

LESSON NOTES

Intermediate S1 #1

A Dutch Job Interview, Part 1

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#1

DIALOGUE - DUTCH

MAIN

1. Meneer Jansen : Dat is een eer u te ontmoeten. Mijn naam is Jansen. Ik had al over u gehoord.
2. Lukas : Ja meneer mijn naam is Lukas. Goed u eens te ontmoeten.
3. Meneer Jansen : Ik begrijp dat u voor ons wilt komen werken.
4. Lukas : Inderdaad, ik heb belangstelling voor de baan als leraar Engels.
5. Meneer Jansen : Waar heeft u eerder gewerkt?
6. Lukas : Op een paar verschillende scholen, in de onderbouw.
7. Meneer Jansen : En wilt u nu op een hoger niveau werken?
8. Lukas : Ja dat is mijn belangrijkste motivatie.
9. Meneer Jansen : U zult ook eindexamens moeten afnemen. Een hele verantwoordelijkheid.

ENGLISH

1. Mister Jansen : It's an honor to meet you. My name is Jansen. I heard about you.
2. Lukas : Yes sir, my name is Lukas. It's good to see you finally.
3. Mister Jansen : I understand that you want to come and work for us.
4. Lukas : Indeed, I'm interested in the job as an English teacher.
5. Mister Jansen : Where have you worked before?
6. Lukas : At several different Junior High Schools.
7. Mister Jansen : And you want to work at a higher level?
8. Lukas : Yes that's my main motivation.
9. Mister Jansen : You will have to hold final examinations as well. Quite a responsibility.

VOCABULARY

Dutch	English	Class	Gender
eer	honor	noun	masculine
goed u eens te zien	good to see you	interjection	
begrijpen	to understand	verb	
belangstelling	interest	noun	masculine
verschillend	different	adjective	
belangrijk	important	adjective	
niveau	level	noun	neuter
motivatie	motivation	noun	masculine
eindexamen	final examination	noun	neuter

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>Geselecteerd worden voor de Olympische Spelen is een grote eer.</p> <p>"Being selected for the Olympics is a great honor."</p>	<p>Ik heb al veel over u gehoord. Het is goed om u eens te zien</p> <p>"I've heard a lot about you. It's nice to meet you finally."</p>
<p>Begrijpt u deze vraag?</p> <p>"Do you understand that question?"</p>	<p>Begreep je het?</p> <p>"Did you understand?"</p>
<p>Wij begrijpen het.</p> <p>"We understand."</p>	<p>Begrijp je die vraag?</p> <p>"Do you understand that question?"</p>
<p>Ik vind haar erg leuk, maar zij heeft geen belangstelling.</p> <p>"I like her very much, but she's not interested."</p>	<p>Wij gaan graag iedere keer naar een verschillend restaurant.</p> <p>"We like to go to a different restaurant every time."</p>
<p>Ontspannen is erg belangrijk voor de gezondheid.</p> <p>"Relaxation is very important for one's health."</p>	<p>Bij hevige regen is een goede water afvoer belangrijk.</p> <p>"With heavy rain good water drainage is very important."</p>
<p>Onstpannen is erg belangrijk voor de gezondheid.</p> <p>"Relaxation is very important for one's health."</p>	<p>Hij speelt basketbal op een heel hoog niveau.</p> <p>"He plays basketball on a very high level."</p>
<p>Het grootste probleem met deze studenten is hun gebrek aan motivatie.</p> <p>"The biggest problem with these students is their lack of motivation."</p>	<p>Iedereen is zenuwachtig voor het eindexamen.</p> <p>"Everybody is nervous for the final examination."</p>

VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

Ik heb belangstelling voor...("I'm interested in...")

Literally this means "I have (an) interest in." The infinitive (dictionary form) of the verb "to have" is *Hebben*. The first person singular is *ik heb*. The word *belang* used without the suffix can also mean "Importance." While *belangstelling* is a noun, the verb form "To be interested in" is *belang stellen*, which can also be said as *Ik stel belang in...* Note that the verb is split into two parts, a common grammatical construction in Dutch.

This expression is used to show or to express that you are interested in a certain thing (or person). If, for example, you are interested in philosophy, you can say *Ik heb belangstelling in filosofie*. On the other hand, it is also used in a polite way to say "No." If somebody tries to sell you something, instead of a blunt "No," you say *Nee dank u wel ik heb geen belangstelling*, meaning "No thank can you. I'm not interested." This phrase can be used in both formal and informal conversations, although it might be a bit on the formal side. To go back to the above mentioned example, a more informal way would be to say *Ik hou van filosofie*, literally "I like philosophy."

The adjective derived from the noun *belangstelling* is *belangstellend*. In English "Interested." For example, *Een belangstellend luisteraar* would be "An interested listener."

For example:

1. *Hij informeerde belangstellend hoe het ging.*
"He inquired sympathetically how things were."

een paar verschillende ("several different")

The Dutch word *paar* officially means "a pair" as in "a pair of shoes," meaning two. But it is very often used in a broader way, in the same way as the word "couple" or "few" in English. For example, *Ik ga een paar dagen weg* means "I'm going away for a few days," so not especially two days. It could be a little more. *Verskillend* is "different" So the translation for *een paar verschillende* becomes "a few different" or "a couple of different."

The expression is mostly used to point out that there are more possibilities or that there have been some different things. It says that there are at least two, but often more, items being referred to. So it is less precise than using numbers or words like "a dozen." The word *verschillend* of course points out that they are or were all different items. If you say *een paar onderdelen*, it means "a few parts," theoretically they could be the same parts. However when you say *een paar verschillende onderdelen*, ("several different parts") it is obvious that they are all different from each other.

In more formal language, *enkele verschillende* would be used instead of *een paar verschillende*.

Verskillend is an adjective or adverb. It is linked to the noun *verschil* ("difference") and to the verb *verschillen* ("to differ, to be different.")

It has many uses. For example, the answer to the question *Hoe is het weer in April?* "How is the weather in April?" can be *Oh, dat verschilt* ("Oh, that's always different.")

Another example:

1. *Het betreft hier een paar verschillende onderwerpen.*
"This concerns several different subjects."

***hoger niveau* ("higher level")**

As in many other European languages, the noun *niveau* ("level") has a few slightly different meanings. It may refer to a physical level like *waterniveau* ("water level"), but also to more abstract facts, like *onderwijsniveau* ("level of education") or even the level of a conversation or a joke. *Hoog niveau* ("high level") or *laag niveau* ("low level") are expressions that could be used in those situations.

As mentioned above, this expression can be used in combination with many different topics. It also has a certain subjectivity in it. When using *laag niveau* ("low level") or *lager niveau* ("lower level,") one should be careful. It can easily be interpreted as negative or degrading.

For example:

1. *De universiteiten zijn in dit land altijd van een hoger niveau.*
"The universities in this country are always on a higher level."

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is Using the Present Tense to Talk About the Present or Past

Waar heeft u eerder gewerkt?

"Where have you worked before?"

In this lesson, you will learn how to:

1. Use a present tense to talk about the past
 2. Change the word order to ask a question
 3. Use adjectives
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1. How to use the present tense to talk about the past

The Dutch verb *hebben* ("to have") is very widely used. The formal first person singular is *heb*, although *heeft* is also widely used (more often, some think). *U heeft gewerkt* is the Present Perfect of "You have worked." So a present tense is used to talk about something that happened in the past. The Simple Past would be *U werkte* ("You worked.") As in many other languages there are several ways to refer to the past.

Below you will find some common tenses and conjugations of the verb *Hebben*.

Infinitive: <i>Hebben</i>			
Present	Simple past	Present Perfect with the verb <i>werken</i> ("to work") (present + past participle)	English
<i>Ik heb</i>	<i>Ik had</i>	<i>Ik heb gewerkt</i>	I have
<i>Informal: Jij hebt</i>	<i>Jij had</i>	<i>Jij hebt gewerkt</i>	You have
<i>Formal: U heeft (hebt)</i>	<i>U had</i>	<i>U heeft (hebt) gewerkt</i>	You have
<i>Hij/zij heeft</i>	<i>hij/zij had</i>	<i>Hij/zij heeft gewerkt</i>	He/she has
<i>Wij hebben</i>	<i>Wij hadden</i>	<i>Wij hebben gewerkt</i>	We have
<i>Zij hebben</i>	<i>Zij hadden</i>	<i>Zij hebben gewerkt</i>	They have
<i>Informal: Jullie hebben</i>	<i>Jullie hadden</i>	<i>Jullie hebben gewerkt</i>	You have
<i>Formal: U heeft (hebt)</i>	<i>U had</i>	<i>U heeft (hebt) gewerkt</i>	You have

For example:

1. *Ik heb al gegeten.*
"I have already eaten."
2. *Zij zijn verleden jaar in Italië geweest.*
"They have been to Italy last year."

2. How to change the word order to ask a question

In Dutch, turning a statement into a question is relatively easy. In many cases, just changing the word order is all it takes. Sometimes the verb has to be conjugated differently, but usually not. For a simple statement the sentence is usually made up of a subject, a verb and a direct object, or some other clause (in that order.) For example *Jan slaat de hond* ("John beats the dog,") becomes *Slaat Jan de hond?* ("Does John beat the dog?")

This is basically the whole grammatical theory for turning statements into questions. But of course there are also different ways (see below).

For example:

Dutch		English	
Statement	Question	Statement	Question
<i>Ik ben gelukkig.</i>	<i>Ben ik gelukkig?</i>	I am happy	Am I happy?
<i>We gaan naar het strand.</i>	<i>Gaan we naar het strand?</i>	We are going to the beach.	Are we going to the beach?
<i>Het weer is mooi.</i>	<i>Is het mooi weer?</i>	The weather is nice.	Is it nice weather?
<i>Het weer is mooi.</i>	<i>Hoe is het weer?</i>	The weather is nice.	How is the weather?

3. How to use adjectives

Adjectives are always placed before the noun to which they refer. Adjectives in Dutch are conjugated. Both the article before it and the gender of the noun have their influence on the conjugation of the adjective. Please see the table below for some examples that should make things clear.

Dutch	English	Description
<i>Een grote beer.</i>	A big bear.	Indefinite article, masculine noun
<i>De grote beer.</i>	The big bear	Definite article, masculine noun
<i>Een groot huis.</i>	A big house.	Indefinite article, neuter noun
<i>Het grote huis.</i>	The big house.	Definite article, neuter noun
Please note		
<i>Het rode, bakstenen huis.</i>	The red brick house.	A house that is made of bricks and is red.
<i>Het rood bakstenen huis.</i>	The red-brick house.	A house made of red bricks.

Examples from the dialogue:

1. *En wilt u nu op een hoger niveau werken?*
"And you want to work at a higher level?"
2. *Ja dat is mijn belangrijkste motivatie.*
"Yes that's my main motivation."

Sample Sentences

1. *Ik heb de laatste twee jaren helemaal geen vakantie gehad.*
"I haven't had any holidays in the last two years."
2. *Ik ga vanavond naar het feest. Ga jij ook?*
"I'm going to the party tonight. Are you going as well?"
3. *Op goede scholen zijn er altijd moeilijke examens.*
"Good schools always have difficult examinations."

CULTURAL INSIGHT

Job Interviews in the Netherlands

As in any other country, in the Netherlands job interviews are nerve-racking and unpleasant situations, for the person being interviewed at least. Employers want the best and therefore put a lot of pressure on the person being interviewed. The potential future employee obviously wants the job, if not he/she wouldn't be sitting there! Still, in comparison to other countries, Holland is fairly relaxed regarding the interview process. In interviews in other countries they may suddenly ask interviewees to play a role, give a demonstration or some other unexpected thing, but this sort of interview is fairly rare in Holland. Useful expression:

1. *En? Wat vond u zelf van dit gesprek?*
"And? What did you think about this conversation yourself?"

[Correction Note]

In the lesson's main audio at min 0:54, 1:32 and in the first dialogue line the instructor says [*Dat is een eer u te ontmoeten.*], but should have said [*Het is een eer u te ontmoeten.*]