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To take a stance: a developmental study of the use of pronouns and passives in spoken and written narrative and expository texts in Dutch

Janet G. van Hell*, Ludo Verhoeven, Marjan Tak, Moniek van Oosterhout

Department of Special Education, Faculty of Social Sciences, Radboud University Nijmegen, PO Box 9104, 6500 HE Nijmegen, The Netherlands

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Abstract

Discourse stance as expressed by the use of pronouns and passive-voice constructions is examined in two different text genres, narrative and expository text, produced in speech and writing by four groups of Dutch speakers: 9–10 year olds, 11–12 year olds, 15–16 year olds, and adults. In the pronoun analyses, the distribution and use of personal, impersonal, indefinite impersonal (pro)nominals, and demonstrative pronouns were examined. These quantitative analyses were supplemented with qualitative, functional analyses of the use of *men* (like German 'man'), generic *je* 'you', as well as *ik* 'I' in expository text. In the passive analyses, the distribution and use of five types of passives were examined: present, past, infinitival, impersonal, and pseudo passives. The qualitative analyses of passives focused on the semantics of the verb, the presence of the agent, and the nature of the patient noun phrase, i.e., its degree of topicalization and animacy. In general, the results showed that children and adults use pronouns and passives systematically to express discourse stance in narrative and expository texts. In specific cases, grade school children use pronoun and passive forms in rhetorically less sophisticated ways, indicating that the expression of discourse stance is part of later language development.

Keywords: Discourse stance; Language development; Spoken; Written; Pronouns; Passive

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +31 24 3611619; fax: +31 24 3616211.
E-mail address: J.vanHell@pwo.ru.nl (J.G. van Hell).

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1. Introduction

Consider the following two excerpts from a story written about a personal event and an expository discussion produced by a Dutch-speaking woman, both dealing with social conflicts between people.

(1) *Ze scholden haar uit. 'Dikkerd met je vette benen!' Ze tilden haar jurkje omhoog en lachten haar uit. Wat had ik het met haar te doen. Zij is mijn beste vriendinnetje. Ik probeerde haar te helpen. We scholden terug en zeiden, dat ze op moesten houden, maar ze gingen door.* [Vivian, woman, NW][1]
'They scolded at her. 'Fatty with your fat legs'. They lifted up her little dress and laughed at her. I felt so sorry for her. She is my best friend. I tried to help her. We scolded back and said that they should stop, but they continued.'

(2) *Als iemand merkt dat een kind niet meer naar school durft en zich terugtrekt, zal er met de 'pester' gepraat moeten worden. Vaak zien diegenen na een tijdje dan ook wel in dat het eigenlijk niet leuk is wat ze doen.* [Vivian, woman, EW]
'If someone notices that a child does not dare to go to school and withdraws itself, there should be talking with 'the plaguer'. After some time they often see that it is not quite fun what they do.'

In (1), the writer's perspective is more involved and personalized, whereas the excerpt in (2) reflects a more distanced and impersonal perspective. Such differences in the speaker's or writer's perspective on the propositional content of a message reflect differences in discourse stance.

Discourse stance can be defined as the ''overt expression of an author's or speaker's attitudes, feelings, judgments, or commitment concerning the message'' (Biber and Finegan, 1988: 1). Others, for example Kress (1994), Ochs (1990), and Schultz and Fecho (2000), emphasize the cultural, social, and communicative context within which the speaker–writer produces the linguistic message (see Berman et al., 2002 for more definitions). These different, but compatible, viewpoints are integrated in Berman et al's recently formulated notion of discourse stance, as follows. They consider discourse stance to refer to three interrelated dimensions of text construction: orientation (the relations between the participating elements in text production and reception: sender, text genre, and recipient), attitude (epistemic, deontic, or affective attitude) and generality (the generality or specificity of reference to people, places, and times referred to in the text).

As illustrated by the excerpts in (1) and (2), genre differences motivate speaker–writers to adopt a different stance: a more distanced, objective, detached, general, and impersonal stance in abstract discussions and expository texts in general, and a more involved, subjective, immediate, specific, and personalized stance in narratives, particularly ones relating to personal experiences. These differences in stance related to the production of expository and narrative texts resemble the continuum that has been proposed for

[1] In the description of the excerpts, characteristics of the text are denoted as EW: expository written; ES: expository spoken; NW: narrative written; NS: narrative spoken.

characterizing readers' responses to text. Readers adopting an 'efferent', nonesthetic stance are focused on extracting information from the reading event. In contrast, readers who adopt an 'esthetic' stance are focused on the experience of the moment and will tend to lose themselves in the pleasure and beauty of the story (cf. Alexander, 1997). Distinct properties have also been proposed to characterize differences between spoken and written discourse. For example, Jahandarie (1999) discusses a series of dimensions of attributes that are more typical of spoken discourse than of written discourse, which can be seen as typifying aspects of discourse stance: respectively, evanescent versus permanent, contextualized versus autonomous, involved versus detached, redundant versus concise, natural versus taught, transparent versus dense, and fuzzy versus precise. Importantly, however, features differentiating between text genres and modalities (speech vs. writing) may be gradual rather than strictly dichotomous. For example, the proposed difference in degree of involvement between speech and writing may be modified by text genre, and vice versa. While generally speaking there may be more involvement in speech than in writing, some spoken genres (e.g., oral expository discussion or debate) may be less involved than others (such as oral narratives). Further, spoken narratives may display as relatively involved a stance as written ones, and spoken expositories may reveal as detached a stance as their written counterparts. Most importantly from the point of view of the present study, the ability to express discourse stance in accordance with communicative and rhetorical conventions may be a developmental issue related to children's overall social, cognitive, and linguistic development (Berman et al., 2002 Section 5.9).

The present study addresses these issues by examining discourse stance in two different text genres, produced in both speech and writing, by speaker–writers of different ages. Four groups of native speakers of Dutch (9–10 year olds, 11–12 year olds, 15–16 year olds, and adults) each produced two texts: a written narrative and expository text, or a spoken narrative and expository text.

Speaker–writers can select various linguistic forms to convey variations of discourse stance in accordance with modality and genre, and so reflect a culture's modes of communicating information to others (cf. Kress, 1994). The present study examines two sets of linguistic devices available to speaker–writers to express stance in extended monologic discourse: pronouns and passive-voice constructions. Our key research question is how speakers and writers of different ages express stance, as encoded by means of pronouns and passives, as a function of text genre (narrative vs. expository texts) and modality (spoken vs. written). Our theoretical framework is a cognitive–functionalistic perspective (e.g., Givón, 1998; Tomasello, 1998). We assume that the overall function of language is communication, and that linguistic forms, like pronouns and passive-voice constructions, are symbolic instruments that serve to express communicative functions (here, stance).

1.1. Pronouns in the expression of stance

One linguistic device to express stance is through the use of personal or impersonal pronouns. A pronoun is a closed class word, which serves to substitute for a noun, a noun phrase, or a proposition (Schachter, 1985). *Personal pronouns* are items used to refer to the speaker–writer (*I*), the addressee (*you*), and other persons and objects whose referents are presumed to be clear from the context (*he*, *she*, *it*, *they*). Speaker–writers assume that these

referents are accessible to the listener–reader (Ariel, 1990; Givón, 1998), since they are currently activated in working memory (e.g., Gathercole and Baddely, 1993), or are part of a mental trace in the episodic memory representation of the current text (Ericsson and Kintsch, 1995; Kellogg, 2001). *Impersonal pronouns*, in contrast, are typically indefinite and do not refer to a specific entity: since the referent is not specified by the speaker or writer, impersonal pronouns enable one to make a generic reference. Examples in English include generic *you* and *we* (see Reilly and Zamora, 2005) and French *on* (Jisa and Viguié, 2005). As a result, personal pronouns are more topical, more salient, and more in focus than are impersonal pronouns.

Because personal pronouns have a specific referent known to the speaker–writer and listener–reader, they seem more appropriate to express a personal and involved stance. Impersonal pronouns have a generic and unspecified referent and so seem better suited to expressing a more distanced, less personal stance. This suggests that personal pronouns will occur more in personal narratives than in expository texts, whereas impersonal pronouns will be more frequent in expository than in narrative discourse (cf. Kress, 1994). Similarly, personal pronouns may be more typical of spoken, and impersonal pronouns of written texts. An earlier cross-linguistic study conducted in the framework of the same project as the present one (see Berman, 2005) examined the distribution of personal and impersonal pronouns serving as grammatical subjects in narrative and expository texts produced orally and in writing by 4th graders and adults in four different languages—Dutch, English, Hebrew, and Spanish (Ravid et al., 2002). We found that the use of personal and impersonal pronouns was affected by genre and modality, but not by age. Personal pronouns were used more often in narrative than in expository texts, and more often in spoken than in written texts (this latter effect was significant in English and Hebrew, but not in Dutch and Spanish). Impersonal pronouns, on the other hand, occurred more often in expository texts than in narrative texts, although this difference was considerably higher in the spoken than in the written modality. A remarkable finding was that the use of personal and impersonal pronouns was not affected by age.

The present study deals with data from Dutch, and extends our previous work by performing more fine-grained analyses of different types of personal and impersonal pronouns functioning as subject NPs across four different age groups. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first systematic attempt to study the development of different types of personal and impersonal pronouns across two different genres and modalities in Dutch. Below we briefly describe the relevant pronominal systems in this language.

Dutch *personal pronouns* in subject position include singular and plural 1st person, 2nd person, and 3rd person pronouns. *Impersonal* pronouns include generic *we* 'we', generic *je* 'you' Singular, the generic noun *men* [corresponding to German and Swedish 'man'], generic *jullie* 'you' Plural, generic *hij/zij* 'he/she', and generic *ze* 'they'.[2] Table 1 lists (1)

[2] We did not include *het* 'it', which can be used as 3rd person singular (neuter) or in a more impersonal way, e.g., as subject of an impersonal verb (as in *Het botert niet tussen die twee* 'It doesn't get on between those two') or as a provisional subject referring to a dependent clause (as in *Het is beter om dit niet te doen* 'It is better not to do this'). There is considerable discussion among researchers about how to determine the boundaries between 'personal' and 'impersonal' *het* (see Romijn, 1996, for an extensive discussion). Diving into this discussion is beyond the purpose of this paper, and we, therefore, decided not to include *het* in the pronoun analysis.

Table 1
Overview of pronouns analyzed in this study (English translation in quotationmarks)

Category	Instances
(1) Personal pronouns	
1st person singular	*ik* 'I'
1st person plural	*wij*, *we* 'we'
2nd person singular	*jij*, *je* 'you', *u* 'you—polite form'
2nd person plural	*jullie* 'you', *u* 'you—polite form'
3rd person singular	*hij*, *ie*, *die* 'he', *zij*, *ze* 'she'
3rd person plural	*zij*, *ze* 'they'
(2) Impersonal pronouns	
Generic we, 1st person plural	*wij*, *we* 'we'
Generic je, 2nd person singular	*je* 'you'
Generic jullie, 2nd person plural	*jullie* 'you'
men	*men* [like German *man*]
Generic hij/zij, 3rd person singular	*hij* 'he', *zij* 'she'
Generic zij, 3rd person plural	*zij*, *ze* 'they'
(3) Indefinite impersonal pronominals and nominals	
Generic and partitive pronominals	For example: *iedereen* 'everyone', *ieder* 'everyone', *elk* 'each', *allen* 'all'; *sommigen* 'some', *iemand*', someone', *niemand* 'no one'
Generic and partitive nominals	for example: *ieder(e)* 'every', *elk(e)* 'each', *al/alle* 'all', *allemaal* 'all'; *(een) zeker(e)* '(a) certain', *enkele*' some'
(4) Demonstratives	
Referring to person	For example: *diegene(n)* 'he/she/those who', *die* 'he/she/they'
Referring to object	For example: *datgene* 'that which', *dat* 'that'

Note. The full scoring schema can be requested from the first author.

the personal and (2) the impersonal pronouns, (3) indefinite pronouns and quantifying/quantifier pronouns and (4) demonstratives examined in this study.

In general, we expected *personal pronouns* to be used more often in the narrative texts than in the expository texts that we examined. Since personal experience narratives typically describe events experienced or witnessed by the narrators themselves, speaker–writers should use a relatively high number of first person singular and plural pronouns to refer to the protagonists and third person pronouns to refer to antagonists or other participants in the events. First person singular *ik* may also be used in expository texts, not to refer to the experiencer of the events recounted, but to postulate an expository argument or proposition. Our earlier, more global analysis (Ravid et al., 2002) suggests that there will be no systematic differences in the use of the different types of personal pronouns in written texts versus spoken texts. Finally, younger children may make less consistent and less rhetorically appropriate use of these different personal pronouns than the older age groups.

In contrast, we expect *impersonal pronouns* to have a higher frequency in expository texts. Dutch has a single-item *men* that uniquely and explicitly marks generic reference and lacks a corresponding personal pronoun. It is comparable to German and Swedish *man* as well as to French *on*, which is derived from the word for 'man' (Jisa and Viguié, 2005). The Dutch item *men* is associated with a more formal level of language use, and appears mainly in written language (Haeseryn et al., 1997). We, therefore, expect that *men* will be more

frequent in expository texts than in narrative texts, particularly in the written expository texts, and will be used predominantly by adults and to a lesser extent by high school students. Generic *je*, on the other hand, will be more common in the expository texts of the younger children to express a distanced and impersonalized stance. This is expected because generic *je* has the same form as the personal pronoun *je*, which is used early on by young preschool children (Bol and Kuiken, 1986; de Houwer and Gillis, 1998). In attempting to produce more formal discourse, children will be more likely to choose a form that is easily available and familiar, that is, *je* rather than the less familiar *men*. Note, however, that although most Dutch speakers will agree that generic *je* is a less elegant means to use in formal style than *men*, Dutch adults tend increasingly to use generic *je* to impersonalize discourse, particularly in spoken texts, but even in written texts.[3] If our subjects reflect this trend, we can expect to find generic *je* used by the two older age groups as well, particularly in their spoken expositories.

1.2. Passive-voice in the expression of stance

A second linguistic device used to convey stance is passive-voice in a sentence like *Mijn vriendje werd geplaagd door twee grote jongens* 'my friend became plagued by two big boys' = 'My friend was plagued by two big boys' [Jurien, boy, aged 9, NW] rather than the corresponding active version *Twee grote jongens plaagden mijn vriendje* 'Two big boys plagued my friend'. A prototypical transitive event has two participants: an agent and a patient (Hopper and Thompson, 1980; Givón, 1990). The agent is the voluntary instigator of the action and the patient is the participant affected by the action. In active sentences, the agent is generally the grammatical subject, and in passives, the patient is the grammatical subject. As a result, in passive constructions the patient becomes the focused topic of the sentence, and the agent is downgraded, being expressed in a prepositional phrase, as in *Mijn vriendje werd geplaagd door twee grote jongens* or not mentioned at all, as in *Mijn vriendje werd geplaagd* (Keenan, 1985). An event can thus be reconstructed by changing the relative saliency of the agent and patient (Berman and Slobin, 1994: 517–538; Slobin, 1994).

Active and passive sentences are truth-conditionally equivalent, but they serve different discourse functions (Myhill, 1992). The choice of using passive or active voice is motivated by local or global aspects of the discourse context. A function of voice alternation more related to local discourse context is to mark the relative topicality of agent and patient. Speakers may choose to topicalize the patient and to de-topicalize the agent by using a passive construction, in what Keenan (1985) refers to as a means of 'foregrounding', such that patients are foregrounded and agents backgrounded. The foregrounding of patients in passives serves an important discourse function, as shown by Bamberg (1994) and Berman and Slobin (1994) in their analysis of oral picture book narrations. Narrators used passives to hold the main character in a topical, foregrounded position, yielding a smooth discourse flow with the main character as discourse topic. This is illustrated in (3) by an excerpt from the

[3] Anecdotal evidence for this assertion comes from a collection of statements of the Dutch soccer player Johan Cruijff, entitled '*Je moet schieten anders kun je niet scoren*' [You must shoot else you can't score]. These statements were chronicled in his function as soccer analyst in the media, hence, *je* in the title is not a personal pronoun, but generic *je*. In fact, many of Cruijff's statements contain generic *je*.

spoken narrative of an 11-year-old girl in our data-base: she keeps the main character, herself, referred to as *ik* 'I' in a foregrounded position by switching between active and passive-voice three times.

(3) *Op de vorige school werd ik gepest. En nou toen had ik had ik een repetitie en toen mocht ik altijd bij eentje afkijken maar dat mocht toen niet meer. Toen werd ik door de hele klas buitengesloten. En toen ging ik dit jaar naar een andere school en nou word ik niet meer gepest.* [Manon, girl, aged 12, NS].

'At my previous school I was harassed. And well I had a test and I could always copy but afterwards I couldn't anymore. Then I was ostracized by the whole class. And then this year I went to another school and now I am not harassed any more'.

Other researchers emphasize the dimension of given-new information or thematic information (e.g., Ferreira, 1994; Gourley and Catlin, 1980; Tomlin, 1983) in describing differences between passive and active constructions. It is assumed that in the organization of information in a sentence, the information known to the speaker–writer and listener–reader (the given information) tends to occur earlier in a sentence than new information. As speaker–writers tend to assign the function of given information to the instigator of the action, the agent will occupy the earliest sentence position, resulting in an active sentence. However, if the participant affected by the action, the patient, embodies the given information, speaker–writers tend to produce a passive sentence. Finally, Bock (e.g., 1986) argues, based on her extensive work using experimental techniques like priming to elicit active or passive constructions, that choice of active or passive-voice depends on the level of activation of concepts in memory. Activated concepts tend to take the earliest syntactic position in the sentence. The language production system adjusts this positioning: if the activated concept is the agent the sentence is likely to be an active construction and if the activated concept is the patient the sentence is likely to be a passive construction.

This brief discussion of discourse factors affecting a choice of voice—relative topicality, foregrounding, given-new information, thematic information, or levels of concept activation in memory—as adopted a micro-view on discourse context by focusing on local discourse-features. However, choice of active versus passive constructions may also be motivated by more global aspects of discourse context: the degree of formality of the communicative situation; discourse genre (personal story or expository prose); and/or modality (writing or speech).

Passive constructions typically enable speaker–writers to express a more detached, distanced, generalized, and objective stance, whereas active sentences enable them to express a more immediate, involved, personal, and subjective stance. People can use either passive or active voice to convey how they conceptualize the event that they are describing. This is illustrated in (4) and (5) by excerpts from texts written by a university-educated woman on the issue of avoiding problems between people. In the expository text excerpted in (4), she uses passive-voice to express a more distanced stance.

(4) *Het is misschien gemakkelijk gezegd, maar de conclusie die getrokken kan worden, is dat als mensen proberen om anderen meer met respect tegemoet te treden, er al heel veel problemen tussen mensen voorkomen kunnen worden.* [Barbara, woman, EW]

'It may be easily said, but the conclusion that can be drawn is that if people try to approach others with more respect, many problems could be prevented.'

This same woman uses active voice in her written narrative, yielding a more involved stance.

(5) *Wat ik mezelf kan herinneren van vervelende situaties op de middelbare school [is] dat vooral de meisjes zo vaak roddelen over anderen. Ze kunnen eerst poeslief tegen elkaar doen, en dan achter elkaars rug om de ander volledig zwart maken. Ik weet niet, misschien hoort dit wel bij de middelbare schoolperiode, maar ik vond het toch altijd vervelend, en probeerde er niet aan mee toe doen.* [Barbara, woman, NW]

'What I myself can remember of unpleasant situations at high school [is] that the girls especially so often gossip about others. They may at first be gentle to one another and then behind each others' backs they slander them completely. I don't know, maybe this is part of high school life, but I (have) always found it very unpleasant and tried not to take part.'

It has been observed that passive-voice is more common in writing than in speech (see, for example, Chafe, 1985; Jahandarie, 1999). Kress (1994) argues that (agentless) passives are typical in impersonal, academic writing. A recent crosslinguistic study conducted in the framework of the same project as the present study analyzed the distribution of passive-voice constructions in written expository and narrative texts in five different languages: Dutch, English, French, Hebrew, and Spanish (Jisa et al., 2002). This study showed that passives were used more in English, Dutch, and French than in Hebrew and Spanish. Further, passives were more frequent in expository texts than in narrative texts, and use of passives increased with age. The present study provides a more detailed analysis of a range of different passive constructions in the Dutch sample, focusing on how they function in different modalities (writing vs. speech), genres (expository vs. narrative), and at different levels of age and schooling (9–10 years, 11–12 years, 15–16 years, and adults).

As background, we briefly describe passive constructions in Dutch which, like English, allows passives on a large range of syntactic arguments (Keenan, 1985). Dutch passives are usually formed with the passive auxiliary *worden* (literally 'become') and the perfect participle of a main verb (Verrips, 1996). The perfect participle is also referred to as the passive participle (Haeseryn et al., 1997; Van Bart et al., 1998) to emphasize that the participle in passive constructions does not imply perfective aspect. As in English, the argument of the verb that is the subject in active clauses can be optionally expressed in a prepositional phrase corresponding to the English by-phrase, and introduced by the preposition *door* (literally 'through'). Compare *Mijn vriendje werd geplaagd door twee grote jongens* 'My friend was plagued by two big boys' produced by a 9-year-old boy in his written narrative with the equally possible agentless version *Mijn vriendje werd geplaagd.*

Dutch has several types of passive constructions. So-called 'true passives' have a grammatical subject, in contrast to 'impersonal passives', which have an expletive element as an impersonal grammatical subject (see Haeseryn et al., 1997; Van Bart et al., 1998 for details). True passives are based on transitive verbs, in one of the following three forms: (1) with the auxiliary verb *worden* 'become' plus present participle; (2) with a past participle;

or (3) with an (auxiliary) verb and a passive participle, and an optional passive auxiliary *worden* or *zijn* 'to be'.[4] The first is constructed with the passive auxiliary *worden* ('become', the meaning of *worden* in copula constructions, see Verrips, 1996) and a present participle, e.g., *Heel wat kinderen worden gepest* 'Many children become = are teased' [Tessa, girl, aged 12, EW]. Type (2) passives are constructed with the auxiliary *zijn* 'to be' and a past participle, and the verb *worden* is typically omitted, as in *Ik ben zelf ook wel eens gepest 0 [0 = geworden]* 'I am also myself sometimes harassed' [Liselore, girl, aged 10, EW]. In type (3) passives, the passive auxiliary *worden* or *zijn* 'to be' can be deleted. These passives are constructed with an (auxiliary) verb (e.g., *schijnen* 'to seem', see the example below) and a passive participle. We term these 'infinitival passives'. For example, in the sentence *Ook de medepassagiers schenen deze mening te zijn toegedaan* 'Also the co-passengers seem this opinion to be hold' = 'The other passengers also seem to hold this opinion' [Janske, woman, EW], the phrase *te zijn* 'to be' can be deleted before the participle *toegedaan* 'hold' (cf. *Ook de medepassagiers schenen deze mening toegedaan*).

The literature on 'true' passive constructions distinguishes verbal or syntactic passives and adjectival or lexical passives (e.g., Levin and Rappaport, 1986; Verrips, 1996). In general, verbal passives entail a transition to a state and have a dynamic reading, while adjectival passives have a stative reading. In Dutch, verbal passives are constructed with the auxiliary verb *worden* or with the auxiliary verb *zijn* in the perfective forms of verbal passives. Adjectival passives are typically constructed with the auxiliary verb *zijn* (see Verrips, 1996 for further discussion).

As noted before, Dutch also has impersonal passives (Keenan, 1985), as in *En er werd altijd over hem gepraat* 'And there became always about him talked' = 'and there was always talking about him' 'And people were always talking about him' [Annemarie, girl, aged 15, NS]. These impersonal passive constructions are marked by an auxiliary and past participle, but with no nominal in a nuclear relation to the verb. Impersonal passives are usually constructed with an impersonal subject, in the form of an expletive element like *er* '(existential) there', *daar* '(locative) there', or *hier* 'here' as is *er werd* . . . 'there was . . .' in the above example. Expletive *er* is optional in impersonal passive constructions as in *Ik denk dus dat 0 alleen in sommige ernstige gevallen moet worden ingegrepen* 'I thus think that (0 = there) only in some serious cases must become intervened' = 'people should intervene, there should be intervention' [Vivian, woman, EW]. Impersonal passives are typically formed when the (sole) argument of the verb controls the activity, so that the volitional subject is typically not only animate but also human (corresponding to strictly subjectless impersonal constructions in languages like Spanish) (Tolchinsky and Rosado, 2005) or Hebrew (Berman, 1980). Unlike in such languages, however, in Dutch the agent can be explicitly mentioned in a prepositional *door* phrase, as in *Ik denk dus dat (er) alleen in sommige ernstige gevallen moet worden ingegrepen door een leraar* 'I thus think that (there) only in some serious cases must become intervened by a teacher' = 'I thus think there should be intervention by a teacher only in some serious cases'. Impersonal passives

[4] The auxiliary *zijn* can be deleted in passives with the modal verbs: *blijken* 'appear/turn out', *lijken* 'appear/seem', *heten* 'be called', *dunken* 'seem', *schijnen* 'appear', *voorkomen* 'appear/look to'. The auxiliary *worden* can be deleted in passives with the modals: *dienen* 'should', *moeten* 'must', *hoeven* 'have to', *kunnen* 'can', *mogen* 'can/be allowed to'.

are a fourth category of passive constructions considered in this study in addition to the three types of 'true' or personal passives noted earlier.

A fifth group are 'pseudo-passive' constructions, including 'semi-passives' with the auxiliary *krijgen* 'to get, be given' and a passive participle, as in *Er was dit jaar een nieuwe leraar bij ons op school gekomen die onze klas kreeg toegewezen*. 'There was this year a new teacher at us in school arrived who our class was given assigned' = 'This year a new teacher arrived at our school who was assigned our class' [Ruud, boy, aged 16, NW]. This category also includes modal passives, that is, infinitives with a modal passive reading, e.g., *Nederlands was door geen enkele leraar ook maar een beetje interessant te maken*. 'Dutch was by not a single teacher even just a little interesting to make' = 'Not a single teacher could make Dutch even just a little interesting' [Maarten, man, NW]. A third type of 'pseudo-passive' constructions take the verb *zijn* 'to be' with a deverbal adjective ending in *-baar* or *-lijk*, as in *Voor buitenstaanders is het vaak onbegrijpelijk* 'For outsiders it is often incomprehensible' [Suzanne, woman, EW]. A fourth 'pseudo-passive' construction takes verbs like *raken* 'to become, turn (into)', *staan* 'to stand', *zitten* 'to sit = be (located)', *liggen* 'to lie, be located' and *blijven* 'to stay' followed by a passive participle. The difference between these constructions and 'true' passives is nicely illustrated by two consecutive clauses in the oral expository text of a Dutch-speaking man: *Die ziet dat mensen gepest worden* 'He sees that people harassed become = are teased' [true passive] followed by *Die ziet dat mensen geïsoleerd raken* 'He sees that people isolated become/ turn' = 'He sees that people become isolated' [pseudo-passive], where *die* refers to 'the teacher' that was mentioned in a previous clause. Finally, these pseudo-passive constructions also include certain set expressions like *Al mijn wensen gingen in vervulling* 'All my wishes became true = came true'.

2. Method

The study analyzed narrative and expository texts produced in speech and writing by four groups of native, monolingual speakers of Dutch.

2.1. Participants

Four groups of native Dutch speakers participated in the study, each divided equally by sex: 40 grade school children aged 9–10 years (4th grade); 40 children aged 11–12 years (6th grade); 40 high school students aged 15–16 years; and 40 university graduate adults.[5]

[5] As these figures indicate, the Dutch sample differed from the populations in the other papers contributing to this special issue in several respects (see Berman and Verhoeven, 2002): (1) related to specificities of the Dutch school system, the two middle groups of children were a year younger than their counterparts in other countries (who were in Grade VII, junior high school = French *collège* aged 12–13 and in high school = French *lycée* aged 16–17, respectively); (2) the persons who constituted our adult population were not all necessarily at advanced levels of study in graduate school (doing their master or doctoral degrees) as they were in the other countries; and (3) the Dutch sample included 40 subjects per age-group, half of whom produced either written or spoken texts, whereas in the other six countries, the same subjects (between 20 and 32 in number) produced all four texts, narrative and expository, in both writing and speech.

An equal number of female and male participants were randomly allocated to either the written or spoken condition.

2.2. Materials and procedure

Participants first viewed a three-minute video clip without words that showed vignettes of teenagers involved in different social, moral, and physical conflicts. Participants were then asked, in counterbalanced order, to tell or write a story about a situation in which they had been involved or an incident they had experienced of interpersonal conflict and to produce an expository text discussing the issue of interpersonal conflict. Half the participants in each age group were asked to write a story and an essay, whereas the remaining half were asked to tell a story or give a lecture.

2.3. Scoring procedures

All texts were transcribed and divided into clauses, following Berman and Slobin's (1994) definition of a clause as a 'unified predicate', and texts were then coded using the CLAN programs of the CHILDES International Child Language Data Base (MacWhinney, 1995).

2.4. Pronouns

Each text was analyzed for number of times a particular pronoun form was used, divided by the total number of clauses of the text, to control for differences in text length. Pronouns were defined according to how they were used *in context* (except for the generic *men*, indefinite impersonal nominals and pronominals, generics and partitives, which have no corresponding personal pronoun function). For example, as noted in Section 1.1, the pronoun *je* 'you' can have either a specific, personal or generic reference (as is the case for English, too, as noted in Reilly and Zamora, 2005). This dual function is illustrated in the following excerpt from an expository text written by a 12-year-old girl: *Je zegt niet tegen iemand: Omdat jij dat hebt doorverteld mag je niet meedoen* 'You do not say to someone: because you have passed it on you cannot take part' [Jolanda, girl, aged 12, EW]. As argued by Brown and Yule (1983) and Reilly and Zamora (2005), listener–readers and speaker–writers determine a pronoun's referent via anaphora, which enables the person to pick out the intended referent via contextual and co-textual cues. We, therefore, carefully examined the context in which a pronoun was used in order to determine whether the speaker–writer was making specific or generic reference.[6] Moreover, in case of generic *je*, the rule of thumb is that if *je* can be replaced by *jij* in a sentence without semantic or pragmatic changes, *je* is an impersonal pronoun. So, in the preceding example, the first *je* was scored as generic *je* (impersonal pronoun), whereas the following *jij* and *je* were both scored as specific *je* (personal pronoun), on the assumption that they had as their referent the indefinite iemand 'someone'. By the same standards, the pronoun we in the following excerpt was scored as generic: *Kleine pesterijtjes kunnen verschrikkelijk ontaarden en dat*

[6] We adopted the criteria proposed by Zamora and Kriz (2000) for this distinction.

soort problemen moeten we zoveel mogelijk proberen te voorkomen. 'Small harassments can deteriorate terribly and so we should try to avoid that kind of problems as much as possible' [Hester, girl, aged 16, EW]. This decision is further supported by the fact that the English and French counterparts of this same sentence might take the generic pronouns *one* and *on*, respectively, while Spanish and Hebrew might use impersonal subjectless constructions in the same context.

For the pronoun analysis, the texts of 5 males and 5 females in each condition were randomly selected, yielding 10 texts in each of the 16 (age × genre × modality) conditions, so that the analysis is based on a sample of 160 texts.

2.5. Passives

Similarly to the pronoun procedure, we calculated how often each participant used a particular passive form, divided by the total number of clauses in the text, to control for differences in text length. The passive analysis was performed on the full sample of 20 texts in each of the 16 (age × genre × modality) conditions, yielding a total of 320 texts.

3. Results and discussion

Findings are presented separately for pronouns (Section 3.1) and passive-voice (Section 3.2).

3.1. Distribution and use of pronouns

ANOVAs with the factor age group (9–10, 11–12, 15–16, adult), genre (expository, narrative) and modality (written, spoken) were performed on the frequency scores, separately for each form, treating age group and modality as between-subject variables and genre as a within-subject variable. The resulting mean frequency scores are given in Table 2. We report only significant effects, at a level of $p < .05$ or less. Frequency scores are in percentages.

3.1.1. Personal pronouns

Analysis of the first person singular pronoun *ik* 'I' revealed a significant main effect of genre, $F(1,72) = 12.31$, $p < .001$; *ik* was used more frequently in narrative texts ($M = 21.72$, $SE = 2.04$) than in expository texts ($M = 12.71$, $SE = 1.53$).

The first person plural pronoun *wewij* 'we' was also used more often in narrative texts ($M = 6.29$, $SE = 1.07$) than in expository texts ($M = 0.62$, $SE = 0.30$), $F(1,72) = 24.81$, $p < .0001$. The significant effect of age, $F(3,72) = 3.33$, $p < .05$, indicated that this pronoun was frequently used by 9–10 years olds ($M = 6.04$, $SE = 1.72$), but less so by 11–12 years olds ($M = 2.34$, $SE = 0.77$), high school students ($M = 3.55$, $SE = 1.31$) and adults ($M = 1.89$, $SE = 0.52$).

In the analysis of the second person singular pronoun *je/jij* 'you', only the three-way interaction between genre, modality, and age was significant, $F(3,72) = 2.81$, $p < .05$; this interaction appeared to be caused by the relatively frequent use of *je* by 9–10 years olds in their written narratives ($M = 3.57$, $SE = 1.50$) as opposed to the remaining texts produced by

Table 2
Mean frequencies (in proportions) of personal and impersonal pronouns as a function of age, genre and modality

9–10 year olds				11–12 year olds				15–16 year olds				Adults			
EW	ES	NW	NS	EW	ES	NW	NS	EW	ES	NW	NS	EW	ES	NW	NS
Personal pronouns															
First person singular															
.08 (.05)	.20 (.06)	.16 (.08)	.21 (.06)	.24 (.06)	.07 (.02)	.25 (.06)	.22 (.05)	.11 (.03)	.13 (.03)	.23 (.07)	.21 (.04)	.05 (.02)	.13 (.02)	.22 (.04)	.24 (.07)
First person plural															
.02 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.14 (.06)	.07 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.05 (.02)	.03 (.02)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.04 (.02)	.10 (.04)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.05 (.01)	.02 (.01)
Second person singular															
.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.04 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.03 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.03 (.01)	.02 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.00)	.01 (.01)
Second person plural															
.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.02 (01)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)
Third person singular															
.03 (.03)	.05 (.02)	.08 (.03)	.13 (.05)	.02 (.01)	.03 (.02)	.14 (.05)	.18 (.05)	.02 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.14 (.05)	.13 (.04)	.01 (.01)	.03 (.01)	.14 (.05)	.06 (.03)
Third person plural															
.13 (.04)	.06 (.02)	.11 (.06)	.18 (.07)	.02 (.01)	.05 (.02)	.09 (.04)	.04 (.03)	.06 (.02)	.06 (.03)	.03 (.01)	.04 (.02)	.03 (.01)	.04 (.02)	.05 (.03)	.04 (.02)
Impersonal pronouns															
Universal we															
.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Generic je, singular															
.13 (.06)	.28 (.06)	.02 (.02)	.05 (.03)	.14 (.04)	.26 (.05)	.01 (.01)	.02 (.01)	.12 (.02)	.19 (.05)	.05 (.03)	.04 (.02)	.02 (.01)	.17 (.04)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)
Generic jullie, plural															
.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Men															
.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)
Generic hij or zij, singular															
.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)
Generic zij, plural															
.08 (.07)	.00 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.03 (.02)	.00 (.00)	.02 (.01)	.01 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.02 (.01)	.01 (.01)	.01 (.00)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.00)

A proportion of .00 means that this form never occurred or was rounded off to 0.00 (in case it's frequency was .0049 or lower). Standard errors are between parenthesis.

the three older age groups (the highest being the 11–12 years olds' spoken narratives, M = 2.80, SE = 1.04).

The analysis of the second person plural pronoun *jullie* 'you' revealed no significant differences.

The third person singular pronoun was used considerably more often in narrative texts (M = 12.51, SE = 1.58) than in expository texts (M = 2.24, SE = 0.51) texts, $F(1,72) = 36.86$, $p < .0001$.

In the analysis of the third person plural pronoun *ze/zij* 'they', the effect of age was significant, $F(3,72) = 5.59$, $p < .005$. As was found in the first person plural pronoun *wewij* 'we', the 9–10 years olds (M = 11.89, SE = 2.64) used *ze/zij* considerably more often than the 11–12 years olds (M = 5.00, SE = 1.33), the high school students (M = 4.59, SE = 0.96) and the adults (M = 3.84, SE = 0.99).

3.1.2. Impersonal pronouns

Generic *we* 'we' was used only in expository texts (M = 0.28, SE = 0.14) and not in narrative (M = 0.00) texts, $F(1,72) = 4.21$, $p < .05$.

The analysis of singular generic *je* 'you' revealed a significant effect of age, $F(3,72) = 2.84$, $p < .05$: the use of generic *je* was relatively low in adults (M = 5.31, SE = 1.45), somewhat higher in the high school students (M = 10.17, SE = 1.81) and the 11–12 years olds (M = 10.86, SE = 2.31), and highest in the 9–10 years olds (M = 12.04, SE = 2.72). The main effects of genre, $F(1,72) = 68.39$, $p < .0001$ and of modality, $F(1,72) = 14.12$, $p < .0005$, were qualified by the significant interaction between these two factors, $F(1,72) = 11.82$, $p < .005$. As can be seen in Fig. 1, the use of generic *je* was particularly high in the spoken expository texts.

The analysis of the impersonal pronoun *men* showed significant effects of age, $F(3,72) = 5.97$, $p < .005$, and of modality, $F(1,72) = 7.66$, $p < .01$, as well as a significant interaction

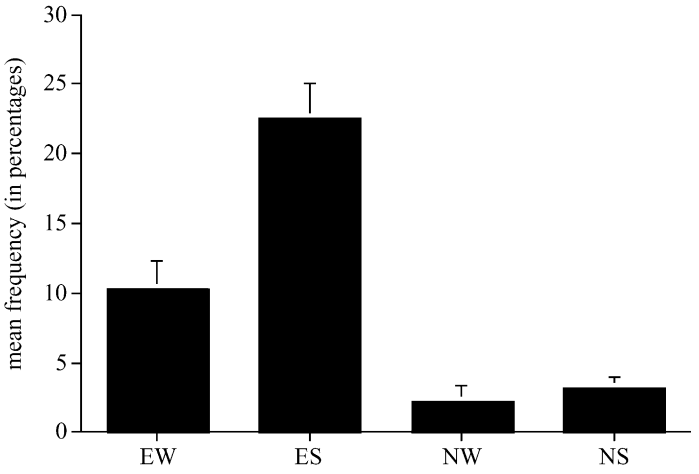

Fig. 1. Frequency of the use of generic *je* 'you' as a function of genre and modality. EW: expository written; ES: expository spoken; NW: narrative written; NS: narrative spoken.

between these two factors, $F(3,72) = 5.97$, $p < .005$. This interaction was caused by the fact that *men* only appeared in the written texts of high school students ($M = 0.08$, $SE = 0.08$) and of adults ($M = 0.84$, $SE = 0.37$); *men* never occurred in the spoken texts of the two oldest age groups, nor in any of the texts of the two youngest age groups.

Finally, the generic form of the second person plural pronoun *jullie* 'you' and the generic form of the third person singular pronoun were seldom used; analyses of these forms revealed no significant effects. The generic form of the third person plural pronoun *ze* 'they' referring to people was used more frequently, particularly by 9–10 years olds in their written expositories ($M = 7.62$, $SE = 6.96$), but the analysis revealed no significant differences.

3.1.3. Indefinite impersonal nominals and pronominals

Indefinite impersonal nominals and pronominals were divided into two categories: generics (collective) and partitives (non-collective).

Across all texts and all age levels, there was relatively little use of generic and partitive pronominals,—0.65% and 1.8%, respectively. The analyses of these two forms did not reveal any significant effects of genre, modality, or age.

The corresponding nouns were also used relatively very little—0.35% and 0.35%, respectively. The analysis of the generic nominals showed no significant effects. In the analysis of the partitive nominals, only the effect of age was significant, $F(3,72) = 4.57$, $p < .01$: high school students ($M = 1.01$, $SE = 0.26$) used generic nominals more often than the 9–10 years olds ($M = 0.10$, $SE = 0.07$), 11–12 years olds ($M = 0.20$, $SE = 0.16$), and adults ($M = 0.24$, $SE = 0.12$) did.

3.1.4. Demonstrative pronouns

In a final series of analyses, we examined the use of demonstratives, i.e., the pronominals making deictic reference to a person or an object (see Table 1). The resulting means are presented in Table 3.

Analysis of pronominals with reference to a person revealed significant effects of genre, $F(1,72) = 8.06$, $p < .01$, and of modality, $F(1,72) = 18.91$, $p < .0001$, as well as an interaction between these two factors, $F(1,72) = 6.06$, $p < .05$. Across all age groups, demonstrative pronouns referring to a person were much more common in the spoken narratives ($M = 6.95$, $SE = 1.08$) than in the other three text types—written narratives ($M = 1.46$, $SE = 1.01$), spoken expositories ($M = 2.37$, $SE = 0.62$) and written expositories ($M = 1.13$, $SE = 0.51$).

Comparable results were obtained in the analysis of pronominal demonstratives referring to an object. This showed a significant effect of modality, $F(1,72) = 7.85$, $p < .01$, qualified by the interaction between modality and genre, $F(1,72) = 4.09$, $p < .05$. As observed in demonstratives referring to a person, the spoken narratives ($M = 5.80$, $SE = 0.75$) contained more demonstratives referring to an object than the three other text types—written narratives ($M = 2.72$, $SE = 0.64$), spoken expositories ($M = 4.05$, $SE = 0.66$) and written expositories ($M = 3.52$, $SE = 0.60$). The main effect of age, $F(3,72) = 4.83$, $p < .005$, indicated that usage increased with age: this form was used most frequently by adults ($M = 5.03$, $SE = 0.67$) and high school students ($M = 5.16$, $SE = 0.62$), somewhat less frequently by 11–12 years olds ($M = 3.77$, $SE = 0.72$) and least frequently by 9–10 years olds ($M = 2.12$, $SE = 0.63$).

Table 3
Mean frequencies (in proportions) of demonstratives referring to person or object as a function of age, genre and modality

9–10 year olds				11–12 year olds				15–16 year olds				Adults			
EW	ES	NW	NS	EW	ES	NW	NS	EW	ES	NW	NS	EW	ES	NW	NS
Demonstrative pronouns referring to person															
.03 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.05 (.04)	.07 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.03 (.02)	.01 (.01)	.10 (.03)	.01 (.00)	.04 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.06 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.01 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.04 (.01)
Demonstrative pronouns referring to object															
.03 (.02)	.02 (.01)	.00 (.00)	.04 (.01)	.03 (.01)	.03 (.01)	.05 (.02)	.03 (.01)	.05 (.01)	.05 (.01)	.04 (.01)	.07 (.01)	.03 (.01)	.06 (.01)	.02 (.01)	.08 (.01)

A proportion of .00 means that this form never occurred or was rounded off to 0.00 (in case it's frequency was .0049 or lower). Standard errors are between parenthesis.

In sum, the above analyses suggest that both children and adults use personal and impersonal pronouns systematically to express discourse stance in narrative and expository texts. Personal pronouns (in particular, 1st person singular and plural, and 3rd person singular) were used more often in narrative texts than in expository texts. Though the general pattern of results was comparable across the three older age groups, 9–10 years olds used personal pronouns in quite specific ways, differently than the remaining age groups. The youngest children used 1st and 3rd person plural (*we* 'we' and *ze* 'they', respectively) relatively often. Furthermore, they used 2nd person singular *je* 'you' relatively often, particularly in their written narratives. In contrast to personal pronouns, the impersonal pronouns were more frequent in expository texts than in narrative texts: generic *we* appeared only in expository texts, while generic *je* was highly typical in spoken expositories. The impersonal pronoun *men* was only used by 15–16 years olds and adults. Though adults also used generic *je*, this form was more common among the school children in all three age groups, most particularly in the 9–10 years olds' texts. Remarkably, with the exception of generic *je*, the use of personal and impersonal pronouns was not affected by written or spoken modality.

Effects of modality were observed in the analysis of demonstratives, however. Across all ages, the use of demonstratives referring to a person or an object was relatively frequent in the spoken narratives. Finally, no effects of genre or modality were observed in the use of indefinite impersonal nominals and pronominals.

These statistical analyses were supplemented by more qualitative investigation of selected topics related to the use of pronouns in narrative versus expository texts.

3.1.4.1. The use of men *and generic* je. Though we had expected, and found, the impersonal pronoun *men* to be more common in the texts of the older age groups, this form was observed with lower frequency than anticipated. Out of the 40 adults and high school students together who produced a narrative and an expository text, only four adults and one high school student used the form *men*, and they did so exclusively in their written expositories. Instead, the two groups of older subjects used a wide range of other pronominal forms to express a detached and impersonal stance in their expository texts. Of these, generic *je* was the most common (see Table 2). All ten adults used generic *je* in their spoken expositories, and five did so in their written expositories. Similarly, nine of the high school students used generic *je* in their spoken expositories, and all used generic *je* in their written expositories (Recall that in the present sample, in each age group, $n = 10$ in each of the four modality $\times$ genre conditions). In fact, across age groups, generic *je* was the form used most frequently to express impersonal stance in expository texts.

In developmental terms, however, the older subjects make a rhetorically more sophisticated use of this same term than do the younger children. This is illustrated by the excerpts in (6) and (7) from the expository texts written by a university graduate woman and a 10-year-old girl, respectively.

(6) *In eerste instantie zou <u>je</u> kunnen zeggen dat dit gedrag zoals pesten, vechten of een ander buitensluiten, een sociaal doel dient: het laat zien dat <u>je</u> bij een bepaalde groep hoort of het geeft een rangorde in groepen mensen aan.* [Rianne, woman, EW]

'At first, you could say that behavior like teasing, fighting, or ostracizing others serves a social purpose: it shows that you belong to a certain group or it gives a ranking in groups of people

(7) *Je kan ruzie bijvoorbeeld oplossen door te zeggen ik vind het niet meer leuk.*
[Aimee, girl, aged 10, EW]
'You can solve a fight for instance by saying I don't find it funny any more'.

In the first, adult excerpt, generic *je* serves to refer in a highly general and abstract way to any and all individuals in the entire universe of human beings, all of society, that might interpret this kind of behavior in a certain way and that might recognize it as identifying them with a particular social group. The fact that *je* is used in preference to more formal, even more distanced *men* can be interpreted as expressing a more 'receiver-oriented' attitude to the text, in which both the sender–writer and the receiver–reader are jointly involved as members of human society. In contrast, the use of generic *je* in (7) is less general and less abstract than in the adult example, and describes a specific solution to a certain type of social conflict, a fight. Besides, generic *je* is immediately followed by a non-general, personalized use of *ik*, in a form of direct speech, which counteracts the distancing, generalized effect of the preceding statement with *je*.

3.1.4.2. Personal pronoun ik *and personal experience in expository text.* As noted, personal pronouns like first person singular *ik* occurred significantly more in narrative texts, while impersonal pronouns like generic *je* are more common in expository texts. This does not mean that personal pronouns never appeared in expository texts, or that impersonals never appeared in narrative texts. A closer look at Table 2 shows, for example, that *ik* is used in both the written and spoken expository texts, along with generic *je*, indicating that speaker–writers may change perspectives within a single text.

The changing of perspectives is related to the development of intratextual diversity and of rhetorical consistency as described by Berman et al. (2002). They propose that with age, speaker–writers will intermix different orientations, attitudes, and levels of specificity of reference within a single text. They suggest that adults in particular will adopt a personal orientation in parts of their expository text. One way to study the development of rhetorical consistency is to examine in which context personal pronouns are used in expository texts. We tried to evaluate this claim by examining the verb denoting the action or event assigned to the 1st person singular pronoun *ik*, the personal pronoun most frequently used in expository texts. The results are depicted in Fig. 2.

The vast majority of verbs occurring with *ik* in the adults' expositories were cognitive verbs (76%) used to express an opinion or to make a proposal or state an assumption (cf. Schwanenflugel et al., 1998; Wing and Scholnick, 1986), e.g., *denken* 'think', *bedoelen* 'mean', *vinden* 'find' = French *trouver*. The rest were verbs mainly related to the act of producing the text (16%), e.g., *vertellen* 'to tell', *opnoemen* 'to enumerate'. The majority of verbs in the high school students were also cognitive (67%). A different pattern was observed in the 9–10 years olds' expository texts. In the 9–10 years olds' expositories, only 25% of the verbs assigned to *ik* were cognitive and 23% were related to the act of producing the expository text. The pattern of results of the 11–12 years olds was more like that of the

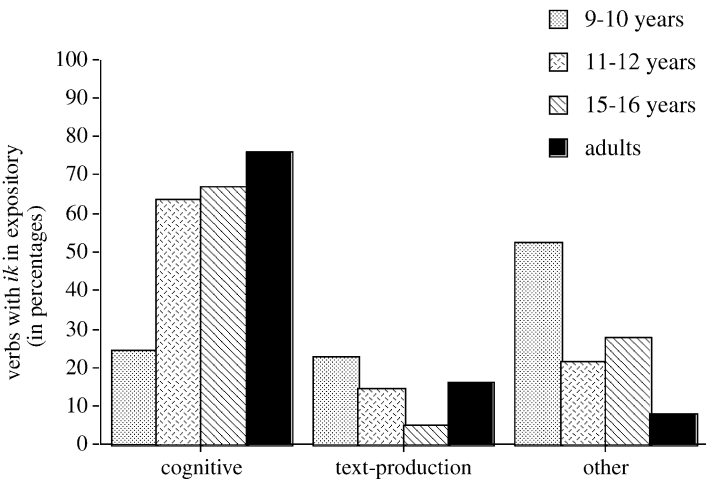

Fig. 2. Frequency of cognitive, text-production, or 'other' verbs assignd to *ik* 'I' in expository texts as a function of age.

the two older age groups: 64% of the verbs occurring with *ik* were cognitive and 15% were related to the act of producing the expository text.

It thus turns out that in expository texts, adults use *ik* mainly with cognitive or text-production verbs, whereas the 9–10 year old children used this pronoun with a more varied range of verbs. This suggests that although in both age-groups, speaker–writers may choose to change perspective by alternating between 1st person singular *ik* and generic *je*, older speaker writers retain a more consistently general or abstract expository mode by using cognitive or textual verbs that sustain their ongoing argument. Children, on the other hand, use *ik* in less selective contexts, so that it often signifies a total switch to the other side of the genre spectrum, a 'storytelling' mode. This is illustrated by the following excerpt from the spoken expository text of a 9-year-old boy.

(8) *En tussen grote mensen en kinderen zijn ook wel's ruzies . . .Of tussen je vader en jou, dan ga, dan eh, of je moeder, en dan ga je, en dan word je boos, en dan ga je mamma slaan enzo en dan moet je naar de gang. En dan eh ga je bijvoorbeeld, doe ik ook wel's, dan als je dan op je broertje of je broertje boos bent dan ga ik wel's naar z'n kamer en dan sloop ik iets van 'm van de lego ofzo of van de Knecks. En en ik heb ook wel's dingen van me moeder uit haar kastje, ehm d'r uit gegooid. Dat kunnen ze allemaal doen*. [Mathijs, boy, aged 9, ES]

And between grown ups and children there are also sometimes fights . . . Or between your father and you, then go, then eh, or your mother, and then you go, and than you get mad, and then you go to hit your mamma and so on and then you are sent out of the room. And then eh you go, for example, I also do that sometimes, then if you are mad with your brother then I sometimes go to his room and then I break up something from his lego or Knecks (=another construction game). And and I also have taken things from my mother out of her locker, eh thrown out. That is something that they can do.

The contrast between pronominal usage in the adult text excerpted in (6) and the usage of younger children as in (7) and (8) corroborates Berman et al.'s prediction that when children use personalized elements in their expository texts, they may do so in rhetorically inconsistent and communicatively inappropriate ways.

This does not mean that because adults use first person *ik* mainly in conjunction with cognitive or text-related verbs that they refrain from telling about personal events in their expositories. On the contrary, adults do intersperse accounts of personal experiences in their expository texts, but they tend to explicitly integrate these into the ongoing exposition, for example, by discussing the event as an illustration of an argument they wish to make, or as anecdotal evidence. In other words, adults typically frame personal, specific references in their expository text in rhetorically consistent and communicatively appropriate ways, rather than narrating these as self-contained events per se, as the children tend to do. This more mature reference to specific incidents in adult expository texts is illustrated in (9) and (10), excerpts from a female adult and a male adult, respectively.

(9) *Waar groepen mensen bij elkaar komen, doen zich vaak problemen voor. Met name wanneer het gaat om veel mensen op een klein oppervlak. Als je kijkt naar uitgaansgelegenheden (discotheek) waar oogcontact al een aanleiding kan zijn voor ruzie. "Kun je't zien?" is een veel gehoorde uitspraak. Mensen gaan met elkaar op de vuist als de blik in elkaars ogen hen niet aanstaat.* [Anne, woman, EW]

Where groups of people come together, problems often occur. Especially when dealing with lots of people in a small area. If you look at places of entertainment (discotheque), eye contact alone can be a reason for a fight. "Can you see it?" is a commonly heard comment. People take fists to each other if they don't like the look in the other's eyes.

(10) *Er wordt mij gevraagd een opstel te schrijven over problemen tussen mensen op het moment dat ik mij verdiep in de literatuur over ouder-kind communicatie, meer in het bijzonder het fenomeen van LO-regulatie. LO-regulatie wil zeggen. . .[persoon beschrijft theorie over LO-regulatie]. Als ik deze begrippen probeer toe te passen op problematische relaties dan blijkt direct dat de theorie iets ontbeert.* [. . .] [Mathijs, man, EW]

I am asked to write an essay on problems between people at the moment that I am caught up in the literature on parent-child communication, more in particular the phenomenon of LO-regulation. LO-regulation means . . . [person describes theory on LO-regulation]. If I try to apply these terms on problematic relationships, than it immediately becomes clear that the theory lacks something. [. . .]

3.2. Distribution and use of passive-voice

The following analyses were conducted to determine the distribution and use of passive-voice constructions in our Dutch sample. Statistical analyses were performed to specify the distribution of each of the five types of passive constructions noted for Dutch (see Section 1.2 above) in relation to the three variables of age, modality, and genre (Section 3.2.1).

More content-oriented analyses were then conducted to study the semantic content of verbs occurring in the most frequent passive constructions (Section 3.2.2), the occurrence of agentless passives (Section 3.2.3), and the nature of the patient nominal in passive constructions (Section 3.2.4).

3.2.1. Distribution of five types of passive constructions

We performed a five (passive type: present, past, infinitival, impersonal, and pseudo-passives) by two (genre: narrative, expository) by two (modality: written, spoken) by four (age: fourth graders, sixth graders, high school students, adults) ANOVA on the passive frequency scores. We report only significant effects, at a level of $p < .05$ or less. Frequency scores are in percentages.

The analysis showed a strong effect of passive type, $F(4,608) = 111.140$, $p < .0001$, indicating a strong differentiation in distribution of different types of passive constructions as described in Section 1.2 above. The present *worden* passive was used considerably more ($M = 4.49$) than the other four types: past *zijn* passive ($M = 0.86$), infinitival passive ($M = 0.05$), impersonal passive ($M = 0.18$), and pseudo-passive ($M = 0.50$) constructions. The main effects of genre, $F(1,152) = 3.89$, $p = .05$, and of modality, $F(1,152) = 7.14$, $p < .01$, were also significant: passives occurred more often in expository ($M = 1.36$) than in narrative texts ($M = 1.08$), and more often in written ($M = 1.42$) than in spoken texts ($M = 1.01$). The main effect of age, $F(3,152) = 8.16$, $p < .0001$, shows that the use of passive constructions increases with age: passives were used relatively frequently by adults ($M = 1.65$), somewhat less frequently by high school students ($M = 1.31$) and sixth graders ($M = 1.30$), and least often by the fourth graders ($M = 0.59$).

The two-way interaction between passive type and age, $F(12,608) = 3.03$, $p < .0005$, was significant. Simple effects analyses revealed that except for the impersonal passives, frequency of use of each passive type increases with age. Passive type also interacted with modality, $F(12,608) = 2.61$, $p < .05$: simple effects analyses showed that infinitival passives and pseudo-passive constructions occur more often in writing than in speech (both ps $< .05$); the effect of modality was marginally significant in the present passive, and was not significant in the past passive and impersonal passive. The interaction between age and modality, $F(3,152) = 3.31$, $p < .05$, was significant: the written texts of the adults, but not of any of the children (4th and 6th graders as well as high school students) contain more passives than their spoken texts.

The two-way interactions were qualified by the significant three-way interaction between passive type, age, and modality, $F(12,608) = 2.06$, $p < .05$. Separate analyses were performed on each of the five passive types in order to probe the exact nature of this three-way interaction. The resulting means are presented in Figs. 3–7; in all figures, the frequency of the specific passive type is shown as a function of genre, modality, and age. Fig. 3 shows the frequency of the present passive construction. Fig. 4 shows the frequency of the past passive construction. Fig. 5 shows the frequency of the infinitival passive. Fig. 6 shows the frequency of the impersonal passive and Fig. 7 shows the frequency of pseudo-passive constructions.

These analyses show that the interaction between age and modality was not significant in past and impersonal passives, marginally significant in present passive, $F(3,152) = 2.25$, $p = .08$, and infinitival passive, $F(3,152) = 2.43$, $p = .07$, and significant in pseudo-passive,

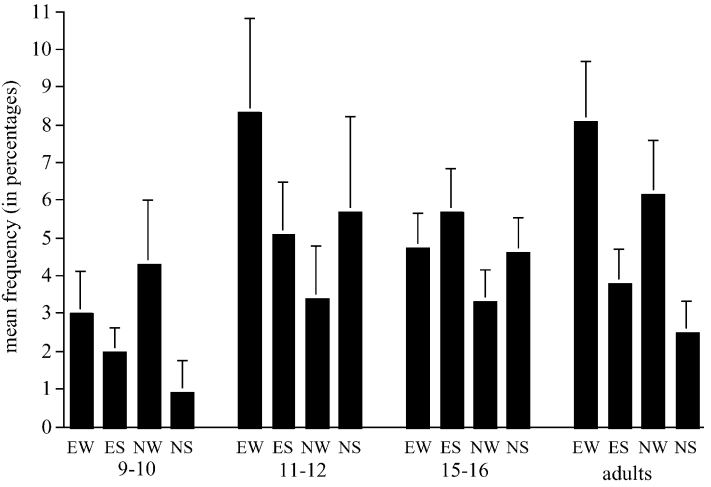

Fig. 3. Frequency of the present participle passive construction as a function of genre, modality, and age. EW: expository written; ES: expository spoken; NW: narrative written; NS: narrative spoken.

$F(3,152) = 5.22$, $p < .005$. In the latter three constructions, passives were more frequent in written texts than in spoken texts, but only in some, typically the older, age groups. Present passives were more frequent in written than in spoken texts of adults and, surprisingly, 4th graders; infinitival passives occurred only in the written texts of high school students and adults; pseudo-passive constructions were more frequent in the written than spoken texts of high school students and adults.

Finally, passive type interacted with genre, $F(4,608) = 2.82$, $p < .05$. Separate analyses of each of the five passive constructions indicated that only the present passive, $F(1,152) =$

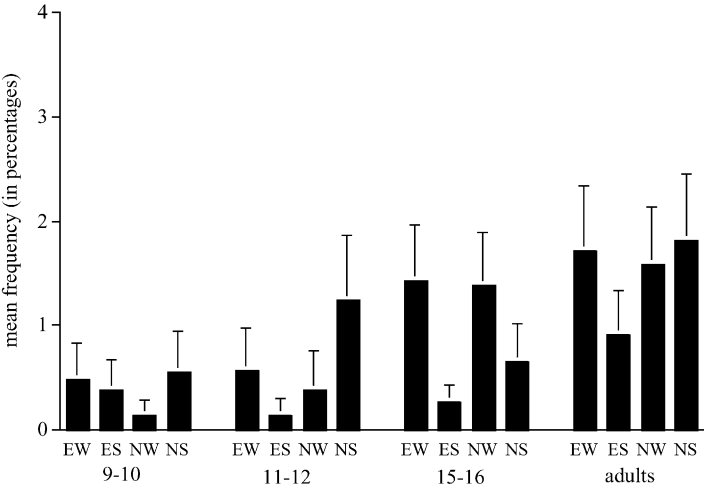

Fig. 4. Frequency of the past participle passive construction as a function of genre, modality, and age. EW: expository written; ES: expository spoken; NW: narrative written; NS: narrative spoken.

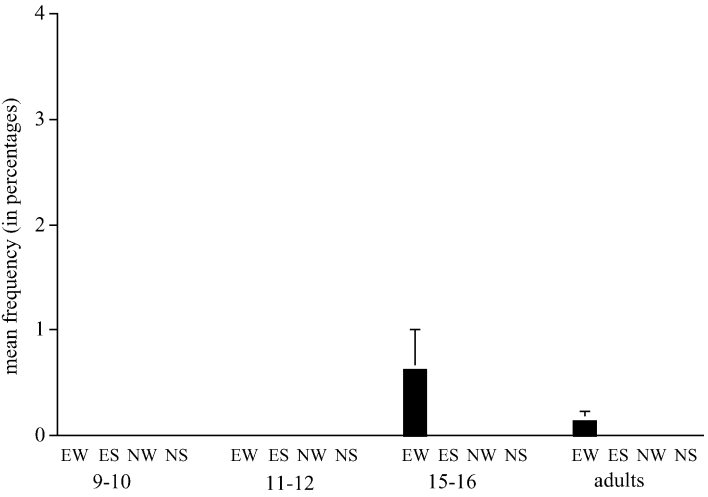

Fig. 5. Frequency of the infinitival passive construction as a function of genre, modality, and age. EW: expository written; ES: expository spoken; NW: narrative written; NS: narrative spoken. The absence of a bar indicates that no passive was observed in this condition.

3.39, $p = .07$, and the infinitival passive constructions, $F(1,152) = 3.98$, $p < .05$, were used more frequently in expository than in narrative texts. No significant differences between the two genres were observed in the past passive, pseudo-passive, and impersonal passive constructions.

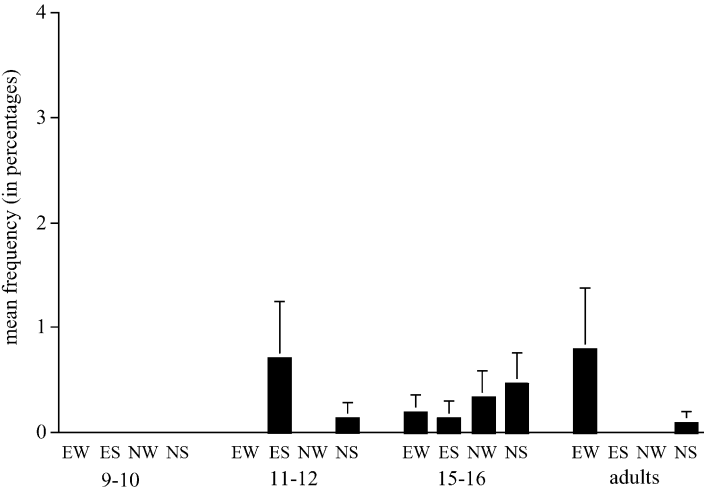

Fig. 6. Frequency of the impersonal passive as a function of genre, modality, and age. EW: expository written; ES: expository spoken; NW: narrative written; NS: narrative spoken. The absence of a bar indicates that no passive was observed in this condition.

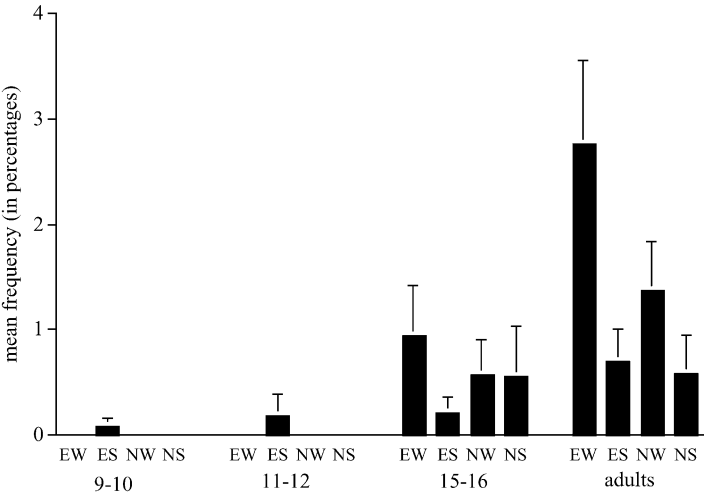

Fig. 7. Frequency of the pseudo-passive construction as a function of genre, modality, and age. EW: expository written; ES: expository spoken; NW: narrative written; NS: narrative spoken. The absence of a bar indicates that no passive was observed in this condition.

In sum, substantial differences were observed in the use of the five different types of passives. Present *worden* passives occurred considerably more frequently than any of the four other passive constructions—past, infinitival, impersonal, and pseudo-passives. And expository texts contain more passives than narratives only in the case of present and infinitival passives, not in the three other types—past, impersonal, and pseudo-passives.

In line with what is known about acquisition of passives in general, we found that the use of passive constructions increases with age even at these late stages of language development (Alfi-Shabtay, 1999; Berman, 1997; Keenan, 1985; Ravid et al., 2003; Slobin, 1994; some languages show a different developmental pattern, see, e.g., Demuth, 1990 on Sesotho). Our detailed analysis showed, however, that the general developmental pattern was qualified by passive type and modality. Use of past and impersonal passives increased with age in our sample. On the other hand, use of present, infinitival and pseudo-passive constructions was dependent on modality as well as on age: these three types of passives were more frequent in the written than in the spoken texts of high school students and adults, whereas the younger age groups appeared insensitive to this modality difference (except for 4th graders' use of present passives).

In addition to analyzing the distribution of the five passive types as a function of age, modality and genre, we performed more fine-grained analyses of the discourse functions of passives in our sample. Specifically, we aimed to reveal characteristics of passive constructions that may serve particular functions in the expression of discourse stance in each of our four text types: written and spoken expositories and written and spoken narratives. These analyses focus on the following dimensions: semantics of the verb, the presence of an Agent and use of *door* 'by' phrases, and the nature of the Patient Nominal.

3.2.2. Negative affect verbs

The quantitative analyses showed that in the two younger age groups, passives were mainly restricted to past and present passives, whereas adults used all five passive types. A more detailed analysis of the passives used by the 9–10 and 11–12 year olds revealed that not only was use of passives restricted to two types of morpho-syntactic constructions, but also to a relatively small set of verbs (i.e., 41 different verbs in total). Specifically, the two youngest age groups used the single verb *pesten* 'to tease' in more than one third (40%) of their passive constructions, and it was particularly frequent (57% out of all passive verbs) in their spoken expositories. Adults used a far wider variety of verbs across the four text types, 216 different verbs in total, in past and present passive constructions (Berman and Slobin, 1994: 167–168). Although adults also used the verb *pesten* with higher frequency than any other verb in passive constructions, it occurred far less in their texts (11% of their passive-construction verbs compared with 40% in the two younger age groups).

The verb *pesten* expresses a negative affect. The negative affect connoted by this verb is illustrated in the following three excerpts from the texts of a 4th grader, a 6th grader, and an adult.

(11) *Als je wordt gepest heb je een gevoel. Wie weet wat voor gevoel dat is? Ja het is alleen, verdrietig, eenzaam enzovoort*. [Eva, girl, aged 10, ES]

'When you are teased, you have a feeling. Who knows what kind of feeling that is? Yes, it is alone, unhappy, lonely, and so on'

(12) *Pesten is niet zo'n leuke vorm. Ik kan het weten want ik ben zelf gepest en dat is helemaal niet leuk* [Jacqueline, girl, aged 12, ES]

'Teasing is not such a nice thing. I should know since I have been teased myself and it is absolutely not funny'

(13) *Ik werd dus min of meer opeens gepest door haar. Ik vond dit natuurlijk heel erg vooral omdat ik haar eerst had geholpen*. (Nassira, woman, NW)

'I became [=was] thus more or less all of a sudden teased by her. I found that really awful of course because I had helped her first'

The common use of *pesten* parallels Bamberg's (1994) analysis of the verbs used in passive constructions in the oral narratives of children and adults. Bamberg (1994) notes that almost all passive constructions were used to refer to a negative type of situation/affect: the events should not have happened and resulted in negative emotional states. In the three examples he discusses, German-speaking adult narrators used the passive participles *erschrocken* 'frightened', *angegriffen* 'attacked', and *aufgeschreckt* 'aroused', all of which involve negative affect.

In light of these proposals, we tested whether the passive constructions in our sample function to encode a 'negative stance' across both speech and writing and narrative and expository genres by examining the affective connotation of verbs in past and present passive constructions in the texts produced by the adults, the 9–10 year olds and the 11–12 year olds in our sample. The grade school children's data in this and subsequent analyses

were collapsed across age, as certain text types in each group contained so few passives (see Figs. 3 and 4). Verbs were categorized as either expressing NEGATIVE AFFECT—e.g., *pesten* 'tease', *buitensluiten* 'exclude, ostracize', *negeren* 'ignore', *uitschelden* 'abuse'—or as NEUTRAL/POSITIVE, e.g., *oplossen* 'solve', *ervaren* 'experience', *uitpraten* 'talk over, discuss', *samenwerken* 'work together, cooperate'. It turned out that the large majority of the verbs in all four text types produced by the children expressed a negative affect (63% and 71%, respectively, in the written and spoken narratives, and 78% up to as high as 91% in the written and spoken expository texts). In the adult texts, in contrast, the predominance of verbs expressing a negative affect was qualified by text genre. In the spoken and written narratives, the majority of verbs were indeed negative (nearly two thirds altogether—63% and 64%, respectively). But in the expository texts, both spoken and written, the amount of verbs denoting negative affect was much lower, down to less than half (45% and 40%, respectively). This analysis shows that in written as well as spoken narratives (of the kind analyzed in Bamberg's oral narrative sample), both children and adults commonly use passive-voice to encode a negative stance. While children also often use passives in this way in their expositories, use of passive in adult expositories functions to express more than just negative affects. The function of passives is studied in further detail by examining the occurrence of the agent nominal (Section 3.2.3) and the nature of the patient nominal (Section 3.2.4).

3.2.3. Agentless passives

As discussed in the Introduction, an important pragmatic function of canonical or 'true' passive constructions (that is, those based on transitive verbs) is to increase the topicality of the patient (the subject in passive-voice) and to decrease the salience of the agent (the subject in active voice). This function of voice alternation is illustrated in *Ik had veel pijn. Toen werd ik door mijn zus naar huis gebracht* 'I had much pain. Then became = was I by my sister home brought' 'I had much pain. Then I was brought home by my sister' [Yaleesa, girl, 9–10, NW]. As also noted in a crosslinguistic study of passive constructions in written narrative and expository texts (Jisa et al., 2002), in most passive constructions, the topicality of the agent is downgraded even further by omitting the agent, for example, *Toen werd ik naar huis gebracht* 'Then I was brought home'. Agentless passives are considered by some to be typical of impersonal, academic writing (Kress, 1994).

Agentless passive constructions like these were very common in texts of our adult sample, accounting for 90%, 96%, 89%, and 84% of the past and present passives in the written and spoken expositories and written and spoken narratives, respectively. Agentless passives also dominated in the two younger age groups, accounting for 95%, 95%, 84%, and 83% of the past and present passives in written and spoken expositories and written and spoken narratives, respectively. In sum, omitting the agent in passive constructions is not only very common in the texts of children and adults alike, agentless passives are also more or less evenly distributed across the four text types. In other words, the presence or absence of an agent in present and past passives was not diagnostic of age, modality, or genre.

3.2.4. Nature of the patient noun phrase

In passive constructions, the patient is in a foregrounded and topical syntactic position. Generally speaking, personal pronouns like *ik* 'I' are more topical than lexical noun

Table 4
Topicality of patient: frequencies of personal pronouns, nominals and impersonal pronouns in present and past passives as a function of genre and modality

	EW	ES	NW	NS
Adults				
Personal pronouns	20.8	23.5	43.6	42.1
Nominals				
Definite	23.6	17.6	25.5	34.2
Indefinite/generic	18.1	29.4	5.5	0.0
Zero	16.6	5.9	3.6	5.3
Total	58.3	52.9	34.6	39.5
Impersonal pronouns	16.7	21.6	20.0	15.8
4th and 6th graders				
Personal pronouns	37.8	20.9	42.1	45.8
Nominals				
Definite	13.5	4.7	31.6	12.5
Indefinite/generic	10.8	9.3	5.3	4.2
Zero	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.2
Total	24.3	14.0	36.9	20.9
Impersonal pronouns	37.8	62.8	21.0	33.3

Columns do not always total to 100% as the lexical status of some patients could not be determined.

phrases, both definite, e.g., *het kind* 'the child', and indefinite, e.g., *een kind* 'a child' (Myhill, 1992). Impersonal pronouns like generic *je* are presumably even less topical (cf. Jisa and Viguié, 2005; Ravid et al., 2002; Reilly et al., 2002; Reilly and Zamora, 2005). Thus, although the patient is always topicalized to some extent in passive constructions by being promoted to grammatical subject, the speaker–writer may choose to foreground some patients more than others by varying their syntactic category. Personal pronoun subjects of passive constructions (e.g., *ik* in *ik word gepest* 'I become = am teased') are more topical than definite nominals in this syntactic role (e.g., *het kind* in *het kind wordt gepest* 'the child becomes = is teased') and these in turn may be more topical than indefinite subjects of passives (e.g., *een kind* in *een kind wordt gepest* 'a child becomes = is teased') or than impersonal pronouns in the same position (e.g., *je* in *je wordt gepest* 'you = one becomes = is teased'). In order to examine whether degree of topicalization of the patient is a function of genre or modality, we compared use of these four types of grammatical subjects—personal and impersonal pronouns and definite and indefinite nominals in present and past passives, in the adult and children's texts. The resulting means are presented in Table 4.

The adults' choice of which type of patient phrase they passivize appears to depend on text genre: in narratives, these were relatively often personal pronouns (44% and 42% in written and spoken narrative), whereas in expositories they were relatively often nominals (58% and 53% in written and spoken expository). Use of impersonal pronouns as the subject of passive constructions, however, does not appear to be related to either text genre or modality. The children (9–10 and 11–12 year olds) also used both personal and

impersonal pronouns as well as lexical nominals as patients in their passive constructions (see Table 4). As in the case of the adults, passive-voice patients in the children's narratives were more often personal pronouns than lexical nominals or impersonal pronouns. In contrast to the adults, however, the children less often used lexical nominals as subjects of passive-voice in their expository texts, both written and spoken. A further notable finding is the children's relatively high use of impersonal pronouns as passive subjects, particularly in the spoken expositories (63%). This topicalization of impersonal pronouns in spoken expositories was not an idiosyncratic choice: sixteen of the 22 children who used at least one present or past passive construction used an impersonal pronoun as patient. The following excerpt from the spoken expository of an 11-year-old girl is a typical example.

(14) *Er zijn verschillende problemen soms zoals je wordt buitengesloten ...*
of je wordt gepest. [Lisette, girl, aged 11, ES].

'There are different problems sometimes like you become = are ostracized ...
or you become = are teased.'

In a final analysis of the patient/subject elements in the Dutch passives, we counted how many patients referred to animate (e.g., *ik* 'I', *we* 'we', *de jongens* 'the boys') versus inanimate referents (e.g., *het* 'it', *problemen* 'problems', *de armoede* 'the poverty').[7] Several studies of passive constructions in spoken (Bock et al., 1992; Lempert, 1990) as well as written language production (Clark, 1965) have shown that children and adults alike more often produce patients referring to animate concepts than inanimate referents; such a dominance of animate over inanimate patients was found in verbs with different restrictions with respect to the animacy of their subject- and object-arguments (Jarvella and Sinnott, 1972). We observed a similar trend in all four text types of the two youngest age groups: the patient subject elements in their passive constructions referred to animate referents over two-thirds of the time (70% and 81% in written and spoken expositories and 68% and 67% in narratives). The adults' passives revealed a different pattern, however: they used a similar amount of animate and inanimate patients across the four text types (patients were human referents in 47% and 51% of their expository texts and 53% and 47% in the narratives). In sum, across text types and modalities, children tend to topicalize animate referents in their passives, whereas adults topicalize animate and inanimate referents about equally often.[8]

3.2.5. Types of passive constructions

Lastly, consider the type of passive constructions preferred or avoided by the subjects in our sample. As noted in Section 3.2.1, two of the five passive constructions in Dutch had highest frequency across our sample—past and present passives. The three remaining passive constructions—infinitival passives, impersonal passives, and pseudo-passives—

[7] The impersonal pronouns *het* 'it' and expletives like *er* 'there' were also considered inanimate.

[8] In his analysis of patients in passives, Myhill (1992) used the distinction human versus non-human referents. We, therefore, also counted the number of human and non-human referents. It appeared that the categories animate versus inanimate in our sample coincided with the categories human versus non-human.

were not often used by the 15–16 year olds and adults and they were almost entirely absent from the texts of the two youngest age groups. The low incidence of these passive constructions in children can be expected given their relatively low frequency in adult language (see Figs. 5–7). These constructions—infinitival passives, impersonal passives, and pseudo-passives (including semi-passives and modal passives)—are syntactically more complex than present and past passives. For example, semi-passives and infinitival passives are constructed with other auxiliaries than the more typical passive auxiliaries *worden* and *zijn*, and modal passives require a *to* plus infinitive construction. Moreover, the impersonal passives involve an expletive element like *er* (as in *En er werd altijd over hem gepraat*) 'And there became = was always about him talked = and there was always talk(ing) about him [Annemarie, girl, aged 15, NS]. The low incidence of pseudo-passives, infinitival passives, and impersonal passives in children's spoken and written narrative and expository texts does not necessarily mean that children cannot produce or understand these constructions. In her doctoral research, one of the few studies of passives in Dutch children, Verrips' (1996) structured elicitation of impersonal passives showed that children as young as 2.6–3.0 years were able to produce impersonal passives.

The question thus arises why the 4th graders in our sample failed to use impersonal passives in their texts, and why these showed up only from age 11–12 years (see Fig. 6; cf. Ravid and Zilberbuch, 2003). Impersonal passives, in which the logical subject remains implicit, conceivably encode a lower level of topicality than true passives. The logical subject is generic, perhaps unknown, and from the speaker or writer's point of view irrelevant to the discourse. Thus, a discourse stance function of impersonal passives is to impersonalize a text, as illustrated in a sentence like the following from an adult written expository text: *Er werd gescholden en geroepen*, 'There became = was scolding and calling' [Janske, woman, EW]. Despite Verrips' finding that young preschool children can produce impersonal passives if driven to do so, the much older fourth-graders in our study did not use impersonal passives in the monological texts which they produced on topics of interpersonal conflict. Instead, they depersonalized the statements they made in their expository texts by using true passives with generic pronouns as the subject, as in the following sentence: *En als je getreiterd wordt dan hoor je [er] ook niet bij* 'And if you tormented become = are tormented, then you do not belong with them' [Arjan, boy, aged 10, EW]. That is, the adult in the earlier example chooses to depersonalize or distance the negative event by using an impersonal passive. In contrast, the 10-year-old aims at a similar discourse goal through use of the generic pronoun *je*.

4. Conclusion

The overall cognitive scheme of an event which the speaker seeks to communicate verbally (cf. Slobin, 1991, 1994, 1996), combined with features of the specific discourse context determine speaker–writers' choice of linguistic means of expression in a given situation. The present study has considered how speakers and writers at four different ages and levels of schooling express discourse stance in personal experience narratives compared with expository discussions, and in writing compared with speech. We analyzed

two sets of linguistic devices for conveying stance: pronouns and passive constructions. In this concluding section, we briefly summarize our main findings.

The pronoun analysis showed that children and adults use personal and impersonal pronouns systematically to express different kinds of genre-related discourse stance. Personal pronouns, particularly 1st person singular and plural and 3rd person singular, were more favored in narrative than in expository texts. Impersonal pronouns, in contrast, were more typical of expository than narrative texts. The form that explicitly marks generic reference in Dutch, *men*, was used by only four adults and one high school student. Instead, speaker–writers of all ages used a broad form range of items to express a detached, less personal stance in their expository texts, with generic *je* the most common. A closer look at the discourse context in which generic *je* occurs indicates an age-related functional distinction, since older subjects use this same form in a rhetorically more sophisticated and consistent manner than the 4th graders.

Remarkably, use of personal and impersonal pronouns was not affected by modality, with two exceptions: generic *je* emerged as diagnostic of spoken expository texts across the age groups, while demonstrative pronouns were relatively frequent in the spoken narratives.

Although all age groups deploy the pronominal system of their language quite deliberately in order to express discourse stance across the two text genres, children in the two younger age groups use both personal and impersonal pronouns rather differently than the two older age groups. In particular, the 4th graders use 1st and 3rd person plural and second person singular more often than the older subjects, and not a single one of the 4th and 6th graders use the prototypical generic form *men*.

A more fine-grained qualitative analysis of pronoun usage focused on changing perspectives within a single text by means of alternating between 1st person *ik* and generic *je* in expository texts. In the adult expositories, and also in those of the high school students and the 6th graders, by far the majority of verbs taking *ik* as surface subject were cognitive or text-related verbs, but this was the case less than half of the time in the expository texts of the 4th grade children. This finding indicates that although both groups of speaker–writers may change perspectives within a single expository text (by using both *ik* and generic *je*), the adults do so within a sustained expository mode, whereas when children switch to *ik*, this does not so much signify a sophisticated shift from an impersonal to a more personal, and more involved perspective, but rather a complete switching to a personally-anchored, sender-focused stance. This substantiates the suggestion of Berman et al. to the effect that maturely proficient speaker–writers can flexibly intermix different perspectives in a text without putting the text's consistency at risk. In contrast, when children intermix personalized elements in their expository texts, they may do so in rhetorically inconsistent and communicatively inappropriate ways. That is, although the youngest children in our study can be considered to have mastered the basics of language structure and already be skilful language users, fine-tuned deployment of linguistic expressions and conventions to convey discourse stance in both writing and speaking, and in expository as well as narrative texts, is a property of later language development.

We also considered five different types of passive constructions in Dutch: present passives, past passives, infinitival passives, impersonal passives, and pseudo-passives. Overall use of passive constructions confirmed earlier findings that this is determined by age, genre, and modality. Most previous studies, however, have considered each of

these factors in isolation or independently. Our study undertook a more detailed analysis of potential interaction between these factors, which revealed that frequency of passive usage involves a complex interplay between type of passive construction, age, genre, and modality. Present passives were used substantially more often than the four other passives. Use of present, past, infinitival, impersonal, and pseudo-passives increased with age (see Figs. 3–7); infinitival, impersonal, and pseudo-passive constructions were seldom used by the grade schoolers. Further, genre effects were observed only for present and infinitival passives, both of which were more frequently used in expository than in narrative texts. Particularly in the texts of high school students and adults, written texts contained more present, infinitival, and pseudo-passive constructions than spoken texts. Note that when subjects' passive use was differentially affected by genre or modality, it was always the case that expository text contained more passive constructions than narrative text, and writing contained more passives than speaking. This suggests that the speaker–writers in our sample were indeed adopting different points of view on the contents of their message, and that they used passive-voice as a means of expressing discourse stance.

A micro-view, finer-grained analysis of discourse context focused on local features of discourse including verb semantics and the nature of Agent and Patient roles in present and past passive constructions. As noted in Section 1, Dutch has very few syntactic restrictions on arguments that can undergo passivization, suggesting that the motivation for using a passive construction need not be strictly grammatical as is the case in some languages (Keenan, 1985) but can be assumed to depend on pragmatic discourse considerations, including the expression of stance.

We found that 4th and 6th graders use only a restricted number of verbs in passive constructions, with the verb *pesten* 'tease' accounting for more than a third of the younger children's passives, whereas adults use a far wider variety of verbs in passive contexts. Moreover, the large majority of the verbs used by the two younger groups of children in all four text types express negative affect, whereas in the adults' texts, this is qualified by text genre, going down from around two thirds of the verbs in narratives compared with less than half in the expository texts, spoken and written alike. That is, both children and adults tend to use passives to convey a negative stance, but with children this takes the form of expressing negative affect in their personal experience narratives and in their expository texts alike, whereas the adults adopt a less subjectively involved or affective stance in their expository texts. This is consistent with the findings of Reilly et al. (2002): their comparison of modal expressions and different types of subject nominals in the written texts of 4th graders versus high school adolescents and adults in three different languages revealed quite subjective, socially anchored, moralizing attitudes in the expository texts of the younger children compared with more detached and less affective attitudes in the expository texts of the older subjects.

A further finding of this study was that children and adults alike omit the agent in the vast majority of their passive constructions, and that the presence or absence of the agent is not diagnostic of modality or genre.

In the analysis of the patient noun phrase, the foregrounded and topicalized arguments in passive constructions, we found that adults varied the topicalization of passive subjects with text genre: patients in narratives were relatively often personal pronouns, whereas

patients in expositories were relatively often nominals. The passivization of impersonal pronouns appeared unrelated to text genre or modality. This latter finding contrasted strongly with the passive subjects of 4th and 6th graders: in spoken expositories, the passive subject was an impersonal pronoun in about two thirds of the passives.

A second analysis of the nature of the patient focused on the patient's animacy or inanimacy. Across all text types, the 4th and 6th graders tended to topicalize animate referents in their passives. This observation corroborates the findings in psycholinguistic research, using experimental techniques to elicit active and passive sentences (e.g., Brooks and Tomasello, 1999; Harris, 1978; Horgan, 1976; Jarvella and Sinnott, 1972; Lempert, 1990; van Hell et al., 2004), which shows that in children's passive constructions the nature of the patient (e.g., its animacy or reversibility) plays a role. Our findings in text production by adults, however, differed from those of the grade school children examined in our study: adults topicalized animate and inanimate referents about equally often in their passives. This observation is closely in line with the strong tendency noted among adults but not among the younger age groups to rely increasingly on abstract, hence inanimate, nominals in spoken and written text production, as noted in quite different contexts and for other languages by Reilly et al. (2002) and Ravid and Cahana-Amitay (2005).

Finally, the qualitative analyses revealed some specific cases in which speaker–writers achieved an impersonal, detached stance in their texts by using impersonal pronouns in combination with a passive construction. It appeared that adults relatively frequently used indefinite/generic nominals as passive subjects in past and present passive constructions in expository texts, whereas the use of personal pronouns was less frequent in expository texts than in narrative texts (see Table 4). An even more remarkable combined use of pronouns and passives was observed in the spoken expositories of the grade school children: about two thirds of their passives contained an impersonal pronoun (often generic *je*). We hypothesized that the frequent use of generic *je* is partly related to the infrequent use of impersonal passives in these children. In our monological texts, impersonal passives were not used by 4th graders and only occasionally showed up in the 6th graders' texts, though, if driven to do so, Dutch children as young as 2.6–3.0 can produce impersonal passives (Verrips, 1996). Rather than depersonalizing an event by using an impersonal passive, in which the logical subject remains implicit, grade school children attempt to achieve this discourse function by using an impersonal pronoun (e.g., generic *je*) as the grammatical subject in true passives.

To conclude, both children and adults use pronouns and passives systematically to express discourse stance in narrative and expository texts. The, at times, specific and rhetorically less sophisticated or consistent ways in which grade school children use pronoun and passive forms to personalize or depersonalize their texts indicates that this discourse function is part of later language development.

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Janet G. van Hell is associate professor at the Department of Special Education (Learning and Development), Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Her main research interests are psycholinguistics, bilingualism and language development and cognition in typically and atypically developing children.

Ludo Verhoeven is professor at the Department of Special Education (Learning and Development), Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands. His main interests are in developing literacy, language development, and atypical communication. He is director of the National Center for Language Education, the Netherlands.

Marjan Tak worked as a research assistant with Janet van Hell and Ludo Verhoeven at the Radboud University Nijmegen on the Spencer Foundation project on developing literacy in different contexts and in different languages. She received her MA-degree from the Department of Classical Studies and is currently in a teacher training program for Classical Studies at the Radboud University Nijmegen.

Moniek van Oosterhout worked as a research assistant with Janet van Hell and Ludo Verhoeven at the Radboud University Nijmegen on the Spencer Foundation project on developing literacy in different contexts and in different languages. Moniek van Oosterhout received MA-degrees: in Classical Studies and in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory and is working on her PhD in the Department of Classical Studies at the Radboud University Nijmegen.