Dutch Policy with Respect to Integration of Immigrants: Text Analysis as a Method to Measure Changes

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Abstract Text analysis might be used as a method to evaluate how policy is developing. This is shown by investigating what is said in speeches from the throne in the Netherlands with regard to the integration of immigrants. Does the government play a positive role in this process or do the immigrants have to take care of their own integration? Since in the last years anti-immigrant parties have participated in the government coalition, one might expect a move into the direction of this last view. Based on the proposals presented in the speeches from 1980 until 2011 it turns out that a only slight tendency can be observed in favor of the latter policy in the Netherlands.

Keywords Text Analysis, Content Analysis, Policy Making, Immigrants

government. This is done by applying thematic text analysis. The speech from 2011 contained some sentences regarding immigrants that were without doubt inspired by this third party: "The government's policy on immigration and integration aims to strengthen people's interaction and engagement with society. This means that immigrants are expected to support themselves financially and are conscious to the laws of this country and the values that bind our society together." This formulation gives rise to the question whether this is a new policy in the country, or is this tendency that immigrants have to take care of their own position already going on for a longer period?

2. Theoretical Notions

The Netherlands, like many other countries, has always had immigrants. For these immigrants integration in the country is very important as it maximizes opportunities afforded by legal migration. Here one might focus on the way the integration process works out. In doing so one has to compare immigrants with respect to different types of integration: economic (extend of economic equality), social (extend of contacts) and cultural (extend in which cultural values and patterns are shared). The process is especially considered from the perspective of the immigrant. However, one can also look at the process from the perspective of the country's original population. Closely related are questions concerning social cohesion and inequality. A specific issue concerns the policy positions taken by the government. In studies relating to these positions one looks at what the government wants from immigrants and what it gives to these immigrants. It is not about whether a country wants new immigrants or wants to get rid of the immigrants already legally in the country, but about immigrants already in the country who have to integrate. The position the government takes has an effect on the way the integration proceeds. At the extreme, the government can take two positions with respect to these immigrants: facilitate their integration, or explain that immigrants have to take care of their own integration. The government can also neglect the immigrants, but this is the same as saying they have to find

1. Introduction

The integration of immigrants is an on-going debate in Dutch politics. With the popularity of populist political parties in the last decade it looks as over time immigrants themselves are responsible for integration problems in Dutch society instead of society as a whole. In 2010 the Dutch had a government in which two political parties cooperate, the Dutch conservative liberals and the Christian Democrats. These parties had a separate confidence and supply agreement with a third party, the Peoples Party for Freedom, which is by many considered as a right-wing populist party. This party did not participate in the government, but supported it with respect to several issues. Because of this the government was showing understanding for several positions this third party took. This understanding became visible in the speech from the throne of 2011. The speech from the throne, 'troonrede', is an event where the King or Queen of the Netherlands reads out a prepared speech on behalf of the government to a complete session of parliament, outlining the government's agenda for the upcoming year. The speech is the Dutch equivalent of the state of the union in the United States. The speech from the throne is a good instrument to evaluate policy positions taken by the

their own way.

The government can demand actions from the society to facilitate the integration process (for example to provide Dutch language lessons to make one learn the language faster and better). Now integration should go faster, but also immigrants should feel at home. The other extreme is that the government demands action from the immigrants to fulfill demands for successful integration (for example demand to learn the Dutch language without offering facilities). Here efforts are higher and therefore the process might take more time. This distinction is indicated as 'demands on society' versus 'demands on immigrants'.

In the 1960s a lot of guest workers came to the Netherlands, because the country did not have sufficient workers itself. These workers were mainly from Turkey, Morocco and (at that time) Yugoslavia. At one point in time arrangements were introduced that made it possible for the family to join these workers. Many Turkish and Moroccan workers used this opportunity; the Yugoslavians went for the greater part back to their own country. To facilitate the coming of the new immigrants and their integration one might expect demands on society.

A special policy for minorities started in the 1980s, because a lot of immigrants became unemployed or incapacitated for work due to the economic situation. The goal of this policy was to reduce social backlog and discrimination of minorities (non-western immigrants). The relative growth in second-generation ethnic minorities, and their improved education level and socio-economic position, were associated with an increase in their social contacts with the native Dutch. This increase in contacts however has been suppressed by increased ethnic residential concentration [8]. This concentration is reflected as a treat [4]. The way the integration of immigrants is going, is at times reported [1].

This negative attention became further visible from 2002 on when new populist political parties were elected to parliament. These parties oppose multiculturalism, they prefer nationalism. The parties use several arguments against immigrants: they are a treat for the ethno-national identity; they cause criminality and insecurity; they cause unemployment and they misuse the facilities offered by the welfare states [10]. The present right wing party has a lot of support among the population, therefore it is to be expected that the demands on immigrants are increasing, and that this becomes visible in the government's policy.

In 2007 a new law demanded that the immigrant integrates in the Dutch society. The immigrant has to be able to take care of him or herself and to function full in society (this will even be tested). So in these 25 years the government's attitude has become stricter. This all contributed to a stagnation that is actually already visible since 2002 [9]. This change in rule caused that the integration became more problematic and also gave rise to a tendency to make the coming to the country more difficult. In part this is visible in the application of higher standards when entering the country.

In his government policy statement on October 26 2010 the new prime minister only talks about immigration, but the tone is clear: "Controlling and restricting immigration and improving integration are necessary to prevent the emergence of a social underclass. Integration involves more than obtaining a civic integration certificate. The goal for people is to be able to contribute equally and fully to Dutch society, whatever their sex or religion."

The question still is whether this is a new policy and whether immigrants have to take care of their own integration. Each year the government informs the public about her plans for the year to come. These plans are explained in the speech from the throne.

The concept of demands on society is regarded as every action demanded from society and its government to improve the integration process of immigrants. The concept of demands on immigrants is regarded as every action demanded from immigrants themselves to improve the integration process. Now our research question is: 'Are there changes in views by the government on immigration of cultural minorities over time between 1980 until 2011, in terms of demands on cultural minorities versus demands on society towards the integration process of immigrants in the Netherlands?' To answer this question it is necessary to test two hypotheses: (1) The call for demands on the society has decreased over time in the speeches of the throne and (2) the call for demands on immigrants has increased.

3. Method

The data for this study are found in the speeches from the throne spoken in the period 1980-2011. This timeframe covers all but one speeches spoken by Queen Beatrix. The speech of 2012 is not included as the government that received support from the right-wing party just had fallen. This speech contains statements about immigrants. The data set covers 32 subsequent years. In this period there have been social democratic governments, but also conservative liberal ones. The government in 1980 consisted of Christian democratic and conservative liberal parties and had one more year to go then until the next elections.

For each year the number of times has been counted in a thematic text analysis [2] that each of the two types of demand is mentioned in the speech from the throne. The unit of recording is the clause. The frequency of occurrence of the demands per year indicates whether there has been a shift in view over time. This counting might be done by using a dictionary containing all search entries, i.e., all word phrases that might occur in a text that refer to one of the two concepts. If such a dictionary is available a computer program can perform the text analysis. However, actions the government might want to take can vary in their abstraction, for example from demands for tolerance or adjustment to offering language lessons. Some examples might clarify this. The concept of 'demands on society' is for example captured in the sentence: "Our society as a whole should be

prepared to truly adapt them” (orig.: “Onzesamenleving in haargeheelbehoortbereidte zijn hen daadwerkelijk op tenemen”). From the context it is clear that ‘them’ refers to the immigrants. The other concept ‘demands on immigrants’ is captured in the sentence: “First of all, efforts of those who are involved are necessary” (orig.: “Dat vraagt allereerst om inspanningen van de betrokkenen zelf”). Here the same is going on; ‘those who are involved’ refers to the immigrants. The sentence “That demands for giving and taking, tolerance but also adaptation.” (orig.: “Dat vergt geven en nemen, tolerantie maar ook aanpassing”) includes both concepts. ‘Giving’ and ‘tolerance’ in the context as intended here are applicable for demands on society. ‘Taking’ and ‘adaptation’, in the context of the present sentence, are applicable on both concepts. These examples show that in many situations some interpretation based on context information is necessary.

From the above it should be clear that the construction of a dictionary is very complex, therefore an alternative method was followed. Human raters performed the coding. These raters had an instruction and after that they independently coded the speeches from the throne. For each concept they had to indicate where it was found in the speeches. In this way it was assured that a representative view during the coding process could be maintained, i.e., coding is performed from the perspective of the sender of the message (Shapiro, 1997), here the government. Besides this way of coding allows considering context information necessary to make a correct choice [3]. For more general details on text analysis, see the handbooks [2].

The amount of agreement in assignments among the two

raters is indicated by using the similarity ratio, also known as coefficient of Jaccard [7]. A traditional agreement statistic like Scott’s π [5], that is commonly used, will show an inflated result as the distribution over the categories ‘mentioned’ and ‘not mentioned’ is skewed. Besides the total number of clauses in the speeches is problematic. Usually the number of sentences or clauses in which the concept of interest is found by at least one of the raters is used. The alternatives are the use of the number of clauses in paragraphs dealing with (integration of) minority groups or the use of all clauses in the speeches. The benefit of the coefficient of Jaccard is that it correctly starts from the number of assignments by at least one of the raters; a disadvantage is that no correction for chance is available [9]. The index examines the fraction of the number of assignments on which both raters agree in that the demand is mentioned, so it is the intersection divided by the union. Therefore a conditional probability is computed. For the demand on society concept this fraction is .88, for the demand on immigrants concept it is .89. These outcomes indicate that it does not matter whose rater’s assignments are used.

4. Results

The results of the frequency count per year of demands on society and demands on immigrants according to the first rater are shown in figure 1. The figure contains the number of assignments to each of the demands per year and a trend line per demand.

Figure 1. Frequency of occurrence of the two concepts in the speech from the throne over years

It seems that over time the number of demands on society decreases in the speeches from the throne, while the concept of demands on immigrants increases. Regression analysis shows that the strength of this relation for the demands on society is $b = -.010$ ($p = .216$ one-sided), for demands on the immigrants it is $b = .031$ ($p = .009$ one-sided). This implies that the hypothesis on the decrease of the demands on society is not supported, but the hypothesis on the increase of the demands on immigrants is. Given the strength of the b-coefficient however the amount of change per year is small. It is questionable whether the outcomes really denote a shift in policy. Demands on society are especially found in the 1980s, while the demands on immigrants especially are mentioned after the year 2000. In the speeches of 2002 and 2011 the demand was found twice. These are the years in which the government had the support of right-wing parties. In 2006 the law was accepted that regulated integration of immigrants. With respect to the assignments by the second rater similar results are found.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The results show that over time there has not really been a shift in the view on the integration process. The frequency of occurrence of demands on society in the speeches from the throne in order to make the integration of immigrants possible decreased, but not significantly. Oppositely, the frequency of occurrence of referrals to demands on immigrants themselves has increased, but this increase is minimal. This suggests that the government's focus on the success of the integration of immigrants in the Dutch Society has not shifted from the perspective of society's responsibilities towards the responsibilities of immigrants themselves. The data do not show a clear preference for any of the two demands, there is no clear policy. The result does not rule out that the populist parties had some success in their asking for demands on immigrants.

Some caution is needed in understanding the results. Several remarks can be made regarding this investigation. First of all, this research is limited because only the speeches from the throne have been used for analysis, although this is where policy starts. To gain more information regarding this research question, one should ask which kind of data to use: The presentation of policy proposals as in the speech of the throne or the performance of these plans as becomes visible in reports -transcripts- of meetings in parliament or in evaluations in the media. If one wants to step away from text analysis one can also look at laws that are proposed or the decisions regarding motions that have come the vote. The speeches from the throne give some quick first insight into developments. A benefit of text analysis is that one can use data from the past; the only requirement is that the texts are

available (for computer programs this means available in electronic form). Sometimes these are only the best available texts. The alternative is that people should be interviewed about what happened in the past.

Secondly, if one wants to use text analysis more often to describe developments in policy making and to evaluate the policy, rules might be developed on how to do this. Now at least results of different studies can be compared as the analyses are performed in a similar way. It does not matter whether manual or machine coding is applied. Anyway applying text analysis is a good way to get a quick understanding based on data of the way some policy has developed over time.

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