in particular (institutional) contexts.⁴⁵ In other words, we need to address the phenomenon from contexts that differ in time when we relate previous socialization experiences with the here-and-now socialization that takes place in a particular classroom. We also need to relate contexts that differ in scale or perspective, for instance, when arguing how the classroom context is related to wider sociocultural phenomena such as migration histories and the perception that minorities develop of the effect of schooling. Only through an awareness of cross-contextuality, that is, looking at a diversity of contexts and considering the idea that local practices are both new productions of old differences and bear the traces of those old differences, can we understand the place of locality in wider sociocultural and historical dimensions. Culturally learned experiences become resources for and shape how people define their social positions or how they take on a position with respect to the dominant culture. Likewise, the sociopolitical tensions related to status relationships of groups also shape how cultural experiences are played out in specific contexts. Both are locally produced forms that take into account and reconstruct experiences that exist in the past (previous socialization experience) and elsewhere (power dynamics in other social settings involving similar processes and status relationships).

Although the idea that cultural heritages are regrouped and reconstructed according to local conditions is crucial, we believe that we will only get a limited view of the activities if we are not able to trace them back to the contexts where they were learned and have an eye for patterns that recur, although in different forms. Furthermore, it is important to relate what is happening in the classroom to wider sociopolitical dimensions as in the reproduction perspective. We will not fully understand what is happening in the classroom if we do not consider the power relationships between groups of students and more structural differences in social status that exist outside the classroom and that continue to have an impact on local constructions. Neither will we understand these phenomena if we only see them in cultural terms without understanding the power dynamics that shape these cultural forms. We consider that the challenge is to understand classroom behavior both in terms of local productions and in terms of traces that are left behind and resources available from patterns learned and dynamics that operate in other contexts. In doing so, we widen our view in order to have an eye for both the dynamic as well as the resistant nature of both cultural patterns and social structures.

⁴⁵ To conceptualize the various historical time scales, several authors have made an analytical distinction between three different historical *durées*, as in, e.g., Elsie Rockwell, "Recovering History in the Study of Schooling: From the Long *Durée* to Everyday Co-construction," *Human Development* 42, no. 3 (1999): 113–28, where she distinguishes the long *durée*, the relative continuity, and everyday construction. But see also Dorothy Holland and Jean Lave, eds., *History in Peron: Enduring Struggles, Contentious Practice, Intimate Identities* (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 2001), esp. 9, for an account of how several historical *durées* are necessary to avoid both an ahistorical and an essentialistic approach of identity.