

'I am my own expert'

A discursive psychological perspective on talk about
superfoods in online discussions

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Abstract

Countless diet trends exist in the market and the number continues to grow. These diet trends receive increasing attention in the media through pervasive marketing. The supply of new food products in the supermarkets, such as *superfoods*, show that 'healthy' diet trends are increasingly popular. Nutrition information and advice is thus not solely requested from nutrition experts and official advisory services anymore, which makes it difficult for them to reach consumer-citizens. This results in the need to sketch contours and condition for an improved dialogue with policy makers, scientists and consumer-citizens about 'good food'.

In the dialogue about good food, attention is mainly paid to health facts, but what is at stake is often not only the truth of the facts, but especially the speaker's identity. To gain insights in the hidden interactional concerns and the identity work of speakers, this study takes a discursive psychological perspective on talk about superfoods. Six discussions from two internet forums about superfoods have been analysed to identify the hidden interactional concerns of consumer-citizens in relation to superfoods. The emphasis was laid on what knowledge claims people use to account for choosing superfoods and how this relates to their identity.

The results show that forum participants construct three identities in particular. The participants present themselves as experts of their own body, as reasonable health-seekers and as nuanced experts on superfoods. From this, three conclusions were drawn: Consumer-citizens (1) present themselves as independent of scientific evidence and as reluctant to give advice, (2) display themselves as having a different rationality than scientific rationality and (3) undermine the need for experts to make absolute statements. On the basis of these conclusions, recommendations for frame conditions for a fruitful discussion on 'good food' were discussed, which refer to the assumptions for that are made for a dialogue and additional concerns that should be taken into account.

Keywords: identity, discursive psychology, online interaction, superfoods, nutrition advice

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1 Introduction

1.1 The public and nutrition advice

Science often faces the problem that the public does not show much interest about ongoing research and scientific findings. As Shapin (2007) states it, the laymen let the experts 'get on' with their research and do not actively engage in it. This attitude, however, is different when it comes to problems that request a practical advice, whereby one of these fields of expertise is dietetics (ibid.). Dietetics is a field in which practical advice is highly valuable. Laymen in the dietetics, however, face a variety of advices, which often contradict each other (Willet, 2001).

Thus, in view of the great expert heterogeneity, laymen make use of their freedom to pick and choose which expertise is credible (Shapin, 2007). This freedom of choice is also expressed in the sources of information that are used to access this expertise. A quantitative survey among Dutch consumers showed that different sources are consulted for different food topics (van Dillen et al., 2004). For example, the three most frequently mentioned sources for a *balanced diet* were education offices, magazines and nutrition centres; for *functional foods* consumers relied on written education materials, national education offices and education offices of the food sector the most. For other topics the sources included amongst others retail trade, consumer alliances, the family doctor, scientific organisations and television. The variety of sources suggests that the information that consumers receive is not necessarily in line with scientific expert advice, since for instance media like magazines and television display lots of commercials about unhealthy foods.

In many different countries of the Western world, information about healthy eating is available that is backed up by scientific research and designed to give understandable nutrition advice to the broader public. Examples for advisory services are the Dutch *Voedingscentrum*, the German *Deutsche Gesundheit für Ernährung* or the *Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion* in the United States. However, these advisory services are just one of the many sources that consumers consult for advice on (healthy) nutrition. In turn, the market shows diet trends and advices that are picked up by many people, often for a limited time-span.

1.1.1 Diet trends

There are various examples for such trends: The 'Voedselzandloper' is based on the image of an hourglass, which gives instructions on healthy alternatives for unhealthy foods (Voedselzandloper, n.d. a). Due to the high popularity, it was chosen for the NS Publieks Prijs in 2013 and so far, 300,000 books have been sold (Voedselzandloper, n.d. b). The 'Sonja Bakker' method advises three dishes per day and a certain amount of caloric intake in between (Voedingscentrum, n.d. a). The first book was the best sold book in The Netherlands in 2006 with more than 600,000 copies (Stichting Collectieve Propaganda van het Nederlandse Boek, 2007). However, the popularity of the books decreased to less than 20 % in 2008 (MedicalFacts, 2009).

Another ongoing trend is to add so called 'superfoods' to the diet. The term is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as 'a nutrient-rich food considered to be especially beneficial for health and well-being' (Oxford Dictionary, n.d.). Other sources refer to it as a non-scientific term used by the media (Cancer Research UK, 2014; European Food Information Council, 2012). Examples for superfoods include blueberries, broccoli, garlic, raspberries, green tea, chia seeds, cocoa, salmon, pomegranate and many others (Cancer Research UK, 2014; European Food Information Council, 2012; Datamonitor, 2007). The importance of the trend is reflected in the market development. For example, soy product

sales tripled in Western Europe and doubled in the United States between 2001 and 2006 (Datamonitor, 2007). The green tea market in the United States increased from USD119 million to USD160 million in the same time period (ibid.). Superfoods are also frequently discussed in the media, which stimulates the debate about the topic. Recent examples are the broadcasts about superfoods by the 'Keuringsdienst van Waarde' (2015) and 'Metropolis' (2015), an article in the magazine 'Linda' (2015) and the debate 'Het groote superfoods debat' organised by the food and nutrition news platform 'Foodlog' (2015).

1.1.2 Contested scientific evidence

To all the food trends two distinguishing marks can be attributed: first, they all have a tremendous popularity, which can be seen from the high sells of, for example, related books and food products. Looking at the media coverage of diet trends also reveals their enormous popularity. Second, they all claim positive health effects, whose scientific evidence is contested.

For example, the Voedselzandloper diet is contested because of a wrong use of numbers and wrong interpretations of scientific research (Voedingscentrum, n.d. b). The Sonja Bakker diet is criticised for not being in line with scientific research (Voedingscentrum, n.d. a). Thus, the recommendations of these diets are also not in line with the official dietary recommendation, in this case for the Dutch society, the so-called *Schijf van Vijf* (Voedingscentrum, n.d. c). According to the Voedselzandloper, for instance, fruits and vegetables can be eaten instead of bread, potatoes, pasta and rice, which are all recommended as part of the *Schijf van Vijf*. The Voedingscentrum criticises that this replacement can cause a lack in certain vitamins and nutrients (Voedingscentrum, n.d. b). The Sonja Bakker diet advises to eat less bread and fruit than what is recommended in the *Schijf van Vijf*, which also could lead to a deficiency in some nutrients (Voedingscentrum, n.d. a). Superfoods are also criticised for their contested scientific evidence as well as for the one-sided impression, which is marketed, that one sort of food will have a positive health effect and might even prevent a disease (Cancer Research UK, 2014; Voedingscentrum, n.d. d). Especially the focus on single food items is not in line with the *Schijf van Vijf*, which recommends a varied diet (Voedingscentrum, n.d. c and d).

1.2 Superfoods

In contrast to diets like the Voedselzandloper and the Sonja Bakker diet, the ongoing diet trend of superfoods is not only seen in The Netherlands, but also in other Western countries, for example in the United States. Furthermore, there is no one single source of information about superfoods, nor can a clear founder of the diet trend be identified. This means that diet advice about superfoods can be retrieved from many sources, not just from one book or from one website and there is no clear ownership of it. In line with this, most of the recommendations refer to certain foods in particular rather than giving a full diet recommendation. Because of these outstanding characteristics and its widespread popularity, the superfoods diet is particularly interesting to study.

1.2.1 Definition

The term 'superfood' does not have an official scientific definition (NHS, 2011; Voedingscentrum, n.d. c). This also means that the term can be used by anyone (Voedingscentrum, n.d. d), thus it can be used freely for the marketing of products. The European Union (EU), however, has banned the use of the term superfoods in the EU, unless it is accompanied by a scientifically proven health claim (BBC, 2007).

Superfoods can be bought in the form of fresh food or dried food, as powder, capsules and pills or as an ingredient in another product, for example in a cereal bar. The food industry uses various descriptions, for example:

'A superfood is a nutrient-dense fruit or vegetable that contains a high content of antioxidants, protein, omega-3, minerals, fiber or other essential nutrients that have proven health benefits.' (Nativas Naturals, n.d.).

'Superfoods are natural plant foods which are exceptionally high in nutrition and can therefore provide the body with high amounts of energy.' (RealFoods, n.d.).

'Superfoods are a special category of foods found in nature. By definition they are calorie sparse and nutrient dense meaning they pack a lot of punch for their weight as far as goodness goes. They are superior sources of anti-oxidants and essential nutrients - nutrients we need but cannot make ourselves.' (FoodMatters, n.d.).

'These foods tend to be extraordinarily high in vitamins, minerals, and essential nutrients, and they are recognized for their disease-fighting properties.' (Nutrex Hawaii, n.d.).

All these definitions have in common that superfoods refer to plant-based foods, which are not chemically enriched, but have a naturally high nutrient density. Furthermore, all definitions refer to superfoods as having a positive health-effect. According to these definitions, superfoods are thus not processed in the sense of being enriched with extra nutrients or vitamins. At the same time, the above-mentioned retailers also sell superfoods in the form of powder and capsules, rather than in their natural form. None of them refers to concrete health effects, such as disease prevention.

To sum up, no scientific definition of superfoods exists. It is being used by the food industry for marketing purposes and basically refers to plant-based foods with a high nutrient or vitamin density.

1.2.2 Controversy

The superfoods discourse shows two controversies that are frequently being discussed - the health claims that are being made with regards to superfoods as well as the oppositional development to the research in nutritional epidemiology. The two aspects will shortly be explained in the following paragraphs.

1.2.2.1 Superfood health claims

Generally, health claims in relation to superfoods cannot be found on the products themselves; product information mainly refer to nutrient and vitamin contents. However, many claims circulate in the media about the health benefits of individual superfoods. For the better understanding of claims and critiques, the example of the 'superfood blueberries' will be looked at.

When reading about the positive health effects of eating blueberries on non-scientific websites, a number of health claims come up. These health claims often refer to an improved memory, for instance blueberries 'help preserve memory function' (Joy Bauer, n.d. a), 'can enhance spatial memory and learning' (Joy Bauer, n.d. b), 'could potentially fight more serious memory problems like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's' (Greatist, 2013), 'slow down mental ageing' (The Telegraph, 2006) and 'may reduce memory decline' (ibid.). Other claims say that blueberries 'can lower blood pressure and

perhaps speed up metabolism' (Greatist, 2013), 'may also inhibit the growth of breast cancer cells' (ibid.) and blueberries 'may reduce [the] heart-attack risk' (Mother Nature Network, 2013).

A closer look at these claims shows that the scientific evidence is contested. For example studies about the effect of a blueberry enriched diet on the memory function were mainly conducted with animals or humans at a small sample size (e.g. Malin et al., 2011; Williams et al., 2008; Whyte & Williams, 2014; Krikorian, 2010; NHS, 2013). The finding that blueberries have an effect on cancer cells also derives from studies with animals and in vitro studies (e.g. Jeyabalan et al., 2014; Neto, 2007; NHS, 2013).

Furthermore, the following claims about blueberries on food items were banned by the EU: 'they are very suitable for a heart-friendly diet', 'blueberries have a wide range of health benefits including anti-ageing properties and the maintenance of urinary tract and vision health', 'blueberries can support maintaining of proper night vision' and 'protection of DNA, proteins and lipids from oxidative damage' (European Commission, 2013)¹. All claims have been rejected for 'non-compliance with the regulation because on the basis of the scientific evidence assessed' and the claims could all not be substantiated (ibid.). The claims about blueberries are just one example for health claims about a superfoods with contested scientific evidence.

The core of all critique about superfoods with regard to *health claims* is that they are not based on sufficient scientific evidence (Cancer Research UK, 2014; Voedingscentrum, n.d. d). Reasons for this are that the focus of superfoods lies on the effects of the chemicals they include (antioxidants, vitamins and minerals), but this view excludes the complexity of the interaction between the food intake and the human body (Cancer Research UK, 2014). Moreover, the underlying studies have also been conducted with a purified ingredient, rather than with the food itself and the doses that are being used to reach an effect are often very large (ibid.). Advertisements for superfoods also focus on the effect of one single food item, but do not take into account the complexity of a whole diet (NHS, 2011). The ban of the term 'superfood' on products without a scientifically proven health benefit in the EU is to protect consumers from false beliefs. The EU (2007) thus regulates under article 14 that health claims on food items will only be approved if the claim is based on scientific evidence.

1.2.2.2 Development of research in nutritional epidemiology

The superfoods trend does also not resemble the development in nutrition, because of the focus of the trend on nutrients and vitamins. Traditional research of the relation between nutrition and health (nutritional epidemiology) has focused on nutrient analysis. This means that in the past the relation between a single or a few nutrients or foods and the risk of chronic diseases has been studied (Jacobs & Steffen, 2003; Schulze & Hoffmann, 2006).

Such traditional research can for example be seen in studies with omega-3 fatty acids, which were purported to reduce the risk of cancer. A systematic review of studies that evaluated the effect of omega-3 fatty acids on the incident of cancer shows that the studies have mixed results (MacLean et al., 2006). It was concluded that a large body of literature does not provide enough evidence for a significant association and only few studies suggested otherwise (ibid.).

¹ Search term in the database: blueberry

Omega-3 fatty acids is but one example that shows the difficulty to clearly relate a single nutrient or food to the risk of chronic diseases. The complexity of the dietary input makes it difficult to study the effects of single nutrients or foods. Especially the interaction amongst nutrients and subsequent influence on their bioavailability and absorption as well as the variety of nutrients within food make it difficult to attribute dietary effects to single dietary components (Schulze & Hoffmann, 2006).

In view of this, research in nutritional epidemiology today focusses on food patterns rather than on nutrients. The superfoods trend, which is based on the idea that certain foods with a high density of certain nutrients or vitamins have a direct effect on health, does not resemble this development. This fact contributes to the controversy about the superfoods trend.

1.3 Problem statement

When looking at the emerging dialogue with and amongst consumer-citizens², such as the dialogue about the controversy about the superfoods trend, it is often *limited to discussing facts*, such as scientific evidence. However, the facts and claims in the dialogue by consumer-citizens are not merely used for information transfer, but to perform interactional business.

A study by Sneijder and te Molder (2006) of online conversations in an online forum on food pleasure exemplifies this. Participants in the forum constructed the identity of food lovers by claiming independent or superior access to what good food is. For example, with the objective assessment of scallops 'They are tasty!!!' one participant suggests that tastiness is a feature of scallops themselves rather than a subjective preference. In this way, the participant constructs superior access to the food and indexes the primary right to make an evaluation. This study gives an example of how a claim can be used to perform interactional business, namely to build up the identity of a food-lover.

There is thus a need to widen the perspective to utterances so that the interactional concerns can be revealed. Bringing these concerns to the surface can help scientific experts and policy makers to gain a better understanding of consumer-citizens, how they account for their choices. For example, Bouman et al. (2009) showed that Dutch consumers account for consumption of unhealthy food by emphasising the ordinariness of eating it, rather than stressing on a potentially negative health influence. Another study by Veen et al. (2013) showed that celiac disease patients and their families account for choosing certain food with its tastiness rather than with health as the main criterion.

Understanding how consumer-citizens account for choosing superfoods could shift the focus of scientific experts arguing with only scientific facts to incorporating new issues into the debate that are relevant concerns. In turn, consumer-citizens, who are confronted with a heterogeneity of nutrition advice, might become more aware of their own moralities, understand their own choices and be empowered to engage in a better dialogue on nutrition advice. Eventually, this can lead to an improved dialogue and to a fruitful discussion on 'good food'.

1.4 Relevance

Research in the field of healthy eating practices or ambitions to these, often focusses on the underlying nutritional knowledge and attitudes related to a certain diet (Kersting et al., 2008; Talvia et al., 2011; Girois et al., 2001). Little attention is paid to how people account for their food choices

² A consumer-citizen is an individual who makes choices based on ethical, social and ecological considerations (Thoresen, 2006).

from an everyday life perspective. In the existing studies, especially the relation between participants' knowledge claims and ways of identity building has been shown.

Everyday life interactions about vegan food choices have been studied by Sneijder and te Molder (2009). The research focusses on the relation between ideologically based food choice and identity, expressed in online discussions (ibid.). It shows how with certain knowledge claims, for example, defining vegan meals as ordinary and easy to prepare, a certain identity is being worked up, in this case the identity of an ordinary person. Wiggins (2014) made use of a discourse analysis to understand parent-child interactions in eating practices. She found that parents typically claimed what their children like and thus claim epistemic primacy of the food preferences of their children (ibid.). She thereby showed the importance of knowledge claims, more specific subjective category assessments (such as 'I like strawberries' and 'I hate cheese'), to work up a certain position in the conversation about eating practices. Sneijder and te Molder (2006) have also studied online discussions in taste forums and showed that through particular knowledge claims an identity as a 'gourmet' can be established. Their analysis showed how the participants in the discussion negotiated their relative socio-epistemic rights to assess taste and with that constructed their 'gourmet' identity. For example, by making use of bodily expressions (e.g. 'mmm' or 'delicious') participants constructed independent access to the food and thus claimed the right to know what good food is (ibid.).

A study of naturally occurring conversations among consumers of superfoods would thus be useful to provide insight into how the use of certain knowledge claims helps to build up certain identities. From a societal perspective, unhealthy nutrition habits and the growing numbers of people with lifestyle related diseases call for more insights in how diet choices are being accounted for.

From a scientific perspective, a research like this can be useful for scientific experts and policy makers to suggest conditions, which improve the dialogue and enable a fruitful discussion about 'good food'. The discussion should be on 'good food' rather than just on 'healthy food', because different participants (e.g. scientists and consumer-citizens) might have different, even conflictive definitions of 'healthy food'. 'Good food', however, is not a pre-defined term and does not exclude several food items or categories from the beginning.

1.5 Research objective and research questions

The objective of the research is *to sketch the contours of and conditions for a fruitful discussion about 'good food' by identifying the hidden interactional concerns of consumer-citizens in relation to superfoods.*

When new technologies are being discussed on the public agenda, many concerns are allowed to be subject to discussion, because they are 'hard' concerns (Swiestra & te Molder, 2012). This means that they are believed to be 'hard' enough for a rational debate, whereas other 'soft concerns' are subject to be dismissed: concerns that are subjective, unproven and/or messy with regard to whom is to be held accountable (ibid.). A *fruitful discussion* therefore refers to a discussion, which equally takes into account the soft concerns of the consumer-citizens in the debate. This will open the dialogue to more than a discussion on whether a technology should be forbidden or not. It could also enhance mutual trust rather than cause the lack of it. New technologies can also cause user's behaviour change, which can be taken into account when soft impacts are incorporated in the discussion agenda. (ibid.)

These *hidden interactional concerns* will be looked at in terms of what kind of knowledge claims are being made and which identities are constructed. To reach this aim, the following general research question (GRQ) will be answered:

GRQ: How do consumer-citizens account for the choice and use of superfoods in online discussion forums, and what do they achieve in the interaction by presenting their choice and use in these ways?

The GRQ looks at the knowledge claims that are being made to account for superfoods and what membership or identity is built up with that. It is further broken down into the following specific research questions (SRQs). The SRQs refer to the *kind* of knowledge claims and the effects as well as the identity work of the consumer-citizen.

SRQ1: What knowledge claims do participants make so as to account for choosing and/or eating superfoods, and what is achieved by making them, in terms of rights and responsibilities?

SRQ2: Do these claims allow for the establishment of particular participant identities, and if so, how?

1.6 Thesis outline

The following chapter presents the theoretical framework for this research. First, the background and entry points of discursive psychology are elaborated on. Then the two important concepts for this research, *knowledge claims* and *identity building* as well as the link between them, is further explained. Chapter three covers the method that is used for this research. The two data sources Viva forum and Foodlog forum are introduced, as well as the process of data selection and the eventual corpus for analysis. The two ways of analysing the data, sequential and rhetorical analysis, are explained and illustrated with examples. The fourth chapter covers the analysis of the participant's discussions in the Viva forum and in the Foodlog forum. Chapter five presents the main conclusions from the results and compares the observations that were made to the findings of other studies. Based on the conclusions, recommendations are given for enabling a fruitful discussion on 'good food'. The thesis ends with the limitations of the research and suggestions for further research.

2 Theoretical framework

The following chapter introduces the theoretical framework underlying this study. First, the background and the three entry points of discursive psychology will be introduced, in order to show which perspective will be adopted for the research. Following, the two concepts of the specific research questions *knowledge claims* and *identity construction* as well as the link between them will be elaborated on. First, different ways of using knowledge claims to establish knowledge rights and responsibilities will be explained. Then ways of identity construction in discourse will be explained and existing studies related to identity in discourse will be discussed. The link between knowledge claims and identity construction will be further elaborated on, which builds the framework for the later analysis of the establishment of particular identities through knowledge claims.

2.1 Background of discursive psychology

Discursive psychology was developed by Edwards (1997) and Potter (1996a) and examines how psychological issues are made relevant in everyday interactions (te Molder, 2009). Discursive psychology aims at understanding what people do in interaction and what kind of actions they perform (Potter, 2012) and thus tries to answer the question 'What do people do with their talk or writing?' (Potter, 1996b).

Discursive psychology is based on ethnomethodology and conversation analysis. Discursive psychology and ethnomethodology are related in their understanding of the nature of facts (ibid.). What is significant here is that the meaning of facts are understood as depending on the context. Their use is not only to give a description about something. They are also used to perform a sort of action, depending on the context, for example to compliment someone. Discursive psychology is also intertwined with conversation analysis in view of how an utterance is understood. No difference is made between the utterance and the meaning of it. This means that no assumptions about the underlying attitudes and mental constructs of the speaker are being made (ibid.).

2.1.1 Entry points of discursive psychology

Potter (1996b) describes three characteristics as being the basic elements of discursive psychology.

- (1) Discourse is characterised as *action-oriented*: This is related to the ethno-methodological concept of reflexivity, meaning that language is seen as a tool to perform actions with. People continuously perform actions with discourse, such as complementing another person or giving a warning (Potter, 2012), accusing, defending, building expertise, complaining and so on (te Molder, 2008). These actions do not necessarily have to be explicit; they often look descriptive (Potter, 2012). For example, saying 'This is tasty' about a meal, can be a descriptive way of complimenting the chef. The utterance itself just describes the meal. However, if the chef acknowledges it as a compliment, by for instance saying 'Thank you', the first speaker performed the action of *complimenting* the chef with his description.
- (2) Discourse is *situated*: Discourse can only be understood when the context of it is taken into account. This context is defined by the rhetorical and the sequential positioning and the institutional context. First, discourse is rhetorical, which means that a person rhetorically undermines possible counter versions by saying or writing something (Potter, 1996b; te Molder, 2008). Second, discourse is oriented to its sequential position in the interaction, where the speaker displays an understanding of the prior speaker's intention (Sneijder & te Molder, 2004). Third, depending on the institutional context, speakers embody special identities, such as a

therapist or patient, and their actions will be understood in relation to those identities (Potter, 2012).

- (3) Discourse is *constructed* and *constructive*: Discourse is constructed in the sense that tools like grammatical structures, words, categories, repertoires and stories are put together (constructed) for interactional and rhetorical purposes (Sneijder & te Molder, 2004; Potter, 2012). It is also constructive, as this construction is used to build versions of psychological worlds, of social organisations and action (Potter, 2012).

2.2 Analysing what talk does

The starting point of discursive psychology is discourse, because it is the primary arena for human action, understanding and intersubjectivity (the psychological relation between people) (Potter, 2012). Discourse analysis works with naturalistic settings (ibid.), which are naturally occurring interactions in everyday life situations. These naturally occurring interactions can be understood as any spoken or written conversation, such as a mealtime conversation or a chat in an online forum, which is produced independently from the interference of a researcher (Potter, 2004). The approach focusses only on the public realm which people have access to (ibid.) meaning that no statements about underlying attitudes and mental constructs are being made (Potter, 1996b; Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Discourse analysis is therefore a non-cognitive approach.

People perform many actions by the use of language. Two of these performed actions are particularly relevant in this research, namely: building (knowledge) rights and responsibilities through knowledge claims and constructing identities. In this research, the focus lies on the link between knowledge claims and identity construction. More concrete, this relates to the main research question, '*How do consumer-citizens account for the choice and use of superfoods in online discussion forums, and what do they achieve in the interaction by presenting their choice and use in these ways?*' In the following, first the two actions will be elaborated on and then the link between them will be shown.

2.2.1 Knowledge claims

Through making knowledge claims about certain topics and giving evaluations, people perform the action of simultaneously building (knowledge) rights and responsibilities. Knowledge claims are particularly interesting in food talk, because food talk is highly subjective and treated as belonging to the speaker's territory. The claims that are made are thus hard to undermine or influence. In the following, different kind of claims that can be observed in discourse will be explained.

2.2.1.1 Objective and subjective knowledge claims

Knowledge claims can be distinguished into objective and subjective knowledge claims (Wiggins & Potter, 2003). The terms *subjective* and *objective* do not express any connotations for correctness or accuracy, but express whether the object or the subject is being stressed (ibid.). An example for this can be 'I love cheese' (subjective evaluation) and 'This cheese is lovely' (objective evaluation).

Here, the characteristic of discourse being *constructed* and *constructive* becomes salient. The functions of the two forms of knowledge claims are different. While an objective evaluation may be used in persuasive talk, a subjective evaluation may be used to assess food and account for certain choices without the suggestion that others need to respond or agree with it (ibid.).

Subjective evaluations express a state that is directly felt and privileged and shift the accountability to the person rather than to the object being talked about (ibid.). Objective evaluations refer the described features to the food rather than to the personal liking (ibid.). It is important to note that a speaker can always be held accountable for what is being said, but through an objective knowledge claim the agency can be given to the object, too.

2.2.1.2 Scripted and breach formulations

Another distinction can be made in the descriptions of events, namely scripted formulations and breach formulations. Scripted formulations describe events that are ‘more or less routine and expectable’ (Edwards, 1994, p. 211). A scripted formulation can look like the following extract. It is a reaction in a forum on veganism to the question of Dick, what to put on a sandwich to avoid boredom.

```
1      It's certainly true that you can get temporarily tired of Tartex after a few
2      sandwiches. Have you ever tried fried onions and tomatoes with Herbermare
3      from Dr Vogel fried in a bit of olive oil on top on your bread?
```

5 lines omitted

```
4      A broccoli sandwich can also be recommended. Cook some broccoli and make some
5      garlic butter (16 lines omitted). If you try all kinds of things you will
6      discover after a while that vegan sandwiches are tasty!
```

(Sneijder & te Molder, 2009)

The formulation ‘If you try all kinds of things you will discover after a while that vegan sandwiches are tasty!’ (lines 5-6) is a script formulation. With this, the accountability is shifted to Dick, to try out different sorts of foods. The fact that he will then discover the tastiness of vegan sandwiches is presented as a logical conclusion.

Breach formulations can be seen oppositional to script formulations. They are descriptions of actions and events that are described to be contrasted with a norm or routine (Edwards, 1994, p. 211). The following extract shows a breach formulation, used in an online comment on a website for weight control.

```
1      Was doing really good until dinner and then I blew it. I have been starving
2      all day even though I ate a good breakfast and a good lunch. Does anyone else
3      have those days where you just can't seem to get enough food? I'm already
4      into flex and really mad at myself. I tried gum, I tried vegetable beef for
5      a point, I drank lots of water, but every two hours --- it was like I never
6      did even eat today! :-)
```

(Sneijder, 2006)

The speaker first mentions the good dieting practices (‘Was doing really good until dinner’, line 1), with which the regular diet is stressed. In a very abrupt way the speaker then mentions how the things went wrong. It is presented in a way that this could not have been foreseen before. It is a formulation like ‘At first I thought X, but then I realized Y’, whereby Y is presented as the breach to the normal (Sneijder, 2006). The breach formulation works to contrast the bad eating behaviour with her regular dieting pattern.

2.2.1.3 Stake inoculation

Stake inoculation is a way to establish credible, truthful knowledge claims. Stake inoculation works by refuting a possible stake that someone has been or might be accused of and then giving a counter-argument (Potter, 1996a).

An example for stake inoculation from Potter (ibid.) is the following interaction. It is taken from a study of youth subculture members about their lives and identities by Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1995). It has been noted that the members struggled to display that they make considered choices instead of following a fashion. Thus, they struggled with displaying their authentic rocker identity.

I = Interviewer, R = Respondent

- 1 I: When and how did you get into being a rocker?
- 2 R: It must have been when I was about fourteen or fifteen (.) some friends at
- 3 school were (.)
- 4 I: mmhm
- 5 R: an they- an I said oh heavy metal's rubbish, they said nah it's not an
- 6 they gave me some tapes to listen to an I did enjoy it, did like it
- 7 I: mmhm
- 8 R: and that's when I so-sort of started getting into it (.) before I sort of
- 9 liked things like Duran Duran and Spandau Ballet (.) huh hh
- 10 I: mmhm and then I mean how-
- 11 R: but that's cos I hadn't heard heavy metal you see

(Widdicombe and Wooffitt, 1995, pp.140-141)

The stake that the respondent is trying to refute is that his identity solely derives from social pressure, so he needs to display his authentic rocker identity. He does so by providing a description of his initial view ('an I said oh heavy metal's rubbish [...] but that's cos I hadn't heard any heavy metal you see', lines 5-11). He displays his initial expectation of heavy metal, which he did not like in the beginning. The respondent then provides a counter-explanation by saying 'they gave me some tapes to listen to an I did enjoy it, did like it and that's when I so-sort of started getting into it' (lines 6-8). He thereby displays his process of getting into heavy metal as a thoughtful process with a considered judgement. With this stake inoculation, the respondent works against the idea of just following his friends and works up an authentic rocker identity.

2.2.2 Identity in discourse

In social science research, identity is usually treated as a cognitive entity, which is assumed to reflect actual and relatively fixed personalities, social categories or choices (see McKinlay and Dunnett, 1998). Therefore, identity as a cognitive entity is treated as stable. However, identities can also be understood as social practices, which means that in different situations, people construct, attribute and refute different identities. This means, a person can take variable roles and also make different identities salient in different situation, which can also conflict with each other. For example, a person can present himself as vegetarian in order to express commitment to animal welfare, while at the same time draw on the identity of a responsible human being who looks after his own health to account for eating meat (Sneijder, 2006). Thus, if we want to understand how people account for food choices in terms of their identity, we have to look at the identity in discourse, because the identities can vary depending on the situation.

Identity in the context of food talk has been studied by Sneijder and te Molder (2009). They looked at the relation between identity and ideologically based food choices in a forum on veganism. The study showed that participants in the forum used different ways to systematically resist the notion that being vegan is complicated. They did so by (1) defining vegan meals as ordinary and easy to prepare

and (2) constructing methods of preventing vitamin deficiency, such as taking supplements, as routine procedures. In this way, the participants constructed themselves as 'doing being ordinary'. The study showed how participants worked up the identity of an ordinary person in order to challenge the negative assumptions in relation to their food-identity (vegan). A second study by Sneijder & te Molder (2004) also showed discursive strategies to resist negative assumption of veganism being complicated. They showed that participants (1) constructed veganism as healthy and the recipients as responsible for their own failure and (2) constructed prevention methods for individual health problems as ordinary. Again, they thereby resisted the notion of veganism being complicated and displayed themselves as ordinary.

A study by Veen et al. (2013) focussed on 'taste talk' during mealtime conversations in families with children, who suffer from celiac disease. The food choice for the children was expected to be accounted for in terms of food safety. However, the study showed that the families accounted for it in different ways. First, they found that in moments where food was offered, it was accounted for with its tastiness. Second, in a situation where food was being denied, this denial was softened by constructing it as a joint practice.

The studies show that identity is an important concept in discourse and especially when accounting for certain food choices. In discursive psychology, identity can be looked at from two perspectives (Sneijder & te Molder, 2006): first, it can be used as an interactional tool, for example, to display entitlement to certain knowledge. Second, constructing a particular identity can in itself be an interactional goal.

2.2.2.1 Identity as an interactional tool

Using identity as an interactional tool means that a speaker uses his or her identity to perform a specific action. An example in which identity is used as an interactional tool is the action of *displaying knowledge*. In this context, identity refers to an identity that is ascribed to the speaker, for example being a doctor or being a chef. Belonging to a certain category is treated as sufficient to account for and warrant certain knowledge of a specific topic (Potter 1996a). For example, a doctor is entitled to make claims about health, whereas a chef is entitled to make claims about good food. This is also referred to as *category entitlement* (ibid.).

2.2.2.2 Identity as an interactional goal

Identity can also be the interactional goal itself. This means that by making certain knowledge claims, an identity is built up. An example can be to claim superior knowledge in a food forum and thus working up the identity of a food lover. The membership to a certain category can be achieved or worked up to. At the same time, people can also fail to be treated as having a certain membership (Potter, 1996a).

2.2.3 Linking knowledge claims and identity construction

Identity as an interactional goal is what will be looked at in this research. In discourse, people can construct certain identities through making knowledge claims. In the following, the link between knowledge claims and identity building will thus be looked at more closely.

2.2.3.1 Order of claims

A claim or assessment can either be made in first or in second position. First assessments can index an epistemic authority to the claim, meaning to have the primary right to evaluate the matter

(Heritage & Raymond, 2005) and thereby the speaker claims an entitlement to speak about the topic. This puts the second speaker in the position of claiming agreement, disagreement or adjustment and demonstrating that his right to assess the matter is not secondary to that of the first speaker (ibid.).

The second position (when another person has given an evaluation before) is particularly interesting to look at, because identity becomes very important here: through constructing independent or superior access to the matter at stake, the speaker claims the socio-epistemic right to evaluate the matter. Through this, the speaker can construct a certain identity, for example the identity of a knowledgeable person in that matter.

2.2.3.2 Constructing independent or superior access

Different discursive devices can be used to establish independent or superior access in second position. Superior access refers to showing that the speaker has a superior epistemic right to make an evaluation. Showing independent access means that the speaker expresses that his or her position on the matter was already 'settled' (Heritage & Raymond, 2005, p. 23). Heritage and Raymond showed four different devices to construct independent access in a second position. These devices are:

- (1) Giving a confirmation before agreeing (e.g. 'how tasty' - 'it is tasty, yes')
- (2) Oh-prefacing (e.g. 'how tasty' - 'oh, this is beautiful')
- (3) Making a statement and a tag (e.g. 'how tasty' - 'tasty, isn't it?')
- (4) Stating a negative interrogative (e.g. 'how tasty' - 'isn't it tasty?')

Heritage and Raymond showed that by using these devices, participants presented their assessments as independently arrived at. In a discourse analysis of online talk in a food forum, Sneijder and te Molder (2006) identified three other devices that were used to construct independent or superior access:

- (1) Objective second evaluations (e.g. 'Blueberries are tasty', see also 2.2.1.1)
- (2) Bodily expressions: Bodily or gustatory expressions are assessments of food, which are not embedded in a grammatical structure and which express an on the spot experience (e.g. 'Delicious!')
- (3) Explicit agreement ('I totally agree with you')

Sneijder and te Molder showed that by using these devices, assessment is also presented as more than a mere opinion based on subjective taste preferences. Since food talk is a highly subjective field, claiming independent or superior access might be the only appropriate way of claiming expertise and thereby claiming the membership to a certain group, for example those of the gourmets (ibid.). Through showing that participants had independent knowledge of tasty food rather than just displaying their subjective preferences, the participants of the forum constructed the identity of a gourmet.

This chapter began with introducing the discursive psychological perspective and the entry points of discourse being action-oriented, situated and constructed. It was shown how with different *claims* knowledge rights and responsibilities can be build up. *Identity* how it can be used and achieved in discourse – as an interactional tool and as an interactional goal – was explained. Subsequently the link between making a knowledge claim and building up an identity has been established. This theoretical framework is the starting point for the present study of online

interactions about superfoods. The following chapter will introduce the data to be analysed and the analytical principles that will be used for this.

3 Method

Chapter three covers the method that will be used for this study. First, the data corpus from the two online discussion forums *Viva* and *Foodlog* will be explained, followed by an explanation of the data selection from the extensive corpus. Finally, the two analytical principles, sequential and rhetoric analysis, will be elaborated on.

3.1 Data sources

The data that have been used for the research are online interactions. Online interactions can be considered as naturally occurring talk since the participants freely interact with each other without interference by the researcher.

Discursive psychology has mainly been applied to face-to-face conversation and there are noticeable differences to be taken into account when looking at online interactions. For example, online-interactions are written texts, which are not produced in real time. An answer to a comment can be written at any point in time and the production is not visible, as it is in face-to-face conversation. Therefore, turn-taking in the conversation, this means, direct reactions to what the other speaker has said, is hard to detect (Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003). Amongst other factors, phenomena of face-to-face conversations, such as silence, overlap or interruption are also not displayed in online interaction. However, online interaction can still be analysed for its functional and rhetorical qualities in the sequential context (see Snejder & te Molder, 2005). The two principles, rhetorical and sequential analysis (as will be discussed in 3.3.1 and 3.3.2) are still applicable.

The online interactions for this research have been taken from two online discussion forums that have been chosen through purposeful sampling on the basis of their public access, high popularity and the interaction frequency among participants (i.e. participants actually respond to each other).

3.1.1 Viva forum

Part of the data was taken from the website Viva. The website is related to the Viva magazine and the primary target group are women between 25 and 45 years (Sanoma, 2015a). It contains articles and a general forum that covers various topics, such as entertainment, food, health, beauty, travelling, work, pregnancy, etc. (Sanoma, 2014). The forum can be publicly accessed. The website has a high popularity with 375,000 unique visitors per month and 60,000 registered users (Sanoma, 2015b). Interaction takes place in the comment section below the article as well in the forum discussions, with comments that range from less than 10 up to a few thousand.

3.1.2 Foodlog forum

The other part of the data has been taken from the website Foodlog. Foodlog is a news-platform about nutrition, health, food and drinks. It is also a forum where discussions take place with a critical mind-set in order to enable coming generations to eat responsible and healthy (Foodlog, n.d.). The forum can be accessed by anyone. It attracts visitors of various expertise, ranging from scientists, doctors, farmers, food industry representatives, retailers, journalists, students to critical consumers (ibid.). The website has about 900,000 unique visitors, thereof 85,000 permanent readers monthly (ibid.), which ensures that the forum has a high popularity. Articles placed on the website have a comment section, where interaction takes place, which vary from less than 10 comments to more than 100.

3.2 Data selection

To conduct a discourse analysis, the corpus has to be of a reasonable size so that a detailed analysis of the data can be ensured. Three steps were made to select threads from the Viva and Foodlog forum.

In the first step, the search terms *superfood*, *superfoods*, *supervoeding*, *supervoedsel*, *supergroente* and *superfruit* have been used in both forums to search for threads on these topics³. The body of search results was still far too extensive for an analysis. Second, the search results were scanned based on their titles and their contents. In this step, all threads were sorted out, where only (one of) the search term was named in the discussion, but the main topic of discussion was a different one (e.g. low-calorie diets were being discussed). In the third step, the remaining threads were scanned to find out, where most interactions took place. This is usually where an explicit controversy develops in the discussion. Therefore, threads where clearly a controversy arose have been chosen for the discourse analysis. Other threads, for instance, where recipes were solely listed, or where none of the participants actually made use of superfoods, have been excluded. The kind threads of that were eventually chosen and the controversies therein will be elaborated on in the following paragraph.

3.2.1 Corpus for analysis

The three-step data selection resulted in a corpus of four threads from the Viva forum, with 221 comments in total, and two threads from the Foodlog forum, with 140 comments in total.

The six threads were chosen because they all contained a controversy in relation to superfoods, which was actively discussed by the participants and looked promising for an analysis. The controversies that were discussed in the threads related to different aspects. In the Viva forum these were negative experiences with superfoods, potentially negative influences of superfoods and the possibility of making too much use of superfoods. In the Foodlog forum the controversies dealt with the criticism on the mere existence of superfoods as well as the marketing of superfoods.

Permission has been asked from both forums to make use of the data for the study. According to this, the content will be anonymised and only be used for this research. Both forums have given permission to make use of the data (see appendix A).

3.3 Data analysis

The main analysis of the discussions consisted of two phases: First, discovering certain patterns, in this case recurring knowledge claims. This has been done in terms of variability (differences in terms of content or form of accounts) and consistency (shared features of accounts) in the data. This first phase concentrated on the research question ‘What knowledge claims do participants make so as to account for choosing and/or eating superfoods, and what is achieved by making them, in terms of rights and responsibilities?’ The data has been scanned for noticeable and recurring topics and arguments in participants’ accounts for superfoods. Note that, in a discourse analysis, not the quantity of examples for a pattern is important, but the quality. Discourse analysis does not strive for representativeness, but is interested in the content, organisation and function of a particular text or discourse (Gill, 2000).

³ Searching for individual superfoods, such as *quinoa* and *chia*, primarily led to listings of recipes, so they were not included in the search.

The second phase was concerned with functions and consequences. Based on the idea that discourse fulfils functions, this stage formulates hypotheses about these functions and effects and looks for linguistic evidence (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). This stage dealt with the specific research question 'Do these claims allow for the establishment of particular participant identities, and if so, how?' It focused particularly on what identities are being achieved through making the knowledge claims.

For this analysis, two analytic principles have been used, sequential and rhetoric analysis.

3.3.1 Sequential analysis

The sequential analysis looks at the uptake of an utterance by the speaker following that utterance. In such an uptake, a speaker always shows a certain understanding. By looking at the uptake of the speaker, his or her interpretation of what has been said before becomes salient. In this way, the researcher avoids to make own interpretations of the meaning of the first utterance. The sequential analysis is also referred to as the participants' proof procedure (Edwards, 1997).

The following extract exemplifies the sequential analysis.

HV = Health visitor, M = Mother, F = Father

- 1 HV: He's enjoying that isn't he.
- 2 F: Yes, he certainly is.
- 3 M: He's not hungry 'cuz he's just had his bottle.

(simplified from Heritage & Sefi, 1992)

The health visitor refers to the baby, who is sucking or chewing on something. When using sequential analysis, the meaning of her utterance can be understood when looking at the uptake. The uptake by the father 'Yes, he certainly is' (line 2) displays mere agreement with what has been said by the health visitor. The mother, however reacts by saying 'He's not hungry 'cuz he's just had his bottle' (line 3). It can be seen that the mother treats the utterance of the health visitor as an implication that the baby might be hungry. She therefore denies that the baby is hungry and justifies why the baby cannot be hungry. The mother treats the utterance as an accusation and the health visitor as someone, who is evaluating her competence as a mother (Heritage & Sefi, 1992).

3.3.2 Rhetorical analysis

The second analytic principle refers to the characteristic of discourse being rhetoric. It means that when something is being said, the speaker undermines counter versions and alternatives of what is being said (Potter, 1996b; te Molder, 2008). By looking at possible counter versions, the researcher can make sense of what is actually being said and what action is performed with an utterance.

The following quote from the data corpus helps to illustrate how a rhetorical analysis works. The fragment is from a rape trial. The counsel for the defence is cross-examining the victim of the rape.

C = Counsel, W = Witness

- 1 C: It's where girls and fellas meet isn't it?
- 2 W: People go there.

(simplified from Drew, 1992)

The counsel refers to a club where the defendant and the victim met. Note that for both parties the kind of formulation is very relevant, because they construct versions of how the event might have looked like. Rhetorical analysis helps to show what is made relevant here. By saying 'It's where the girls and fellas meet isn't it?' (line 1) the counsel creates a certain picture. Instead of saying 'girls and fellas' he could have also referred to 'visitors', 'local people' or 'men and women'. He invokes the idea that the club is a place where young people go to, in order to meet people from the opposite sex (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). The witness, on the contrary, calls the visitors just 'people' (line 2), with which she gives a rather neutral description of the visitors.

4 Results

In the following, the main results will be presented, which are derived from the analysis of the interaction amongst the participants of the Viva forum and of the Foodlog forum. The analysis was led by the main research question: How do consumer-citizens account for the choice and use of superfoods in online discussion forums, and what do they achieve in the interaction by presenting their choice and use in these ways?

Through reading and re-reading the chosen threads, recurring knowledge claims that were used to account for eating and choosing superfoods have been identified and noted down. The comments containing these knowledge claims have been analysed further using the two analytical principles (sequential and rhetorical analysis), to eventually find out the dominant patterns and the interactional goals achieved with them.

The two significant patterns that have been identified in the Viva forum are:

- (1) Doing being an expert of your own body
- (2) Doing being a reasonable health-seeker

In the Foodlog forum, one recurring pattern was found:

- (3) Doing being a nuanced expert

To explain the patterns, first the opening statement or the statement triggering a certain interaction will be displayed and analysed. Then a few examples from every pattern will be shown and analysed in terms of the interactional work of the participants (i.e. the knowledge claims and identities that are built up). Some lines of the fragments will be omitted for the purpose of the analysis. The entire fragments can be found in appendix B.

4.1 Viva forum

The corpus for analysis of the Viva forum consisted of four threads with 221 comments in total, (for a description of the corpus for analysis, see paragraph 3.2.1). All four threads have been opened by participants who are new to the topic of superfoods. In the course of the conversations, different controversies arose, namely negative experiences with superfoods, potentially negative influences of superfoods and the possibility of making too much use of superfoods.

The analysis shows that participants constructed two different identities, namely 'doing being an expert of your own body' and 'doing being a reasonable health-seeker'. They will separately be discussed in the following paragraphs.

4.1.1 Doing being an expert of your own body

During the conversation in the Viva forum, it could be observed that participants show expertise and build up the identity as an expert of and for themselves, but not for anyone else. Two observations were made about how participants built up this identity:

- (1) Participants show expertise by showing the independent source for being an expert
- (2) Participants show that they are only their *own* experts and not the expert of anyone else by restricting their statements to their own experiential domain

The identity construction doing being an expert of your own body could be observed 14 times in the corpus.

The first pattern occurred in reaction to an opening statement made by Julia, who presents herself as a novice in the superfoods topic and asks for advice. She also gives a first evaluation of superfoods, specifically displaying her concern in terms of eating superfoods during pregnancy. Her opening statement will shortly be explained in the following and subsequently four examples of the pattern will be elaborated on.

Fragment 1: Julia (opening statement)

- 1 Hoi allemaal, Ik heb weer een vraag mbt voeding, zal gerust een domme
 Hi everyone, I have another question regarding nutrition, is probably a silly
- 2 vraag wezen, maar ik ben graag voorzichtig. Ik ben zwanger, en heb vandaag
 question, but I like to be careful. I am pregnant, and today I
- 3 gekocht: goji bessen, cocus water, en rauwe cacao poeder. Ik wilde wat
 bought: goji berries, coco water, and raw cacao powder. I wanted to
- 4 gezonder eten. Ik bedacht me in ene dat sommige super food een
 eat a bit healthier. I considered suddenly that some superfoods have a
- 5 ontgiftende werking hebben, en dat lijkt me niet slim tijdens een
 detoxifying effect, and that does not seem smart to me during a
- 6 zwangerschap. Ik zal gerust weer overbezorgd zijn, maar ik heb dr geen
 pregnancy. I am probably again overanxious, but I have no
- 7 verstand van, dus zou graag wat hulp willen. Dank
 understanding of it, thus would like to have some help. Thanks

The opening comment by Julia is a help-request towards the other participants in the forum, but at the same time it is also an assessment in first position.

First, Julia demonstrates her interest in superfoods and explains her worries about eating some of them during pregnancy. She says 'I considered suddenly that some superfoods have a detoxifying effect, and that does not seem smart to me during a pregnancy' (lines 4-6) and thus displays her concern about eating superfoods during pregnancy. By mentioning the 'detoxifying effect' as a possible negative factor, she marks superfoods as contested and by this Julia makes a first assessment of superfoods, with which the primary right to evaluate the matter is claimed (Heritage & Raymond, 2005).

Following the assessment, Julia ends by saying that she 'would like to have some help' (line 7) and thereby makes a help-request to the participants of the forum. This brings participants in the situation of giving a second assessment and display independent or superior access (Heritage & Raymond).

Fragment 2 is a reply to Julia by Else. She gives an overview of how she prepares overnight oats and thereby makes use of superfoods.

Fragment 2: Else (reaction to Julia)

- 1 Ik eet graag overnight oats. Die maak ik met amandelmelk, havermout en
 I like to eat overnight oats. I make them with almond milk, oatmeal and

- 2 dan gooi ik er vaak hennepzaadjes, chiazaadjes, abrikozen/dadels en veel
I often throw hemp seeds, chia seeds, apricots/dates and lots of
- 3 vers fruit als blauwe bessen en frambozen in. Snufje kaneel erover,
fresh fruits like blueberries and raspberries in. Pinch of cinnamon over it,
- 4 jam! Juist deze combinatie bevalt me heel goed. Het vult een stuk beter dan
yum! Just this combination I like a lot. It feels a bit better than
- 5 yoghurt met fruit of boterhammen vind ik. Ik gebruik dus superfoods maar
yogurt with fruit or sandwiches I think. So I use superfoods but
- 6 ook gewoon gezonde 'Nederlandse' dingen. En daar doe ik het goed op.
also just healthy 'Dutch' things. And I am doing well with it.

In reaction to Julia, Else works up the identity of being an expert of her own body. The two actions for working up that identity - showing her own expertise and showing that she is only her own expert, not anyone else's – are both performed in her statement.

First, Else establishes expertise by showing her independent source for being an expert, which means that she refers to a source that only she has access to. Note that she does not, for example, mention any information she got from a book or another source, but she gives a description of how she makes overnight oats (lines 1-4) and thereby refers to an independent source. The statement is formulated as a scripted formulation (Edwards, 1994). Script formulations describe events that are 'more or less routine and expectable' (p. 211), they can be used to make the event seem 'perfectly normal, what everybody or anybody would do, as routine, not needing any special account' (p. 217). The use of the scripted formulation works to demonstrate that Else has her own experience with superfoods and has an independent source for being an expert.

Second, Else demonstrates that she is only her own expert and not anyone else's by restricting her statement to her own subjective domain. She uses subjective formulations such as 'I like to eat' (line 1) and 'I like a lot' (line 4) as well as 'I am doing well with it' (line 6). Note that she gives an evaluation of her own use of superfoods and thus restricts the evidence to herself. In this sense, her evaluation of superfoods is hard to undermine, because she only states that it works for her and she does not implicate that it would work for others as well. In that sense, she does not give any direct advice and does neither agree nor disagree with the first assessment that was done by Julia.

Fragment 3 is a reply by Laura to Julia, who keeps her comment rather short.

Fragment 3: Laura (reaction to Julia)

- 1 Ik zweer bij bosbessen! Heerlijk! En ik ben 30 weken zwanger.
I swear by blueberries! Delicious! And I am 30 weeks pregnant.

With this reaction, Laura also establishes the identity of being an expert of her own body by first displaying expertise and second showing that she is only her own expert, not anyone else's. It is particularly interesting how Laura shares her own experience and relates to Julia's situation thereby not directly agreeing or disagreeing with Julia and thus not giving an advice.

It can first be observed from her statement that Laura demonstrates her independent source for her expertise – her experience, which only she has access to. By saying 'I swear by blueberries! Delicious!' (line 1) Laura makes her own evaluation of superfoods, in this case, blueberries. Note that she makes use of the verb 'swear', which expresses a convinced attitude based on a personal

experience, thus the statement is difficult to argue against. In this way, Laura expresses a 'for me it works' claim. Additionally, Laura makes use of a so-called bodily or gustatory expression (Wiggins, 2002; Sneijder & te Molder, 2006) when saying 'Delicious!' The use of the expression 'Delicious!' stresses the notion that Laura makes use of her personal experience and hence she constructs her evaluation as independent from Julia's (see Sneijder & te Molder, 2006).

The second observation is that Laura restricts her statements to her own experiential domain. She does this by saying 'And I am 30 weeks pregnant' (line 1). Note that her statement only relates to herself and that Laura does not establish any direct relation to Julia or any other participant through her statement (see Sneijder & te Molder, 2004). Thus, Laura does not claim to be an expert for anyone else but herself.

In the following fragment, Nina reacts to Julia's statement, precisely limiting her expertise to herself.

Fragment 4: Nina (reaction to Julia)

- 1 Ik heb werkelijkwaar geen idee. Ik drink na het heel hard zweten in de bikram
 I really have no idea. After a lot of sweating in the bikram
- 2 yoga weleens kokoswater omdat het isotoon is (schijnt, en mijn
 yoga I occasionally drink coco water because it is isotonic (seems, and my
- 3 topsportende schoonzusje drinkt het daarom ook, dus ik vertrouw het wel
 and my top-sporting sister-in-law also drinks it therefore, so I do trust it
- 4 enigszins;) en niet zo zoet als AA-drink ofzo en dus wel lekker
 somewhat;) and not as sweet as AA-drink or something and thus
- 5 dorstlessend.
 thirst-quenching.

2 lines omitted

Like the other participants, also Nina's statement presents her as an expert of her own body. Both actions to construct this identity can be observed, namely showing expertise through showing the independent source for being an expert and demonstrating oneself as an expert of oneself, not of anyone else.

Nina displays in her utterance that she restricts her expertise to just herself. She first says 'I really have no idea' (line 1), with which she displays that she does not claim any generalised expertise in the topic of superfoods. She continues by giving an example from her own use of superfoods: 'After a lot of sweating in the bikram yoga I occasionally drink coco water because it is isotonic (seems, and my top-sporting sister-in-law also drinks it therefore, so I do trust it somewhat ;) and not as sweet as AA-drink or something and thus thirst-quenching' (lines 1-5). Nina keeps her statement rather casual by saying that she 'occasionally' drinks coco water. This shows some reluctance to make an absolute statement, which in this situation can be understood as reluctance to make a general statement as an expert for anyone else.

Nina also establishes expertise through showing her independent source for being an expert. First, she refers to her 'top-sporting sister-in-law', who also makes use of coco water. Nina makes use of category entitlement (Potter, 1996a). Belonging to a certain category, in this case being a top-sportsperson, is treated as a sufficient account for having certain knowledge. In this case, Nina refers

to someone in her personal surrounding, rather than a source she has no personal or direct connection to and thereby shows her independent source for being an expert. Second, having said before that she drinks coco water ‘[a]fter a lot of sweating’, the coco water is then described as ‘isotonic’ and ‘thirst-quenching’, like a solution to the sweating. Thus she refers to her own experience and demonstrates her independent source for being an expert.

The pattern of ‘doing being an expert of your own body’ could also be observed in a second thread. The thread is opened by Lena:

Fragment 5: Lena (opening statement)

- 1 Wat is jullie mening over de superfoods hype? Zouden jullie het wel of niet
 What is your opinion about the superfoods hype? Would you or would you not
- 2 gebruiken? Op het internet en overal worden imo alleen de positieve dingen
 use it? On the internet and everywhere in my opinion only positive things
- 3 beschreven maar er zullen ook vast nadelen aan kleven en bijwerkingen.
 are described but there should surely also be disadvantages and side effects.
- 4 Deel hier je positieve en negatieve ervaringen!
 Share here your positive and negative experiences!
- 5 Zelf heb ik een tijdje tarwegras gebruikt maar nooit iets positiefs van
 I have used wheat grass for a while but never noticed anything positive,
- 6 gemerkt, het enige wat ik ervan kreeg was maagpijn.
 the only thing I got from it was a stomach-ache.

Lena asks the community for their opinion about superfoods, especially with regards to positive and negative experiences. At the same time, she gives her own evaluation of superfoods. First, she says ‘On the internet and everywhere in my opinion only positive things are described but there should surely be disadvantages and side effects’ (lines 2-3), thereby marking superfoods as something potentially contested. By further mentioning that she got stomach ache from the wheat grass (see lines 5-6), a negative image of superfoods is created.

The following example is Saskia’s answer to Lena’s comment. Saskia tells the forum members about her experience using bee pollen against her hay fever. She says that she had tried other solutions before, but that bee pollen helped her.

Fragment 6: Saskia (reaction to Lena)

- 1 Postieve ervaring wat betret de bijenkorrels. Ik had hele erge last van
 Positive experience regarding the bee pollen. I had really bad trouble with
- 2 hooikoorts en nu bijna niet meer dankzij de bijenkorrels.
 hay fever and now almost no more thanks to the bee pollen.
- 1 line omitted
- 3 Ik heb al heel wat chemische troep gehad van de dokter voor hooikoorts,
 I have had a lot of chemical junk from the doctor for hay fever,
- 4 maar dit helpt echt!
 but this really helps!

Saskia works up the identity of an expert of her own body. She performs the two actions of demonstrating expertise and showing that she is her own expert and not anybody else’s.

Saskia first claims expertise through showing her independent source for being an expert. She does this by explicitly referring to her own experience ('Positive experience regarding the bee pollen', line 1). Thus, she demonstrates that her expertise does not derive from any secondary source, for example, scientific knowledge, but that she has an independent source for it.

Furthermore, Saskia does not display that she holds any expertise for anyone but herself. First, note how she only refers to personal experience, thereby limiting the validity of the statement when saying 'I had really bad trouble with hay fever and now almost no more thanks to the bee pollen' (lines 1-2). By doing this, she claims being an expert of her own body. Second, by saying 'I have had a lot of chemical junk from the doctor for hay fever, but this really helps' (lines 3-4) she constructs an argument that is hard to argue against, because it suggests personal experience with bee pollen. Note that she says that 'this [the bee pollen] really helps' instead of stressing on the fact that the medicine did not help (e.g. saying 'but the chemical junk did not work'). In that way, she stresses the benefit that she personally experienced.

Summary

The previous examples demonstrated how participants were doing being an expert of their own body. The identity construction could be noted in situations, where superfoods were marked as contested and participants reacted to that in a second position. It could be observed that the participants performed two actions: First, they demonstrated their expertise by showing their independent source of being an expert. Second, they presented themselves as their own expert and not anybody else's expert.

4.1.2 Doing being a reasonable health-seeker

During the conversation in the Viva forum, participants presented themselves as reasonable health-seekers. Two ways to build this identity were observed: (1) by presenting commonly accepted but non-scientific reasons for the use of superfoods and (2) by constructing unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception. The identity of a reasonable health-seeker occurred 16 times in the corpus, whereby 13 times through presenting commonly accepted reasons and 3 times through constructing unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception.

An example of both patterns can be found in reaction to a statement made by Eva. She expresses her doubt of going too far when making use of superfoods and thus makes the matter relevant in the discussion:

Fragment 7: Eva

4 lines omitted

- 1 Ik vraag me alleen af of ik niet doorsla als ik aan het
I am just asking myself if I am not going too far when I am drinking
- 2 kokoswater zit of chia zaad of rauwe cacao door mijn ontbijt doe.
coco water or add chia seeds or raw cacao to my breakfast.

With the statement 'I am just asking myself if I am not going too far when I am drinking coco water or add chia seeds or raw cacao to my breakfast' (lines 1-2) expresses her doubt about possibly overdoing it when making use of superfoods. Note that Eva uses a subjective restriction ('I am just asking myself'), thus keeps it very personal. Yet the following answers from other participants will

show that participants react as if they have been directly accused of going too far when making use of superfoods.

Presenting commonly accepted, non-scientific reasons for the use of superfoods

It could be observed that in reaction to Eva's comment, participants constructed the identity of a reasonable health-seeker by presenting commonly accepted but non-scientific reasons for the use of superfoods. The participants presented their interests in the form of a stake inoculation (Potter, 1996a). Stake inoculation works by refuting a possible stake that someone might have or be accused of and giving a counter-argument (ibid.). In the case of the Viva forum, the possible accusation of going too far is refuted (by assuring to not overdo it) and a commonly accepted, non-scientific counter-interest is presented.

The first example of the pattern comes from Hester, who refutes the idea of going too far and then presents different counter-interests.

Fragment 8: Hester (reaction to Eva)

7 lines omitted

- 1 Ik word blijer van muesli als er ook rauwe cacao en gojibessen door zitten.
I get happier from muesli if there are also raw cacao and goji berries in it.
- 2 Dat is niet doorslaan, maar genieten van lekker eten.
That is not going too far, but enjoying tasty food.

In reaction to Eva's comment, Hester displays the identity of a reasonable health-seeker. She achieves this by presenting non-scientific but recognizably good reasons for choosing superfoods, namely happiness, enjoyment and taste.

Hester effectively presents her commonly-accepted reasons for making use of superfoods through stake inoculation. Eva says 'I get happier from muesli if there are also raw cacao and goji berries in it. That is not going too far, but enjoying tasty food' (lines 1-2). She first refutes the idea of going too far when making use of superfoods ('That is not going too far'), which shows that Hester took up Eva's comment as a direct accusation of overdoing it when making use of superfoods.

Hester then presents her counter-interests, by saying 'I get happier from muesli [...]' and '[t]hat is [...] enjoying tasty food'. The counter-interests are happiness ('happier'), enjoyment ('enjoying') and taste ('tasty'). The three interests are non-scientific, but commonly accepted reasons for choosing food, thus reasons that another person can easily relate to. Stating these reasons here expresses a rationality which does not derive from scientific reasoning but from reasons that are more ordinary, yet commonly accepted as good reasons for eating particular foods.

The following reaction is from Sophie, who also refutes to overdo the use of superfoods and presents her counter-interest:

Fragment 9: Sophie (reaction to Eva)

3 lines omitted

- 1 Heeft niks met doorslaan te maken, maar gewoon met de keuze
Has nothing to do with going too far, but just with the choice

2 om een gezond leven te willen leiden. Niks mis mee.
to want to live a healthy life. Nothing wrong with that.

Sophie's reaction to Eva shows that she also displays rationality in her effort to live healthy. She does so by referring to health as her reason for choosing superfoods.

In the omitted lines, Sophie refutes that Eva is going too far and describes her own use of superfoods. She then makes use of stake inoculation when saying 'Has nothing to do with going too far, but just with the choice to want to live a healthy life' (lines 1-2). Sophie explicitly refutes to overdo the use of superfoods ('Has nothing to do with going too far') and thereby makes use of an objective knowledge claim. She thereby does not only refute the statement of overdoing it for Eva, but constructs it as a fact that is valid for anyone who makes use of superfoods.

She then displays herself as being reasonable by presenting her counter-interest ('the choice to want to live a healthy life'). In her statement, health is presented as the main account for making use of superfoods. Health is a commonly accepted reason, which participants in the Viva forum and also in the 'outside' world can relate to. It displays rationality without necessarily being based on scientific reasoning. The ordinariness of Sophie's reason is also stressed by the closing sentence 'Nothing wrong with that' (line 2). The simple sentence structure makes the reason seem perfectly normal, which makes it easy to relate to for other participants.

Constructing unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception

Another way of how participants presented themselves as reasonable health-seekers was by constructing unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception. The participants did so by making use of knowledge claims that resemble breach formulations, which describe events that are contrasted with a norm or routine (Edwards, 1994a).

The first example is an answer by Sarah to Eva's opening comment. In the omitted part, Sarah describes the guidelines that she has for her own diet, specifically what she is allowed and not allowed to eat. She then says that she also eats fries and crisps, but not very often.

Fragment 10: Sarah (reaction to Eva)

7 lines omitted

1 Als ik wel zin heb in het frietje neem ik die toch, maar nog maar zelden.
If I do feel like fries I take them anyway, but just rarely.

2 En eet ook wel eens chips.
And also eat crisps sometimes.

3 lines omitted

Sarah uses a breach formulation when saying 'If I do feel like fries I take them anyway, but just rarely. And also eat crisps sometimes' (lines 1-2). The formulation stands in contrast to the description of her regular diet (omitted lines). The fact that she actually brings up this exception can be understood as a reaction to Eva's worry of overdoing it when eating superfoods. She thereby counteracts the idea of going too far in making use of superfoods.

Sarah emphasises the normality of eating the fries and crisps, rather than focussing on the fact that she has made an exception in her diet which is unhealthy and thus not in line with the usual diet. The formulation 'If I do feel like' shows that the unhealthy eating is unplanned behaviour and the decision is just based on Sarah's feelings. The situation is described as a perfectly normal situation for Sarah. The account 'because I feel like it' is easy for other people to relate to, because it is a common reason for choosing a kind of food. Sarah expresses that she is not fanatic about following the healthy diet and eventually displays herself as a reasonable health-seeker.

The second example comes from Eva herself, who also opened the thread and asked for the participant's opinion on superfoods. She describes her new eating pattern as follows:

Fragment 11: Eva

3 lines omitted

- 1 Ik heb nu net zo lief een gezonde salade met bonen en linzen en alleen wat
 I now just as much like a healthy salad with beans and lentils and just some
- 2 olijfolie als dressing dan een zak chips. Al eet ik zo nu en dan
 olive oil as a dressing as a bag of chips. Though I eat now and then
- 3 gewoon een (bio) chippie.
 a (bio) chippie.

Eva, who also started the thread, now displays herself as reasonable in terms of her healthy diet and the unhealthy exceptions. She starts off with saying that she likes 'a healthy salad with beans and lentils and just some olive oil [just as much] as a bag of chips' (lines 1-2) and thereby also makes use of a kind of scripted formulation. Note that she formulates what she *likes* rather than just what she *eats*. The fact that she uses a rather subjective reasoning again helps other people to relate to Eva's reasoning. Her reasoning is based on her liking and she does not use scientific reasoning, yet it displays a reasonable attitude.

To head off her own accusation of going too far when making use of superfoods, she makes use of a breach formulation: 'Though I eat now and then a (bio) chippie' (lines 2-3). Eva constructs unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception and thereby heads off the accusation of overdoing it.

She marks the event as an exception by making use of the formulation 'now and then' (line 2), which also stresses the normality of eating unhealthy, rather than the fact that this is against her healthy diet. Note that she does not give an account for this exception here, which makes it seem to be a perfectly normal situation. Instead, she even softens this exception by mentioning that the chips are 'bio' and by using the diminutive form 'chippie'. Being very casual about this exception helps to further work up her identity of a reasonable health-seeker to the other participants.

Summary

The previous analysis showed how participants built up their identity as reasonable health-seekers. The identity construction occurred in a situation where the issue of potentially going too far when making use of superfoods is made relevant. Two different strategies could be observed, namely (1) presenting commonly accepted, non-scientific reasons for the use of superfoods and (2) constructing unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception.

Presenting commonly accepted reasons for the use of superfoods was done in terms of a stake inoculation. First, participants assured that they did not overdo it and thereby headed off a possible accusation of going too far. Then they presented a counter-interest as to why they make use of superfoods. The counter-interest in both cases was a perfectly normal account that other participants could relate to. The counter-interest always displayed a reason other than scientific evidence, but still showed rationality.

To construct unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception, the participants made use of breach formulations. By this, they described unhealthy eating as an exception from the norm. When demonstrating that the participants *do* also eat unhealthy, they stressed the normality of the event rather than it not being in line with the otherwise healthy diet. They show that they are not fanatic in following the diet and thus display themselves as reasonable health-seekers.

4.2 Foodlog forum

The corpus for analysis of the Foodlog forum consisted of two discussions from the comment section of two different articles, with a total of 140 comments. The first article deals with so-called ‘powerhouse’ fruits and vegetables as superfoods and the second article discusses how the Voedingscentrum deals with the topic of superfoods. In both comment sections, controversies arise about the mere existence of superfoods and on the marketing of superfoods. The analysis of the Foodlog forum resulted in one pattern, which shows how participants build up the identity of a nuanced expert.

4.2.1 Doing being a nuanced superfoods expert

During the conversations in the Foodlog forum, it could be observed how participants built up the identity of a nuanced expert. The identity construction was observed 11 times in the data.

The participants claimed an entitlement to speak in reaction to Thomas, who made several - what were treated as absolute - statements about superfoods, namely that *superfoods do not exist*. One example of his comments is displayed in fragment 12.

Fragment 12: Thomas (opening statement)

6 lines omitted

- 1 Ik zeg het nog eenmaal: er zijn geen exotische zaadjes of stengels met
 I say it once more: there are no exotic seeds or stems with
- 2 magische eigenschappen, superfoods bestaan niet en ze komen er ook niet.
 magical properties, superfoods do not exist and they will not exist.

Thomas uses an objective knowledge claim to say that superfoods do not exist and will not exist in the future. Note that the absolute character of his statement is not only underlined by using an objective knowledge claim, but also by the introduction (‘I say it once more’, line 1). With this introduction Thomas marks the matter as redundant to discuss any further.

Fragment 13 is one of the replies to Thomas. Anna criticises Thomas’ statement and says she prefers talk about superfoods over advertisements on unhealthy foods.

Fragment 13: Anna (reaction to Thomas)

11 lines omitted

- 1 Persoonlijk heb ik toch liever 'gezwets' over superfood dan prinsesjes
Personally, I prefer 'chatter' about superfood to princesses
- 2 afgebeeld op ongezonde voeding op ooghoogte van kinderen. Of coca cola die de
displayed on unhealthy foods at the eye level of children. Or coca cola who
- 3 Olympische spelen sponsoort. Enzovoorts.
sponsors the Olympic Games. And so forth.

Anna claims entitlement to speak by rejecting the absolute character of Thomas' statement and building the identity of a nuanced expert herself. Anna says 'Personally, I prefer 'chatter' about superfoods to princesses displayed on unhealthy foods at the eye level of children. Or coca cola who sponsors the Olympic Games. And so forth' (lines 1-3). She points out the ambivalence of superfoods being criticised while at the same time unhealthy food is being sold everywhere, which in this case was not part of the discussion before. Note that she points out the ambivalence, but refuses to make an absolute statement about superfoods herself.

The next reaction to Thomas comes from Peter. It can be seen that Peter reacts in the same way as Anna in fragment 13 and also works up the identity of a nuanced expert.

Fragment 14: Peter (reaction to Thomas)

1 line omitted

- 1 Volgens mij stelt de verkoop van "superfoods" bar weinig voor als je dit
In my view, the sale of "superfoods" constitutes roughly little if you
- 2 vergelijkt met de bewerkte levensmiddelen waar de supermarkt mee volligt.
compare it with processed food with which the supermarket is full of.

Peter claims the entitlement to speak and thus claims expertise, by rejecting the absoluteness of Thomas statement. With his statement 'In my view, the sale of "superfoods" constitutes roughly little if you compare it with processed food with which the supermarket is full of' (lines 1-2) he makes a less absolute claim and is rather nuanced in making a judgement on the topic. He shows the ambivalence of the discussion being about superfoods, while at the same time the unhealthy option of 'processed food' is being sold. Note that Peter does not say whether he agrees or disagrees with Thomas, which shows that not the statement itself, but rather the absolute character of it is being criticised here. Note also that he introduces the statement with 'In my view', which supports his claim for entitlement to speak. He eventually displays himself as a nuanced expert on superfoods.

Marleen reacts in a similar way to the statement by Thomas:

Fragment 15: Marleen (reaction to Thomas)

3 lines omitted

- 1 Het superfood gebeuren is 100% de andere kant op van de versuikering
The superfood occurrence is 100% in the opposite direction of the
- 2 van onze levensmiddelen door de industrie. Die producten scoren het laagst op
saccharification of our food by the industry. These products score lowest on
- 3 de mineralen/caloriën balans.
the minerals/calorie balance.

Marleen states her opinion in a rather nuanced way as opposed to the statement by Thomas, which is being understood as absolute. She says 'The superfood occurrence is 100% in the opposite direction of the saccharification of our food by the industry'(lines 1-2) with which she relativizes the impact of superfoods by comparing it to processed food. Note that in comparison to the other fragments, an objective knowledge claim is used to claim entitlement to speak.

Two facts are interesting to point out here. First, she speaks of the 'superfoods occurrence' rather than of simply 'superfoods'. This strengthens her claim in the sense that she displays to see more behind superfoods than just the food, which could for example be the trend towards healthy eating. Second, she claims that it is '100% in the opposite direction', which is a rather extreme formulation. Note, however, that she does not make an absolute judgement with regards to whether superfoods exist or not. She precisely avoids an explicit agreement or disagreement.

She then says 'These products score lowest on the minerals/calorie balance' (lines 2-3), with which she refers to the mineral content per calorie of sugary food. It is interesting to note that she makes a negative claim about the sugary food, rather than a positive claim about superfoods. Her statement is strengthened by the fact that she makes use of facts that are quantifiable and might be used by scientists.

The pattern of displaying an identity of a nuanced expert was also seen in another Foodlog discussion. In this discussion, Bart comments on the official stand of the Voedingscentrum towards superfoods. The Voedingscentrum explicitly says that superfoods do not exist. In Bart's reaction to the official statement of the Voedingscentrum he states:

Fragment 16: Bart (reaction to the Voedingscentrum)

- 1 *Waarom komt het Voedingscentrum dan toch met zo'n opgeklept bericht dat
Why does the Voedingscentrum release an exaggerating report that*
- 2 *mensen van producten afhoudt die meer toegevoegde voedingswaarde hebben dan
keeps people from products that have more added nutritional value than*
- 3 *een ook al dure Mars of tube Pringles?"
an also expensive Mars or Pringles?"*

Note how Bart counteracts the statement of the Voedingscentrum by rejecting the absoluteness of the statement. He does so through raising the ambivalence argument that could be seen before as well. Through this statement, he claims entitlement to speak on the topic of superfoods and thus builds up his expertise. Note that his utterance 'Why does the Voedingscentrum release an exaggerating report that keeps people from products that have more added nutritional value than an also expensive Mars or Pringles?' (lines 1-3) is formulated as a question, which also points out to the fact that Bart sees no definite conclusion yet. Formulating his utterance as a question also shows that Bart is rather nuanced on the issue as opposed to absolute.

Summary

The previous examples showed how participants distance themselves from absolute statements about superfoods. They display themselves as having a less absolute perception of superfoods. They did so by claiming entitlement to speak in a situation, where an absolute statement was made about superfoods being non-existent. The comments of the participants showed that they all rejected the

absoluteness of the statement by pointing out the ambivalence of the discussion about superfoods on the one hand and the consumption and supply of unhealthy food (e.g. sugary and processed) on the other hand. Through this statement, they established the identity of a nuanced expert on superfoods.

5 Conclusion and discussion

When it comes to nutrition advice and diets in general, the communication between the consumer-citizens and scientists often becomes difficult. To suggest how to improve the dialogue with consumer-citizens in terms of nutrition advice, it is important to have a look at the consumer-citizens first. A discursive psychological perspective was taken to understand the reasoning of consumer-citizens for choosing a diet like superfoods. The analytical view does not look at the facts in the dialogue, but what actions people perform and what identities they work up with the claims they make. In this way, hidden interactional concerns can be brought to the surface. Bringing up these hidden interactional concerns can be a step towards an improved dialogue. Thus, the objective of this study was *to sketch the contours of and conditions for a fruitful discussion about 'good food' by identifying the hidden interactional concerns of consumer-citizens in relation to superfoods.*

To reach this objective, the general research question was posed:

How do consumer-citizens account for the choice and use of superfoods in online discussion forums, and what do they achieve in the interaction by presenting their choice and use in these ways?

To answer the general and specific research questions, conversations from two internet forums have been analysed. The focus was on the kind of knowledge claims that people made and the interactional concerns they brought up. Furthermore, it has been looked at what kind of identity the participants of the forums displayed by making use of the knowledge claims.

In the following, the main conclusions will be presented and compared to findings from other studies. Based on this, recommendations for a fruitful discussion on good food will be given. Following, the limitations of the study will be discussed and implications for further research will be presented.

5.1 Main conclusions

The online data used for this study showed that the consumer-citizens responded in a way as to defend themselves against a number of different claims. These claims relate to the accounts that consumer-citizens would have for choosing and making use of superfoods. First, consumer-citizens present themselves as being thought of just following a diet trend, which is for instance made popular through the media or a newly published book. The consumer-citizens are then portrayed as simply following this trend. Sometimes it goes as far as indicating that they are fanatic in following the diet and keen on educating others about it.

Second, consumer-citizens are also present themselves as working against the accusation of being a victim of the claims that are made about the impact of certain diets. Especially in relation to superfoods, the criticism focuses on the health claims that circulate, such as 'blueberries slow down mental ageing', to name but one example. Consumer-citizens therefore also present themselves as defending that they believe the claims are supported by scientific evidence.

In sum, the consumer-citizens present themselves as working against the accusation of being lay-people, who do not have scientific knowledge. It is assumed that the knowledge of consumer-citizens is restricted to their feelings, values and experiences. Whereas for scientists the assumption is, that they have the knowledge about the facts.

Based on the previous analysis, however, different observations were made about how consumer-citizens account for choosing superfoods. This research leads to conclusions, which are opposite to how the reasoning of consumer-citizens is perceived. What could be seen in the results basically presents the whole debate about superfoods in a nutshell: consumer-citizens do not blindly accept statements which they treat as absolute, and present their own advice from sources independent of scientific research, while at the same time display that they act based on a reasonable and rational attitude.

5.1.1 Consumer-citizens present themselves as independent of scientific evidence and as reluctant to give advice

The first conclusion is that consumer-citizens present themselves as independent of scientific evidence and at the same time as reluctant to give advice. The results show that consumer-citizens, who eat superfoods, are doing being an expert of their own body and not anybody else's. They did so in a situation, where superfoods are being marked as contested, for example the scientific evidence of health claims was criticised. The participants built up the identity through two actions.

First, participants showed their independent source of being an expert. As an independent source, the participants referred to personal situations, from where they got their experiences with superfoods. In that way, *participants presented themselves as independent of scientific evidence*.

Second, participants presented themselves as their own expert and not anybody else's. They did so by restricting their statements to their own subjective domains. By doing this, *participants displayed themselves as reluctant to give any advice to other people*.

Displaying oneself as independent of scientific evidence and as reluctant to give any advice to other people stands in contrast to how the controversy about superfoods is often displayed. In the discussion about superfoods, nutrition and health claims are often mentioned as the reasons of consumer-citizens to choose for this diet. However, this is in contrast to what can be seen from this study. Consumer-citizens distance themselves from this idea by referring to their independent sources only and displaying independence.

The participants also displayed themselves as not being fanatic and having good reasons for choosing superfoods, which are not necessarily scientific. They also claim independent access, yet they do not present themselves as advising other people and they do not explicitly agree to other participant's assessments. This differs to the findings of Heritage and Raymond (2005), who showed how speakers established independent access in different ways, which all included an agreement.

The conclusions suggest that consumer-citizens treat it as risky to display themselves as being dependent of scientific knowledge and to generalize their statements. They display themselves as almost contrastive to how an expert would typically display himself. This might be explained by the fact that consumer-citizens want to keep their own autonomy. Presenting themselves as independent of scientific evidence gives them authority to speak and authority to make a judgement.

It also makes them 'immune' to the general discussion about the scientific evidence of superfoods, because they do not display themselves as dependent of scientific facts. Consumer-citizens display that scientific reasons are not the only reasons to choose superfoods. They display themselves as having other reasons, too. This is in line with the argumentation by Swiestra and te Molder (2012)

that citizen concerns, which are often depicted as 'soft', need to be incorporated in the debate, next to scientific facts.

In addition, the fact that consumer-citizens display themselves as reluctant to give any advice to other people indicates that a generalization of statements is also not favourable for consumer-citizens. This can be seen as a reaction to the constant criticism of superfoods consumers and the general controversy about superfoods. As generalizations are not being made and consumer-citizens only claim that *for them it works*, they can hardly be criticised for it. Challenging the statements is almost impossible as they are restricted to their subjective domains.

Other discourse analyses reveal the idea of referring to the own body as an independent source of reference, for example with the expression 'listen to your own body'. A discourse analysis of online discussions about pelvic girdle pain of pregnant woman showed that the responsibility of the women to take care of themselves is also referred to as 'listening to their bodies' (Fredriksen et al., 2008). In another study with women who suffer from chronic fatigue syndrome, they refer to the need to 'listen to their bodies' in terms of their illness (Hart & Grace, 2000).

Versteeg and te Molder (2015) studied the idiomatic expression 'Listen to your body' (LTYB) in online conversations about aspartame and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The expression is used in contrast to following science blindly and speakers position LTYB as the more rational alternative compared to science (ibid.). However, as opposed to the present study, LTYB is presented and treated by participants as an actual *advice* to other people. In the data of the present study, participants did not give advice to other people. This could be explained by the fact that in the superfoods discussion the *absolute character* of scientific claims, but not the rationality of science itself is criticised. The superfoods consumers make a less absolute claim themselves and do not reject the rationality of science. Therefore, they also display themselves as reluctant to give advice. In addition, this might also derive from the fact that superfoods might yet be a more controversial topic than aspartame and ADHD in terms of scientific evidence.

To sum up, the present study has shown that consumer-citizens display themselves as independent of scientific evidence and at the same time as reluctant to advising other people. By doing this, they present themselves as responding to assumed criticism, for example, being fanatic and not rational. In that way they claim their own territory and claim their right to speak.

5.1.2 Consumer-citizens display themselves as having a different rationality than scientific rationality

The second conclusion to draw from the results of this study is that in discourse about superfoods, consumer-citizens present themselves as having a different rationality than the scientific rationality. The analysis showed that participants built up their identity as a reasonable health-seeker, which occurred when the issue of potentially going too far when making use of superfoods was made relevant. Two different ways of dealing with this were observed. First, participants presented commonly accepted, non-scientific reasons for the use of superfoods. They used stake inoculation to first refute the accusation and then presented a counter-interest that was easy to relate to for other participants. The second strategy was to construct unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception. Participants used breach formulations that described how they also eat unhealthy food and stressed the ordinariness of the event rather than the fact that it is negative to interrupt the healthy diet. With both strategies, the identity of a reasonable health-seeker was established. The two strategies

showed that *participants displayed themselves as having a different rationality than the scientific rationality*.

This conclusion contrasts with the general perception of why consumer-citizens make use of superfoods. It does not show the notion that consumer-citizens are fanatic in what they are doing. They, however, display that they make a reasonable choice rather than having an obsession with healthy eating.

Displaying a different rationality rather than the scientific rationality first shows that there is a need to claim one's own rationality. Rationality in the discourse might be predominantly attributed to scientists rather than to consumer-citizens. It seems that there is a need to work against the idea of rationality being an inherited feature of only science. Consumer-citizens thus have to claim that there is rationality independent of science. This need might arise as a response to the accusation of being fanatic. A fanatic person would not be considered to be rational, but act purely out of irrational reasons. To counteract this idea, the need arises for consumer-citizens to display rationality. The fact that consumer-citizens bring up their reasons also shows that if science does not support an idea, there is a need for consumer-citizens to account for a choice. It is not simply acceptable that a consumer-citizen makes a choice, but the choice then has to be accounted for.

The conclusion of displaying one's own rationality different than scientific rationality in that sense could not be found in other studies. However, what resembles with other studies is the notion of accounting for one's own eating behaviour with the goal to normalise the behaviour and displaying ordinariness, which is also a way to establish non-scientific rationality.

Bouwman et al. (2009) studied consumer's everyday life perspective on healthful eating. They showed that consumers use three different repertoires to point out the importance of health, while at the same time not portraying themselves as too health-conscious. Especially the second repertoire, doing-being-uncomplicated, with which people stressed the relaxed choices on health and pleasure, resembles the 'constructing unhealthy eating as an acceptable exception' pattern. By using the repertoires, the consumers 'confirm the routine, [...] yet [...] distance themselves from being too rigidly health-conscious' (p. 396). This is in line with what could be seen in the Viva forum when the own use of superfoods was explained and followed by presenting commonly accepted reasons for making use of superfoods. The construction of unhealthy eating as an exception is also shown by Peel et al. (2005) in terms of identity work. They showed that diabetes patients also construct their unhealthy eating as an exception while at the same time constructed an identity as a 'compliant' or a 'good' diabetic.

In sum, the study showed that consumer-citizens displayed themselves as having a rationality different than, and next to, a scientific rationality. It can be understood as a reaction to the accusation of being fanatic in making use of superfoods. Consumer-citizens in turn make clear that rationality should not be inherited by science only and that their behaviour does not result from irrational reasons.

5.1.3 Consumer-citizens undermine the need for experts to make absolute statements

The third conclusion is that consumer-citizens undermine the need for experts to make absolute statements. This results from the observation of consumer-citizens working up the identity of a nuanced expert of superfoods. The identity was constructed in a situation where an absolute

statement was made about superfoods being non-existent, leaving no room for a further dialogue. The participants in the discussion rejected the absoluteness of the statement and pointed out the ambivalence of discarding superfoods on the one hand, while unhealthy food is consumed and not discarded on the other hand. In this way, the participants made a far more nuanced claim and claimed their entitlement to speak, thus their expertise on the matter. By this, participants indicated that there should be more to the discussion than just receiving and accepting an absolute conclusion and *undermined the need for experts to make an absolute statement*.

This 'more' to the discussion is not further defined by the participants. Yet, the fact that they talk about the ambivalence of superfoods being criticised while consumption of healthy food is high and not criticised, indirectly raises questions about assumptions that are underlying the expert advice. These questions can for instance be *What is good food?* or *What are the criteria to assess food?*

Because of these hidden concerns, the dialogue becomes difficult, since two different things are being discussed - the expert view and the consumer-citizens' concerns. As Shapin (2007, p. 185) puts it 'You cannot use better logic or more evidence to refute a different kind of concern'.

Undermining the need for experts to make an absolute statement can be understood as a reaction to the absoluteness that is claimed in debates with scientists. It shows that the expectations of consumer-citizens towards science is very different to what they get. It is a way to work against the idea that superfoods can either be evaluated positive or negative. This limited view is what should be opened up with undermining the need for absolute statements. It can also be understood as a way to claim having a say in the matter. Consumer-citizens' opinion and concerns might not be taken into account enough. By showing that absolute statements are not accepted and not needed, they claim to have a voice in the matter. This is also a rejection of the generalization in science and a way, to put forward more individual concerns.

Other studies conclude that in some situations not the science or the expert advice is being declined, but rather the assumptions underlying their statements. For example, celiac disease patients were asked in an online forum if they would make use of a pill that would allow them to eat a diet containing gluten. Their reaction was rather negative and refusing. An analysis of the online talk showed that patients did not generally refuse such a pill, but the assumption that they would take it as a matter of course (see Veen et al., 2011). Hence, not the scientific advice or knowledge was at stake, but the patient's identity.

Another study also shows that rejection is not necessarily pointed at science, but caused by other hidden concerns. Hobson-West (2007) studied the case of the rejection of childhood vaccination in the United Kingdom. It was shown that the rejection of the vaccination campaign derived less from the rejection of the vaccination itself, but rather from the suggestion that the authorities expected blind trust from the people.

In sum, the current study showed that participants undermined the need for experts to make absolute statements. It displays that underlying assumptions of these absolute statements are being questioned as well. With this, the two-sided view on superfoods is rejected and participants claim their own right to have a say in the matter.

5.2 Recommendations

This study aimed at *sketching the contours of and conditions for a fruitful discussion about 'good food' by identifying the hidden interactional concerns of consumer-citizens in relation to superfoods*. Thus, in view of the interactional concerns and the identity constructions that have been found through this study, various recommendations can be for the contours and conditions of a fruitful discussion on 'good food'. These relate to the assumptions about the participants and their rights to knowledge, as well as to the concerns that should be taken into account in the discussion.

Challenging the assumptions about the participants in the dialogue

In the present debate about superfoods, miscommunication results especially from the wrong perception of the positions of scientists and consumer-citizens, thus the underlying assumptions based on which the debate takes place. This has to do with the idea that science and society are seen as two different worlds: the world of the scientist is seen as inhabited by facts, whereas the world of the public is seen as controlled by anything other than facts, for instance experiences and beliefs (te Molder, 2014). However, this perception of the two worlds has proven to be wrong. Facts are actually moralities in action, which are used to negotiate rights and responsibilities and build identities by both, scientists and the public (ibid.).

This could also be seen in the previous analysis. Facts are being used to perform interactional business. A closer look at how the facts are being used reveals the hidden concerns and the relation with identity construction. To have the framework for a fruitful discussion about 'good food', it is therefore necessary to dismiss the idea of monopolies of facts by scientists and moralities by the public and to open up to the perspective of the 'other' in the dialogue. To open up implies that one looks beyond facts and at the underlying moralities. It also means that consumer-citizens should be viewed as a contributing factor, rather than just a receiver of information. Their contribution could lead to incorporating other relevant issues in the dialogue, such as *What is good food?* or *What are the criteria to assess food?*

Taking other concerns into account

Since participants presented themselves as being independent of scientific evidence, this should be taken into account when planning the agenda of discussion. If the whole discussion is about getting more scientific evidence about superfoods, there will not be an effective communication with consumer-citizens. Their concerns are not about scientific evidence per se, but about their own independent sources of values, which should be acknowledged.

Furthermore, consumer-citizens contrasted themselves to scientific experts by displaying themselves as reluctant to give advice to others. This showed a certain degree to have autonomy in decisions. The autonomy of the consumer-citizens should be seen as an important concern in the discussion, otherwise the dialogue will not be participatory.

Another change in perspective concerns the stereotypical view on consumer-citizens of just following a trend and being fanatic in their diets. Consumers displayed that they are rational and have a

rationality different from the scientific one. This need to display rationality and not being fanatic should be taken into account. For example, the different rationality of consumer-citizens should be made a part of the dialogue, rather than stressing the idea that only science is rational. If only science is seen as rational, it would mean that consumer-citizens are denied the ability to reason or think about an issue clearly. In turn, this implies that the view of the consumer-citizen cannot be taken into serious consideration and the scientist do not aim at a dialogue, but at a way to just educate the consumer-citizen. However, accepting a different rationality would create a common ground to argue on. In that case, consumer-citizens and scientists are seen as equal, rather than in a hierarchical order, depending on their rationality.

Participants also displayed that they challenge the absoluteness of scientific statements. This was a way to work against the idea of superfoods being either positively evaluated or negatively evaluated, thus against this two-sided view. The dialogue should not be entered with the idea of discussing whether superfoods exist or not, or should be sold or not, etc. The dialogue should enable more options than acceptance of superfoods or rejection.

5.3 Limitations

The study has several limitations that will be considered in this paragraph. The limitations concern online discussions as data for a discourse analysis, the different target groups of the Viva and Foodlog forums and the representativeness of the data.

Discourse analysis studies everyday talk, which occurs without the interference of a researcher (Potter, 2004). Online conversations can be considered as natural occurring talk, yet discourse analysis so far has mainly been applied to face-to-face conversations. However, some studies have used online conversations, such as studies on veganism (Wilson et al., 2004; Sneijder & te Molder, 2004) and food lovers (Sneijder & te Molder, 2006). Several differences to face-to-face conversations have already been acknowledged in paragraph 3.1. Analysing online conversations is difficult when it comes to the flow of the conversation. Since the conversations in the threads from the Viva forum and the Foodlog forum sometimes went on for several months, many new topics were picked up in the course of the dialogue, but at the same time many comments stayed unanswered and no real dialogue emerged. In this sense, it is often difficult to identify if participants react to each other and if yes, whom they react to.

Furthermore, the conversations have been translated from Dutch to English with the aim to keep the original sense as accurately as possible, which is not feasible in all cases because of expressions that might not be possible to translate accurately.

In terms of the data, the sources that were used also have some limitations. First, both forums have different scopes and target groups: the Viva forum is a general forum that primarily targets women between 25 and 45. Foodlog is a news-platform about nutrition, health, food and drinks and is visited by a variety of users, who have a higher interest in food-related topics, (such as scientists, doctors, farmers, food industry representatives, retailers, journalists, students, critical consumers, etc.). Due to the different scopes and the different target groups, the conversations are not comparable, however the conclusions show that the conversations mirror each other.

In this sense, the representativeness of the study should be mentioned as well. As noted earlier, a discourse analysis is a qualitative analysis and thus does not strive for representativeness. The

interest of discourse analysis lies in the content, organisation and function of a particular text or discourse (Gill, 2000), which in this case were the discussions from the Viva forum and the Foodlog forum. For the implications of the research, it means that general conclusions can hardly be made. The recommendations are based on the two cases and the thesis does not claim that the recommendations for an improved dialogue would be efficient outside these situations.

5.4 Further research

Based on this study, there are several recommendations for further research. First, this study used discussions from two different online forums to bring to the surface the hidden interactional concerns of the participants who account for choosing superfoods. This with the aim of giving recommendations for a fruitful discussion about 'good food'. As mentioned in the limitations, online data is not the predominant source for discourse analysis, which usually studies face-to-face interactions. It would thus be interesting to study a face-to-face conversation about superfoods and see how results differ. An analysis of face-to-face conversation might give an interesting comparison in view of the construction of identities through knowledge claims. It would be interesting to see the difference in knowledge claims that are used in a face-to-face conversation in comparison to written claims, which can be made rather anonymously through computers.

Second, the groups in the discussions that have been looked at were partly homogenous, for example, participants of the Viva forum were all female. It is possible that other interactional concerns would appear in a less homogenous group, which has also been proven by the results of the Foodlog forum. Thus, it would be interesting not only to look at face-to-face conversations, but also to have a dialogue with different stakeholders. This means that men and women should take part in the conversation, but also participants with different roles, including consumer-citizens (who make use of superfoods) and scientists (e.g. a doctor or nutrition advisor).

A third point to be mentioned is that this study only focused on superfoods, yet superfoods is just one of the many diet trends that can be seen in society. However, the communication problem between scientists/nutrition advisors, policy makers and the public is not about superfoods, but about nutrition advice in general. Therefore, a study which focusses on other diets might give insights on the differences (or similarities) of interactional concerns. Results from studies of talk on other diets would give better insights in the overall talk on 'healthy' diet trends and would thus give better insights for a fruitful discussion about 'good food'.

The fourth recommendation regards the participants who should be involved in further research. In view of the recommendations for (beta-)scientists to open up the dialogue to the concerns of consumer-citizens, first the understanding and acceptance of these concerns need to be created. This might be reached by, for instance applying the discursive action method, which stimulates reflective awareness of one's own talk (see Lamerichs et al., 2009). Reflecting on one's own talk and realising the difference to, for example, how the consumer-citizen interacts, might be a good step towards more support from the beta-scientists.

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Appendix

A Permission for the use of data

E-mail to ask for permission from Viva forum and Foodlog forum

The e-mails were sent apart from each other, containing the links to the chosen threads for analysis.

From: rebekka.mejda@wur.nl

To: info@service.viva.nl; dick@foodlog.nl

Date: 19.03.2015

Subject: Toestemming gebruik van inhoud voor onderzoek

Geachte heer, geachte mevrouw,

Voor mijn master Applied Communication Science aan de Wageningen University doe ik een onderzoek naar online discussies over superfoods, specifiek naar hoe mensen de keuze voor superfoods verantwoorden wat hun identiteit betreft. Omdat superfoods een belangrijk thema voor discussie op uw website is, vraag ik voor toestemming om gebruik te maken van de inhoud uit de volgende discussies, met verwijzing naar de bron: (links omitted)

De gebruikte inhoud wordt geanonimiseerd en uitsluitend gebruikt voor het onderzoek. Indien u nog vragen heeft, kunt u contact opnemen met mij of met mijn begeleider Prof. Dr. te Molder (hedwig.temolder@wur.nl).

Alvast bedankt en met vriendelijke groet,

Rebekka Mejda

Replies from the Viva forum and Foodlog forum

From: forum@viva.nl

To: rebekka.mejda@wur.nl

Date: 20.03.2015

Subject: Vraag over "Het forum van Viva.nl"

Dat is wat mijn betreft prima.

Succes met je onderzoek.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Community Manager VIVA-Forum

From: dick@foodlog.nl

To: rebekka.mejda@wur.nl

Date: 19.03.2015

Subject: AW:Toestemming gebruik van inhoud voor onderzoek

Dat is OK.

Hou ons op de hoogte van je bevindingen. Gaan die over Superfoods?

Hgr!

Dick

B Entire fragments

Fragment 4: Nina

1 Ik heb werkelijkwaar geen idee. Ik drink na het heel hard zweten in de bikram
2 yoga weleens kokoswater omdat het isotoon is (schijnt, en mijn
3 topsportende schoonzusje drinkt het daarom ook, dus ik vertrouw het wel
4 enigszins;) en niet zo zoet als AA-drink ofzo en dus wel
5 lekker dorstlessend.
6 Maar waarom zou je opeens deze dingen gaan eten/ drinken? Alleen omdat het in
7 het lijstje superfoods staat?

Fragment 6: Saskia

1 Postieve ervaring wat betret de bijenkorrels. Ik had hele erge last van
2 hooikoorts en nu bijna niet meer dankzij de bijenkorrels.
3 Gebruik elke dag 1 eetlepel in water en drink het op. Wel vies haha!
4 Ik heb al heel wat chemische troep gehad van de dokter voor hooikoorts,
5 maar dit helpt echt!

Fragment 7: Eva

1 Mensen weten inderdaad vaak niet wat gezond is en nemen dan producten met
2 zo'n logo. Of drinkontbijt, allerlei sappen waar zogenaamd genoeg fruit in
3 zit voor de hele dag. Dat deed ik zelf in mijn studententijd ook en daarna
4 ook nog wel. Wat echt gezond is, daar ben ik nu wel uit.
5 Ik vraag me alleen af of ik niet doorsla als ik aan het kokoswater zit of
6 chia zaad of rauwe cacao door mijn ontbijt doe.

Fragment 8: Hester

1 Wanneer doorslaan en hoe ver ga je blijft een vraag denk ik. In Thailand was
2 ik bij een arts die me aanraade elke dag een kokosnoot leeg te drinken
3 zolang
4 ik daar was. Omdat het zo gezond is, en daar betaalbaar. In NL zoek ik dan
5 wel
6 weer andere gezonde dranken. Ik eet zoveel mogelijk speltbrood ipv 'gewoon'
7 brood. Duurder, maar lekkerder en meer uitnodigend om echt gezonde dingen op
8 te doen. Het is zonde om op zo'n lekker brood hagelslag te strooien. Daar
9 moet
10 op zijn minst verse sla en avocado op.
11 Ik word blijer van muesli als er ook rauwe cacao en gojibessen door zitten.
12 Dat is niet doorslaan, maar genieten van lekker eten.

Fragment 9: Sophie

1 Nou nee hoor, je slaat echt niet door. Ik drink ook kokoswater, omdat ik van
2 de Cola afwil. Vind het een goed alternatief. En chia en rauwe cacao eet ik
3 ook.
4 Heeft niks met doorslaan te maken, maar gewoon met de keuze
5 om een gezond leven te willen leiden. Niks mis mee.

Fragment 10: Sarah

1 Ik heb ook wel moeten wennen aan de andere manier van eten. Veel dingen
2 smaakten in het begin niet, of waren saai. Maar gewend zijn aan de pure smaak
3 van eten maakt alles veel lekkerder. Voor mij geen sausje meer over de
4 groente, maar pure bloemkool of broccoli. Geen jus bij de stampot, alleen
5 maar de aardappelen en groentes. De frituurpan is de deur uit, vet eten zorgt
6 voor maagpijn sinds ik het zo weinig ben gaan eten. In een cafetaria kies ik
7 liever een broodje gezond dan friet met een frikadel.
8 Als ik wel zin heb in het frietje neem ik die toch, maar nog maar zelden.
9 eet ook wel eens chips. Vet blijft lekker, maar het kan niet tippen aan echt
10 eten. Heb net zo lief verse worteltjes met een zelfgemaakt dipsausje. Gezond
11 eten is een kwestie van leren en omschakelen. Aan verandering van smaak kun
12 je wennen.

Fragment 11: Eva

1 Dat is waar, violett. Al moet ik zeggen dat ik die dingen toen ik ermee begon
2 niet echt lekker vond. Ik ben ze wel lekker gaan vinden. Sindsdien ben ik
3 ervan overtuigd dat je aan elke smaak kunt wennen.
4 Ik heb nu net zo lief een gezonde salade met bonen en linzen en alleen wat
5 olijfolie als dressing dan een zak chips. Al eet ik zo nu en dan gewoon een
6 (bio) chippie.

Fragment 12: Thomas

1 Volgens mij is dit een ingewikkelde manier om duidelijk te maken dat variatie
2 in je voeding belangrijk is. Daarnaast suggereert het ten onrechte dat er
3 superfoods zouden bestaan. Dit maakt het gezwets over superfoods alleen maar
4 erger. We waren net lekker op weg om meer in voedingspatronen te denken,
5 minder in stofjes en dan krijg je dit. Wat schiet een consument hier nu mee
6 op? Ongezonder eetgedrag compenseren met een handje witte waterkers?
7 Ik zeg het nog eenmaal: er zijn geen exotische zaadjes of stengels met
8 magische eigenschappen, superfoods bestaan niet en ze komen er ook niet. Wel
9 zijn er voedingspatronen die lekkerder, gezonder of verstandiger zijn.

Fragment 13: Anna

1 @Frank, Je klinkt wel erg overtuigd van jezelf. Heb je iets tegen het idee
2 dat er mensen zijn die gewoon echt geld over hebben voor kwalitatief goede
3 voeding? Zo erg is het toch niet wat er gebeurt nu onder de noemer van
4 superfoods? quote #8: "er zijn geen exotische zaadjes of stengels met
5 magische eigenschappen, superfoods bestaan niet en ze komen er ook niet. "
6 Ik merk toch echt dat ik meer energie krijg van mijn schepjes chiazaad door
7 mijn dagelijkse havermoutpap. Heb je het zelf al eens geprobeerd eigenlijk?
8 Ooit een item uit de reeks 'superfood' gekocht zelf? Waar haal je je kennis
9 vandaan? Ik vertrouw vooral mijn eigen lichaam en waarnemingsvermogen. Zou ik
10 dan toch 'magische gedachten' hebben? Of gewoon een goede intuïtie bij het
11 samenstellen van mijn voedingspatroon?
12 Persoonlijk heb ik toch liever 'gezwets' over superfood dan prinsesjes
13 afgebeeld op ongezonde voeding op ooghoogte van kinderen. Of coca cola die de
14 Olympische spelen sponsoort. Enzovoorts. Verrassend weinig witte jassen
15 vallen over dit soort zaken.

Fragment 14: Peter

- 1 Hoe definieer je een hype?
- 2 Volgens mij stelt de verkoop van "superfoods" bar weinig voor als je dit
- 3 vergelijkt met de bewerkte levensmiddelen waar de supermarkt mee volligt.

Fragment 15: Marleen

- 1 Mijn cliënt van vanmorgen zei dat de AH al een superfood schap heeft. Iemand
- 2 al gekeken? Ze had een reep mee waar allemaal gezonde dingen in zaten, zoals
- 3 noten en ook nog wat spirulina. Ik vind het een mooie ontwikkeling.
- 4 Het superfood gebeuren is 100% de andere kant op van de versuikering van onze
- 5 levensmiddelen door de industrie. Die producten scoren het laagst op de
- 6 mineralen/caloriën balans.