



Tourist familiarity in Amsterdam

Route choice behaviour of (un)familiar domestic tourists within Amsterdam's inner city

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Amsterdam is one of the five world's most visited tourist destinations (Boniface and Cooper, 2005, p. 170). Its unique physical environment attracts foreign tourists who would like to have a glimpse of the Dutch capital. This physical environment dates from Amsterdam's 'Golden age' in the seventeenth century, when Holland was one of the world's most powerful nations. Amsterdam was the centre of this nation and grew enormously in terms of built area and population numbers. The canals and canal houses with their exceptional facades are examples of Amsterdam's seventeenth century's workmanship.

Compared to other popular tourist destinations, Amsterdam has not many famous landmarks like the Eiffel Tower, the London Eye or the Colosseum, although the Anne Frank Huis is an internationally familiar tourist attraction. However, as Boniface and Cooper (2005, p. 170) mention, Amsterdam's main appeal lies in the overall physical and particularly social environment. Its vast number of hospitality and entertainment facilities is an important factor of a vibrant street life. Well-known examples of these amenities are the 'brown bars' and the Wallen, where the unique and world-famous Red Light District is located.

These unique characteristics are not only relevant for international tourists, but also for domestic visitors. Domestic holidays and day excursions form an important part of the Dutch tourism industry. Moreover, recreation has become part of the Dutch lifestyle. Dutch people tend to go out in their own country with Amsterdam as one of the most popular tourist destinations (Boniface and Cooper, 2005, p. 168).

In this master thesis Amsterdam's attractiveness will be researched in a more detailed way. What exactly is attractive for domestic visitors? Which routes within Amsterdam's inner city do domestic tourists follow and which routes do they avoid? And what is the role of (un)familiarity in the tourists' behaviour and their route choice decisions? These are the most important questions investigated in this research. The main topic in this research is the experience of Dutch tourists on route choice decisions within Amsterdam's inner city with a focus on the role of familiarity those domestic tourists have with Amsterdam's inner city.

In the twenty-first century tourism is more important and greater than ever before. People travel all over the world and people from all over the world come to a place to experience it. This enormous increase in recreational mobility is the result of a space-time compression: people are able to travel further in the same time span than in the past (Urry, 2007). For a small amount of money cities like London, Paris, Barcelona or Berlin could be visited and in this sense form a competitor for domestic tourist destinations like Amsterdam. Because Dutch people take more holidays abroad than in their own country (Boniface and Cooper, 2005, p. 168) there is a decline of the domestic tourist sector in terms of visitations. The number of domestic holidays has declined by a quarter of a million and the number of holidays abroad has remained stable (NBTC, 2011).

To keep their destinations attractive to be visited by international and domestic visitors, tourist destinations like Amsterdam have to promote themselves actively and make a trip to their city a positive experience. Or to speak in the language of Butler's Tourist Area Life Cycle, tourist

destinations have to develop themselves to attract tourists. When this process comes to an end, stagnation and eventually a decline will follow (Butler, 1980).

Because tourism has been globalised in the past decades tourist destinations have to keep themselves visible in the tourism's 'struggle for life'. Urry (2002) gives this the term 'tourism reflexivity', which he describes as "...The set of disciplines, procedures, and criteria that enable each place to monitor, evaluate and develop its tourism potential within the emerging patterns of global tourism (Urry, 2002, p. 141-142)." So, tourist destinations have to find a unique place in global tourism and have to promote themselves as a niche destination. The tourist destination has to be promoted uniquely in tourists' minds and images to keep the place visible for potential tourists. Professionals in tourist destinations use more and more information and communication technologies (ICTs) to comply with this.

On the one hand, new or different places and their corresponding visual images within the tourist destination are promoted and marketed. On the other hand, familiar places and their corresponding visual images are strengthened. These two marketing strategies respond to tourists' willingness to visit familiar or novel tourist attractions. Some people prefer the mass style of pleasure. These people enjoy the more familiar tourist destinations and their corresponding attractions. Others enjoy more unfamiliar and unknown attractions while travelling. Their desire to experience novel destinations and cultures is a key motivation of their travel behaviour (Cohen, 1972).

Researchers have created several typologies of tourists with which they try to recognise the diversity of tourists' travel behaviour in novel and familiar ways. Policy makers may respond to these various typologies by creating a certain extent of familiarity within the tourist destination. These places have continuously to find a balance between novelty and familiarity. Finding a good position on this continuum will be a pull factor for different types of tourists to visit the place (Basala & Klenosky, 2001).

Familiarity is not simply a matter of a recent visit to the tourist destination, but it is more than that. Richard Prentice (2004) has gathered and distinguished seven interrelated types of familiarity: informational (the extent of information used), experiential (the extent of past experiences), proximate (national identity), self-described (the extent how familiar people think to be with a place), educational (the extent of formal and informal education) self-assured (own judgements and feelings on safety) and expected familiarity (cosiness and attractions expected).

In the conclusion of his article on tourist familiarity Prentice (2004, p. 941-942) cites: "An appropriate typology of variously interrelated forms to guide future research is hence the septet of familiarity (the seven types of tourist familiarity, red.). This septet also sets a potential agenda for destination marketers to use in assessing their product offerings in terms of likely consumer reaction." The seven types of tourist familiarity Prentice identified are used as main theoretical building blocks in researching the role of tourist familiarity in tourists' route choice behaviour.

But with which elements within the tourist destination are tourists familiar? Kevin Lynch (1960) introduced a way in which familiarity could be displayed on mental maps. These mental maps, also called cognitive maps, spatially orient a person at a certain place. Analysing familiar elements in the drawn mental maps may explain different behaviours of individuals. Kevin Lynch distinguishes five

urban elements which can be imagined by people: paths, edges, landmarks, nodes and districts (Lynch, 1960).

Two different types of urban images exist: appraisive and designative aspects of imagery. Appraisive aspects deal with personal, subjective feelings on a place. In other words, how a person feels about a place. Designative aspects are objects in the urban environment individuals know and use while navigating them through the destination. In other words, which things of the destination the individual has remembered and recognised from previous experiences with the destination (Knox & Pinch, 2006, p. 226-227).

1.2 Scientific relevance

Although many publications have analysed the impacts of several types of (tourist) familiarity, none of them have related these issues to the route choice behaviour of tourists in tourist destinations. Several authors have made a connection between familiarity and imagery, but none of these researches took place within the tourist destination itself; these publications are about imagery of tourist destinations and have taken place at home (Baloglu, 2001; Prentice, 2004).

Moreover, few tourist movement related publications have implemented familiarity or even emotions on route choice decisions. Little is known about the role of the senses and emotions within the spatial environment. In the past decades there has become more attention for emotions in geography, particularly in the emotional geography. Followers of this movement in geography emphasize that emotions are relevant in researching human behaviour and shape an individual's senses and meanings of a space or in the case of this master thesis, a route (Davidson et al., 2005).

One example in which familiarity is included in spatial movement of tourists is Kemperman et al. (2009). They concluded that familiarity with the social and physical environment due to previous visitations plays an important role in route choice decisions.

However, a lot of research has been conducted to model routes and itineraries, especially in publications of Lew and McKercher (2002, 2006). These publications have a rational focus on tourist behaviour and one tries in these articles to calculate and quantify tourist behaviour. Middleton (2010, p. 577) highlights this problem as she states that there are not enough appropriate data to analyse pedestrian behaviour. There are many quantitative research methods which can be used to quantify pedestrian movements, such as the frequency of walking, but the question why this happens can seldom be answered. There is little known why groups and individuals choose for a certain itinerary and what their experiences and meanings are while moving.

The level of scale plays an important role in these different research methods. Larger groups can easily be quantified, but the reasons which underpin their movement are largely unknown. Contrary, behaviour of smaller groups and individuals can easier be researched but harder be generalised than larger groups (Middleton, 2010, p. 577).

So, there is a gap in existing literature on spatial movement and emotional experiences of tourists and the moderating role of familiarity. On the one hand, there is a focus on rational decisions of tourists and modelling this and on the other hand, there is a focus on emotional behaviour and imagery of tourists.

Summarised, research to tourist familiarity may help to clarify tourists’ spatial decisions and emotional experiences. In this research route choice behaviour and emotional experiences on a specific route are tested on the seven types of tourist familiarity. Thus, this research will help to provide insights into the role of familiarity in the route choice behaviour of tourists in Amsterdam’s inner city.

1.3 Societal relevance

Combining these research areas may give new insights for tourism policy makers and marketers. Analysing tourists’ behaviour within the tourist destination, comparing this with the need for searching familiar or unfamiliar elements within the tourist destination, may help policy makers to find solutions which may satisfy both unfamiliar and familiar tourists. This then could finally enhance each tourist’s satisfaction (Kastenholz, 2010, p. 320). For instance, public space and urban design could be adjusted because they have a negative impact on tourist experiences and images or new promoting material could be published to create more or less tourist familiarity. Again and for sure, attracting visitors is the main purpose for tourist destinations like Amsterdam to prevent the city from the stage of decline in Butler’s Tourist Area Life Cycle.

1.4 Research questions

The main research question has been formulated as follows: “To what extent does tourist familiarity affect the route choice behaviour of domestic tourists in Amsterdam’s inner city and how could this be explained?”

Different specific research questions may help to find an answer on the main research question. These are:

1. What is tourist familiarity and which types of tourist familiarity can be distinguished?
2. To which extent do cognitive factors play a role in spatial movements of tourists?
3. To which extent do the different types of tourist familiarity affect route choice decisions of domestic tourists in Amsterdam’s inner city?

1.5 Research structure

The first research question will be handled in Chapter 2. The concept of tourist familiarity is explained and the different types of tourist familiarity are clarified further. A clarification of the concept of tourist familiarity is a good starting point of this research as it is the central concept. With a good understanding of this concept the following theoretical chapter can better be understood.

In the second theoretical chapter, Chapter 3, an analysis is made on the general role of cognitive factors in spatial movement of tourists, like the imagery of a destination or sensing the environment. So, in this chapter the broader context of this research is explored. As already mentioned, there is little known about this research area and to make a link with the role of tourist familiarity (Chapter 2) gives a solid theoretical framework for the analysis done in Chapter 5. In this sense, tourist familiarity can be seen as a cognitive factor in tourist route choice behaviour.

Then, in Chapter 4 the methodology used is explained and several definitions used in the theoretical chapters are operationalized. 18 walk alongs (interviewing the respondent while walking along the respondent within the urban environment) have been conducted within Amsterdam’s inner city to get a detailed insight in cognitive reactions of domestic tourists during their walked routes. During the walk alongs a photo camera has been given to respondents with which they can illustrate their

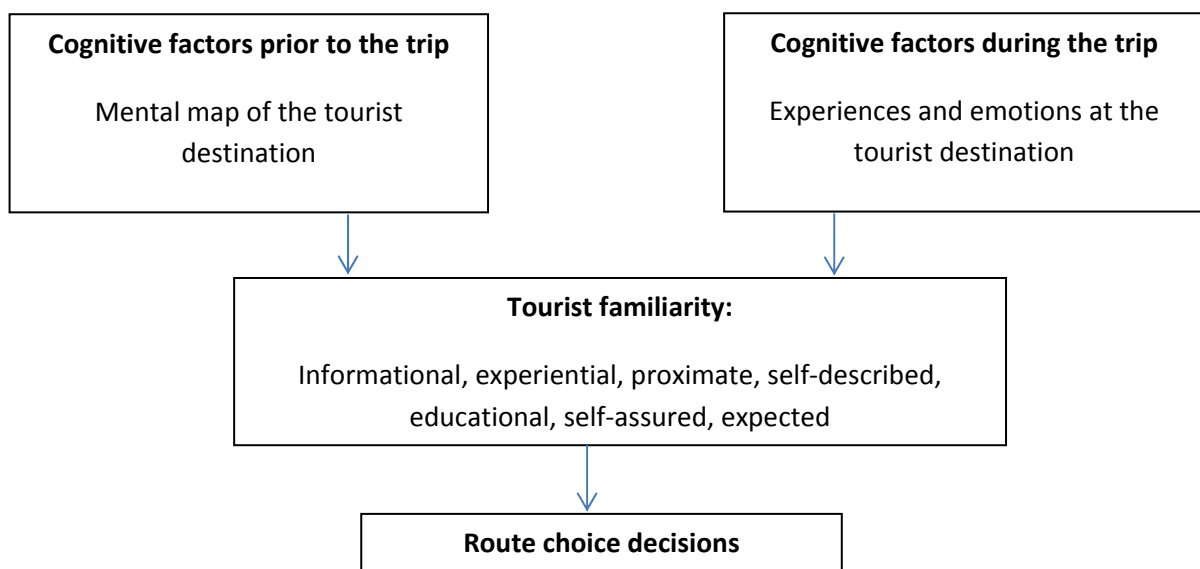
personal feelings which determine route choice behaviour. Before the walk alongs took place respondents have made a mental map of Amsterdam’s inner city and filled in a questionnaire about their experiences with Amsterdam’s inner city to make a first exploration in the respondents’ familiarity with Amsterdam’s inner city. Combining the walk along method and the drawing of mental maps may help to analyse tourists’ behaviour at the tourist destination (Carpiano, 2009). Afterwards, maps of the walked routes have been drawn and the most important aspects of the walk alongs (mental maps, texts and photographs) have been analysed and classified per location in Amsterdam’s inner city. In this way, an overview has made which includes experiences of the different respondents and the role of familiarity per place visited. This then has been linked to the existing theory on tourist familiarity and route choice behaviour explained in the theoretical chapters. This analysis takes place in Chapter 5 and has been designed to find an answer on the third research question.

Finally, in the conclusion (Chapter 6) a comparison is made between the several roles which the types of tourist familiarity take in route choice behaviour. Furthermore, some recommendations for policy makers and tourist marketers will be given to implement tourist familiarity in current policies.

1.6 Conceptual model

As a result of this research structure a conceptual model can be made to use as a guideline in this research. The conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.1. The central box of tourist familiarity will be discussed in Chapter 2 where the concept tourist familiarity is explained. The upper boxes will be discussed in Chapter 3 where cognitive factors are used as a theoretical umbrella over the tourist familiarity concept. The arrow between the central box and the lower box will be discussed in Chapter 5 and contains the empirical part of this research. In this part the influence of tourist familiarity on route choice decisions is analysed.

Figure 1.1: Conceptual model



Chapter 2 Tourist familiarity

2.1 Introduction

The central concept of this master thesis is tourist familiarity. But what does this in fact mean? Some researchers have argued that tourists are searching for unfamiliar areas and experiences. Others have argued that tourists always bear in mind some familiar things when being at an unknown tourist destination. Some researchers have defined this concept as a one- or two-dimensional, others have distinguished several types of tourist familiarity. Although there is more and more interest in tourism, both in economic and in scientific terms, familiarity remains a relatively unclear concept (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002, p. 401). In this chapter, these discussions will be shown to clarify the concept tourist familiarity.

2.2 Balancing between novelty and familiarity

In his famous publication 'The tourist gaze' John Urry explains what is necessary for a distinct tourist gaze, and for tourism in general: " [It is necessary] that there must be certain aspects of the place to be visited which distinguish it from what is usually encountered in everyday life. Tourism results from a basic binary division between the ordinary (everyday life) and the extraordinary. Tourist experiences involve some aspects or elements that induce pleasurable experiences which, by comparison of the everyday, are out of the ordinary. Potential objects of the tourist gaze must be different in some way or other. People must experience particularly distinct pleasures which involve different senses or are on a different scale from those typically encountered in everyday life (Urry, 2002, p.12)."

'The tourist gaze' is an example of a traditional view of the role of familiarity in tourism. Urry (2002) sees unfamiliarity with the tourist destination as an important pull factor why tourists visit the respective destination. Hannam and Knox (2010, p. 91) mention that the term 'spectacular' can be used as a synonym for the unfamiliar. The spectacular is often a reason why people are gazing, photographing or videoing. Many tourists consider the spectacular or the unfamiliar as interesting because they are not used to the features they encounter within the visited tourist destination.

Hannam and Knox (2010, p. 89) highlight the connection between tourism and individuals' daily lives and see this connection in twofold. On the one hand, the person who is going on holiday is the same person as the one who is at home. Mundane activities like working, shopping, cooking, washing, etcetera are the things a person would like to escape from. On the other hand, other aspects of an individual's daily life like his interests and favours may be strengthened during his holiday, but in a recreational way. So, in this sense, these persons are searching for the more familiar things on holiday to fulfil their needs. Hannam and Knox (2010, p. 90) call these unremarkable and familiar activities 'banality'. A certain idea or meaning could be restated constantly whereby it becomes commonplace in everyday life. The ideas that everywhere in Amsterdam are coffee shops or that the Bijlmer neighbourhood is entirely inhabited by ethnic minorities are examples of common-sense understanding created by several types of media over a long period of time.

Basala and Klenosky (2001, p.172) define the difference between novelty and familiarity searchers very well: "...Although tourists are often motivated by a desire to experience novelty and change, they differ in terms of their willingness to travel in novel and unfamiliar ways. Some people prefer

the “mass” style of pleasure travel maintaining a comfortable distance from the host community, while others enjoy a more adventuresome and personal experience.”

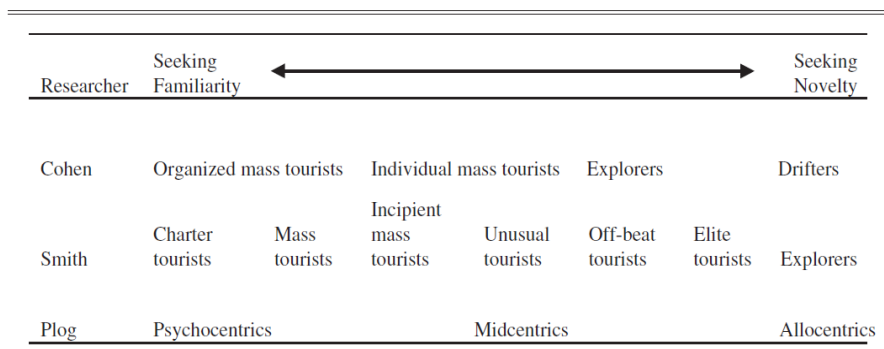
The difference between novelty and familiarity searchers can be expressed in spatial differences. On the one hand, space searchers are tourists who visit attractions in a wide area and have a more active participation at these attractions. These tourists are searching for the more unfamiliar experiences. On the other hand, space sitters are tourists who visit attractions in a smaller area and have a more passive participation at these attractions. These tourists are searching for the more familiar experiences. Individuals generally contain characteristics of both types within the same visitation. The choice to be a space searcher or a space sitter depends largely on the knowledge of and familiarity with the tourist destination (McKercher & Lau, 2008, p. 358).

Finally, which extent of familiarity is attractive for tourists? Baloglu (2001) has stated that the more familiar the tourist destination is, the more it is felt as an attractive tourist destination. This is not really true because, as already mentioned in this section, not all familiar destinations are attractive for a tourist and not all unfamiliar destinations are unattractive for a tourist. Familiarity and unfamiliarity and their corresponding ratings of attractiveness depend on an individual’s taste. However, too much unfamiliarity and too much familiarity at a tourist destination are perceived as unattractive (MacKay & Fesenmaier, 1997).

2.3 Travel style typologies

Several researchers (Cohen, 1972; Plog, 1974; Smith; 1989) have tried to typify different groups of tourists and their travel behaviour. Basala and Klenosky (2001) have compared these typologies with each other and have made an overview of these types along what they call the ‘novelty-familiarity tourist continuum’ (Figure 2.1)

Figure 2.1: The novelty-familiarity tourist continuum



Source: Basala & Klenosky, 2001, p.174

Although the typologies of the three authors literally differ from each other they are generally comparable. Typologies on the left side of the figure are searching for familiarity while typologies on the right side of the figure are searching for unfamiliarity and novelty.

Organised mass tourists, charter tourists and psychocentrics prefer travelling on a familiar and commonplace base. The travel routes in their trips are largely fixed. All their visitations are well-prepared and guided, they are continually reminded to get in the right direction and they sometimes

even wear name tags and. The most important characteristic of these tourists is that they avoid the unfamiliar and the unknown (Cohen, 1972; Plog, 1974; Smith, 1989; Basala & Klenosky, 2001).

On the other hand, drifters, explorers and allocentrics prefer travelling in an unfamiliar way and to unfamiliar tourist destinations. These tourists are adventurous and curious in nature. These tourists travel as much as they are able to off the beaten track. They do not have a fixed route and are highly flexible. Time and space are known in terms of departure and arrival time and space but what happens in between is changeable at any moment. These tourists avoid the familiar and well-known paths and behaviours at the tourist destination (Cohen, 1972; Plog, 1974; Smith, 1989; Basala & Klenosky, 2001).

Between these two extremes are situated many typologies. They contain to a certain extent characteristics of both extremes. Individual mass tourists, mass tourists and incipient mass tourists have not entirely planned their route prior to the trip. Moreover, these tourists have a certain control over what they are going to do, so these tourists are more flexible than those on the left side of the novelty-familiarity tourist continuum. However, the unfamiliar things they do and visit happen often in a routine way. Explorers, unusual tourists, off-beat tourists and elite tourists contain more characteristics of those on the right side of the continuum. They also try to get off the beaten track, but they feel at ease with some characteristics of the familiarity searchers like standard housing or transportation (Cohen, 1972; Plog, 1974; Smith, 1989; Basala & Klenosky, 2001). In this research the different typologies will not be analysed separately, but they will be used as guide to analyse the respondents' general extent of searching familiarity or novelty.

2.4 Defining tourist familiarity

Tourist familiarity is one of the most important components of how an image of a tourist destination is formed. Gathering familiarity in various ways affects the image of an individual and his decision-making, particularly his route choice decisions. Familiarity may not be confused with imagery because familiarity is situated on the consumption side of tourism (the image tourists have of a tourist destination) and imagery is situated on the production side of tourism (the image marketers create) (Prentice, 2004 p. 941).

Baloglu (2001, p. 127) explains why it is necessary for tourist destinations to use familiarity as a reliable concept: "Familiarity with a destination is a significant concept for tourist destinations because of its vital role in the tourist destination selection process. It represents a key marketing variable in segmenting and targeting certain groups and developing a marketing action plan, including product, distribution, pricing and promotion decisions."

Tourist familiarity is a broad concept and can be defined in several ways. In the first studies on familiarity the concept is used one-dimensional and has traditionally been treated as previous experiences or visitations a tourist has with a tourist destination. Baloglu (2001) is the first researcher who recognises the multidimensionality of tourist familiarity. He states that tourist familiarity is a combination of previous experiences and a certain extent of information used. In his eyes, familiarity cannot simply be reached by several visitations of the tourist destination, particularly larger ones. To feel themselves more at ease tourists search information about the destination to become more familiar with it.

Prentice (2004) went further where Baloglu (2001) ended and has extended the typology of tourist familiarity in seven interrelated types. These seven types are informational, experiential (the two types Baloglu already mentioned), proximate, self-described, educational, self-assured and expected familiarity. In the next section each type is clearly defined and explained and these types are used as guidance in the empirical part of this research.

2.4.1 Informational familiarity

The first type of tourist familiarity is informational familiarity. Prentice (2004, p. 926) defines this as the extent of sources used, operationalized as single or multiple sources. Information plays a connecting and intermediate role between the production side (the tourist destination) and the consumption side (the tourist) of tourism. The creation of information and the relation it plays between tourists and tourist destinations is organised by many professionals like photographers, writers of guide books, local councils and travel agents (Urry, 2002, p. 145). After creating information, the images these professionals construct are distributed across several types of media, particularly on the electronic highway. The information will finally be mixed and consumed by tourists (Lengkeek, 2001, p. 174).

Kerstetter and Cho (2004) explain why the relation between familiarity and the extent of information used is unclear. On the one hand, tourists who are familiar with a tourist destination tend to fall back on their own knowledge rather than searching for new information in the media. On the other hand, tourists who are more familiar with the tourist destination may tend to search more information in the media to get a deeper understanding and of the tourist destination and to update their knowledge about it. However, unfamiliarity with a tourist destination may also lead to information search because of an individual's willingness to know something about the destination to be visited. They further remark that it is necessary to apply more empirical research to clarify these somewhat contradicting findings.

2.4.2 Experiential familiarity

The second type of tourist familiarity is experiential familiarity. This type can be defined as the number of previous visitations (Prentice, 2004, p. 926). Kerstetter and Cho (2004) state that experiential familiarity has been proven to be one of the most important factors why tourists choose to visit a tourist destination or attractions within the tourist destination or not.

Because previous experiences with the tourist destination affect tourists' image of it, these previous visitations play an important role in predicting possible future visitations (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2003; Prentice, 2004). Inexperienced, or in other words unfamiliar, tourists have largely stereotypical images of a tourist destination. The more a tourist visits a tourist destination, the more experienced he is with the tourist destination and the more realistic become his images. However, for some tourists the stereotypes will not be displaced but there is just a nuancing of imagery (Prentice & Andersen, 2003).

Finally, the more positive image a tourist has about the tourist destination the more likely it is that he visits the tourist destination once more. Lau and McKercher (2004) make a difference in terms of visitations. They claim that the more familiar tourists visit the tourist destination because of relaxing and escaping in a familiar atmosphere. The more unfamiliar tourists want to visit the tourist destination because of experiencing novelty. However, it is the question whether this is applicable for every tourist and every tourist destination.

2.4.3 Proximate familiarity

Proximate familiarity is the third type of tourist familiarity. Prentice (2004, p. 927) describes this type as nationality. Kastenholtz (2010) highlights the fact that national identity plays a role in the extent of familiarity a tourist has. Images are different among various nationalities. Within these nationalities images are shared among individuals. So, the belonging to a specific nationality may be a factor for a different perceived reality.

In her conclusion Kastenholtz (2010, p. 319) states that “the suggested direction ‘the (culturally) closer, the better the destination image’, as derived from product-self congruity (this suggests that people prefer things with which they can identify themselves), and here also named ‘destination-self congruity (identifying with a tourist destination) could not be generally confirmed.” She concludes that the willingness for seeking novel or familiar experiences is different among individuals within the same national group which may influence the individual's satisfaction. Therefore nationality plays not a role as big as was thought before.

Moreover, there is little theoretical evidence on how different nationalities experience and behaviour in the same tourist destination. There are many researches on the experience of different tourist destinations by different nationalities. Consequently, data of these studies are difficult to compare with each other (Yoo & Sohn, 2003). As a result, the term could better be described as national identity.

2.4.4 Self-described familiarity

The fourth type of tourist familiarity is self-described familiarity, what Baloglu (2001) calls self-rated familiarity. This type can be defined as the extent how familiar respondents think themselves to be with a place (Prentice, 2004, p. 927). Prentice uses the term self-described instead of self-rated familiarity because self-rated has more to do with the respondents' description of a tourist destination. Self-described familiarity is about a tourists' feeling of familiarity with a place without the necessity of having been there once.

So, people are not always aware that they are familiar with a destination without having been there. This is the result of the large amount of information and imagery flows between places. Because people know many things about the tourist destination from secondary sources like books, the Internet and social media, they are quite familiar with the place. However, many people may consider themselves to be unfamiliar with the tourist destination when they have never visited the place before. Prentice (2004) gives the example of Australia which is pretty well-known to young British adults without being once in Australia.

2.4.5 Educational familiarity

Educational familiarity is the fifth type of tourist familiarity. Prentice (2004, p. 926) defines this type as the extent of sources of personal education an individual has had on the corresponding tourist destination. Educational familiarity consists of two forms: formal and informal learning. Formal learning happens at schools or other educational institutions and informal learning can be done by learning books, watching television, browsing the Internet, watching movies, etcetera (Prentice, 2004).

2.4.6 Self-assured familiarity

The sixth type of tourist familiarity is self-assured familiarity. According to Prentice (2004, p. 941) "This is assurance with a destination country, and interprets experiential familiarity in consumers' own judgements and feelings". Security has become a major issue after terrorist attacks in New York, Madrid and London in the past decade. Feelings individuals have on safety and self-assurance have become more important in people's imaginations since those attacks (Prentice, 2004, p.941).

Although safety is an important issue for tourists, the extent of safety and insecurity felt differs among individuals. Taking risks at a tourist destination may influence the likelihood of visiting the tourist destination. Novelty searchers tend to take more risks than familiarity searchers. This is because novelty searchers tend to earlier go out of their 'environmental bubble' than familiarity searchers (Lepp & Gibson, 2003, p. 607).

Although it is commonly believed that people avoid risks in a certain extent, the perceived risks of tourists have seldom been researched. Lepp and Gibson (2003, p. 607) identified seven risk factors: terrorism, political instability, health, strange food, cultural barriers, crime and a nation's political and religious dogma.

2.4.7 Expected familiarity

The final and seventh type of tourist familiarity is expected familiarity. Prentice (2004, p. 941) defines this as both the cosiness and attractions expected by tourists of a destination. Cosiness ('gezelligheid' in Dutch) is a hard to define word, but it means something like 'feel at home' or 'feel welcomed'.

Experiencing cosiness is what can be counted as passive consumption of culture. These are the amenities which facilitate the primary attractions of the tourist destination. One may think about restaurants, pubs, shops and public spaces. Hannam and Knox (2010, p. 100) call these amenities 'secondary tourist facilities'.

As already mentioned, Amsterdam does not have as many primary attractions as London or Paris does. Its attractiveness lies in its street life which forms a significant part of tourists' experience in the Dutch capital. This is why Hannam and Knox (2010, p. 7) state that "foreign visitors come to Amsterdam to... "let it all hang out" and enjoy the entertaining spectacle of "tolerance"". So, many foreign visitors visit Amsterdam not because of its primary attractions but because of its secondary tourist familiarities. As a result, Amsterdam has become a theme park where tourists are looking to other tourists and where this cosiness is often better be valued than the attractions of the city itself.

So, Amsterdam's main pull factor for many tourists is enjoying the spectacle of the city. In other words, experiencing its expected cosiness. On the other hand, activities like the visitation of a museum, going to a theatre or a cruise on the canals (the active consumption of culture) just forms a small part of many tourists' total experience (Hannam & Knox, 2010, p. 100).

2.5 Conclusion

Prentice (2004, p. 927-928) recognises the increasing relevance of familiarity in the scientific literature: "The available literature is beginning to suggest the analytical pertinence of familiarity. In researching it, the literature further suggests the need to consider its associative content, and particularly the presence of national stereotypes and associations. It also suggests the need to

recognise its multidimensionality, and possible consumer unawareness as one dimension. Simply including familiarity as a summary statement in surveys is clearly insufficient.”

This citation shows the shortcomings of existing literature on familiarity and is a good starting point for further research. As mentioned in the different sub-paragraphs, there are several gaps in the existing literature on tourist familiarity to be bridged. Each type of tourist familiarity has been researched, but the link with route choice behaviour of tourists has rarely been made. As a contrast, something that has been researched reasonably well is the link that tourist familiarity has with imagery, particularly in the study of Prentice (2004).

The links between the types of familiarity and route choice behaviour will be analysed in the mental maps, questionnaires and finally the walk alongs. But to analyse route choice behaviour of tourists, the connection has to be made with cognitive decisions of people, following in chapter 3. The cognitive branch of geography will be used as a theoretical umbrella over the tourist familiarity concepts to better explain the deeply mental decisions of individuals.

Chapter 3 Cognitive decisions in route choice behaviour of tourists

3.1 Introduction

Tourists' spatial behaviour within the tourist destination is one of the most important aspects of tourism research. The itineraries, consisting of a route and several stops, taken by tourists form the most visible part of tourists' behaviour. Because travel itineraries are easy to observe, models of pedestrian movement can be created to help policy decisions (Lew & McKercher, 2002, p. 609).

However, existing pedestrian movement models show some shortcomings. They often assume that pedestrians choose the shortest or quickest path from A to B. This is not always applicable because tourists are often wandering through a tourist destination without behaving on a routine basis (Kemperman et al., 2009, p. 208). Moreover, because every tourist has its own preferences and feelings, route choice behaviour is variable among individuals. Participation in activities and visitation of attractions is highly individualistic because of a variable experience with the tourist destination, a variable extent of information search or a variable connectedness felt with the tourist destination (see Chapter 2)(Lew & McKercher, 2006, p. 411).

For a better understanding of tourist movement one has to look at cognitive route choice decisions. These decisions usually take place in two stages. The first stage takes place prior to the trip. In this stage mental (cognitive) maps illustrate an individual's image of the tourist destination and form the basis for route choice decisions. In the second stage these mental maps are matched with the reality of the destination. Then, the role of emotions and feelings comes to the forefront. Expected situations may confirm tourists' mental maps, but unexpected situations may change them and may consequently change people's route choice behaviour.

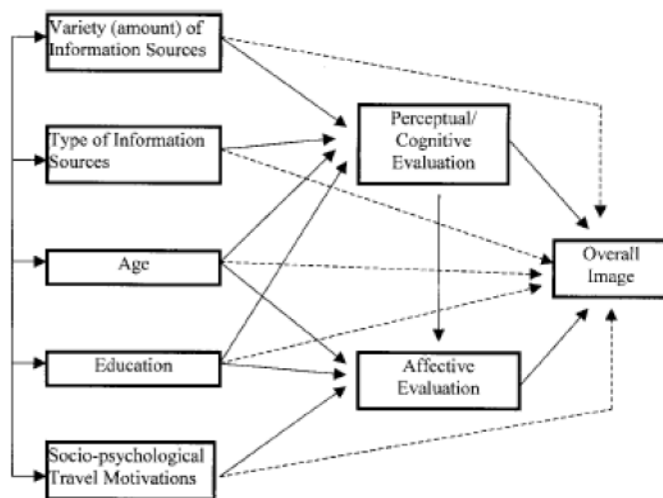
The central theme of this chapter is the role of cognitive decisions in route choice behaviour. First, cognitive route choice decisions prior to the trip are explained. Then cognitive route choice decisions during the trip are investigated. Finally, the connection will be made between familiarity with the tourist destination and the way how cognitive route choice decisions are undertaken.

3.2 Cognitive route choice decisions prior to the trip

3.2.1 Tourist destination image

A tourist destination image depends on several factors. The "Path model of the determinants of tourism destination image before actual visitation" by Baloglu and McCleary (1999) (Figure 3.1) shows that perceptual, cognitive and affective evaluations affect a tourist destination image. Perceptual and cognitive evaluations are related to beliefs and knowledge of the destination. These are the more rational aspects of tourist destination image forming. Tourists who are unfamiliar with the tourist destination are using these perceptual and cognitive evaluations to move themselves within the tourist destination. Affective evaluations are related to feelings and consequently form the more subjective aspects in tourist destination image. These evaluations are shaped by information sources, age, education and socio-psychological travel motivations. Tourists who are more familiar with the tourist destination have been found to use these affective evaluations because they have more elaborated images of the tourist destination (Andsager & Drzewiecka, 2002, p. 402).

Figure 3.1: Path model of the determinants of tourism destination image before actual visitation



Source: Baloglu & McCleary, 1999

Lynch (1960, p. 9) uses the term imageability to indicate whether the image of a tourist destination is strong or weak. Imageability can best be defined as the quality of a physical object. Unique, easily recognisable elements which have a special shape, colour or composition form the most powerful images in an individual’s mind. It is for tourist destinations important to create a highly imageable city. If this is the case tourists can easily navigate themselves within the tourist destination because they are able to recognise elements they are already familiar with prior to the trip.

3.2.2 Mental mapping

Mental mapping is an appropriate way of researching the image and familiarity of a tourist destination before the trip to the tourist destination takes place. Following Lynch (1960) people mainly observe tourist destinations as a built environment consisting five types of elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks. These elements together form the image of a tourist destination.

Paths are the elements in the city over which people move. One may think about streets, pavements or transportation routes. Edges are perceived boundaries of a certain homogenous district in the city. This can be a railway track, a highway, a canal, a large body of water, a large building, and so on. Districts are parts of the city which can be distinguished by a homogeneous character. Districts can be formed at various scales: a couple of streets, a small neighbourhood or a large area. This is dependent of the people’s view and image of the district. Nodes are points where two or more paths come together. One may think about simple intersections of streets or large squares. Landmarks, finally, are unique buildings in the city which are identifiable in the built environment. These are churches, towers, bridges, museums, stations, palaces, and so on (Lynch, 1960). Table 3.1 shows some examples of elements in the built environment of Amsterdam’s inner city.

Paths are the most important elements in route choice behaviour research because individuals are moving over paths to travel from A to B. Moreover, they are often the most dominant features of the built environment because paths are usually directly experienced. Important paths distinguish themselves with a high imageability. This can be achieved by its unique location, its unique amenities

or its unique activities (Lynch, 1960). In this research elements with which tourists are familiar will be investigated with the help of the mental map technique.

Table 3.1: Elements in the physical environment of Amsterdam’s inner city

Paths	Edges	Districts	Nodes	Landmarks
Kalverstraat	Canals	Jordaan	Dam Square	Royal Palace
Rokin	Railway tracks	De Wallen	Leidseplein	Railway Station
Damrak	The IJ	Grachtengordel	Rembrandtplein	Rijksmuseum
Nieuwendijk	S100 Ring way	Binnenstad	Spui	Westerkerk

3.3 Cognitive route choice decisions during the trip

Mental maps will be matched with reality when tourists have arrived at the tourist destination. Cognitive processes then affect the way tourists experience the urban environment. Both minds and bodies are important in tourists’ experiences and they are interrelated in the sense that emotions affect spatial (embodied) movement. This interrelatedness is a relatively new phenomenon in scientific research because earlier studies have considered people’s emotions and physical movements as separate processes. It is the assemblage of emotions and physical movement, together with services and products at the tourist destination, which produces the total experience of the tourist destination. So, one has to think beyond the dualism of mind and body and to see individuals as physical objects possessing emotions (Hannam & Knox, 2010, p. 57).

In traditional mobility studies emotions and representations are often forgotten concepts. However, the upcoming emotional geography recognises the role of the senses and emotions in experiencing the tourist destination. Milligan (2005, p. 2105) states that “Undoubtedly, emotions matter, they are an integral part of our daily lives. They affect the way we see, hear, touch and react to the environment, people, and places around us. Emotions also have tangible effects on our surroundings and can shape the very nature and experience our being-in-the-world”

Cresswell (2010, p. 19) highlights these aspects of mobility as he defines mobility as “The entanglement of movement, representation and practice.” Movement can be described as the physical displacement from A to B. Representations are the shared meanings people have while moving. Practice is the embodied and habitualised practice of movement. These concepts can easily be overlapped and in this sense the term mobility can be somewhat confusing (Cresswell, 2010, p. 19-20).

Cresswell (2010, p.20) further explains how the interrelatedness between these concepts of mobility works: “In addition to being a traceable and mappable physical movement which is encoded through representation, walking is also an embodied practice that we experience in ways that are not wholly accounted for by either their objective dimensions or their social and culture dimensions (...) Similar sets of observations could be made about all forms of mobility: they have a physical reality, they are encoded culturally and socially and they are experienced through practice.”

Experiencing movement occurs due to the stimulation of the five senses with which the human body is equipped. These senses can be stimulated in a positive or negative way. The stimulation of the senses in a positive way is one of the main goals in tourism. This is one of the more difficult aspects of tourism research but should not be forgotten in tourist destination marketing (Hannam & Knox, 2010, p. 69).

Sight has traditionally been seen as the most important sense in tourism. However, several authors have criticised this and think state that the composition of different senses determines the experience of the tourist destination. Urry (2002) has revised his first definition of the tourist gaze where just gazing plays a role and claims that tourism consists various sensescapes. In these sensescapes different senses are interconnected to form the final experiences. Urry (2002, p. 144) mentions soundscapes, smellscapes, tastescapes and the geography of touch as different types of sensescapes.

Bissell (2009) mentions the fact that senses can be intensified at certain moments, either positive or negative. Consequently, senses might interrupt or mediate walking practices (Middleton, 2010, p. 577). Finally, in tourism, the positive intensification of the stimulation of senses will increase tourists' appreciation of the tourist destination. The exact role of sense stimulating and the role of emotions which may determine route choice behaviour have been investigated during the different walk alongs.

3.4 Route choice decisions and familiarity

Finally, the connection between cognitive route choice decisions and familiarity will be made. Xia et al. (2007) have created four models to illustrate the processes that take place when people are navigating through the tourist destination. A differentiation has been made between largely familiar, partially familiar and largely unfamiliar tourists. Moreover, there has been made a distinction on the extent of using landmarks for orienting.

Tourists who are largely familiar with the tourist destination have a relatively fully comprehensive cognitive map prior to the trip that has to be taken. These tourists are familiar with many elements of the tourist destination. For example, they recognise paths where they are going to walk along or buildings along these paths. Because these tourists are relatively well-known with the tourist destination they are generally searching for the shortest or quickest path from A to B. This route choice has previously been determined by one or more tourist familiarity types mentioned in chapter 2. The only decisions these tourists have to take concern the time of departure and the mode of transport. Once the largely familiar tourist has arrived at the tourist destination his cognitive map will be matched with reality. This cognitive map will be broken down in smaller cognitive maps which are more detailed and more manageable while the individual is moving. These are so-called local cognitive maps. Landmarks are used to facilitate route choice decisions. When a largely familiar tourist recognises a church situated in the tourist destination he knows which direction he has to take when he is moving on a path nearby the church. So, landmarks are an aid to recognise pathways (Xia et al., 2007, p. 447-448)

Tourists who are partly familiar with the tourist destination have a less completely cognitive map of the tourist destination compared to the more familiar tourists. There are two types of tourists who are partly familiar with the tourist destination. The first type has previously visited the tourist destination, but not many times. Consequently, this tourist has not much experience with navigating within the tourist destination. The second type has not previously visited the tourist destination before but has gathered enough information before the trip has been taken place. Consequently, he is partly familiar with the tourist destination without having been there once. For the first type it is experiential familiarity which determines his partial familiarity, for the first type it is one of the other types of tourist familiarity. These tourists also have to break down their cognitive map in local

cognitive maps. Because the cognitive map of these tourists is not complete, landmarks or paths may be incorrect or not readily identified. Consequently, these partly familiar tourists have to use way finding tools, such as maps, books or asking other people (Xia et al., 2007, p. 448-450).

Tourists who are largely familiar with the tourist destination do not have any cognitive map before the trip takes place. This is why no route can be planned prior to the trip. Because these tourists do not have any idea about the routes to walk, two determinants are relevant: time and space. The temporal scale determines how much wandering can take place; the spatial scale determines what is attractive to wander. Landmarks can be used in two ways. The first type is where largely unfamiliar tourists are wandering aimlessly through the tourist destination. The second type is where largely unfamiliar tourists use some attractive landmarks for determining their route (Xia et al., 2007, p. 450).

3.4 Conclusion

As can be concluded, cognitive decision making occurs before the trip takes place and during the trip itself. Prior to the trip an image of the tourist destination is created and a corresponding mental map is made. Then, this map will be matched with reality where emotions are going to play a role. Because the more familiar tourists have generally a more detailed and correct mental map of the tourist destination reality confirms what is drawn on their mental maps. The more unfamiliar tourists have a less detailed and correct mental map of the tourist destination which means that reality does sometimes not correspond with their mental maps. Then, landmarks are used to reorient themselves. So, the process of cognitive decision-making differs between the more familiar and the more unfamiliar tourists.

Chapter 4 Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The different theoretical concepts of Chapters 2 and 3 will be researched in the analytical part of this master thesis. Three kinds of methods will be applied to give an answer to the main question, containing both qualitative and quantitative methods. First, respondents’ mental maps of Amsterdam’s inner city will be gathered to investigate respondents’ familiarity with the inner city. Second, several walk alongs with respondents will be applied to investigate their route choice behaviour in the city and to compare this route choice behaviour with the already drawn mental maps. Finally, respondents will have the choice to make some pictures during the walk alongs which may illustrate their route choice decisions and familiar or unfamiliar elements. In this chapter the choice of methods will be explained and the theories and ideas behind the methods will be set out.

4.1.1 Research area

The research area of this master thesis is Amsterdam’s inner city. The inner city is surrounded by Singelgracht in the west, south and east and the IJ in the north. The S100 ring encircles the area. Amsterdam’s station, Centraal Station, is located in the north, next to the IJ. From there, Damrak is the main street leading to Dam square, Amsterdam’s central square in the heart of the inner city. Kalverstraat, located south of Dam square is Amsterdam’s most famous shopping street and leads to Rembrandtplein, a well-known public square. De Wallen, situated east of Damrak and Dam square, is the oldest part of the inner city. This area is famous because of its Red Light District. De Grachtengordel, with its seventeenth century canals, embraces the heart of the city. This area exists of four parallel canals and several perpendicular canals. Finally, the area west of the Grachtengordel is known as De Jordaan.

Amsterdam is one of the world’s most popular tourist destinations with an annual number of more than four million visitors (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2010).

The number of visitors has been increased constantly over the past decade. Two thirds of Amsterdam’s overnight accommodations are situated in the inner city. These characteristics make Amsterdam’s inner city a suitable research area for studying tourists’ route choice decisions.

4.1.2 Target group

Domestic tourists from the Netherlands belong to the target group in this research. To make sure that respondents are tourists, it is necessary that they do not live or work in Amsterdam. There has been chosen for this group because this group fits best in the novelty-familiarity continuum. It is likely that respondents within the target group are situated between foreign tourists and residents of Amsterdam on the extent of tourist familiarity. Foreign tourists are probably generally unfamiliar with Amsterdam’s inner city while residents of Amsterdam are generally familiar with the inner city.

Figure 4.1: Map of Amsterdam’s inner city



Consequently, it is plausible that individuals within the target group mutually differ in terms of tourist familiarity what makes the target group an interesting collection of individuals.

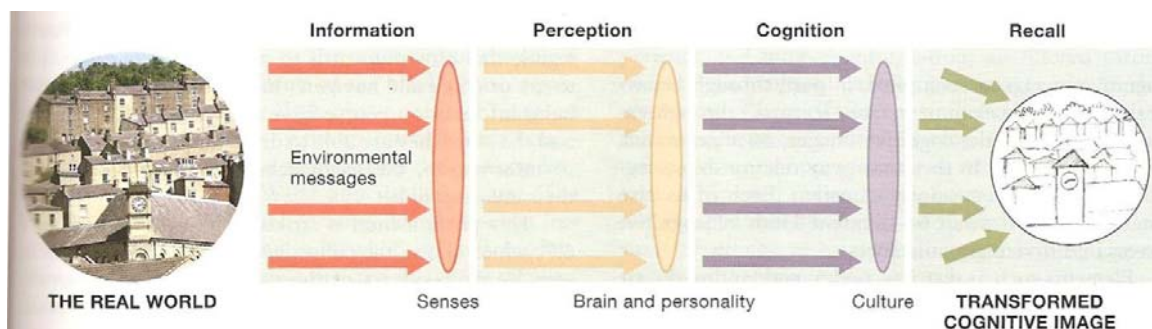
4.2 Mental mapping

4.2.1 Theory

Cities like London, Paris and Amsterdam create images in people’s minds. These cognitive maps show what people observe in mind when they think about a particular place. Mental mapping is an appropriate research method because it shows the interaction between an individual and the physical environment.

Creating a cognitive map is a process that occurs in different stages. First, information from the real world affects people’s senses. This then is filtered through brain, personality and cultural background with its corresponding attitudes and values. Finally, a cognitive map of the destination is created (Knox & Marston, 2004, p. 219)(Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2: The formation of cognitive images



Source: Knox & Marston, 2004, p. 219

As already mentioned in Chapter 3, according to Lynch (1960) people mainly see the environment as a built environment consisting paths (channels along which people move), edges (barriers that separate one area from another), districts (areas with an identifiable character), nodes (strategic points for travel) and landmarks (physical reference points). These elements together form the basis for the created cognitive map (Knox & Marston, 2004, p. 218).

Because information is filtered several times, these cognitive maps are a simplified version of reality and are distorted. On the one hand, this is partly the result of incomplete information (Knox & Marston, 2004, p. 219). It is impossible to have a complete cognitive image of the destination because the destination where people have an image of is too big, too extensive and too dynamic (Jenkins & Walmsey, 1993, p. 233). In other words, people are filtering out important information and set, conscious or unconscious, aside information irrelevant for them. On the other hand, Golledge (1999, p. 101) states that people’s route choice behaviour is highly dependent on an individual’s knowledge of a destination, in other words his familiarity with the destination. The completeness of the mental map is, in other words as much as possible correct situated elements, a good indicator of the familiarity of tourists with Amsterdam’s inner city. It has been concluded that generally the more detailed a mental map is the more familiar the respondent is with the environment (Golledge & Stimson, 1997). So, there can also be a shortage of information input.

Golledge and Stimson (1997, p. 34) have made the connection between mental maps and route choice determination. After having passed the different stages of cognitive image creating (Figure 4.2) the individual uses his mental map for his travel plan (the so-called movement imagery). First, barriers to movement are images, such as costs, distances and times. Finally, an imagination of the route from origin to destination and the corresponding mode of transport are decided.

Mental maps are used in this research because is it useful to combine them with the walk along method which enriches the participant’s mental map (Carpiano, 2009). Researching the drawn elements in mental maps gives a good insight in an individual’s familiarity with elements in Amsterdam’s inner city and forms the basis for studying the relationships between familiarity and route choice behaviour.

4.2.2 Operationalization and application

First, a mental map of Amsterdam’s inner city was drawn by respondents. These mental maps were drawn to illustrate respondents’ familiarity with Amsterdam’s inner city. Then several questions in the form of a questionnaire on tourist familiarity had to be filled. 52 individuals were approached to draw the mental map and to fill in the questionnaire.

Respondents got fifteen minutes to draw their mental map and to fill in the questionnaire. The most important factor is that respondents are not influenced by the environment or by other individuals. There will be used an A4-paper with a short introduction and explanation at the top and a blank space on the rest of the page. This A4-paper can be found in Appendix 1.

4.2.3 Analysis

The main purpose of the mental map research is to discover whether tourist familiarity affects route choice behaviour. To combine the mental maps with a questionnaire an attempt is made to give an answer to this question. The questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1. The following table lists the variables arising from the data collection (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Variables of mental maps and questionnaires

Question/Variable	Coding	Measurement
1. TouristFam1	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
2. TouristFam2	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
3. Informational1	1 Always 2 Usually 3 Often 4 Sometimes 5 Never	Ordinal
4. Informational2	1 Always 2 Usually 3 Often 4 Sometimes 5 Never	Ordinal
5. Informational3	1 Totally no	Ordinal

	2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	
6. Informational4	1 The Internet 2 Travel guide 3 Mouth to mouth 4 Newspapers/magazines 5 Television/radio 6 No information use	Categorical
7. Experiential1	Open question	Interval/ratio
8. Experiential2	Open question	Interval/ratio
9. Proximate1	1 Yes 2 No	Binary
10. Proximate2	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
11. Self-described1	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
12. Educational1	1 None 2 Several 3 Much	Ordinal
13. Educational2	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
14. Educational3	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
15. Educational4	1 No 2 Few 3 Much	Ordinal
16. Educational5	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
17. Educational6	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
18. Educational7	1 No 2 Several 3 Much	Ordinal
19. Educational8	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
20. Educational9	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes	Ordinal

	5 Totally yes	
21. SelfAssured1	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
22. SelfAssured2	Open question	Nominal
23. SelfAssured3	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
24. SelfAssured4	Open question	Nominal
25. SelfAssured5	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
26. Expected1	1 Totally no 2 No 3 Neutral 4 Yes 5 Totally yes	Ordinal
27. Expected2	Open question	Nominal
28. Age	Open question	Ratio
29. Gender	1 Male 2 Female	Binary
30.Paths		Ratio
31.Nodes		Ratio
32.Landmarks		Ratio
33.Edges		Ratio
34.Districts		Ratio
35. Total elements		Ratio

In this research the different drawn elements have been quantified, as has been done in previous researches on mental maps. The results of the mental maps and questionnaires are linked in a quantitative way to test the possible interdependence between the questions on the seven types of tourist familiarity and the content of the mental maps. This has been done by correlations. For the correlations between the ordinal variables and the ratio variable of the total elements on the mental map Spearman’s rho was used, because this measure fits best between an ordinal and a ratio variable. For the correlations between the interval/ratio variables and the ratio variable of the total elements on the mental map Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used, because this measure fits best between an interval/ratio variable and a ratio variable.

The conditions for correlation have been met. The measurement level is sometimes interval/ratio and sometimes ordinal when there has been made a Likert scale. De Vocht (2005, p. 140) mentions that 20 observations are already enough for using correlations. The number of observations in this research is 52, which is sufficient. Furthermore, linearity was in the outcomes. Finally, there are no specific extreme values in the data sets whereby the outcomes could eventually be distorted.

4.3 Walk alongs and auto-photography

4.3.1 Theory

As already mentioned in Chapter 3, there is a growing interest in the role emotions play in mobility (Cresswell, 2010). An appropriate way to study research subjects in their movement is to move together with them as a participating researcher. Ferguson (2011, p. 81) mentions the need to move along respondents: "Researchers need to shadow practitioners, following in their footsteps on the walks, drives and any other (social) ways in which social work is done. This means following the practitioner as she leaves the office, makes a journey by car or on foot, walks to the doorstep and (tries to) gain access to the service-user's, walks into and within the home, and then leaves and does the return journey".

This citation shows an example of a participation ethnography where the researcher moves along with the respondent. Kusenbach (2003) defines combining interviewing the respondent while moving as a 'go along'. She describes the added value of the go-along technique as follows: "What makes the go-along technique unique is that ethnographers are able to observe their informants' spatial practices in situ while accessing their experiences and interpretations at the same time (Kusenbach, 2003, p. 643)."

The walk along method is particularly useful to discover a respondent's sense of place. Carpiano (2009, p. 264) illustrates this as follows: "Through asking questions and observing, the researcher is able to examine the informant's experiences, interpretations and practices within this environment. Thus, as a means of obtaining respondents from participant while they actively inhabit specific contexts, the go along is a unique tool for meeting the challenges posed within the health and place literature – as well as social sciences in general – regarding the need to examine how physical, social and mental dimensions of place interact within and across time for individuals". So, the main purpose of the go along (also called walk along) is to examine a respondent's relationship with the environment where he is moving through.

Walk alongs are particularly useful to combine them with other research methods. They could be complementary to other quantitative or qualitative research methods like mental mapping, questionnaires or photography (Carpiano, 2009, p. 271).

Pink (2008, p. 190) notes why combining walk alongs and analysing photographs is useful in ethnographic research: "In photographs I find reminders and representations of the materiality, sensoriality and sociality of the tour". Hall (2009, p. 458) also sees combining a walk along and photography as an appropriate research method: "The photographs produced by researched informants, following simple guidance from the researcher, provide clues to the ways in which informants view their environments and to the elements that they see as significant. Such photographs are commonly used in conjunction with interviews with research informants, a process known as photo interviewing or elicitation. The key in these cases is that photographs are always situated and analysed with reference to the context in which research informants produced them."

The different functions of photography could be classified into several categories. Photographs as representation are used on account of their specific cultural meanings. Photographs as evocation sees photographs as a unique and necessary addition to texts and maps. They have a powerful descriptive charge and are useful to illustrate things maps cannot show. Photographs as material

culture emphasizes the importance of material objects in interaction with human experience and social relations. Photographs as illustration are simply photographs to support a text and are used in geographical work as straightforward descriptors of what a place looks like (Rose, 2008).

The auto-photography technique has several advantages. First, respondents' daily lives can well be illustrated and a correct representation can be produced. Second, photographs could be stimulation for discussion. Third, respondents' photographs could be taken at places where the researcher is not able to go to or change the situation. Finally, many things could be illustrated with photographs: not just the main object could be photographed, but also its context (Hall, 2009, p. 457-458)

4.3.2 Operationalization and application

To find out explanations for route choice decisions of tourists in Amsterdam's inner city 18 walk alongs have been conducted. The respondent did not have any instruction when being at the destination so he or she is free in what to do there. The walk alongs have taken place on random days during the week, when respondents were available.

The interview technique in this research is semi-structured, but has much in common with an open-ended format, because there is hardly guidance in the conversation. In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer has beforehand some questions in mind that may guide the interview (Carpiano, 2009, p. 265). In general, the following questions were posed when being at the several elements which determine the route choice decisions of respondents:

Why does this path/node/landmark/district affect your route?

Why is this path/node/landmark/district situated on your route?

Is this path/node/landmark/district familiar or unfamiliar for you?

Why is this path/node/landmark/district familiar or unfamiliar for you?

Questions during the walk alongs are related to route choice decisions and not to experiences within the environment per se. It is the experience which determines route choice decisions. The researcher asks questions about motivations for route choice decisions and the role of familiar or unfamiliar elements which may determine these decisions.

Questions are asked per element in the urban environment. Questions about paths are posed on the corresponding path between two nodes. Questions about nodes are posed at the nodes themselves. Questions about landmarks are also posed at the landmarks themselves. Questions about districts will be posed when the route through the district is completed.

At the start of the walk along the respondent is asked to carry a photo camera during the walk along. Respondents are asked to take photographs of physical and social elements of Amsterdam's inner city that influence their route choice behaviour. Moreover is asked whether these elements were familiar or unfamiliar for them. The instruction was: "This photo camera will be used to give me insight what you see. Take photos of elements which determine your route choice decisions or take photos of familiar or unfamiliar elements."

4.4.3 Analysis

Notes of the walk alongs have been analysed and sorted per location within Amsterdam's inner city. In this way a list of elements which affect route choice decisions can be created. The researcher uses these notes to make an image of the different places within Amsterdam's inner city. Respondents' statements are translated into the theoretical concepts concerning tourist familiarity that form the basis of this research. A comparison has been made by comparing relatively familiar and relatively unfamiliar tourists. Two things are described per tourist group. First, why tourists use the respective element in their walking route and second, how they navigate themselves to and from the elements.

The role photography plays in this research is the role of photographs as illustration. They function as supporting data for the interviews during the walk alongs. Respondents' photographs are important because it makes possible to look through the respondents' eyes. These photographs have been categorized per respondent and per location and the most interesting photographs could be used as supporting data in the analysis.

Chapter 5 Results

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter results of the field work will be discussed. First, an overview of the mental maps and the conducted walk alongs will be shown to provide insights in respondents’ familiarity with Amsterdam’s inner city. Several introducing statistics and maps will be shown for an initial understanding of the differences between the more familiar and the more unfamiliar tourists.

Thereafter, the seven types of tourist familiarity will be investigated. Per type of tourist familiarity is checked whether this type significantly correlates for the number of elements that is drawn on the mental map. In other words, whether this type of familiarity plays a role in the extent of familiarity with Amsterdam’s inner city. The outcomes of the mental maps are analysed with the help of qualitative data gathered during the walk alongs.

Finally, the most interesting elements which show the differences and similarities between familiar and unfamiliar tourists concerning familiarity with Amsterdam’s inner city will be examined to clarify the role of tourist familiarity in tourists’ route choice behaviour within this area. The routes to and from well-known and less well-known places will be investigated and there will be looked why the element is used in the route and how tourists navigate themselves close to the element.

5.1.1 Mental maps

Each respondent has drawn a mental map of Amsterdam’s inner city. By counting the number of elements presented on the mental maps, it is possible to analyse these mental maps in a quantitative way. 83 different elements were found on the mental maps, drawn by 52 respondents. These respondents were acquired in two ways. First, respondents were approached in the researcher’s direct or indirect social environment. Second, respondents were approached in Amsterdam itself. Respondents live in different parts of the Netherlands. Half of the respondents live in a central area in the Netherlands: a region between Utrecht, Arnhem and Amersfoort. Other people were from large cities like Rotterdam and Utrecht or middle-sized cities like Den Helder, Deventer, Capelle aan den IJssel and Middelburg. None of the respondents live in small villages, so in this way the outcomes of this research may be somewhat biased.

Only the relatively correct positioned elements are included in this research. Scale did not matter that much, because it is hardly impossible to draw a map on a right scale. Moreover, it is hardly impossible to draw elements on the exactly right locations. However, when a respondent for example drew Rembrandtplein north to Amsterdam Centraal Station, this element was not included in the analysis.

Some well-known, but hard to classify elements (both spatial: “Where is it situated?” and characteristic: “To which element does it belong?”) could also be found on the mental maps. Examples are the pigeons on Dam square, the coffee shops all around the inner city, prostitutes on De Wallen or just the words ‘shops’ or ‘buildings’ anywhere on the map.

Figure 5.1 (Appendix 2) shows the distribution of the number of elements drawn on the mental maps. It is difficult to make a distinction between largely familiar, partly familiar and relatively unfamiliar tourists mentioned by Xia et al. (2007) because they overlap each other and are hard to define separately. However, the average number of drawn elements, 18, has been chosen as a break

point to make a distinction between tourists. Respondents which have drawn 18 elements or less on their mental maps were labelled as unfamiliar during the walk alongs, Respondents having drawn 18 elements or more were labelled as familiar during the walk alongs. So, in this research almost two third of the respondents (34 respondents) are unfamiliar tourists and approximately one third of the respondents (18 respondents) are familiar tourists.

Because the distinction between unfamiliar and familiar tourists is too sharp, gradations have been used in determining the extent of familiarity with Amsterdam's inner city. So, the more elements a respondent has drawn on his mental map, the more familiar he is with Amsterdam's inner city. And the opposite: the fewer elements a respondent has drawn on his mental map, the less familiar he is with Amsterdam's inner city.

Subsequently, it is interesting to see what these respondents have included on their mental maps. Table 5.1 shows the 30 most drawn elements on the mental maps of Amsterdam's inner city. Amsterdam's most used railway station, Amsterdam Centraal Station, is the most drawn element. Almost every respondent has drawn this element (96,2 %). It is closely followed by Dam square (92,3 %), the central square in the heart of Amsterdam's inner city. Several other elements around Dam square, like Kalverstraat, the royal palace (Paleis op de Dam), De Wallen, Madame Tussauds and Damrak are also drawn relatively often. It could generally be said that the further an element is situated from Dam square, the less it is drawn by respondents.

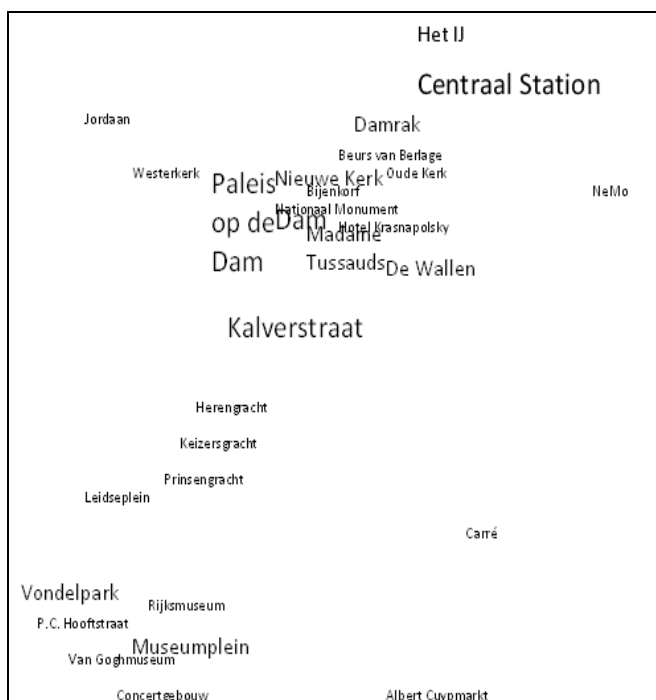
Landmarks are Amsterdam's inner city's most well-known elements. 17 of the 30 most drawn elements are landmarks. Moreover, there could 6 paths, 4 nodes, 2 districts and 1 edge be found in the list. The most familiar nodes in this list could also be seen as landmarks. Many tourists see these nodes not just as a place where streets are crossing but as a distinctive square, but as recognisable squares. So, features of the city could be perceived as different types of elements (Knox & Marston, 2005, p. 219). However, in this case they are labelled as nodes. This is the same for the most well-known paths, which are not seen as paths just running from one node to another but as distinctive paths (see the following sections).

Table 5.1: 30 most drawn elements in mental maps

Name	Element	% of drawing	Name	Element	% of drawing
Centraal Station	Landmark	96,2	Herengracht	Path	21,2
Dam	Node	92,3	Keizersgracht	Path	21,2
Kalverstraat	Path	71,2	Prinsengracht	Path	21,2
Paleis op de Dam	Landmark	69,2	Rijksmuseum	Landmark	21,2
De Wallen	District	48,1	Leidseplein	Node	19,2
Madame Tussauds	Landmark	44,2	Jordaan	District	19,2
Rembrandtplein	Node	42,3	Van Goghmuseum	Landmark	17,3
Damrak	Path	40,4	Concertgebouw	Landmark	15,4
Museumplein	Node	36,5	Oude Kerk	Landmark	15,4
Nieuwe Kerk	Landmark	34,6	Westerkerk	Landmark	15,4
Het IJ	Edge	32,7	Hotel Krasnapolsky	Landmark	13,5
Vondelpark	Landmark	30,8	P.C. Hoofstraat	Path	13,5
Bijenkorf	Landmark	25,0	Albert Cuypmarkt	Landmark	11,5
Nationaal Monument	Landmark	23,1	Carré	Landmark	11,5
Beurs	Landmark	21,2	NeMo	Landmark	11,5

With the help of the data in Table 5.1 an aggregated map of Amsterdam’s inner city through the eyes of the respondents can be drawn to get a more detailed view of the spatial distribution of respondents’ included elements. The 30 most drawn elements shown in Table 5.1 have been included in the aggregated map (Figure 5.2). The largest drawn elements have been included by 50 per cent of the respondents or more. The average drawn elements have been included by between 25 and 50 per cent of the respondents. The smallest drawn elements have been included by between 10 and 25 per cent of the respondents.

Figure 5.2: Spatial distribution of the thirty most drawn elements



The first thing that strikes is the concentration of drawn elements around Dam square. Particularly, landmarks around Dam square are well known to tourists. Furthermore, the axis from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Dam square affects familiarity: elements along this axis are reasonably often drawn. As will become apparent from the walk alongs, almost every respondent has walked around Dam square and on the Amsterdam Central Station – Dam square axis. This could explain why elements in this area are so well-known to respondents. Finally, a concentration of drawn elements around Museumplein can be found. Several well-known cultural amenities are situated on this square and many festivities are held on this square. As a consequence, relatively many respondents know where to find this square.

It is also interesting what tourists' intentions are. Some people are searching for new experiences while other people are searching for familiar experiences (see Chapter 2 on tourist familiarity). Figure 5.3 (Appendix 2) shows the extent of familiarity searching. More than half of the people highlight they are searching for familiar experiences. Approximately 20 per cent of the respondents are not searching for familiar experiences.

The extent of familiarity searching does not significant difference between familiar and unfamiliar tourists. So, familiar experience searchers exist among the whole unfamiliar-familiar range. Some unfamiliar and familiar respondents share the same stance. This citation is globally the most heard reason why people are searching for familiar experiences: "When we're going to Amsterdam we're often searching for familiar experiences and places. In this way we feel ourselves most at ease. So we're enjoying ourselves most at places we know."

Figure 5.4 (Appendix 2) shows the extent of novelty searching. Compared to the figure of familiarity searching (Figure 5.3, Appendix 2) one can see the large number of non-novelty searchers. In this case, the differences between familiar and unfamiliar respondents are significant: there is a moderate positive correlation (0,482) between the wish of novelty searching and the number of elements drawn on the map (Table 5.2, Appendix 2). So, the more elements a respondent has included on his mental map, the more he is searching for new experiences. A familiar respondent explains why he is familiar with Amsterdam's unbeaten paths: "I'm familiar with several areas usual tourists don't visit. This is a result of my willingness to visit new places and gain new experiences. The somewhat more unknown areas like De Jordaan and De Grachtengordel are for me much more attractive than the beaten tracks like Kalverstraat and Dam square. They are quieter, more beautiful and more attractive". On the other hand, unfamiliar tourists are aware of their lack of novelty searching: "We actually never search for new experiences. We're content with the experiences we get at our familiar routes, so we don't have the tendency to visit unfamiliar places."

So, familiar tourists are generally searching for familiar experiences. They do not have the wish to discover new experiences. On the other hand, unfamiliar tourists are searching for both novelty and familiarity when visiting Amsterdam.

People found it generally difficult to draw a map of Amsterdam's inner city. The first reaction when respondents saw this research was somewhat negative and often heard quotes were: "Oh no, I can't make this map.", "I'm not that familiar with Amsterdam.", "This is nothing for Me." or "I can't draw, and certainly not a map of Amsterdam's inner city". However, all respondents came up with several elements, some more than others. It was interesting to see that some people who thought they were

familiar with Amsterdam were confronted with the fact that they did not know much about Amsterdam.

5.1.2 Walk alongs

In this research 18 walk alongs have been conducted with domestic tourists from the Netherlands. These respondents were from big cities or middle-sized cities in the Netherlands. The main purpose of this method was to find out the motivation for spatial behaviour and the experience of the urban environment (Pink, 2008). In this research method the researcher imposes a depth interview when walking in the field, also called participating observation (Bryman, 2008). The main questions to be answered are why tourists choose for a certain route and how they experience that route. Because the main theme is tourist familiarity the walk alongs will provide a lot qualitative information about the role of familiarity when walking the route. The 18 walk alongs have been conducted between the 30th of May 2011 and the 21st of July 2011. The composition of the tourist groups differed in terms of age (the youngest person was 20 and the oldest was 71) and gender (some groups consisted only of men, of women or a combination). The largest group was one of four persons and the smallest was an individual person. Figure 5.5 and 5.6 (Appendix 3) show the 18 walked routes. The first 12 maps are the walk alongs which have been performed with 'unfamiliar' tourists (with tourists who have included less than 18 elements on their mental maps) (Figure 5.5) and the final 6 maps are the walk alongs which have been performed with 'familiar' tourists (with tourists who have included more than 18 elements on their mental maps) (Figure 5.6). The proportion between familiar and unfamiliar tourists is equal to that in the mental map research (respectively one third and two third).

Some characteristics of the walk alongs are remarkable. One route is walked twice in exactly the same way. Another route is even three times walked in the same way; only date, time and length of time varied. Furthermore, there can be noted that itineraries of familiar tourists include a larger spatial scale than those of unfamiliar tourists.

Respondents were not familiar with this type of research, so at the beginning of the walk along people were a little bit reluctant. When the walk along once gathered pace respondents became more open and began to feel more at ease. Interaction between members of the same walk-along sometimes affect the route choice behaviour of that group. When people were in doubt about the route or were lost, they were consulting which direction to be taken. Sometimes people were even quarreling about it, as this example shows: "Person 1: I'm not quite sure about the direction to take. Person 2: You think you're familiar here, but you're not. Person 1: Okay, your wish! From now on you'll walk on the front." Moreover, some respondents even asked the researcher for directions, although there was explained that this was impossible.

5.1.3 Conclusion

This section provides an idea of how familiar respondents are with Amsterdam's inner city. Some things can be noted here. Respondents are familiar with the axis Centraal Station-Dam square-Kalverstraat because the most drawn elements are drawn surrounding this axis. However, people are much less known with the areas further away from this axis. Moreover, novelty searchers are the more familiar respondents and familiarity searchers can be found in both familiar and unfamiliar respondents.

5.2 The role of tourist familiarity in Amsterdam's inner city

In this section the question will be answered how the spatial differences between the respondents can be explained. The seven types of tourist familiarity will come to the forefront to explain why people are familiar or unfamiliar with Amsterdam's inner city. The results of the correlations between tourist familiarity types and the mental maps will be interpreted by using qualitative data from the walk alongs.

5.2.1 Informational familiarity

The relation between information use and the role of tourists' familiarity with the tourist destination is relatively unclear in the existing literature (Kerstetter & Cho, 2004). Figure 5.7 (Appendix 2) shows a dichotomy between information users and non-information users. Most respondents tend to use information, whatever the extent of use. Just 4 respondents indicated they never use any information for their trip to Amsterdam. One respondent explains this as follows: "It's just for shopping why I visit Amsterdam and I know where I can find the shops where I want to go to. Therefore, it's not necessary to use any information for my walking route." Furthermore this respondent explains why he does not use any information in unfamiliar areas: "The routes I walk are based from my own experiences. Once I take another route I follow street signs or my instinct says which route I've to take. I've never visited any museum in Amsterdam, because those things haven't got my interests. So, the only purpose why I visit Amsterdam is shopping on the beaten tracks: Nieuwendijk, Dam square and Kalverstraat."

Although a lot of people have ever used information for their route, they use any information quiet infrequent. Inquiries from people show that use of information only occurs when a particular, unfamiliar goal is in mind. One can think of a visit of a museum or an event. A respondent illustrates: "Every time I'd like to visit Amsterdam I visit Amsterdam's tourist agency's internet site to see what's going on in the city. I'm not going for shopping here, but I want to experience the authentic Amsterdam's street life and visit cultural amenities. Therefore I'm searching on the Internet to find out where exhibitions are or concerts take place. Today we'd like to go to the Westerkerk for an organ concert. There were so many things to do here but this event attracted us most."

Table 5.3 (Appendix 2) shows the relation between the extent of information use and the number of elements drawn on the mental maps. The correlation table shows that the more information people use, the more elements they have drawn on their mental map, although there is just a moderate correlation of -0,636. In line with this, the less information people use the fewer elements they have drawn on their mental map. These results confirm what Kerstetter and Cho (2004) have concluded in their article: tourists who are familiar with Amsterdam's inner city use sources more frequently and do more active searching than tourists which are unfamiliar with Amsterdam's inner city.

Behaviour of the mentioned respondents corresponds to these findings. The person who never used any information had drawn far fewer elements on his mental map than the person who used information every time. So, the unfamiliar person did not use any information while the familiar person searched actively for information.

The Internet is the most used information source as Figure 5.8 (Appendix 2) shows. Two third of the respondents has ever used the internet to determine their route within Amsterdam's inner city. Many respondents share the same view on this. One example illustrates this: "The Internet gives us the most actual information about what's happening in Amsterdam. Moreover it's an accessible

information source. I even looked on the Internet ten minutes before we went to Amsterdam.” Mouth-to-mouth information is also an important information source for tourists. Other's experiences in the social environment, both positive (“My friend told me that the Begijnhof is a really nice and quiet place. I surely had to visit it.”) and negative experiences (“The last time my uncle was at Rembrandtplein he was robbed. That happened at night. Such a thing is a reason for me to avoid this place at night.”), determine whether people will visit that place or not. Classical media sources like television, radio, magazines and newspapers play a smaller role in decision making. This is probably caused due to the enormously increased use of the Internet, making these media relatively less important. Travel guides are hardly used by domestic tourists. This is a huge difference with foreign tourists who almost all use a travel guide. No significant differences in types of information use can be found between familiar and unfamiliar tourists, so it could be said that different information sources are used in whole the familiar-unfamiliar range.

Approximately half of the respondents usually determined their route prior to the trip and somewhat less than half of the respondents did not determine their route beforehand, or determined their route prior to the trip not that much (Figure 5.9, Appendix 2).

Table 5.4 (Appendix 2) shows that the correlation between the extent of route determining beforehand and the number of elements drawn by the respondents on their mental maps is moderate (0,566). This means that the more elements respondents have drawn on their mental maps the less they determine their route beforehand. So, familiar tourists generally have not determined their itinerary before. They leave open the possibility for new experiences and for other places to visit. Familiar respondents cite: “We leave the possibility open for things we didn't have in mind before. We certainly have our goals within the city, but we don't know the way how we will arrive at those goals.” During the walk along these respondents went from De Jordaan to Rembrandtplein via Spui because they saw a book market on that square: “We found it nice to walk on the book market. We didn't know it was situated there but it attracted us. So, this spontaneous idea influences our route”.

On the other hand, unfamiliar tourists generally know their route beforehand and are searching for places and experiences they already know. Unfamiliar respondents say: “Yes, we usually know our route prior to our trip to Amsterdam. We almost always walk from Amsterdam Centraal Station via Dam square to Kalverstraat and back. We actually never go to other streets than those.”

Slightly less than half of the people do not have a complete idea on how their route will be (Figure 5.10, Appendix 2). Most people have a relatively complete idea where they are going to and what they are going to do in Amsterdam. However, there cannot be made a distinction between familiar and unfamiliar tourists concerning the completeness of the route prior to the trip (this correlation is not significant). It seems that the completeness of the route is individualistic and so there are differences, particularly within the familiar tourist groups. This might be the result of the route's scale. The longer the route is, the less it is likely that people can completely keep in mind the route they will take. A familiar respondent explains why his route is complete: “I searched on the Internet for different things to do in Amsterdam. I combined them in Google Maps and tried to find the best route to walk. When keeping these streets in mind, it's easier for me to navigate myself in the city. It's an advantage that I can easily remember street names.” However, another familiar respondent explains why his route is not complete: “I know where the museums, pubs and restaurants are situated but the exact route is difficult to remember. Amsterdam is such a big city, has so many streets, that, although I feel myself reasonably familiar here, I'm sometimes lost. Moreover,

Amsterdam offers so many possibilities to reach a place that I leave the possibility open for spontaneous movements”.

It is easier for unfamiliar tourists to have a complete idea of the walking route, because their trip includes generally fewer streets. Unfamiliar tourists illustrate this: “For sure, my walking route is complete. That’s not so difficult, because we usually walk the same route: Amsterdam Centraal Station – Dam square – Kalverstraat – Rembrandtplein and vice versa. We don’t need any information for that, we’ve got that route in our minds and know completely how to walk that route.”

So, several differences can be remarked between familiar and unfamiliar tourists concerning informational familiarity. Familiar tourists use more information to determine their route than unfamiliar tourists. The type of information source does not matter in this case: the Internet is used most by both familiar and unfamiliar tourists. Although familiar tourists have their route in mind before the trip takes place the route does not necessarily be totally complete. Meanwhile, unfamiliar tourists generally have their route in mind prior to the trip and this route is usually complete.

5.2.2 Experiential familiarity

Following the literature, one of the most important types of tourist familiarity is experiential familiarity (Kerstetter & Cho, 2004). This type of familiarity implies the extent of experiences within the tourist destination before the trip takes place. The distribution of the average number of visits per year to Amsterdam's inner city is shown in Figure 5.11 (Appendix 2). Most tourists visit the capital less than three times per year. Surprisingly none of the respondents indicated that they visit Amsterdam less than one time per year.

As could be expected, the more times a tourist visits Amsterdam's inner city per year, the more familiar he is with this area. Table 5.5 (Appendix 2) shows a strong correlation (0,716) between the average number of visits per year and the number of elements drawn on the mental map. So, the more times a tourist visits a destination the more he is able to keep in mind elements in this destination. Quotes from walk alongs show this contradiction. An unfamiliar tourist states: “I don’t feel myself familiar with Amsterdam because I don’t visit the city that much. I use my former experiences within the city to determine my route within the inner city. I don’t know many buildings and streets in the city, but I know where the ones I’m familiar with are situated.”

Familiar tourists cite: “We know a lot of elements in the city because we’ve got many earlier experiences in Amsterdam. We regularly visit the city and every time we learn where places are situated. We remember those places and experiences for our next visits to Amsterdam.”

However, not only the average number of visits to Amsterdam's inner city is important. Also the time of the last visitation plays a role. Most tourists visited Amsterdam's inner city within a year before this research took place, most of them between 3 and 8 months (Figure 5.12, Appendix 2). Table 5.6 (Appendix 2) shows a moderate correlation (-0,549) between the time of the last visitation to Amsterdam's inner city and the number of elements that is drawn on the mental map. A tourist who visited Amsterdam 12 months ago says: “Because it’s a long time ago when I visited Amsterdam for the last time it’s hard to remember which elements I saw at that moment. I’m familiar with some elements in the inner city but I have forgotten the names of streets, squares and so on.” Tourists who visited Amsterdam 1 month ago say: “A lot of elements we know which we’ve drawn on our

mental maps are from the experiences of our last visitations to Amsterdam. On the other hand, we don't know exactly anymore where places are situated which we've visited a couple of years ago."

It can be concluded that the less time exists between the last visitation and this research the familiar the respondent is with Amsterdam's inner city. So, the time of the last visitation plays certainly a role but not as much as the average number of visitations per year.

5.2.3 Proximate familiarity

Proximate familiarity deals with the extent to which people feel themselves connected to the tourist destination and whether they can identify themselves with the tourist destination. People can be directly (familiar persons) or indirectly (emotionally) connected with Amsterdam's inner city. Because none of the respondents have lived or worked in Amsterdam, family or friends in Amsterdam are more suitable in this research. 8 respondents have family or friends living in Amsterdam, 44 do not. There is no difference between these groups concerning the number of elements which respondents have included. So, family or friends living in Amsterdam does not affect familiarity with Amsterdam.

16 respondents do not feel themselves emotionally connected with Amsterdam, whereas 20 respondents do. Another 16 respondents have a neutral stance (Figure 5.13, Appendix 2). As can be seen in the correlation table (Table 5.7, Appendix 2) there is a moderate to strong correlation (0,686) between the felt connectedness with Amsterdam's inner city and the number of elements drawn on the mental map. This implies that the more emotionally connected tourists feel themselves with Amsterdam, the more familiar they are with the place. Walk alongs confirm this statement. An unfamiliar tourist says: "I feel myself totally unconnected with Amsterdam. I don't like the atmosphere of a big city, so the city doesn't attract me. That's why I'm not searching for other streets or routes where I haven't been in my life. If I go to Amsterdam I'm searching for familiar experiences and those are related to shopping purposes." She explains further why she's connected with non-unique aspects of Amsterdam: "I'm going to a big city for clothing stores like H&M, Zara and De Bijenkorf. It doesn't matter that much to me whether this is in Amsterdam, Rotterdam or somewhere else. However, I visit Amsterdam regularly often because I know that here is a large concentration of those shops. But no, I don't feel the connectedness with Amsterdam itself".

On the other hand, some familiar tourists mention some aspects which attract them emotionally: "I've visited for approximately 40 years. For me it's the most beautiful city in the world. I've seen Paris, London and Berlin, but no city can beat Amsterdam." Another familiar tourist says: "I've lived for several years in Utrecht. I think that you can compare this city with Amsterdam, but Utrecht is somewhat smaller. I can find the street life and atmosphere which I've experienced in Utrecht. In this sense my history determines why I regularly visit Amsterdam."

5.2.4 Self-described familiarity

The extent of how familiar respondents think themselves with a destination is called self-described familiarity. Figure 5.14 (Appendix 2) shows approximately the same distribution as that of the emotional connectedness (Figure 5.12). 20 people feel themselves familiar with Amsterdam's inner city, whereas 16 people feel themselves unfamiliar. 16 people take a neutral stance.

The correlation between feeling familiarity and real familiarity is strong (0,732) (Table 5.8, Appendix 2). This means that most people (both familiar and unfamiliar) are aware of their familiarity with Amsterdam's inner city, as these respondents illustrate: "Oh yes, I know I'm not familiar with

Amsterdam. I'm familiar with the most well-known elements of the city like Dam square, Amsterdam Centraal Station and Kalverstraat but that's all. It's because I don't visit the city that much and I don't have a total image of the city." Another respondent says: "I know I'm familiar with the city. I can really make good imaginations about it and know how the city is in reality. I'm interested in the city and every time I enjoy myself, wherever I'm situated."

However, there are some respondents who think they are familiar but in reality they are less familiar than they had thought: "I thought I was familiar with Amsterdam but when drawing my mental map I found that it was a mistake. I think I feel myself familiar with a small part of Amsterdam, but not as a whole. That's why I've drawn such a small number of elements (14 elements)."

5.2.5 Educational familiarity

Educational familiarity is about being familiar with a destination by formal or informal learning. As becomes clear in Figure 5.15 (Appendix 2), almost every respondent has read several books about Amsterdam. Just 7 persons have not read any book about Amsterdam. None of the respondents have read many books. This pattern is almost the same for what one has learned at school about Amsterdam and the number of movies and series seen about Amsterdam.

Figure 5.16 (Appendix 2) shows the relationship between the types of formal and informal learning about Amsterdam and the image respondents have of Amsterdam. What is striking is that novels and learning at school do generally not have any influence on a respondent's view of Amsterdam. On the other hand, movies and series have more influence on tourists' images of Amsterdam. Particularly the detective series of Baantjer causes a certain image of Amsterdam.

Finally, Figure 5.17 (Appendix 2) shows that there is no influence of educational familiarity on route choice behaviour. So, despite tourists have learned and know certain things about Amsterdam's inner city they do not use that as a determinant for route choice decisions.

5.2.6 Self-assured familiarity

The central concept of self-assured familiarity is safety. The first and most important question about safety in Amsterdam is for sure whether respondents feel themselves safe in Amsterdam. Half of the respondents feel themselves safe or totally safe in Amsterdam's inner city (Figure 5.18). Few people feel themselves unsafe in Amsterdam. Moreover there is a large group who feel themselves sometimes safe and sometimes unsafe in Amsterdam (approximately one third of the respondents).

The correlation table (Table 5.9, Appendix 2) shows the correlation between the extent of safety felt by the respondents and the number of elements drawn by the respondents on their mental maps. There is a strong correlation between safety felt and familiarity (0,693): the more familiar a tourist is with Amsterdam, the safer he or she feels himself or herself in Amsterdam.

The most cited reason why people feel themselves safe in Amsterdam is the presence of others. One respondent expresses this as follows: "I never feel myself really unsafe, because there is always 'life' on the streets and people in the city are generally pleasant." Furthermore, people do not seek for places with a sinister environment. Especially the familiar tourists know there are plenty of shady businesses going on and they globally know where these things take place. But once they have eventually arrived at such space they are confident that there is enough security in the form of bodyguards, video cameras or policemen. Finally, the feeling of being familiar with the environment

gives familiar tourists a safe feeling. One respondent said that “The idea of knowing Amsterdam gives me a safe feeling. In most cases I know where I ‘ve to go to when bad things are about to happen.”

On the other hand, there are also elements giving respondents an unsafe feeling. Paradoxically, the presence of others is mentioned several times as an unsafe factor. They felt the possible presence of pickpockets as a threat to their safety. This feeling is most experienced in tourist areas, because tourists are aware that criminals exploit this situation. Second, particularly unfamiliar tourists mention the factor of being away from a familiar area as an unsafe factor. A relatively unfamiliar respondent verbalized this as follows: “The more I walk out of the inner city, the more I feel myself unsafe. This is because I don't know the urban environment anymore.” Furthermore, dark streets and sinister people are avoided as much as possible. Particularly women mention the factor of being looked after or being yelled at as intimidating. However, the results of the questionnaire do not show any significant difference between men and women concerning the role of safety.

De Wallen is by many respondents mentioned as an unsafe area. People generally have a negative image of the area. In the eyes of the respondents there are a lot of drugs users, drugs dealers and drunken people. One respondent even mentioned a specific place which he will never visit anymore: “There is a bridge in De Wallen which I don't cross in the dusk or darkness. This bridge is situated at the end of Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal, nearby café ‘The Old Sailor’. I know what kind of things are going on there and those are not my kind of activities. I always avoid that place because you never know what could happen. Maybe I'll be robbed or abused.”

5.2.7 Expected familiarity

Expected familiarity is defined as the cosiness and attractions expected by tourists of a destination. Every person is to some extent familiar with cosy elements in Amsterdam's inner city. The vast majority of the respondents appreciates Amsterdam's social and physical environment. One respondent, a familiar tourist, was even completely lyrical about Amsterdam: “Amsterdam is for me by far the most beautiful city in the world!” Just one person did not appreciate the cosiness of Amsterdam and 8 respondents gave a neutral answer. This implies that they are aware of both cosy and non-cosy elements (Figure 5.19, Appendix 2).

Despite the fact that almost every respondent likes Amsterdam's inner city, there is still a correlation, although moderate (0,491), between the extent of cosiness felt and the number of elements drawn on the mental map (Table 5.10, Appendix 2). The more familiar a respondent is with Amsterdam the more a respondent appreciates Amsterdam's cosiness.

Both physical and social elements were mentioned as cosy. The combination of the buildings along the canals and the canals themselves is the most mentioned physically cosy element. A respondent says: “The canals and the atmosphere around those canals make Amsterdam a unique place in the Netherlands. There are so many lovely places in De Grachtengordel and De Jordaan where you can soak up Amsterdam's unique atmosphere. That's for me the cosiest element of Amsterdam because other cosy elements like shopping streets and busy squares could also be found in other cities in the Netherlands.”

The huge number of shops, bars, restaurants and terraces is also mentioned by many people, as a respondent illustrates: “There are so many possibilities within the inner city to enjoy yourself, even in a relatively small area. You can relax, eat, drink, shop, everything you need.”

Somewhat less people cite parks and courtyards as cosy: "Several parks are situated somewhat out of the city centre, but when the weather is good we visit them regularly. Those parks are good places to relax, watching people and enjoy Amsterdam's street life. Particularly Vondelpark attracts us because of its huge size, variety of visitors and the nearby P.C. Hoofstraat and Leidseplein. Vondelpark offers us a possibility to enjoy the street life in both a built and a green environment."

Social elements are more cited than physical elements. Particularly Amsterdam's street life with its numerous cultures, tolerance and uniqueness is very attractive to domestic tourists. This confirms the findings of Hannam & Knox (2010, p. 100) where they are talking about passive (soaking up the atmosphere of a place) and active (visiting a cultural facility) consumption of culture. So, in the case of domestic tourists in Amsterdam's inner city exists more passive than active consumption of culture.

On the other hand, several physical and social elements are designated as non-cosy. Some respondents mentioned the already familiar shops as non-cosy because they feel that Amsterdam loses its uniqueness: "We try to avoid Nieuwendijk and Kalverstraat as much as possible. Aren't those streets cosy? Not at all! Every city centre looks the same. You can find Blokker, V&D and Kruidvat everywhere you are in the country. That's not what we call cosy. We're searching for cosy authentic shops in other parts of Amsterdam, like in De Jordaan." Furthermore, several unsafe elements are mentioned as non-cosy. These elements correspond to the unsafe elements in the self-assured familiarity (Paragraph 5.2.6).

5.2.8 Conclusion

Although all seven types of tourist familiarity affect the image tourists have of a tourist destination, not every type affects the familiarity with Amsterdam's inner city: educational familiarity (reading novels, education about Amsterdam and watching movies or series) has no influence on the image and route choice behaviour of domestic tourists in Amsterdam's inner city.

Moreover, the extent of important differs per type. Self-described familiarity correlates best with the number of elements drawn on the mental maps (correlation of 0,732), so the extent how familiar respondents think themselves with Amsterdam's inner city is an important factor for their ultimate familiarity. Experiential familiarity is also important in familiarity creating. The number of visits per year and the number of months ago of the last visitation correlates well (respectively 0,716 and - 0,549). Self-assured and proximate familiarity correlate moderately with tourists' ultimate familiarity (respectively 0,693 and 0,686), so the connectedness and safety felt in Amsterdam differ among tourists. Informational familiarity differs somewhat less between familiar and unfamiliar tourists. Finally, the cosiness felt by tourists correlates least (0,491), because Amsterdam's atmosphere is generally appreciated

Although there is no clear and strict distinction between familiar and unfamiliar tourists and it is hard to generalise individuals, a characterisation between relatively unfamiliar and relatively familiar tourists could be sketched. Relatively unfamiliar tourists hardly use information to determine their trip, know their route beforehand, rarely visit Amsterdam, have visited Amsterdam a relatively long time ago, do not feel themselves connected to Amsterdam, know they are unfamiliar with Amsterdam, feel themselves sometimes safe and sometimes unsafe in Amsterdam and appreciate Amsterdam's cosiness. On the other hand, relatively familiar tourists use information to determine their route, do not know their route beforehand because they leave possibilities open for

alternatives, frequently visit Amsterdam, have visited Amsterdam a relatively short time ago, feel themselves connected to Amsterdam, know they are familiar with Amsterdam, feel themselves safe Amsterdam and highly appreciate Amsterdam's cosiness.

5.3 Tourist familiarity and route choice behaviour in Amsterdam

5.3.1 Introduction

In the previous section the different types of tourist familiarity in Amsterdam have been analysed. Now it is necessary to find out how the different types of tourist familiarity affect tourists' route choice behaviour when moving within the tourist destination. A distinction has been made between the more familiar tourists and the more unfamiliar tourists, because these groups use elements in the built environment in a different way. Because every tourist has its own interpretation of a place or a route, it is hard to generalise the results of the walk alongs. However, the most interesting places and routes and the most interesting differences and similarities between the tourist groups are shown in this section to illustrate the influence of tourist familiarity on tourists' route choice behaviour. Quotes of familiar and unfamiliar tourists are used to illustrate the contrasts and resemblances between the groups on a place or route in Amsterdam's inner city and photos made by respondents are used to support these data.

The selection of these places has been determined by the respondents. The mental map research showed that Amsterdam Centraal Station, Dam square and Kalverstraat are the places which are most displayed on the mental maps, by both familiar and unfamiliar tourists. All walk alongs with relatively unfamiliar tourists passed these elements. Moreover, in half of the walk alongs with relatively unfamiliar tourists Rembrandtplein was included. Route choice behaviour of largely unfamiliar tourists on the route Amsterdam Centraal Station – Dam square – Kalverstraat – Rembrandtplein will be analysed in the first part of this section.

In the second part of this section route choice behaviour of largely familiar tourists will be highlighted. These walk alongs took place in other areas than those of unfamiliar tourists (De Jordaan, De Grachtengordel and De Wallen). On the other hand, these tourists also walked parts of the unfamiliar tourists' routes. So, in this sense route choice behaviour can be partly compared with the more unfamiliar tourists.

Two things are described per tourist group. First, why tourists use an element in their walking route and second, how they navigate themselves to and from these elements. Respondents' citations and photos are placed on the theoretical concept of tourist familiarity and cognitive route choice decisions.

5.3.2 Route choice behaviour of relatively unfamiliar tourists

From Amsterdam Centraal Station to Dam square

Amsterdam Centraal Station is used in every walk along as a starting point, although most respondents have negative stances concerning the current state of the station and its surrounding physical environment. An unfamiliar respondent illustrates this: "This site looks awful. When leaving the station you would immediately have a good impression of Amsterdam, but there's none." Another unfamiliar respondent, however, mentions the fact of the station's accessibility as a necessary factor for tourists: "It's important to keep Amsterdam accessible for both residents and tourists. Investment is necessary to realise that. The view from here is probably not the best you

wish, but construction works are needful.” Unfamiliar tourists were beforehand aware of the construction works at Amsterdam Centraal Station. They have heard about the delay of the North-South metro line construction in newspapers and on television. The acquired information about this current situation at Amsterdam Centraal Station, **informational familiarity**, ensures that people are aware of some negative experiences when being at this place.

As already mentioned, all relatively unfamiliar respondents choose for the train as a transportation mode because of their positive experiences with it: “We always use the train. We’ve never experienced trouble, despite any delays. However, we take that for granted.” This citation shows an attitude which is closely related to habitual behaviour. Previous experiences (**experiential familiarity**) play in this sense the largest role why tourists use Amsterdam Centraal Station in their walking route.

Because people usually use Amsterdam Centraal Station as starting point of their walking route they have relatively much experience with route choice decisions to and from the station. Mental maps confirm this as they showed the familiarity with the Centraal Station of relatively unfamiliar tourists. They can navigate themselves easily surrounding this station and know the location of it. These tourists use this landmark as a way finding tool: when they are situated close to the station tourists can already see the station from a distance and know which direction to take. Photo 5.1 illustrates this. This picture has been taken from Dam square and oversees Damrak and at the end Amsterdam Centraal Station. On the other hand, people unconsciously use Amsterdam Centraal Station to determine their route because they know that they have to leave the station behind to reach the inner city.

Photo 5.1: Amsterdam Central Station used as way finding tool



The most used route from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Amsterdam’s inner city is that from Stationsplein to Damrak. It is a habit for many relatively people to walk on Damrak: “We know this is the shortest and easiest path to the inner city. A lot of other people walk this route, so we also use this route because of its crowds and atmosphere.” This habitual behaviour as a result of previous experience ensures that respondents generally use the similar route to travel from Centraal Station to the inner city. So, again, **experiential familiarity** determines why unfamiliar tourists choose for Damrak in their walking route.

However, no respondent stopped somewhere at Stationsplein or Damrak to visit a shop or another amenity and no respondent could appreciate its built environment. One respondent explains why: “The amenities at Damrak are very low-grade. You can find them in any European tourist destination. Souvenir shops with cheese, wooden shoes and windmills, tour agencies for excursions to Volendam and restaurants offering English breakfast are just suitable for foreign tourists.” Photo 5.2 shows such an unattractive, non-appreciated low-quality souvenir shop at Damrak. Anyway, the effectiveness of the route (the easiest way from A to B) overshadows the declined physical attractiveness (low-quality shops). So, on the one side relatively unfamiliar tourists choose for Damrak because of its expected cosiness (**expected familiarity**). On the other hand, this cosiness is disturbed by low-quality amenities.

Photo 5.2: Low-quality shop at Damrak



Other unfamiliar tourists choose to include Nieuwendijk in their route. One respondent says: “In my opinion it’s strange why people walk all over Damrak to Dam Square. It’s easy to take a sidewalk and walk on Nieuwendijk, which is completely pedestrianized. I know that Nieuwendijk is much cosier than Damrak with its shabby amenities.” For this respondent the knowledge about cosiness at Nieuwendijk (**expected familiarity**) is why he decides to include this street in his walking route.

The reason why several visitors skip Nieuwendijk on their route from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Dam square is the fact that they are going to visit the street on the end of their route: “We’re going to walk on Nieuwendijk on our way back. Walking this street twice is in our opinion not the most interesting thing to do.”

Another relatively unfamiliar respondents further submit: “On our way back we’re going to visit confectionary Van Der Linde at Nieuwendijk. There we take an ice cream before we walk further to Amsterdam Centraal Station. Actually every time we visit Amsterdam we take an ice cream there. Despite during wintertime, for sure. The confectioner even knows us, so we feel ourselves a little bit connected to that confectionery”. In this case **proximate familiarity** (emotional connectedness) determines why these respondents visit Nieuwendijk.

From Dam square to Kalverstraat

Dam square is located on the south side of Damrak and Nieuwendijk. Dam square is predominantly described as a cosy and pleasant place by relatively unfamiliar tourists. Many respondents mention positive aspects of Dam square: "Dam square with its pigeons, street performers and beautiful buildings has a great appeal to us. We actually always go to this place when we're in Amsterdam's inner city". Another unfamiliar respondent even mentioned the must for going to Dam square: "When I'm walking from Amsterdam Centraal Station via Damrak to the inner city I don't know how I've to avoid Dam square. It's the easiest and quickest way to reach the shops in the inner city so I always cross this square". In this case, earlier experiences (**experiential familiarity**) determine why tourists choose to include Dam square in their walking route: first, because of habitual behaviour and second, because of its attractiveness. For many tourists Dam square is a large pull factor in the inner city because of its cosiness (**expected familiarity**). People are aware of that and use Dam square because of its nice atmosphere. For many unfamiliar tourists these types of familiarity have strengthened each other: attractiveness ensures repeat visits of the square and these repeat visits ensure an enhanced sense of appreciation. This example shows the interdependency of the concept familiarity.

For every unfamiliar respondent Dam square was easy to find and this element has been drawn in almost every mental map. They do not use any information to find Dam square, so **informational familiarity** does not play any role at this place: "This is the most well-known place in Amsterdam. Everyone knows Dam square and knows where it's situated."

When respondents are located on Dam square they can easily orient themselves, even the most unfamiliar respondents. They know where to find Kalverstraat and 'the other shopping street' (Nieuwendijk) because of previous experiences (**experiential familiarity**). Photo 5.3 illustrates this. The unfamiliar respondent who made this photo explains: "I rarely visit Amsterdam, but when I'm here I always walk the same route: from the station via Damrak, crossing Dam square, going to Kalverstraat and vice versa. So, I feel myself unfamiliar with the inner city as a whole but familiar with some streets, such as Kalverstraat."

Photo 5.3: Familiar starting point of Kalverstraat



Some relatively unfamiliar tourists stopped at Dam square to look at street performers, living statues or musicians, as illustrated in Photo 5.4. They did not have this in mind beforehand. The respondent who made this photo says: “We’re conscious that there’s a lot going on at Dam square. We appreciate the street performers there and usually stop for a while. However, because you never know whether there are street performers we don’t have the idea to stop at Dam square every time. When there’s nothing going on we just walk by.” For other respondents these appreciated cosy elements do not affect their route choice behaviour: “Those performers don’t mean anything to us. We just use Dam square to go to Kalverstraat. The only things where we’ve to stop for are traffic lights.”

Despite these respondents use the same route their temporal scale is different. Due to the appreciated attractiveness, the former respondents stopped at Dam square for a while (**expected familiarity**). On the other hand, the latter respondent did not stop at Dam square because of the lack of appreciated attractiveness (lack of **expected familiarity**).

Photo 5.4: Spontaneous stop at Dam square



Then, almost all relatively unfamiliar respondents crossed Dam square to the beginning of Kalverstraat. This is Amsterdam's and Holland's most famous shopping street and attracts domestic tourists from all around the country. One respondent describes this attractiveness as follows: "Amsterdam is my shopping street and I'm frequently to be found here. Actually, here are all the shops I'm looking for, so Kalverstraat is always included in my walking route when I'm in Amsterdam's inner city." This can be defined as **expected familiarity** because this respondent is aware of Kalverstraat as attraction for her.

However, respondents found it difficult to determine where this street exactly starts and ends. "I think Kalverstraat begins at Dam square and ends at Rembrandtplein. But I'm not sure of that. I actually never really look at street signs. Sometimes I come in sideways around Kalverstraat but I don't know their names at all." This could explain why fewer people have included Kalverstraat on their mental maps than the former elements. The uniqueness of Dam square and Amsterdam Centraal Station ensures that nearly all people include these elements on their mental maps. Kalverstraat is somewhat less unique because it shares characteristics (shopping area, walking crowds) with other streets like Nieuwendijk and Leidsestraat.

However, because of previous experiences (**experiential familiarity**) unfamiliar tourists know where they could find the street. Without looking for street signs they diagonally cross Dam square from Damrak and arrive at the beginning of Kalverstraat. Most relatively unfamiliar tourists walked Kalverstraat twice: from Dam square to the Munttoren and vice versa. A respondent explains this: "Regularly, I walk all the way through the end of Kalverstraat and then I turn around to see the shops on the other side of the street. For most shops I can define whether they're interesting for me or not, because many shops are equal to the ones in my hometown. So, I don't have to be really familiar with the shops to know what I could experience there." This is a form of **proximate familiarity**: this respondent feels herself emotionally connected with the shops in Kalverstraat because she is able to compare them with shops she already knows from her hometown. This finally determines whether to visit or not to visit the shop.

From Kalverstraat to Rembrandtplein

Several tourists walked further over Reguliersbreestraat and decided to include Rembrandtplein in their itinerary. The location of Rembrandtplein is an often cited reason for visiting the square. Many relatively unfamiliar tourists know where they could find Rembrandtplein. An unfamiliar respondent says: "Without Kalverstraat I wouldn't know where Rembrandtplein is located. But because the square is located at the end of the shopping area it's attractive to go there for a while."

Moreover, Rembrandtplein is a well appreciated square by unfamiliar tourists. Many respondents included Rembrandtplein in their route because there they could rest on a terrace or a bench. An unfamiliar respondent highlights what the function of the square is for her: "When I'm tired of shopping I need to relax. Because there is a lack of opportunities at Kalverstraat I often go to Rembrandtplein to sit down and take a break for an hour".

For these respondents appreciation of its cosiness (**expected familiarity**) and earlier experiences (**experiential familiarity**) with the square determine why they have chosen to include Rembrandtplein in their route.

Avoided routes

Walking a route within Amsterdam’s inner city will consciously or unconsciously ensure that other routes and places are avoided. The main difference within the relatively unfamiliar tourists group is walking to Rembrandtplein or not. For several reasons there are some unfamiliar tourists who do not visit Rembrandtplein. First, there are some relatively unfamiliar tourists who visit Amsterdam just for shopping and in that perspective Rembrandtplein does not fit in their route: “I don’t go Rembrandtplein because the things I could do there, such as eating or drinking something, can I also do somewhat closer to the shopping streets. Maybe it’s the result of time constraints. For the same ease, I take something from a snack machine, the McDonalds or La Place. Finally, this saves me much time.”

Second, many tourists mention the fact of unattractive streets surrounding Rembrandtplein as a reason for not visiting the square: “Because Kalverstraat is pedestrianized it’s much more attractive than the street behind the Munttoren (Reguliersbreestraat).” Another relatively unfamiliar respondent says: “Reguliersbreestraat is too widely designed. This affects the cosiness in a negative way. Moreover, the trams drive here very frequently so that could create dangerous situations (see Photo 5.5).” These respondents are aware of the physical unattractiveness of Reguliersbreestraat due to his earlier experiences with it (**experiential familiarity**).

Photo 5.5: Unattractive Reguliersbreestraat



Other areas have been avoided, too. One example is De Wallen. Although many unfamiliar tourists have heard about De Wallen and have an image of it, just one walk along with unfamiliar respondents passed this area. Stigmatisation of the area is one of the things which deters tourists from going to De Wallen. An unfamiliar respondent says: “I don’t like the Red Light District. Prostitutes, pimps, drugs dealers and alcoholics are everywhere. That is not what I identify myself with. I’d rather stay away from that area”. In line with this, people generally feel themselves unsafe when walking through De Wallen: “For me the beaten tracks are more attractive than unbeaten tracks like De Wallen. I can understand why foreign tourists come here to see the Red Light District, but all harsh things in the area give me unsafe feelings”. So, unfamiliar tourists avoid De Wallen

because of its sinister environment. They have generally heard about those things in the media. This then forms their view the area although some tourists have never been there.

These citations are examples of **self-assured familiarity** and **self-described familiarity**. Although people have rarely or never visited De Wallen, aspects of its social environment have been positioned in the forefront of people's imaginings by several media. So, **self-described familiarity** (in this case caused by **informational familiarity**: media) determines why people choose to avoid De Wallen. Moreover, people's judgements and feelings about safety (**self-assured familiarity**) are in this sense the most important factor why respondents avoid De Wallen.

Anyway, unfamiliar tourists are more unfamiliar with De Jordaan than with De Wallen. This is probably due to the fact that De Jordaan is much less present in the media so people do not hear and see much about this area. One unfamiliar tourist describes this as follows: "I've heard of De Jordaan but I wouldn't know where to find that neighbourhood. And certainly not how I should get there. And if I'll be there, then I don't know which are the nicest streets for the best experiences. Maybe I've to search for information which may increase the chance to go to De Jordaan". So, the main reason why unfamiliar tourists do not visit De Jordaan is a lack of experiences (**experiential familiarity**), lack of knowledge about the area (**informational familiarity**) and a lack of willingness to visit this unfamiliar area.

The final area which is avoided many times is De Grachtengordel. Surprisingly few people have included the canals on their mental maps. However, some walk alongs crossed De Grachtengordel. The most walked route is Leidsestraat from Kalverstraat to Leidseplein which crosses Singel, Herengracht, Keizersgracht and Prinsengracht. De Grachtengordel was for unfamiliar respondents just a thoroughfare from Kalverstraat to Leidseplein and nothing more: "I cross De Grachtengordel just at Leidsestraat and don't know much about it. Just that there are three or four canals in this area. Anyway, Leidsestraat is attractive to me because it's an attractive shopping street." They appreciate the physical environment, but do not go there necessarily: "Sometimes when I cross several canals I look a few seconds at the cityscape. I like it, but I don't visit De Grachtengordel for the canals themselves. I use this area as a thoroughfare to other places or streets."

Unfamiliar tourists find it difficult to distinguish the different canals. They generally know Herengracht, Keizersgracht en Prinsengracht by name, but how they are situated is for many people unknown. Their sequence is mixed up and Singel is often forgotten. Therefore, these people experience difficulties to navigate themselves through De Grachtengordel: "We've very little experiences with moving through De Grachtengordel. The most used street within this area is Leidsestraat and we know this route from earlier experiences. It could well be that there are many other possibilities to navigate ourselves through this area, but that's not our main purpose. We even haven't got to look at street signs to find the right direction. When we cross the canals we know we'll automatically reach Leidseplein". Photo 5.6 has been made by these respondents and illustrates their route choice behaviour on this street. In the centre of the photo is a bridge which crosses a canal. When following this street they automatically reach Leidseplein. So, these tourists use their previous experiences (**experiential familiarity**) to move through De Grachtengordel.

Photo 5.6: Leidsestraat as most well-known street in De Grachtengordel



5.3.3 Route choice behaviour of relatively familiar tourists

From Amsterdam Centraal Station to Dam square

Familiar respondents choose for Amsterdam Centraal Station as starting point for the same reason as unfamiliar respondents: its accessibility, usability and positive previous experiences. Of the 6 walk alongs with relatively familiar tourists 2 groups used the P+R (park and ride) possibility to travel to and within Amsterdam. In their opinion, the parking rates in the city centre are too high. “Parking in Amsterdam’s inner city costs approximately four euros per hour, maybe more. That’s way too much for me! Therefore we decided to park the car under the Amsterdam Arena and went by train to Amsterdam Centraal. That saves us a lot of money”. In this example **informational familiarity** plays a role and affects route choice decisions: people have searched information about parking and travel possibilities in Amsterdam and decided on the basis of that information which transportation mode to use.

4 of the walk alongs went from Amsterdam Centraal Station to Dam square: three via Damrak and one via Nieuwendijk. Generally, the same reasons for walking on these streets have been given as the relatively unfamiliar tourists did: those are the quickest and shortest paths to reach Dam square. At Dam square the relatively familiar tourists went into different directions: 2 groups went into Kalverstraat and 2 into Paleisstraat. Tourists going into Paleisstraat walked into this street to go to De Grachtengordel and used the Royal Palace to orient themselves (Photo 5.7). One respondent explains: “I’ve seen on Google Maps that De Grachtengordel is situated right behind the palace, so the only thing we’ve got to do is to walk behind the palace.” Another respondent says: “I haven’t searched for information about our route but the main purpose was to walk a while along the canals. We know they’re situated behind Dam square, in the direction of De Jordaan. With the help of direction signs we could easily continue our walking route.”

Photo 5.7: Paleisstraat used as a thoroughfare to De Grachtengordel



Kalverstraat

More familiar tourists generally use Kalverstraat as the shortest path from where they were situated at that moment to Amsterdam Centraal Station. Their walking tempo was faster than that of unfamiliar tourists. A respondent explains: “We walk through Kalverstraat because we know this is one of the quickest and shortest routes from Rembrandtplein to Amsterdam Centraal Station. However, we actually never stop for the amenities in Kalverstraat. In the past we’ve tried several other routes back to Amsterdam Centraal Station but those weren’t suitable routes. Because Kalverstraat is fully pedestrianized it’s much more attractive to walk through than for example Rokin with its traffic.” For those tourists **experiential familiarity** determines why they choose Kalverstraat on their way back. They have tried several other routes but have the best experiences with this street.

Rembrandtplein

Few relatively familiar respondents were aware of physical redevelopments of Rembrandtplein in the last years, but they highlight the attractiveness of the square: “I don’t remember exactly how the square was in the past, but in my opinion it’s a very pleasant place. Especially if it’s sunny it is nice to relax here on a terrace and watch things and people passing by”. One familiar respondent was aware of the changes of Rembrandtplein: “In the past the square was a little messy. Then I came here, but now it’s even more attractive to visit this square when being in Amsterdam. Good job of Amsterdam’s municipality!” So, like the more unfamiliar tourists, these tourists visit Rembrandtplein because of its cosiness (**expected familiarity**).

Direction signs, placed all around the inner city are a handy tool to lead tourists to the square. Particularly familiar tourists used direction signs to the square: “We’ve never approached the Rembrandtplein from another side than from Kalverstraat. Now, we’ve approached it from Spui whereby it was necessary for us to orient ourselves with the help of directional signs because of a lack of experience (**experiential familiarity**) with this route. Without doing that it was also succeeded, but it makes decision taking a little bit easier.”

Other relatively familiar tourists used a map of Amsterdam to go to Rembrandtplein: “We wanted to walk from Vondelpark to Rembrandtplein. When being at Stadhouderskade we were not really sure which streets to walk to reach Rembrandtplein. Then we saw a map of this part of Amsterdam’s inner city and found out which route to take. So, because we didn’t have any experience (lack of **experiential familiarity**) with this part of the inner city we used this tool to orient and navigate ourselves.”

De Wallen

Just one relatively familiar tourist group included De Wallen in their walking route. These familiar respondents mention some positive aspects of De Wallen: “Whenever we’re in Amsterdam we visit a pub where we’ve come now for thirty years. We’ve seen plenty of things to distinguish dangerous situations from normal, safe ones. For us is De Wallen a very beautiful neighbourhood, this is still the old Amsterdam”. These tourists are familiar with De Wallen because of their years of experience with the area (**experiential familiarity**). Moreover, for the cited familiar tourists **proximate familiarity** is important: in the pub where they regularly come are friends with whom they feel connected.

Because these tourists visit De Wallen on a regular basis their previous experiences (**experiential familiarity**) with the area determine which route they take: “We always walk over the same streets in De Wallen. We try to avoid the narrowest streets, especially in the dark. Oudezijds Voorburgwal and Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal are attractive streets to walk on, as well as Damstraat and Zeedijk. There are many people to find, there are the most beautiful cityscapes and there are the nicest amenities to find.” Photo 5.8 illustrates why these respondents find Oudezijds Voorburgwal a nice street: “This photo shows a combination of a canal, bridge, church and beautiful houses. This is really a nice environment to walk through. This is in our opinion one of Amsterdam’s most beautiful spots.” These respondents are examples of familiarity searchers: although they are already quite familiar with De Wallen (and Amsterdam’s inner city as a whole) they still search to experiences they are already familiar with.

Photo 5.8: Physical environment of Oudezijds Voorburgwal



De Jordaan

During the walk alongs De Jordaan has been visited several times, only by familiar tourists. For some of these respondents De Jordaan is the cosiest neighbourhood of Amsterdam: “The area is very close to the busy city centre, but radiates so much peace. Sometimes I let myself get lost so I can explore new places. There are things in this area which you’ll never find anywhere else in the Netherlands: lovely little shops, authentic Amsterdam styled pubs and it is possible to meet a lot of famous Dutch people.” So, what is expected of this area (**expected familiarity**) determines why people choose to walk within this area.

None of the respondents are very familiar with De Jordaan. Every respondent had the stance of ‘hanging all around’. They found it too difficult to navigate themselves exactly to the area. Consequently, information was for them not necessary because they enjoyed themselves with wandering through De Jordaan. Respondents cite: “We’re continuously searching for nice experiences and new spots. In our opinion, the best way to achieve this is to wander around the area without being guided by information (a conscious lack of **informational familiarity**). So, we’re not as much as familiar with this area as with other areas in the city, but we’re not searching for it. On the other hand, we’ve visited different places in De Jordaan more than once, so we know them from earlier experiences (**experiential familiarity**). We now use them to orient ourselves a bit.”

Photo 5.9 is such a familiar spot which these respondents used as way finding tool. It shows the Noorderkerk at Noordermarkt. Because these tourists know where this landmark and node are situated they can easily reorient themselves when wandering through De Jordaan. So, for these respondents it is a familiar place in a relatively unfamiliar area.

Photo 5.9: Noorderkerk at Noordermarkt in De Jordaan



De Grachtengordel

5 out of 6 walk alongs with relatively familiar respondents passed through De Grachtengordel. These respondents consciously chose for this, in contrast to the relatively unfamiliar respondents. Some familiar tourists have searched information concerning events and cultural amenities in Amsterdam and they ended up with De Grachtengordel. One couple visited an organ concert in the Westerkerk,

another group visited Foam photography museum. For these tourists **informational familiarity** determines why they visit De Grachtengordel. Other familiar tourists walked through De Grachtengordel because of its uniqueness and its relaxed atmosphere. They had no specific purpose to walk through this area but appreciated the general social and physical environment (the combination of the canals, houses and mixed composition of people). For these tourists **expected familiarity** is important why they walk within De Grachtengordel: they know that they experience cosiness in this area and enjoy De Grachtengordel as an attraction as a whole.

Although relatively more familiar tourists visit De Grachtengordel more intensive, some people encounter difficulties to navigate themselves within this area. A relatively familiar tourist cites: “I visit Amsterdam quite often, also in De Grachtengordel. However, it is still difficult for me to distinguish the canals. They really look the same. The best way to know where I’m situated is to look at street signs. I know there are four canals and thus also four very large streets which have the same names as the canals. If I walk from the Amsterdam Centraal Station to De Jordaan I know that I’ve to cross these four streets. At every intersection street signs can be found. That makes it somewhat easier to move from A to B”. So, this respondent uses paths (canals) to navigate himself within De Grachtengordel. For this respondent (the lack of) **self-described familiarity** comes to the forefront. He thought to know the sequence of the canals, but they did not exactly. So, sometimes people think themselves to be familiar with a place but in reality they are not.

The latter respondent moved perpendicular to the canals. Other relatively familiar tourists have found other way finding tools to navigate themselves through the area: “When I see the Westerkerk I know I’m on the west side of Amsterdam and when I see the Munttoren I know I’m on the south side of Amsterdam’s city centre (Photo 5.10). When I’m not sure which direction I’ve to take I’m going to watch to house numbers. They are ascending from the western to the southern part of De Grachtengordel and for sure descending from the southern to the western part of De Grachtengordel”. In this case landmarks like the Westerkerk and the Munttoren are used as way finding tools and even normal buildings are used to find the right way because of a lack of sufficient familiarity.

Photo 5.10: The Westerkerk used as way finding tool



Other relatively familiar tourists had no trouble with finding the right direction within De Grachtengordel: “We don’t understand that people can get lost here. It’s not so hard to remember four names of canals! However, because we’d like to visit Foam photography museum we’ve written down its address. Then it’s very easy to find it because we know the sequence of the canals. How I know this? I’ve learned this at primary school.” This was the only found example of **educational familiarity** used during the walk alongs: information that was learned at school was used to partially determine their route.

More familiar tourists used Leidseplein, which is situated at the edge of De Grachtengordel as a way finding point to Vondelpark and P.C. Hoofdstraat and passed the square without stopping, as this respondent illustrates: “I don’t specifically go to Leidseplein to enjoy myself or to stay there for a while. However, I know that I have to cross this square to reach the lovely Vondelpark. When I go to that park I turn right at Kalverstraat to Leidsestraat, then go straight forward, crossing Leidseplein and finally I’ll arrive at Vondelpark. I don’t have other routes as alternatives for my usual route, because I’m not familiar with streets surrounding the Leidseplein. I sometimes go to Max Oeweplein because of its cosy, car free square. But because my main purpose is to go to Vondelpark I use Leidseplein and its surrounding streets as just a transit route.” So, **experiential familiarity** and the lack of cosiness felt (**expected familiarity**) are important factors why Leidseplein is chosen in respondent’s route.

This respondent explains further why he does not really appreciate Leidseplein: “There is too much traffic on Leidseplein. As I’ve already said, I just come here because Vondelpark and P.C. Hoofdstraat are lying nearby. No, Leidseplein is nothing for me. Rembrandtplein gives me a lot more pleasant feelings.” This opinion is illustrated in photo 5.11.

Photo 5.11: Traffic at Leidseplein



Avoided routes

Particularly relatively familiar tourists who are searching for novel experiences consciously avoid certain routes and places. Especially well-known routes (those used by relatively unfamiliar tourist) are avoided as much as possible.

The mentioned presence of low-quality shops at Damrak is the reason for several more familiar tourists to avoid Damrak and to choose another route from Amsterdam Centraal Station to the inner city. Familiar tourists illustrate this: "We consciously avoid Damrak. In our opinion it's one of Amsterdam's ugliest streets. All those low-quality facilities are totally unattractive to walk along. We even prefer to walk a while along the busy Prins Hendrikkade, whether it is to De Jordaan or De Wallen."

Further, some familiar tourists do not really appreciate Dam square anymore, because the square has become relatively unattractive due to alternative routes: "We've been so many times on Dam square, so we don't necessarily go to that square. We know it's a nice place but there are so many other nice places in Amsterdam, even a couple of minutes away from Dam square".

Like Dam square, the more familiar tourists sometimes avoid Kalverstraat because of their **experiential familiarity**: "I know Kalverstraat very well. However, now I'm looking for new experiences and I know I can't find them in Kalverstraat. Only when I really need something like clothes you'll find me here. For a unique experience you could better avoid this street".

These citations show a kind of over-familiarity: too many previous experiences (**experiential familiarity**) ensure that people might avoid this place. A relationship with the novelty-familiarity continuum can be made here. Respondents who avoid Dam square and Kalverstraat can be described as novelty searchers, while respondents visiting these places can be described as familiarity searchers.

5.3.4 Conclusion

Several things can be remarked out of this analysis. For many route choice decisions it is experiential familiarity which determines why a tourist chooses or avoids a route, particularly for relatively unfamiliar tourists. Because they are generally searching for familiar places, routes and experiences they often decide to choose for the same routes as they did in previous visitations. The route Amsterdam Centraal Station – Damrak – Dam square – Kalverstraat is a typical example of a route which is largely determined by experiential familiarity.

Moreover, expected familiarity is important in Amsterdam's inner city because many tourists, both familiar and unfamiliar, approximately know what they could experience at the place they visit or route they walk. The expected cosiness and attractions within Amsterdam's inner city where tourists are already familiar with are pull factors for places to be visited.

Informational familiarity does not play any role for relatively unfamiliar tourists because of their habitual behaviour. As a consequence, these tourists choose for routes with which they are already familiar. On the other hand, some more familiar tourists have searched information about amenities within the area they would like to walk (for example De Grachtengordel). These tourists had the willingness to visit novel destinations.

Sometimes tourists thought themselves familiar with an area but they were not in reality. The example of the sequence of the canals shows this. However, this lack of self-described familiarity is just valid for some more familiar tourists. On the other hand, self-described familiarity of De Wallen, which can be defined as a way of stereotyping, is partly the cause why many tourists avoid this area.

Proximate familiarity plays a larger role for relatively familiar tourists than for unfamiliar tourists. This is because they feel themselves more emotionally connected with several places, although this type also exists among the more unfamiliar tourists (the example of the confectionery at Nieuwendijk).

Self-assured familiarity (safety felt) did not play a large role in route choice making. Only in De Wallen certain streets were consciously avoided. This might be because tourists feel themselves relatively safe on routes which are familiar to them. So, unconsciously they might avoid unsafe routes and places because of their lack of novelty searching.

Educational familiarity (formal or informal learning) was not important in route choice making. Just one example could be found where this type of tourist familiarity was used for navigating (the sequence of the canals).

Finally, avoidance of routes has two causes. First, unfamiliar tourists who do not have the willingness to search new places and experiences try to avoid off the beaten tracks and stay as much as possible on familiar routes. Second, more unfamiliar tourists who are searching for new places and experiences try to avoid places and routes with which they are already familiar. This can be defined as over-familiarity.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

In this research an attempt has been made to explain why domestic tourists behave differently within Amsterdam's inner city, with a main role for the concept tourist familiarity. The main research question was formulated as follows: "To what extent does tourist familiarity affect the route choice behaviour of domestic tourists in Amsterdam and how could this be explained?" Different specific research questions were made to help to find an answer on the main research question. These were: "What is tourist familiarity and which types of tourist familiarity can be distinguished?", "To which extent do cognitive factors play a role in spatial movements of tourists?" and "To which extent do the different types of tourist familiarity affect route choice decisions of domestic tourists in Amsterdam?". To investigate this, three types of research have been used: mental maps in combination with a questionnaire, walk alongs and auto-photography.

Chapter 2 showed the importance of recognising the multidimensionality of the concept tourist familiarity. Seven types of tourist familiarity could be found (experiential, informational, proximate, self-described, educational, self-assured and expected familiarity) and relationships with image building have been made. However, the link between tourist familiarity and route choice behaviour of tourists has rarely been investigated.

By using the theory of individuals' cognitive decisions (chapter 3) as a theoretical umbrella over the tourist familiarity concepts, the deeply mental decisions of individuals can be better explained. These decisions on route choice behaviour take place in two phases: prior to the trip and during the trip. Prior to the trip, people's mental map has been created by using different types of tourist familiarity. Then, this mental map will be matched with reality and confirms or does not match with the original mental map. In the latter case new decisions have to be made in order to navigate themselves within the tourist destination. Three groups have been distinguished on route choice behaviour and familiarity: tourists who are largely familiar, partly familiar or largely unfamiliar with the tourist destination.

The mental map and walk along analysis shows that not every type of tourist familiarity affects the overall familiarity with Amsterdam's inner city: educational familiarity (reading novels, education about Amsterdam and watching movies or series) had no influence on the image and route choice behaviour of domestic tourists in Amsterdam's inner city. Moreover, the extent of importance differs per type. The extent of how familiar respondents think they are with Amsterdam's inner city (self-described familiarity) is the most important determinant for their total familiarity. The number of visits per year and the number of months ago of the last visitation (experiential familiarity) are also important determinants for their total familiarity. Somewhat less important are the connectedness felt (proximate familiarity) and safety felt (self-assured familiarity) in Amsterdam's inner city. Many respondents have ever used information (informational familiarity) to decide which route to take, although this happens not very often. Cosiness felt (expected familiarity) by individuals differ the least between the more familiar and the more unfamiliar tourists, because Amsterdam as a tourist destination is generally appreciated.

Because expected familiarity did not differ between the more familiar and the more unfamiliar tourists this type determines for many tourists why they choose to include a place or route in their walking route or not. Tourists generally know what they could expect at a certain place. This is in many cases caused by previous experiences, particularly for the more unfamiliar tourists and familiar

tourists searching for familiarity. They are searching for already known routes with which they are already familiar. Informational familiarity plays just a role in route choice decisions for familiar tourists who are searching for novel experiences which they have found prior to the trip. For the more unfamiliar tourists this type does not play any role because of habitual behaviour. Proximate familiarity is somewhat more important for the more familiar tourists because they modify their walking route due to emotionally connectedness felt at certain places. This is less the case for unfamiliar tourists, which have fewer connections with Amsterdam's inner city. Self-assured, self-described and educational familiarity have the least influence on route choice decisions of tourists. Finally, avoidance of routes has two causes: tourists' lack of willingness to visit new experiences and routes and familiar tourists' avoidance of already familiar routes because of over-familiarity.

So, tourist familiarity indeed affects the route choice behaviour of domestic tourists in Amsterdam. All seven types of tourist familiarity have their influence on how tourists experience their walking route and the extent of how familiar they are within this tourist destination.

This research contributes to a better understanding of domestic tourists' preferences on route choices within a tourist destination. To distinguish this target group in more familiar and more unfamiliar tourists, different policies can be made. For the more unfamiliar tourists it is important to keep the already familiar routes attractive and to improve the parts of the walking route where negative experiences have been encountered. By making their walking route a totally positive experience the more unfamiliar tourists keep coming to the tourist destination. In the example of Amsterdam's inner city, Damrak and Reguliersbreestraat are examples of streets with which tourists are already familiar in a negative way and may influence route choice behaviour.

For the more familiar tourists, who are searching for both novelty and familiarity, different things must be kept in mind. Novelty searchers need to encounter new experiences in unfamiliar areas. So, these tourists must be aware in a way so that they will visit these new routes or places. Attractive routes to those areas (for example De Jordaan, De Grachtengordel and De Wallen) and attractive routes within these areas will give them positive experiences. On the other hand, avoiding familiar places must be countered. A possibility to do this is to make these places (for example Damrak, Dam square and Kalverstraat) more attractive for these relatively familiar tourists searching for novelty. Renewal and change in the form of different activities or a different physical environment could increase the attractiveness of these places and could influence route choice behaviour of these tourists.

So, for a tourist destination it is necessary to find a balance between familiarity and unfamiliarity to keep it attractive. Too much familiarity could be a factor why the more familiar tourists avoid the tourist destination while too much unfamiliarity could be a factor why the more unfamiliar tourists avoid the tourist destination. Finding position on this continuum is an important task for policy makers of tourist destination.

In future studies it is needful to find out how tourist familiarity works in other places. Its influence may be different in somewhat less well-known and less visited cities. Second, a higher number of respondents could be used to give a better image of how tourists use tourist familiarity in their route choice behaviour. It could also be interesting to analyse how these outcomes differ between domestic and international visitors.

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Appendix 1 Mental map research and questionnaire

Master thesis John Jansen – Research on tourists’ route choice behaviour

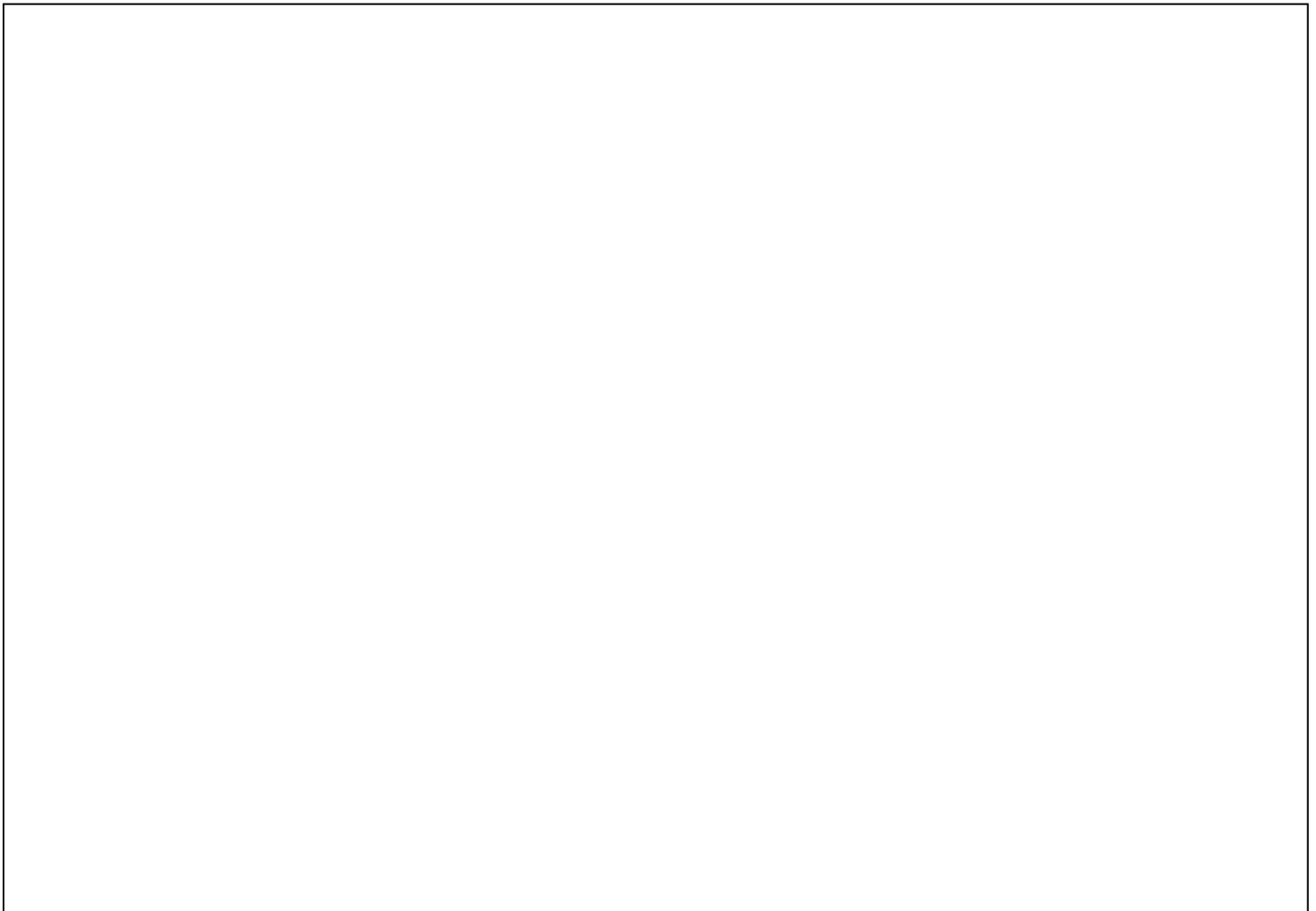
As a student human geography at Utrecht University I am doing research for my master thesis on route choice behaviour of domestic tourists in Amsterdam’s inner city and the role of familiar and unfamiliar elements in that behaviour. My research contributes to a better understanding of the use and perception of the inner city from the perspective of domestic tourists. I would really appreciate if you want to participate in this research. This research consists of two parts: drawing of a ‘mental map’ and filling in a questionnaire. It takes about fifteen minutes. Your information will be processed completely anonymous.

Part 1: Your mental map of Amsterdam’s inner city

First, I would like to ask you to draw a map of Amsterdam’s inner city. Here are some instructions for drawing your ‘mental map’:

- Draw a sketch of Amsterdam’s inner city on which all for you familiar elements are included.
- Give the elements the correct names wherever possible.
- Think of streets, buildings, attractions, intersections, areas.
- **The mental map is your image of Amsterdam’s inner city, so your map is always correct!**
- Good luck!

Drawing area:



Part 2: Questionnaire concerning your drawn mental map

Then I would ask you to fill in a questionnaire about Amsterdam’s inner city. Would you try to answer the following statements and questions? Tick the answer that best applies to you.

1. When I’m in Amsterdam’s inner city, I’m searching for familiar experiences.

Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

2. When I’m in Amsterdam’s inner city, I’m searching for novel experiences.

Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

3. I use information sources to determine my route within Amsterdam’s inner city.

Always Usually Often Sometimes Never

4. The route I’ll take within Amsterdam’s inner city is determined in my mind beforehand.

Always Usually Often Sometimes Never

5. The route I’ll take within Amsterdam’s inner city is completely determined beforehand.

Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

6. Which types of information sources do you use to determine your route within Amsterdam’s inner city?

the Internet Travel guide(s) Mouth-to-mouth information
 Newspapers/magazines Television/radio I don’t use information

7. How many times per year do you visit Amsterdam’s inner city?

..... Times

8. When have you visited Amsterdam’s inner city for the last time?

..... months ago

9. Do you have any friends or family living in Amsterdam’s inner city?

Yes No

10. I feel myself emotionally connected to Amsterdam’s inner city.

Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

11. I feel myself familiar with Amsterdam’s inner city.

Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

12. How many novels have you read about Amsterdam’s inner city?

None Several Much

13. Having read novels about Amsterdam’s inner city determines my image about Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

14. Having read novels about Amsterdam’s inner city determines the route I’ll take within Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

15. Have you had any education at school about Amsterdam’s inner city?

- No Few Much

16. Having had education about Amsterdam’s inner city determines my image about Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

17. Having had education about Amsterdam’s inner city determines the route I’ll take within Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

18. Have you seen any movies or series taking place in Amsterdam’s inner city?

- No Several Much

19. Having seen movies or series taking place in Amsterdam’s inner city determines my image about Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

20. Having seen movies or series taking place in Amsterdam’s inner city determines the route I’ll take within Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

21. I feel myself safe in Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

22. Are there any (physical and social) elements in Amsterdam’s inner city to with which you feel safe and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

23. These safe elements in Amsterdam’s inner city determine my route within Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

24. Are there any (physical and social) elements in Amsterdam’s inner city to with which you feel unsafe and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

25. These unsafe elements in Amsterdam’s inner city determine my route within Amsterdam’s inner city.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

26. In my opinion Amsterdam’s inner city is cosy.

- Totally no No Neutral Yes Totally yes

27. Which (physical and social) elements in Amsterdam’s inner city do you describe as cosy and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

28. What is your age?

.....

29. What is your gender?

- Male Female

This is the end of the research. Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix 2 Descriptives and significant correlation tables of the results

Figure 5.1: Number of elements drawn in the mental map per respondent

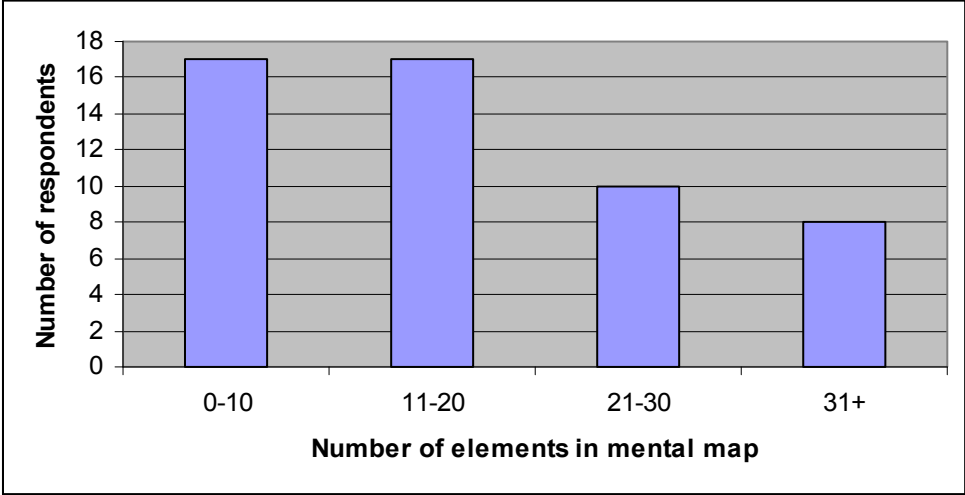


Figure 5.3: The extent of familiarity searching

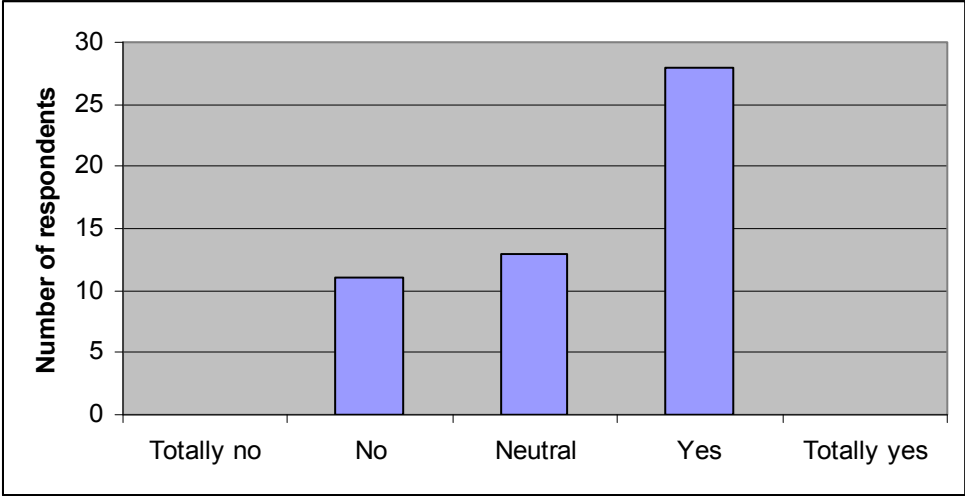


Figure 5.4: The extent of novelty searching

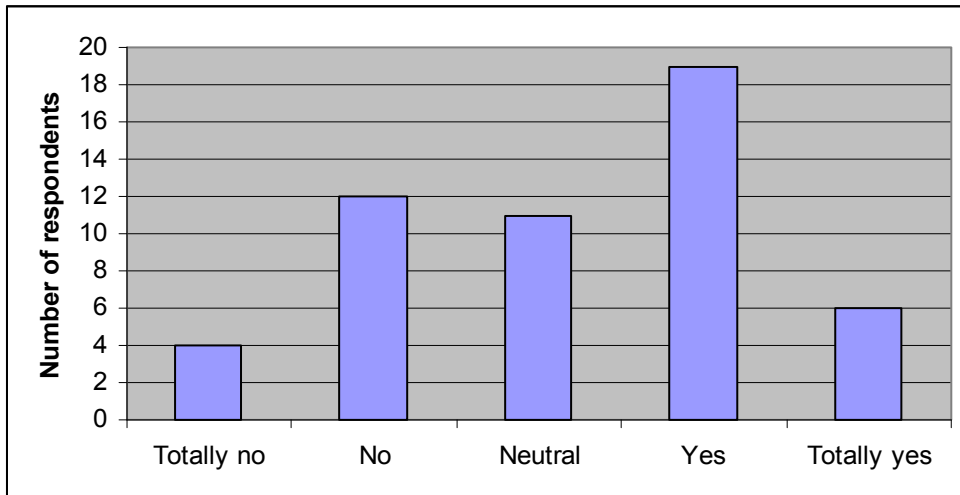


Table 5.2: Correlation between the extent of novelty searching and number of drawn elements

Correlations			TouristFam2	Elements
Spearman's rho	TouristFam2	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.482**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	52	52
	Elements	Correlation Coefficient	.482**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5.7: The extent of information used per respondent

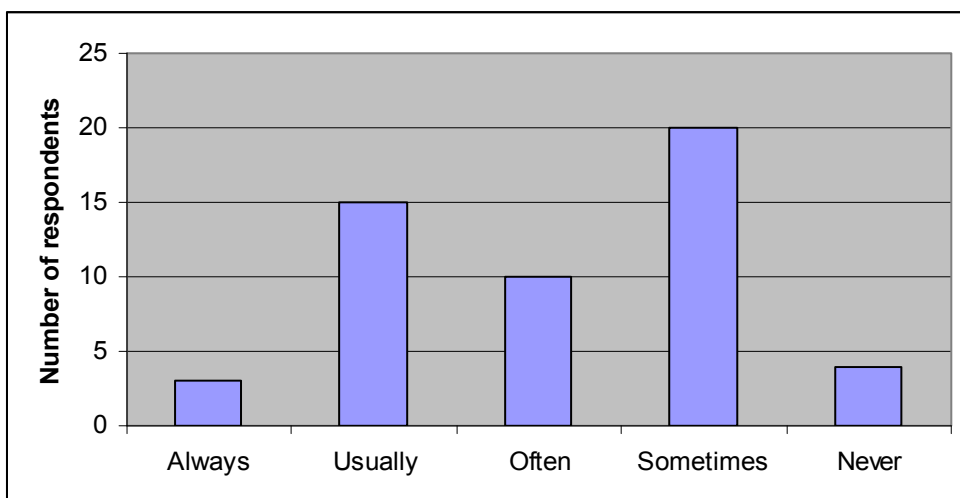


Table 5.3: Correlation between information used and number of drawn elements

Correlations			Informational1	Elements
Spearman's rho	Informational1	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.636**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	52	52
	Elements	Correlation Coefficient	-.636**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5.8: Information sources used by respondents

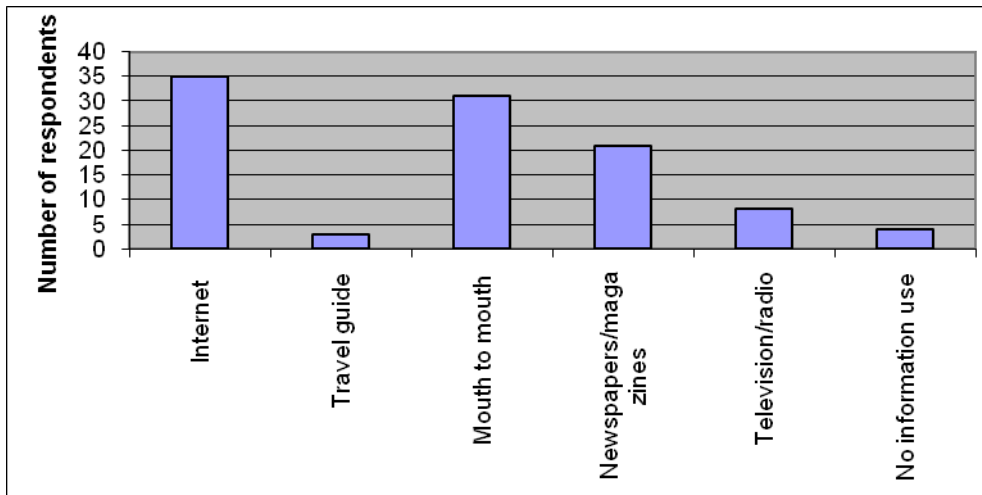


Figure 5.9: The extent of route determining prior to the trip

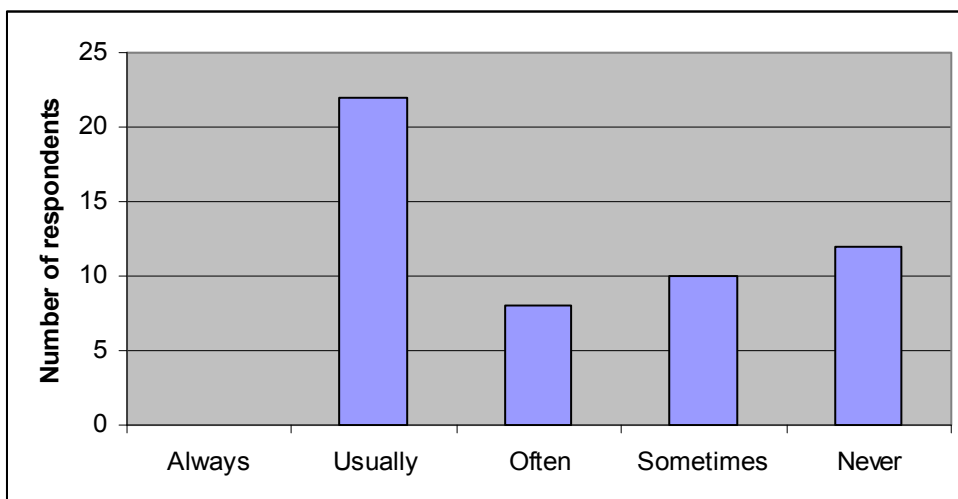


Table 5.4: Correlation between the extent of route determining beforehand and number of drawn elements

Correlations			Informational2	Elements
Spearman's rho	Informational2	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.566**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	52	52
	Elements	Correlation Coefficient	.566**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5.10: The extent of completeness of the route prior to the trip

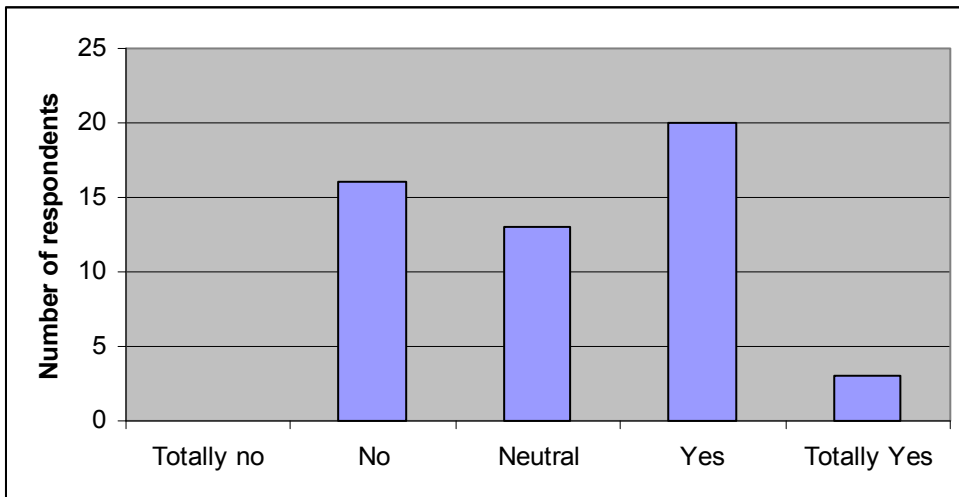


Figure 5.11: Number of visits per year

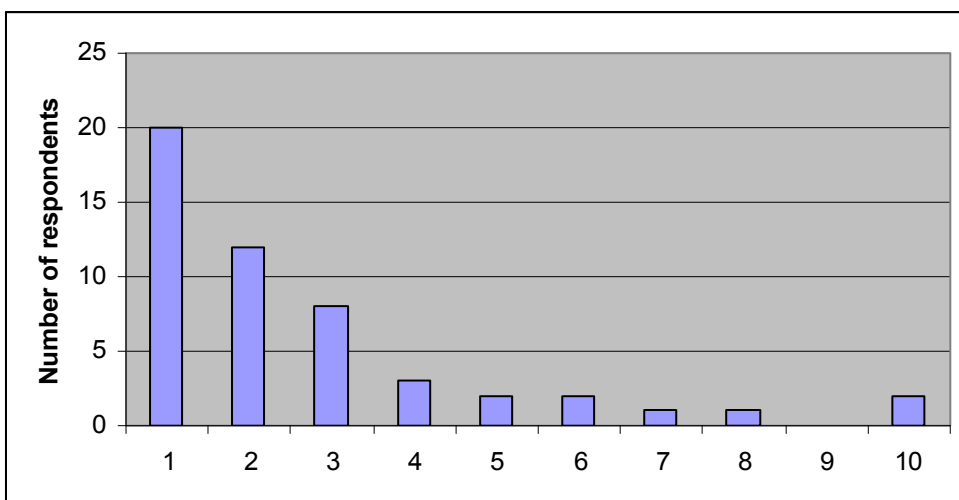


Table 5.5: Correlation between average annual number of visitations and number of drawn elements

		Experiential1	Elements
Experiential1	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.716**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	52	52
Elements	Pearson Correlation	.716**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5.12: Number of months ago of the last visitation

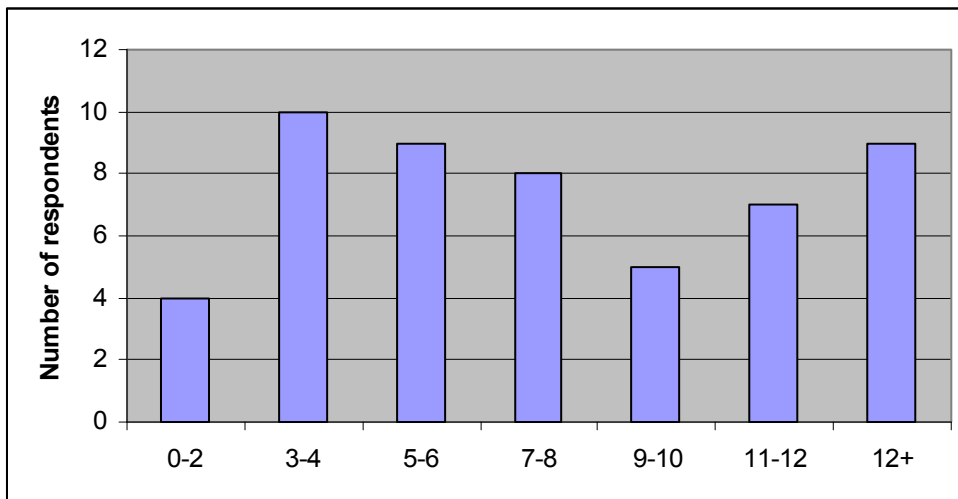


Table 5.6: Correlation between date of last visitation and number of drawn elements

		Experiential2	Elements
Experiential2	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.549**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	52	52
Elements	Pearson Correlation	-.549**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5.13: The extent of emotional connectedness with Amsterdam’s inner city

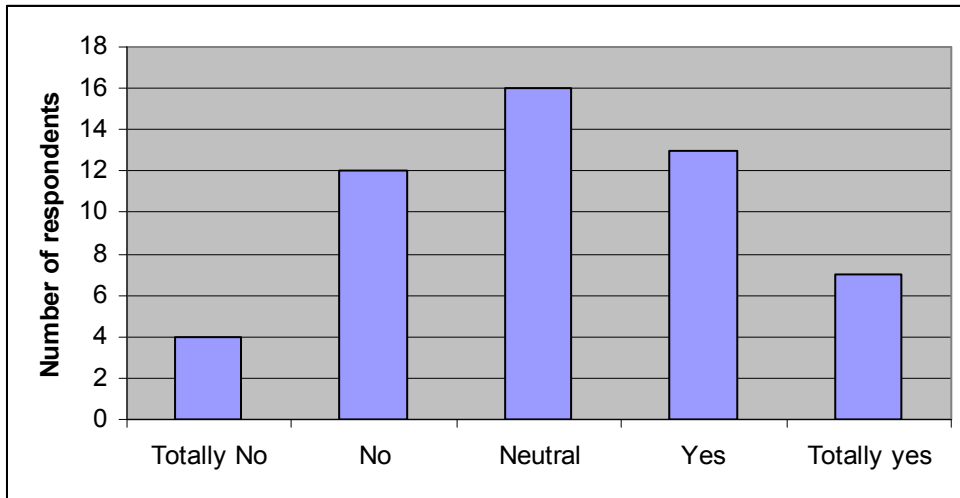


Table 5.7: Correlation between emotional connectedness felt and number of drawn elements

Correlations			Proximate2	Elements
Spearman's rho	Proximate2	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.686**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	52	52
Elements	Elements	Correlation Coefficient	.686**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5.14: The extent familiarity felt with Amsterdam’s inner city

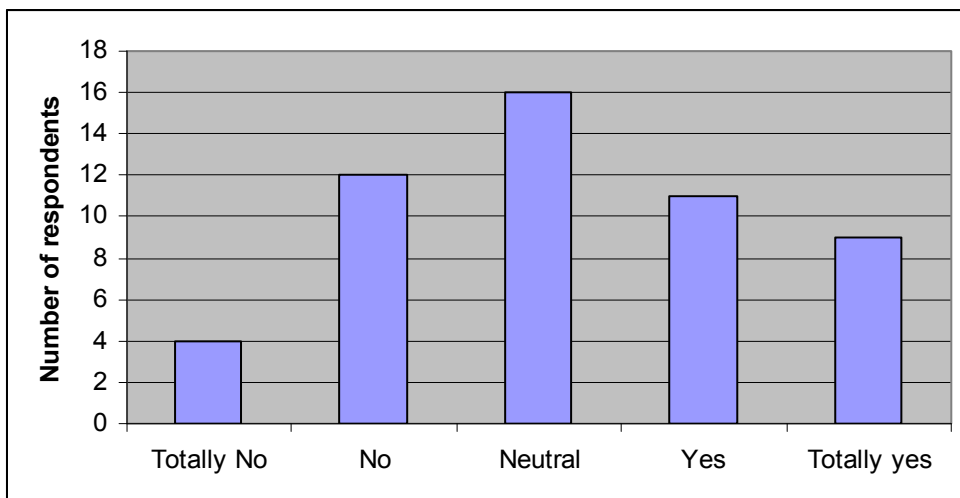


Table 5.8: Correlation between familiarity felt and number of drawn elements

Correlations			SelfDescribed1	Elements
Spearman's rho	SelfDescribed1	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.732**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	52	52
	Elements	Correlation Coefficient	.732**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5.15: The extent of formal and informal learning on Amsterdam’s inner city

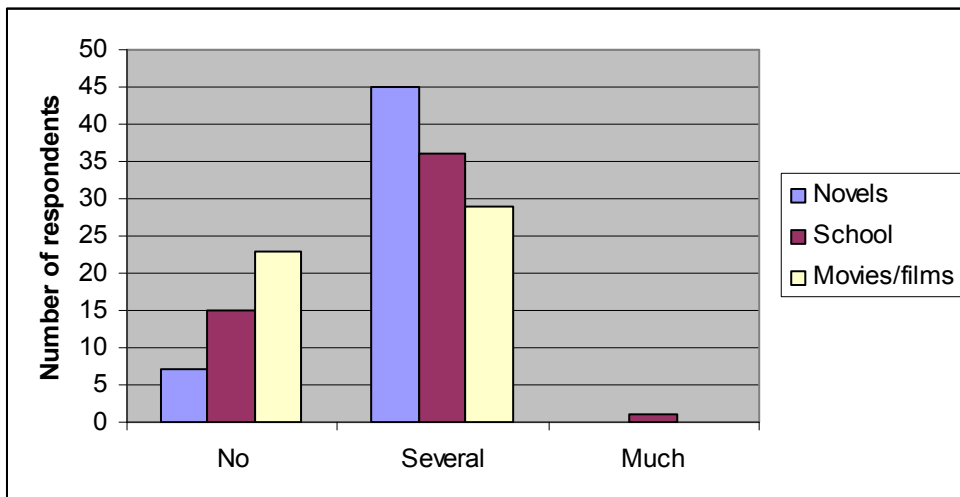


Figure 5.16: Influence of formal and informal learning on the image of Amsterdam’s inner city

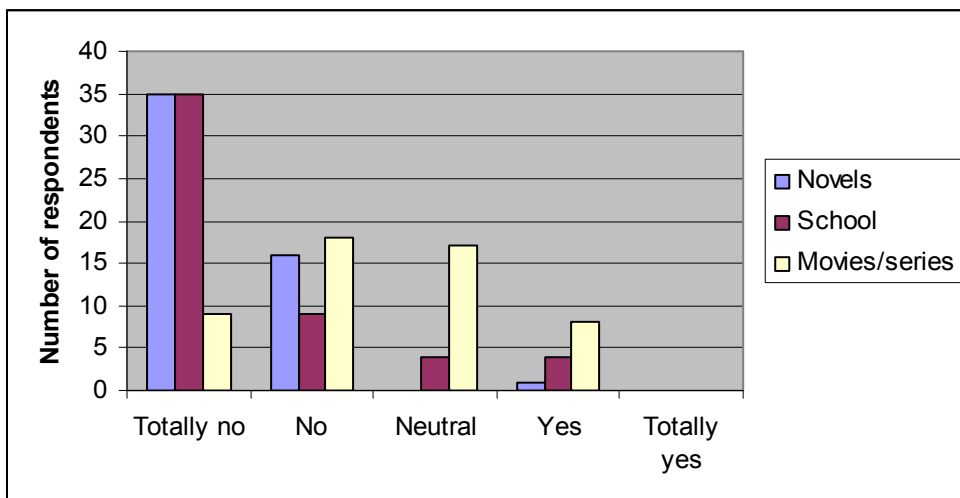


Figure 5.17: Influence of formal and informal learning on route choice behaviour within Amsterdam’s inner city

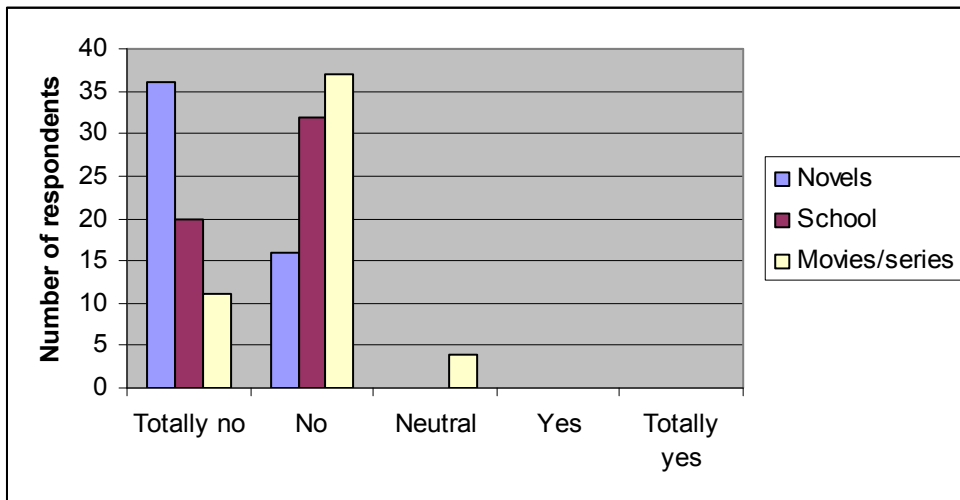


Figure 5.18: The extent of safety felt in Amsterdam’s inner city

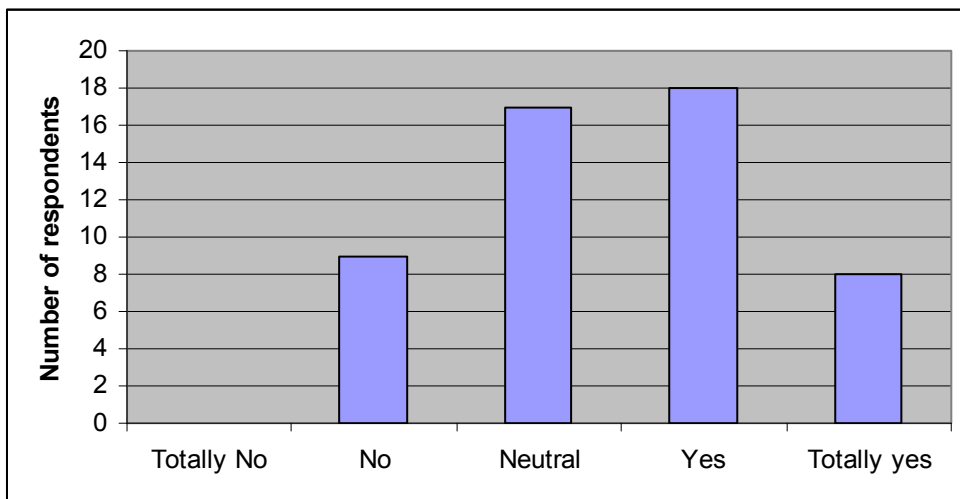


Table 5.9: Correlation between felt safety and number of elements drawn

Correlations			SelfAssured1	Elements
Spearman's rho	SelfAssured1	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.693**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	52	52
	Elements	Correlation Coefficient	.693**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Figure 5.19: The extent of cosiness felt in Amsterdam’s inner city

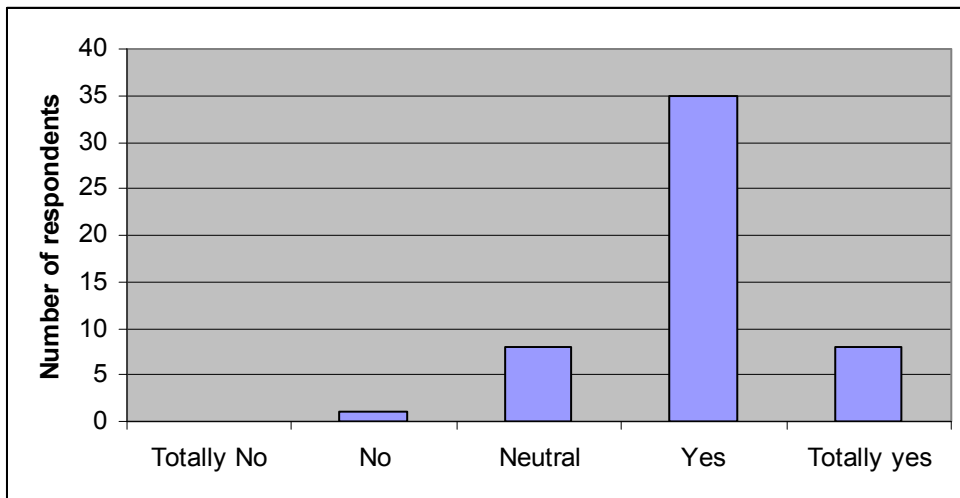


Table 5.10: Correlation between cosiness felt and the number of elements drawn

Correlations			Expected1	Elements
Spearman's rho	Expected1	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.491**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	52	52
	Elements	Correlation Coefficient	.491**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	52	52

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 3 Performed walk alongs

Figure 5.5: Performed walk alongs with unfamiliar tourists





Figure 5.6: Performed walk alongs with familiar tourists



Tourist familiarity in Amsterdam – Route choice behaviour of (un)familiar tourists within Amsterdam’s inner city

