Local and international perspectives on the historical sociolinguistics of Dutch

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Abstract
This paper introduces the field of historical sociolinguistics and gives a brief impression of the advances made during the last three decades. Furthermore, the relationship between local and international perspectives is stressed, while discussing the papers in the present Taal & Tongval issue. Finally, new research perspectives and the importance of using original archive sources come to the fore.

Keywords: historical sociolinguistics, corpora, standardisation, private letters, Dutch language history from below

1. Introduction

Since the Taal & Tongval journal was launched in 1949, its subtitle has changed a few times. After almost thirty years, the original subtitle “Tijdschrift voor de studie van de Nederlandse volks- en streektalen” [= Journal for the study of Dutch vernacular and regiolects/ dialects] was replaced by “Tijdschrift voor dialectologie” [= Journal for dialectology], a subtitle stressing the discipline instead of the research object. The research object again came to the fore in the “Tijdschrift voor taalvariatie” [= Journal for language variation], the subtitle change of 2001 which implied covering a larger field than only regional variation. In recent years this wider scope has become clear in the editorial statement, in which Taal & Tongval is presented as a journal devoted to the scientific study of all types of language variation in the Netherlands and Flanders, in neighbouring areas and in languages related to Dutch. This wider scope is also reflected in the present
Sociohistorical linguistic research of Dutch has been carried out over the years by two main research groups which complement each other in time and in the main type of research material. The Brussels research group (Vrije Universiteit Brussel), directed firstly by Roland Willemyns, later by Wim Vandenbussche, has a long and fruitful tradition of research on nineteenth-century, mainly (but not exclusively) administrative documents written in Flanders. The Leiden research group (Leiden University), directed by Marijke van der Wal, concentrates on ego-documents, private letters in particular, from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which are at the core of the Letters as Loot research programme. We, the invited organisers of the 2012 colloquium and editors of the present issue, have participated continuously in the international scholarly network of historical sociolinguists. We have witnessed the impressive advances in historical sociolinguistics, of which we will give a brief impression to inform researchers who are less familiar with the historical sociolinguistic field.

### 2. Advances in historical sociolinguistics

Three decades passed between the theoretical and methodological reflection by Suzanne Romaine in her *Socio-Historical Linguistics: Its Status and Methodology* (1982) and the publication of *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics* (2012) by Hernández-Campoy & Conde-Silvestre (eds). This highly recommended handbook gives an excellent overview of the methods, developments and achievements in the thriving discipline of historical sociolinguistics. Research on different types of variation has been conducted across various languages and various periods of time. We mention research of genre variation and the construction of multi-genre corpora such as the Helsinki *Corpus of English Texts*. Regional variation used to be dealt with by dialectology only, but was also incorporated in historical sociolinguistics (cf. Elspaß 2005). Research on social, gender and age variation was carried out in corpora enriched with metadata of the text writers, such as the Helsinki *Corpus of Early English Correspondence* and the Dutch *Letters as Loot* corpus.
Apart from Labovian research on groups of language users, individuals and their relations are at the core of social network analysis initiated by the Milroys and elaborated for historical research by Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade (Leiden University) and others. What the handbook also shows is the interdisciplinary character of historical sociolinguistics with its strong connection not only with modern sociolinguistics, but also with corpus linguistics, philology, dialectology, discourse studies, etc. (cf. Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2012: 27). Looking back, we see three decades of enormous productivity and challenging international research.

What are mostly considered as external characteristics of a paradigm, also apply to the field of historical sociolinguistics: researchers are indeed a visible group of scholars, sharing a similar scientific training, presenting research at specialist conferences and publishing in specialist journals. The Historical Sociolinguistic Network (HiSoN), which was launched by Stephan Elspaβ, Nils Langer, Joachim Scharloth and Wim Vandenbussche at the Language History from Below conference at the University of Bristol in 2005, has organised scientific training in the successful HiSoN Summer Schools for PhD students and other young researchers. HiSoN has stimulated many specialist international conferences, the most recent being the Touching the Past. (Ego-)documents in a historical and linguistic perspective conference at Leiden University in 2011 and the Historical Discourses on Language and Power conference at the University of Sheffield in 2014. Publications covering a wide range of languages and a time span of many centuries, appeared in various journals, and books were published by diverse publishers. The maturity of the discipline also becomes evident from new publication opportunities. Two book series by prestigious international publishers have been started: the Peter Lang series Historical Sociolinguistics. Studies on Language and Society in the Past under the editorship of Nils Langer, Stephan Elspaβ, Joseph Salmons and Wim Vandenbussche, and the John Benjamins Advances in Historical Sociolinguistics series under the editorship of Marijke van der Wal and Terttu Nevalainen. Apart from the internet journal Historical Sociolinguistics and Sociohistorical Linguistics, edited since 2000 by Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade, the new Journal of Historical Sociolinguistics in print will be launched by De Gruyter in 2015, under the editorship of Anita Auer, Catharina Peersman, Gijsbert Rutten and Rik Vosters.

It really is harvesting time for the historical sociolinguistics discipline and it is therefore also an excellent moment to show in this special issue how the historical sociolinguistic research of Dutch is embedded in the
international debate and how Dutch research contributes to these discussions and achievements.

3. Local and international perspectives

Two of the following papers, those by Trudgill and Joby, focus on the role of Dutch abroad, in particular in Britain; two others, one by Rutten & Van der Wal and one by Nobels, deal with Dutch in the Netherlands, while the paper by Lodge presents the comparative perspective of a French metropolis.

In *The role of Dutch in the development of East Anglian English*, Peter Trudgill (University of Agder) examines how Dutch speakers had a profound influence on the morphology of East Anglian English. This influence dates from a period of almost two centuries in which Norwich, the second largest city after London, hosted a large community of Flemish and Walloon immigrants, approximately 40% of its inhabitants. This made Norwich the scene of considerable language contact during many generations which, however, left hardly any French or Dutch traces in the local English at the lexical level. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this does not come as a surprise, since English natives were always in a majority, and there was no intergenerational break in transmission between parents and children. However, there is another, more fundamental morphological feature of the East Anglian dialect, i.e. third-person singular zero, which, as Trudgill convincingly demonstrates, is the result of French and Dutch linguistic influence, although in a much more indirect way. His detailed sociolinguistic analysis shows that the large minority of immigrants were able to introduce the simplified third-person singular zero feature into the East Anglian dialect by arriving at a time when the present tense verb system was already in a state of flux, with variability between the original *-th* form and the newer *-s* form. It was in a situation of three-way competition between the older *-th* form, the newer *-s* form and the foreigners’ zero form that the typologically simpler *-Ø* was successful in the late 16th century.

Immigrants from the Low Countries were found not only in East Anglia, but also in other regions of Britain. Chris Joby (Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul) gives an initial overview of the largely unknown use of Dutch in early modern Britain in his article *Een korte inleiding tot de sociolinguïstische geschiedenis van het Nederlands in vroegmodern Groot-Brittannië*. He distinguishes three groups of Dutch speakers or writers: immigrants and their offspring, temporary visitors from the Low Countries and Britons who learnt Dutch for various reasons. Their use of Dutch was related to the
private domain, to work and to other social contexts, of which the church was the major one. Joby’s inventory of the available Dutch sources leads to particular research questions and gives an impression of future research possibilities.

The metropolis as a cultural and linguistic melting pot and the locus of dialect contact was and is a fascinating habitat for linguists. In *Codification and reallocation in seventeenth-century Paris*, Anthony Lodge (University of St. Andrews) concentrates on both the process of codification and what was referred to by Trudgill (1986) as reallocation. Putting the process of codification in French within its broad sociolinguistic context, he clearly demonstrates that this process was conditioned by the social tensions endemic in a city the size of Paris. A grammarian such as Vaugelas is shown to reflect usage rather than setting the highest social value (*bon usage*) variants. He based his prescriptions on his own observations of real-life usage and these values thus emerged from a consensus directly or indirectly involving the whole community. The usefulness of Vaugelas’ work for the readers of his *Remarques* was that it informed them about the social value ascribed to sensitive sociolinguistic variables and about the place to which each belonged within the socio-stylistic spectrum. The development in the speech of the Paris metropolis is traditionally considered in terms of top-down standardisation, but Lodge preferably sees it in terms of dialect mixing and koineisation. Many of Vaugelas’ *Remarques* are shown to reflect one of the processes involved in koineisation labelled as ‘reallocation of variants’: the community accommodates linguistic variants left over from earlier instances of dialect contact within its overall scheme of socio-stylistic variation.

The papers by Nobels and by Rutten & Van der Wal examine the *Letters as Loot* corpus of Dutch private letters from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, confiscated by the English during times of warfare.

In *Small but tough. Diminutive suffixes in seventeenth-century Dutch private letters*, Judith Nobels examines different diminutive suffixes and their many variants from both a regional and a social perspective. To be able to conduct this research, she also addresses the problem of spelling forms that obscure the difference between the phonological types of the suffixes [i] and [jə], the present-day substandard and standard diminutives respectively. While according to traditional Dutch language history the diminutive suffix [i] occurred for the first time in the spoken Dutch of the seventeenth century, the data from the *Letters as Loot* corpus show that the [i] suffix is found in seventeenth-century writings, and is even the most frequently used variant. In terms of region, the [i] suffix appears to be most
strongly linked to North Holland and in particular to the city of Amsterdam, while in a social respect, the [i] variant is most popular with women and members of the lower social classes. Nobels also demonstrates that the palatalised variants (present-day standard suffix [ə]) spread from North Holland southwards to Zeeland, with South Holland as a clear transitional region. In Zeeland, the original [kə] suffix remained popular. Making use of new material on ‘language history from below’ thus appears to shed new light on the rise, spread and use of diminutives.

In *Change, contact and conventions in the history of Dutch*, Gijsbert Rutten and Marijke van der Wal (both Leiden University) examine phonological and morpho-syntactic phenomena of variation and change in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch, reviewing the importance of two types of explanation: dialect contact and supralocalisation. In their first case study on long e’s in Zeeland they discuss the degree to which ego-documents such as the confiscated letters resemble the contemporary spoken language. Although particular seventeenth-century results appear to show an orthographic distinction in accordance with the phonemic distinction, this does not prove a straightforward representation of local dialect phonology in spelling. The strong supralocal writing tradition was based on the same phonological difference, and, moreover, morphological and syllabic writing systems were increasingly found; these findings stress the importance of writing conventions and supralocalisation. In their second case study they evaluate to what extent language change can be shown to result from dialect contact, choosing the change of bipartite to single negation which has been claimed to be promoted by dialect contact. If dialect contact played a decisive role, the metropolis of Amsterdam, which attracted by far the most immigrants, would have been progressive compared to the other regions. However, the results of the *Letters as Loot* corpus show a steady pattern of regional north-to-south diffusion: Amsterdam is less progressive than North Holland, and more progressive than South Holland. Thus the *Letters as Loot* sociohistorical linguistic approach not only gives a view of linguistic change, but also clarifies the value of particular explanations.

4. Conclusions and perspectives

When taking stock of the state of sociohistorical linguistics of Dutch, both new research perspectives and further opportunities for international collaboration come to the fore.
The fruitful collaboration between scholars (including Nobels, Rutten, Simons and Vosters) describing the social stratification of Northern and Southern varieties of Dutch from the seventeenth century onwards, has repeatedly produced results that favour a fundamentally new approach towards Modern Dutch language history proper. The traditional image of a divided linguistic heritage from 1585 onwards has percolated into virtually all reference works on Dutch language historiography, to the point where the development of ‘Dutch in Flanders’ from the seventeenth century onwards is treated as a footnote in a grand narrative of Hollandic standardisation. Yet, the linguistic reality found in the archive sources used by the editors of the present issue and their collaborators strongly suggests that there was a continuous flow of on-going contact between Northern and Southern Dutch, defying the view of isolated linguistic developments in both parts of the language community. It is our impression and conviction that much is to be gained from an integrated history of Modern Dutch (post 1600), in which the description and analysis of original texts from all social strata and functional domains is given preference over the traditional imagery of Northern linguistic uniformity and Southern decay (and other myths related to standard language ideologies).

Equally intriguing is the matter of linguistic contact between local varieties of Dutch and other languages in the context of migration during and after the Early Modern period. Dutch in England, as discussed by Trudgill and Joby in this issue, is a case in point, but the record of detailed historical descriptions of Dutch ‘extra muros’ remains bleak. While we know that foreign archives preserve an abundance of both ego-documents and other sources written in Dutch and testifying to the presence of migrants and/or colonisers, the systematic compilation of corpora with Auswandererbriefe remains one of the foremost desiderata for the study of Dutch language contact and language change from the sixteenth century onwards.

The role of the metropolis as the locus for language change – and the accompanying discussion on the Stadt-Land opposition in sociolinguistic developments – was not entirely neglected in recent work on the social history of Dutch. Given the increasing digital access to large collections of historical language data, however, Lodge’s example of a sociolinguistic history of Paris could serve as a blueprint for similar studies of the linguistic legacy of Dutch and Flemish ‘metropolitan’ towns. Such an endeavour could facilitate a Dutch sub-chapter in the budding attempts to create a European forum for the integration of historical linguistics and sociolinguistics in the study of language in the metropolis, currently led by scholars from the LANCHART team at University of Copenhagen.
It is worth pointing out, finally, that the current momentum of ‘harvesting time’ for historical sociolinguistics also allows for an assessment of the international dimension of two decades of research on Dutch language history from below. Various on-going projects beyond the Dutch language area have referred explicitly to this young tradition from the Low Countries when designing research plans on pluricentricity, language contact and sociolinguistic stratification. This includes work as diverse as Icelandic projects on ‘language change and linguistic variation in nineteenth-century Icelandic and the emergence of a national standard’, a Finnish research cluster on ‘reading and writing from below: toward a new social history of literacy in the Nordic sphere during the long nineteenth century’, and even British work on ‘the history of the French language in Russia’.

What transpires in these neighbouring projects as one of the fundamental keystones of the work done in Leiden, Brussels and elsewhere, is the constant concern with ‘going back to the sources’, and with giving preference to linguistic reality over generally accepted accounts of language history. This approach has allowed for a careful reappraisal of a language history including writers from all layers of society, true to the motto De tael is gansch het Volk (Prudens van Duyssche) which hovers over the Academy hall in Ghent in which the Taal & Tongval colloquia are held and where the contributions in this issue were first presented.

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Note

1. At the one-day Taal & Tongval colloquium, papers were given by Peter Trudgill, Chris Joby, Anthony Lodge, Gijsbert Rutten, Rik Vosters and Jacques van Keymeulen. The present issue comprises four of these papers and an additional contribution by Judith Nobels.

References


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The role of Dutch in the development of East Anglian English

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Abstract
Dutch speakers may or may not have contributed a certain amount of lexical material to modern East Anglian dialects. There is a much stronger case to be made, however, for arguing that Dutch speakers did have a rather profound influence on the morphology of East Anglian English, dating from the time when almost forty percent of the population of the capital of East Anglia, Norwich, were refugees from the Low Countries. That influence was indirect, and mediated through mechanisms of linguistic change associated with language contact.

Key words: Dutch, Norwich, immigrants, language contact, dialect contact, simplification, third-person singular zero

1. Introduction

Today, the greater urban area of the city of Norwich in eastern England has a population of about 250,000, and is of a medium size compared to other cities in the country. In mediaeval times, however, and up until the 18th century, Norwich was the largest city in England apart from London, with the possible exception from time to time of Bristol and York. Green & Young (1964) cite a population figure for Norwich in 1662 of 29,200 and say that “Norwich was then probably the largest provincial town in England.”
2. Dutch in Norwich

Even eight decades earlier, in 1579, the population of Norwich had been as high as 16,236; the focus of this paper is on the remarkable fact that, of that sixteen-odd thousand, approximately 6,000 were immigrants. Only just over 60% of the population of the city in the last quarter of the 16th century were native-speakers of English.

The large immigrant community, which formed well over one third of the population of Norwich, was comprised of the largest settlement of Flemish and Walloon Protestant refugees anywhere in England. They had fled across the North Sea from the Low Countries to escape from Spanish persecution which, under the Duke of Alba, had been gradually increasing from 1567 onwards. The Spanish overlords there had executed many prominent people, confiscated estates, and ruthlessly suppressed any opposition to their rule; and there was considerable persecution of Protestants.

These Norwich refugees were following in the footsteps of a slightly earlier and much smaller group of immigrants from the Low Countries who had come by invitation. In 1565, the mayor and aldermen of Norwich had asked 30 “Dutchmen” and their families to settle in Norwich. These newcomers were weavers and other textile workers who were invited because it was felt that the economically highly important Norwich textile industry had been lagging behind in terms of technology, design and skills. These “Dutchmen” were in fact 24 Flemish and 10 Walloon master textile workers who, it was hoped, would help to modernise the industry in the city (Rickwood, 1984; Vane, 1984).

The newer and much bigger wave of refugees were themselves also predominantly textile workers, but they also included ministers, doctors, teachers, merchants and craftsmen. Our interest here, however, lies in the fact that these 6,000 or so incomers were native speakers of Dutch (Flemish) and, to a lesser extent, French (Walloon). They came mostly from Flanders and Brabant, but there were also many Walloons from Armentieres, Namur and Valenciennes (which at this period lay north of the border with France), plus some German speakers from Lorraine.

It is attested that this sudden influx of refugees caused very considerable overcrowding. It could hardly be otherwise. The population of the city had, after all, increased by about 60% in a rather short space of time. The very high proportion in the city of foreigners – “Strangers” as they were called in Early Modern English – did lead to a certain amount of inter-communal friction, and there was at least one attempted revolt against them; but generally the absorption of a very large number of refugees into the population
was relatively problem-free, perhaps because the economic benefits of the reinvigorated textile trade were eventually rather obvious.

Thus large numbers of English speakers, Dutch speakers, and French speakers found themselves living in very close proximity to one another: Norwich at the turn of the 16th century was the scene of very considerable language contact indeed. And this situation must have continued for many generations. The Dutch and French languages survived in Norwich for many decades before complete language shift to English took place. Moens, for example, (1888) writes that “in the first half of the 17th century, as much Dutch and French was spoken in Norwich as English”. That would seem to be something of an exaggeration, given that the Strangers were always outnumbered by the indigenous anglophone majority. But the first books ever to be printed in Norwich were in Dutch and, as Joby (2012) has described, many documents from the period, written in Dutch, are preserved today in the Norfolk Record Office. Official orders for the conduct of the “Strangers” in Norwich were also written in French in 1659.

Eventually, “slowly but inevitably the Strangers became merged into the surrounding population and the community lost its separate identity” (Ketton-Cremer 1957). By 1742 the congregations attending church services in Dutch and French were apparently small, and their churches in poor shape. And although church services in Dutch and French continued for much longer than that, it appears that they gradually became simply liturgical languages which no one spoke in their everyday lives, although the church services do suggest that some sense of a separate ethnic identity had been preserved.

The best interpretation of the language shift process would seem to be that the Dutch and French languages, having arrived in Norwich in the period 1565-1570, finally died out of use as native languages in the city some time during the 1700s. This suggests that Norwich was a significantly trilingual city for 150-200 years or so, maybe six to eight generations. If this was the case, then it is highly likely that during this period a good number of people from indigenous Norwich families acquired the ability to speak Dutch (even if not French), as happened elsewhere in England (Joby, forthcoming), not least because of intermarriage and trading activities.

3. Language Contact: Lexis

From a sociolinguistic perspective, we can note that language contact studies show that long-term, community-wide language contact of this type,
lasting for several generations, can often have linguistic consequences. If the
demography and other sociolinguistic conditions are right (Trudgill, 2011),
a large minority language, while subject in the end to language shift to the
majority language, can leave some linguistic traces behind as substratum
effects. One might expect, therefore, to see some signs of the influence of
Dutch – and perhaps even French – on the local dialect of Norwich and
its region. But what is the evidence? Can we locate any traces of such a
substratum effect?

The truth would appear to be that these many generations of language
contact have left behind very little influence on the local English. And
there is really no surprise here, because of the particular conditions which
obtained. Well over one-third of the population of Norwich may have been
native speakers of languages other than English. But, as I have written in
Trudgill (2011), the linguistic consequences of language contact depend very
much on the sociolinguistic nature of that contact. It is in fact absolutely
no surprise if the kind of scenario that we witness in Norwich from, say,
1570–1750 leaves few or no traces. After all, in a situation where a continuous
native-speaker tradition is maintained (Thomason & Kaufmann 1988), why
would there be any consequences?

In situations where native speakers transmit their language from one
generation to another in the normal way, without interruption, the fact that
there may also be non-natives around who are speaking second-language
versions of the language will normally have no effect on this transmission
whatsoever. It would be no surprise if the English spoken by native speakers
of Flemish and Walloon was simplified and otherwise influenced by their
native languages – undoubtedly it was. And if the demography is right,
natives can and will accommodate, to different extents, to non-natives.
But in 17th-century Norwich the demography was not right. The natives
were always in a majority, and there was no intergenerational break in
transmission between parents and children.

As far as the actual linguistic data is concerned, it has been argued that
the Walloons, the French-speaking Strangers, are responsible for the local
dialect word *lucam* ‘attic window’, assumed to be from the French *lucarne*
’skylight, garret window’ (Trudgill, 2003). The English Dialect Dictionary
(EDD) does confirm that this item is specifically a Norfolk and Suffolk
word. And it is particularly relevant that the word refers to the type of
long windows in the upper storeys of buildings that weavers used to sit and
work at, in order to get the best light. On the other hand, the same word
in the form of *lucarne* appears in most English language dictionaries, and
is therefore not necessarily entirely East Anglian. In any case, no other
examples of Walloon influence on East Anglian English have been proposed, to my knowledge.

If we now turn to Dutch/Flemish, we can note that, while the lexical contribution of Dutch to Standard English is nothing like that of French, it is reasonably well established as being of some importance. The loan words involved tend to fall into a limited number of distinct semantic fields. It is not surprising, given the maritime trading connections between the Low Countries and Britain, that there are numerous words of nautical origin:

*bluff, boom, buoy, cruise, deck, dock, drill, freebooter, iceberg, keelhaul, leak, morass, pump, skipper, sloop, smack, smelt, smuggle, yacht.*

There are other words which are probably or possibly trade related:

*to bluff, brandy, bundle.*

There are a few, later words having to do with painting:

*etch, easel, landscape, sketch,*

and others of no particular provenance:

*cackle, frolic, grab, offal, roster, skate, slurp.*

The additional and particular influence of Dutch/Flemish vocabulary on the English of Norwich is harder to determine, for the obvious reason that Dutch and English are closely related languages, both descended from West Germanic. Resemblances between Dutch and forms of English are therefore most usually due not to the influence of Dutch on English, or vice versa, but to their common origin. Nevertheless, when we find English words that resemble Dutch and that are found *only or mainly* in East Anglia, then it is worth considering, first, whether or not they derive from close contact across the North Sea: Pettersson (1994) has shown that there are more words of Dutch and/or Low German origin in English dialects than in Standard English, as revealed by her study of the Survey of English Dialects materials, and that the areas with the largest number of such words are Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Essex. She suggests that “this is natural since the Dutch came across the North Sea and primarily settled in the areas in which they first landed”. A second possibility is that they originated from the Flemish speakers who arrived with the Norman conquest, or
from the Flemish weavers who arrived in the 14th century. And the final and most likely possibility is that they derive from the massive numbers of Dutch-speaking Strangers who arrived in Norwich in the 16th century. In this scenario, the geolinguistic assumption would be that Dutch words which first arrived in Norwich then diffused, in the familiar pattern of the diffusion of linguistic innovations outwards from urban central places, to cover much or all of the area dominated by Norwich as the main urban centre, namely East Anglia.

One phenomenon which is widely accepted as being the result of language contact between Norfolk English and the Dutch of the Strangers is the presence in Norwich and other Norfolk towns of open areas which are not called squares, as they would be elsewhere, but plains. This seems rather uncontroversially to have come from Dutch plein: in Norwich there is Bank Plain, St Andrews Plain, St George’s Plain, St Giles Plain and several more. This naming tradition is continued to the present day, albeit somewhat self-consciously, in new-build areas in the city.

Other Norfolk dialect words which have been suggested (Trudgill, 2003) as being of Dutch origin include the following:

Dwile ‘floorcloth’ seems rather obviously to come from Dutch dweil, which has the same meaning. The EDD shows this word as being confined to the dialects of Norfolk and Suffolk, apart from one reference to Cambridgeshire.

Crowd ‘to push, as of a wheelbarrow or bicycle’ may very likely have come from Dutch kruien ‘to push a wheelbarrow’. The EDD, which also refers to pushing ‘as of a wheelbarrow’, as in “just crowd that barrer here”, once again has references almost exclusively from Norfolk and Suffolk.

But other East Anglian words (Trudgill, 2003) which have been suggested as being due to 17th-century Norwich Dutch are much more doubtful:

Deek, meaning ‘dyke, ditch’, could be from Dutch dijk. It is shown in the EDD as a variant of dike, but it is given as occurring in Lincolnshire and Kent as well as East Anglia. This makes it less like to be a loan due to the Flemish Strangers.

Fye out ‘clean up’ may be connected to Dutch vegen ‘to sweep’. Fye is purely East Anglian, according to the EDD, but a problem for the Flemish-origin hypothesis is that the EDD lists a similar form fay or feigh which occurred
very widely with a similar meaning in 19th-century dialects in many other parts of England.

_Foisty_ ‘mouldy, musty’ is basically the same word as _fusty_, and may derive from Dutch _fust_ ‘cask’; but this is also the same word as French _fût_, Old French _fust_. The EDD has no entry for this word.

_Dwainy_ ‘weak, sickly.’ There was an Old English word _dwinan_ meaning ‘to waste away’ which became _to dwine_ in Middle English. This form survived in regional dialects in many parts of the country (see EDD), and survives in English generally in the form of _dwindle_. But the form _dwain(y)_ is, according to the EDD, confined to Norfolk and Suffolk and may perhaps be from, or influenced by, a related early Dutch word _dwijnen_ ‘to vanish’.

_Hake_ ‘hook over a cooking fire, pothook’ may possibly also be Dutch. The word _hook_ derives from Old English _hoc_ ‘hook’. _Hake_, on the other hand, comes from the related Old Norse word _haki_, also meaning ‘hook’, and/or from the Dutch word for ‘hook’ _haak_. According to the EDD, the ‘hook over a cooking fire’ meaning is confined to Norfolk and Suffolk.

4. **Language Contact: Morphology**

It has to be conceded, then, that, as predicted above, the Dutch and French languages of the Strangers have left hardly any traces on the dialects of East Anglia. However, there is another, more fundamental feature of the East Anglian dialect which, I argue, actually is the result of French and Dutch linguistic influence, although in a much more indirect way. And the reason why, against all sociolinguistic expectations, this influence did take effect requires more detailed sociolinguistic analysis.

The feature concerns present-tense verb forms. “Third-person singular zero” (Trudgill, 1974) is a well-known feature of the traditional dialects of Norfolk, Suffolk and northern Essex (Trudgill, 1990). In these dialects, forms such as the following are usual:

- She like it very much
- He do that very well
- That taste very nice.
In Norfolk and Suffolk, at least, the feature also continues to be very much a feature of modern dialects. The publications of the Survey of English Dialects show zero-marking of third-person singulars in northern Essex, all of Suffolk, and all of Norfolk except the Fens (Trudgill, 1990; 2001).

Many other dialects of English demonstrate exactly the same phenomenon but, interestingly, they are all spoken outside the British Isles. It is well known that African American English in the United States has this feature, as do the English-based creoles and post-creoles of the Caribbean and West Africa. Other varieties of which this is true include the South Pacific pidgin and creole varieties Tok Pisin, Bislama, and Solomon Island Pidgin; the language spoken on Pitcairn and its sister language on Norfolk Island; and the English of Saint Helena.

What all these non-British Isles varieties have in common is that they share a history of considerable language contact. Their speakers are all descended from forebears who learnt English as a second language. Third-person zero is also found in the institutionalised basilectal second-language varieties of Singapore, Malaya, and elsewhere, where it is the speakers themselves who have learnt English as a second language. Adult language contact is well known to lead to simplification and regularisation (Trudgill, 2011), and loss of this irregular -s in these varieties is therefore not surprising. But how do we explain the regularisation that occurred in East Anglian English, as the only British Isles variety which demonstrates third-person singular zero? The fact that East Anglian dialects share this grammatical feature with the overseas contact varieties does throw up a possibility: can it be that East Anglian third-person singular zero is also a contact feature?

To investigate this possibility, we have to examine the chronology of the development of this East Anglian verb form. Up until to the 15th century, East Anglian English shared the fully inflected present-tense verb systems of other southern Middle English dialects; and the Paston letters, written in colloquial style by natives of the county of Norfolk, show consistent usage of third-person -th up until 1509. As is well known, this ending was found throughout the south of England, while the ending in the North was -(e)s. Then, for reasons that are not too well understood, the originally northern form began to spread southwards. Baugh and Cable (1993) claim that the spread of -es forms to the south is “difficult to account for, since it is not easy to see how the Northern dialect, where they were normal, could have exerted so important an influence on the language of London and the South”. Immigration is one obvious possibility.

The spread was gradual geographically and socially. The northern innovation affected lower-class and colloquial speech first, and we know
that in London there was a long period when there was variability. It is often pointed out that Shakespeare was able to use both \textit{-th} and \textit{-s} forms to indicate social status of speakers, but also to help meet the needs of poetic metre. According to Baugh and Cable, \textit{-s} forms predominated in the London area by 1600, and the diffusion continued from there: forms in \textit{-th} still occurred in the Traditional Dialects of Devon and Cornwall until the early years of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century (Wakelin, 1972).

As far as East Anglia is concerned, we can assume that the new \textit{-s} forms arrived in Norwich also before 1600. But there is evidence that zero has been the norm since at least 1700. The Rev. R. Forby, who was born c. 1732 and died in 1825, set out in his posthumous book (1830) to describe the East Anglian dialect “as it existed in the last twenty years of the eighteenth century”, i.e. from 1780-1800, so his very oldest speakers would have been born around 1710. He wrote: “we so stubbornly maintain that the first and third persons are of the very same forms ‘I love, he love’” (1830: 142). And in fact it is probable that the \textit{-Ø} ending was typical of Norfolk English well before that: a number of zero forms occur in the colloquial Norfolk correspondence of Katherine Paston written in the period 1603-1627 (Hughey 1941).

If we then want to consider a contact-based explanation for why modern East Anglian dialects have zero, then we must consider what sociolinguistic factors were operative in the two hundred year period between approximately 1510, when the Paston letters show \textit{-th} in Norfolk, and 1710, when Forby shows that \textit{-Ø} had established itself in local Norfolk speech rather than the \textit{-s} which had taken over in London. And we have already noted a sociolinguistically very important event which happened during precisely that period: the arrival of the Strangers in the capital of East Anglia. This suggests rather strongly that third-person singular zero in East Anglia is no different in origin from the same grammatical feature in Englishes elsewhere in the world.

We can argue that East Anglian third-person singular present-tense zero is a contact feature which developed as a result of the presence in Norwich of large numbers of non-native speakers of English who, in using the language as a lingua franca amongst themselves and with the native population, failed to master, as non-native speakers often do, the irregular person-marking system of English verbs. This feature then spread out from Norwich as the dominant central place, in the well-known pattern of the geographical diffusion of linguistic innovations (see Trudgill 1983: 57-87), until it covered the whole area of East Anglia.

There is, however, a serious problem with this hypothesis to do with the fact, as asserted above, that the sociolinguistic scenario was not right
for significant substratum effects to occur. And why would this language contact situation result in the simplification of the present-tense verb system when it had no other grammatical consequences, and hardly any lexical consequences either, as we have seen?

The most important explanatory factor for this development in East Anglia was precisely the timing of the arrival of the Strangers in Norwich (Trudgill, 1996). At all times, as we have seen, in spite of the large numbers of foreigners in the city, native speakers outnumbered non-natives by at least two to one. It is therefore apparent that, under normal circumstances, the zero form would never have won out. Circumstances were not normal, however. The point is that the Strangers arrived in Norwich from the Low Countries at more or less the same time as the new -s form arrived from the Midlands of England via London. It was in a situation of three-way competition between the older -th form, the newer -s form and the foreigners’ zero form that the typologically simpler -Ø was successful, leading to the situation that we find in the dialect today. That is, the immigrants arrived exactly at the time when the present-tense verb system was in a state of flux in Norwich, with considerable variability between -th and -s forms. In other words, at any other time in history, competition between minority non-native zero forms and majority native forms with third-person marking would not have led to the replacement of native by non-native forms.

In the late 16th century, however, competition was not between zero and a single native form. On the contrary, competition was between -Ø and -th and -s. This was a much more equal competition, and one in which the non-native form had the advantage of linguistic naturalness and simplicity. And as far as this feature was concerned, the non-natives were not outnumbered 2-to-1. The English of the native population was variable in usage between -s and -th endings, and there must have been a crucial decade or so when each of the three forms was employed by approximately one-third of the population, with the indigenous citizens divided half and half as to their usage of the older and newer forms. The originally non-native form then eventually won out, because of its linguistic naturalness and regularity.

5. Conclusion

I suggest, then, that Dutch speakers had a really rather profound influence on East Anglian English, even if the Dutch language itself did not. The explanation for the absence of third-person singular -s in East Anglian English is similar to the explanation for its absence from other varieties,
including African American English. The explanation lies in language contact. The very large minority of Flemish and Walloon non-native speakers of English may have had very little lexical influence on Norwich. But they did, indirectly, have an influence with much more fundamental grammatical consequences.

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Een inleiding tot de sociolinguïstische geschiedenis van het Nederlands in vroegmodern Groot-Brittannië

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Abstract
This article provides an initial overview of a subject which has to date received little academic attention: the use of Dutch in early modern Britain. The picture that emerges is that the Dutch language was used in a variety of social contexts, including the church, work, the home and at court, in particular that of the Anglo-Dutch King, William III. Although for most of those who used the language in Britain Dutch was their mother tongue, there were also Britons who learnt the language, such as those who married Dutch-speakers; merchants who traded with the Dutch and other Britons; such as the famous scientist, Robert Hooke.

Key words: Dutch, Great Britain, early modern period, social domains, sociolinguistics

1. Inleiding

Vanaf het midden van de zestiende eeuw weken vele mensen uit de Lage Landen uit naar Engeland vanwege religieuze vervolging en uit economische nood. Hoewel sommigen na enige tijd terugkeerden, bleven anderen in hun nieuwe thuisland wonen. In de zeventiende eeuw vertrokken nog meer mensen uit de Lage Landen naar Engeland om onder andere de moerassige gebieden van het land droog te leggen. Velen onder hen bleven eveneens in Engeland. In zo'n twintig steden en dorpen stichtten deze immigranten vreemdelingengemeenschappen. In sommige steden waren er Waalse gemeenschappen, in andere steden Nederduytsche of Vlaamse gemeenschappen en in enkele steden waren er beide. In deze steden stichtten de leden van deze gemeenschappen kerken om hun hervormde geloof
te kunnen praktiseren. Vaak werkten de immigranten los van de Engelse inwoners; ze trouwden eveneens met anderen van dezelfde gemeenschap en de leiders van deze gemeenschappen waren verantwoordelijk voor het gedrag van de immigranten. In dit artikel zal ik bespreken waar de Nederduytsche of Vlaamse gemeenschappen werden gevestigd en daarna het bewijs overwegen voor het gebruik van de Nederlandse taal in bepaalde sociale contexten, vooral maar niet exclusief binnen deze gemeenschappen. Eén context waarin deze taal intensief en langdurig werd gebruikt, en waarvoor wij veel bewijs hebben, is de kerk. Maar ook thuis, op het werk, op school, in het leger en in het culturele leven speelde het Nederlands een rol.

Behalve degenen die zich in Engeland vestigden waren er ook anderen in dat land die kennis van het Nederlands hadden. Vissers gingen tijdelijk naar Engeland voor de haringvangst en koop- en zeelui uit de Lage Landen voerden naar verschillende havens om handel te drijven. Voorts waren er Engelsen die om verschillende redenen Nederlands leerden, zoals de bekende wetenschapper Robert Hooke. Ik zal bewijs aanvoeren voor het gebruik van de taal van beide groepen in Engeland.

Elders in Groot-Britannië waren er eveneens mensen die Nederlands kenden. In Schotland was er een kleine Nederlandse gemeenschap in de hoofdstad Edinburgh en in de zeventiende eeuw werkten zee- en kooplui uit de Lage Landen in verschillende plaatsen langs de Schotse kust. In West-Wales was er al sinds de middeleeuwen een Vlaamse gemeenschap. Voor beide gebieden is er enig bewijs voorhanden voor het gebruik van het Nederlands in de vroegmoderne periode. Voordat ik bespreek waar deze Nederlandse gemeenschappen werden gevestigd en waar anderen zich bevonden die de taal kenden, zal ik eerst een opmerking vooraf maken over de terminologie en over de bronnen die in dit artikel zullen worden aangehaald.

2. Terminologie en bronnen

Zoals bekend is het heel moeilijk om geschikte termen te vinden voor de Nederlandse taal in de vroegmoderne periode en ook voor degenen die deze taal spraken. Er waren meerdere uiteenlopende Germaanse dialecten, zoals Vlaams en Brabants in het zuiden en Hollands en Zeeuws in het noorden van de Lage Landen die destijds met het alomvattende woord Nederduytisch werden omschreven. In de sociolinguïstische literatuur wordt het woord ’Vroegnieuw-Nederlands’ gebruikt (bijv. Van Leuvensteijn et al. 1997: 227); of in het Engels ‘Early New Dutch’ (Willemyns 2013: 78 vv.). Om te vermijden
dat elke keer zo’n lange uitdrukking wordt gebruikt, kies ik voor het korte woord ‘Nederlands’, hoewel het zo is dat dit wat anachronistisch klinkt en meerdere uiteenlopende noordelijke en zuidelijke dialecten omvat. In sommige Engelse steden kwam de meerderheid van de immigranten uit de zuidelijke provincies van de Lage Landen zoals Vlaanderen en Brabant. In andere steden kwamen ze meestal uit het noorden. Sommige gemeenschappen die werden gevestigd, noemt men daarom Vlaams/Flemish en andere (Neder)duyts/Dutch. Om het eenvoudig te houden wordt in dit artikel de term ‘Nederlandse gemeenschappen’ gebruikt, hoewel die niet helemaal juist is en mensen uit de zuidelijke provincies lijkt uit te sluiten (vgl. ‘Dutch communities’ in de Engelstalige literatuur).

Het aantal primaire bronnen voor deze studie is helaas beperkt. Dit is wellicht een van de redenen waarom dit onderwerp tot nu toe nauwelijks of geen academische aandacht heeft gekregen. Niettemin zijn er wel enkele bronnen beschikbaar die ons laten zien dat het Nederlands in verschillende steden en sociale contexten in vroegmodern Groot-Brittannië werd gebruikt. Ten eerste zijn er enkele duizenden brieven die in het Nederlands werden geschreven. Zo’n vierduizend brieven die nu in de London Metropolitan Archives worden bewaard, zijn aan het einde van de negentiende eeuw uitgegeven door J.H. Hessels (Hessels (red.) 1887-97 (hierna H 87)). De meerderheid behoort tot het kerkelijke domein, maar deze verzameling bevat ook brieven die in een andere sociale context zijn geschreven. Daaraan kunnen 65 privé-brieven worden toegevoegd die rond 1567 door immigranten naar Ieper werden gestuurd en in de negentiende eeuw voor een deel door Hendrick Janssen zijn getranscribeerd (Janssen 1857). Er bevinden zich ook andere bronnen in verschillende archieven in Engeland die in het Nederlands werden geschreven. Daaronder vallen kerkelijke documenten zoals doopboeken en attestaties, werkreglementen en testamenten. Enkele boeken zijn in het Nederlands in Engeland geschreven, waaronder boeken voor gebruik in de kerk, zoals een psalmboek en een catechismus voor kinderen; een boek over de Opstand; en een aantal dichtbundels. Soms vormen deze en andere bronnen het bewijs dat deze taal destijds ook gesproken werd.

3. Nederlandse gemeenschappen, tijdelijke bezoekers en inwoners die Nederlands kenden

Zoals gezegd migreerden in de zestiende eeuw vele mensen vanuit de Lage Landen naar Engeland. Zij vestigden zich vooral in steden en dorpen in
het zuidoosten van Engeland, dat het dichtstbijzijnd gelegen gebied ten opzichte van de Lage Landen is. Aan het eind van de zestiende eeuw waren er zo'n 7.000 vreemdelingen of aliens in de hoofdstad, Londen, van wie men voorzichtig kan zeggen dat ongeveer de helft Nederlands was; de anderen waren vooral Waals of Frans (Scouloudi 1985: 73-85). In het graafschap Kent bevonden zich Nederlandse gemeenschappen in Dover, Maidstone en Sandwich. In 1571 waren er zo'n 270 ‘Fleminges of the Lawe Contryte of Flanders dwellinge [] in Dov[e]r’ (Overend 1888-9: 111) en in 1574 behoorden meer dan 2.000 mensen tot de Nederlandse gemeenschap in Sandwich, die eveneens vooral uit Vlaanderen afkomstig waren (Backhouse 1995: 27-8). In East Anglia vestigden zich vele mensen uit de Lage Landen, met name uit Vlaanderen en Brabant. In Norwich, de hoofdstad van Norfolk, woonden in 1582 bijna 4.700 vreemdelingen of ‘Strangers’, waarvan de meerderheid tot de Nederlandse gemeenschap behoorde (Moens 1887-8: 44-5). Overigens, 1 op 3 inwoners van Norwich was in die tijd afkomstig uit de Lage Landen (Hunt Yungblut 1996: 30). Er waren ook Nederlandse gemeenschappen in de Norfolkse steden Great Yarmouth, waar in 1571 meer dan zeventig gezinnen uit Zeeland en Holland woonden (Aliens at Great Yarmouth in 1571 1885-7: 291-6), Thetford en King’s Lynn, waar in 1572 44 ‘Duchemen’ woonachtig waren met hun gezinnen (Rye (red.) 1877: 196-8). In het graafschap Suffolk, in de hoofdstad Ipswich, was er een kleine Nederlandse gemeenschap van zo'n dertig gezinnen (Redstone 1919-24: 200-1). In het graafschap Essex woonden in 1577 zo'n 30 gezinshoofden ‘commonly called in English Dutchmen’ met hun gezinnen in de stad Halstead, en in 1586 waren bijna 1.300 ‘Dutch Strangers’ woonachtig in Colchester (Moens 1905: viii). In Stamford, aan de grens van Cambridgeshire en Lincolnshire, vestigde zich een Nederlandse (en Waalse) gemeenschap van wevers, die daar werden uitgenodigd door William Cecil, Lord Burleigh (Burn 1846: 218-9). En in 1573 mochten in de havenstad van Boston in Oost-Lincolnshire zich veertig ‘Dutchmen’ vestigen met hun gezinnen. Naar schatting waren er gemiddeld 3 kinderen per gezin, samen met de vrouw van het gezinshoofd en soms een dienstmeisje of knecht (vgl. Backhouse 1995: 27). Daarom kan men voorzichtig spreken van 11.000 à 15.000 mensen die in de laatste decennia van de zestiende eeuw in de Nederlandse gemeenschappen in Engeland woonachtig waren. Hieronder zal het gebruik van het Nederlands in een aantal sociale contexten binnen deze gemeenschappen worden besproken.

In de zeventiende eeuw werkten ongeveer 50 Vlaamse en Brabantse wevers bij de nieuwe Royal Tapestry Works, die in 1619 werd opgericht in Mortlake in Surrey (Hefford 2002: 49). Daarvoor hadden zij in Brussel of Parijs gewerkt (Hefford 2007: 171). Een Nederlandse kerk werd voor hen en
hun gezinnen in c. 1621 in Mortlake opgericht. Zo’n 55 jaar later tijdens zijn reis door Engeland schreef Joannes Vollenhove in zijn dagboek (Vollenhove 2001: 189):

*Na het passeren van verscheide dorpen en lanthuisen aen den oever der Riviere (Thames) gelegen, te Moadelak (Mortlake) uitgetreden. Na eenige ververschinge, aldaer genomen bij een vrou, die Duitsch (= Nederlands) sprak, waer bij wij onze mantels lieten ...*

Velen uit de Lage Landen werkten voor de Zeeuw Cornelis Vermuyden aan de drooglegging van moerassige gebieden in Engeland, zoals Canvey Island in Essex en de Fens in West-Norfolk en Cambridgeshire. Daarna bleven velen in deze gebieden wonen. Maar niet alleen in het zuidoostelijke gebied van Engeland waren er Nederlandse gemeenschappen. In de zestiende eeuw was er ook een kleine gemeenschap van wevers in Coventry in Midden-Engeland (H 87: III, i, 205-6) en in de zeventiende eeuw was er een Nederlandse gemeenschap in Sandtoft in Noord-Lincolnshire, waar Vermuyden enkele jaren bezig was met het droogleggen van Hatfield Chase. Straks zal ik dieper ingaan op het hanteren van het Nederlands binnen deze gemeenschappen.


*Aldaer gedurende den harinkvank een groote menichte is van Nederlandsche visschers en coopvaerders.*

Het consistorie van de kerk schreef vaak brieven naar Londen waarin om hulp werd gevraagd, omdat het aantal vissers groter was dan het aantal kerkleden. De zeelieden spraken nauwelijks of geen Engels. In een brief
uit 1654 schreef het consistorie in Yarmouth dat er tussen de 50 en 60 Nederlandse vissers in de stad waren die Gods Woord niet konden horen, omdat de kerk in die tijd geen predikant had (H 87: III, ii, 2243).

Tot dusver heb ik het alleen over Engeland gehad, maar er waren ook mensen uit de Lage Landen die in andere delen van Groot-Brittannië werkten of woonden. In Schotland was er een gemeenschap van Nederlandse kooplieden en vakarbeiders in de hoofdstad, Edinburgh (Campbell 1996: 92-3). Het is niet bekend hoe groot deze gemeenschap was, maar deze bleek in elk geval groot genoeg te zijn om in 1586 aan de magistraten van Edinburgh te vragen of ze de ‘University Hall’ als kerk mochten gebruiken (Smiles 1889: 113-4). In de regio East Neuk in Fifeshire is er sprake van veel handelsverkeer met de Lage Landen. Een concreet overblijfsel daarvan is de klok in de kerk van Crail, die in Rotterdam werd gegoten, waarop de inscriptie staat te lezen: ‘PEETER VANDEN GHEIN HEFT MY GHEGOTEN INT IAER DCXIII’ (1613) (Fleming 1930: 377). Veel schepen uit de Lage Landen voeren naar Aberdeen met een tamelijk onverwachte vracht: uien. De snelste kregen de hoogste prijs (Jackson 2002: 166). Maar het is vooral vanwege de visserij dat mensen uit de Lage Landen naar Schotland trokken. In Stornoway op het eiland Lewis werkte een Nederlandse vertegenwoordiger (factor) met zes landgenoten om de activiteiten te steunen van de Nederlandse vissers die in de daaronmliggende zee actief waren (Shaw 1980: 124-5). Als er geen oorlog was, gingen elke zomer zo’n 500 Nederlandse boten naar de Shetlandeilanden voor de haringvangst. Velen kwamen aan wal om lokale producten van de bewoners te kopen, kousen bijvoorbeeld.

Voor zover ik weet, vestigden in de vroegmoderne periode mensen uit de Lage Landen zich niet in Wales. Maar het is bekend dat de koning in de twaalfde eeuw een aantal Vlamingen die destijds in Engeland woonden naar Pembrokeshire stuurde (Toorians 2000: 184). In zijn ‘Beschrijving der Britse Eilanden’ schrijft de auteur en kunstenaar Lucas d’Heere (De Heere 1937: 48):

haer gheslachte tot noch aen de sprake ende andersins bekent is ghelyc
Humphrij Lhuijd seyt ... ende ick hebbe ooc med eeinghe ghespraken die noch
good vlaemsch spraken tzelfde aen haer ouders ende als van vader tot kinde
gheleert hebbende.7

Dus het is goed mogelijk dat er tot in de zestiende eeuw in dit gebied van Wales nog mensen waren die Nederlands spraken, hoewel Mark Stoyle (2005: 13) ons vertelt dat daar in 1642 alleen Engelstaligen woonden.

Er waren ook enkele Britten die in deze periode Nederlands kenden. Sommigen trouwden met mensen in de Nederlandse gemeenschappen en

*Bought of Pits, Little Britain, High Dutch bible, 2 low dutch testaments 1sh.  
Stevins mechanicks, Dutch 4d ... Dutch grammar and Dutch Corderius 3d.*

Dat wil zeggen dat hij bij de boekwinkel Pits in de Little Britainstraat in de binnenstad van Londen enkele boeken in het Nederlands kocht, waaronder twee (hoogstwaarschijnlijk Nieuwe) Testamenten. *Stevins mechanicks, Dutch* verwijst waarschijnlijk naar diens *De Beghinselen der Weeghconst* en *Dutch Corderius* naar een Nederlandse vertaling van de *Colloquia* van Maturinus Corderius (1479-1564). Dat Hooke deze boeken in een Londense boekwinkel kon kopen, zegt ons dat er vraag was naar Nederlandse boeken in de Engelse hoofdstad. Vooral leerde hij Nederlands om die taal te kunnen lezen. Het is niet bekend of hij Nederlands sprak, hoewel hij dat wellicht met ‘Mr Blackburne’ deed, terwijl hij bezig was de taal te leren. Hooke vertelt ons in zijn dagboek niet welke ‘Dutch grammar’ hij had aangeschaft, maar er waren wel enige boeken te koop voor degenen die in die tijd Nederlands wilden leren. In 1606 publiceerde Marten le Mayre ‘The Dutch School-Master’ in Londen, nadat hij (zoals hij de lezer vertelt) had gemerkt dat er geen enkel boek beschikbaar was om Nederlands mee te leren. Op de titelplaat presenteert hij zichzelf als ‘professor of the said tongue (d.w.z. Nederlands)’. In het boek staan veel zinnen in het Nederlands en het Engels, waarvan de grootste groep staat onder de titel ‘To buy and sell / Om te coopen ende vercoopen’, wat duidelijk maakt dat het boek vooral voor kooplieden was bedoeld. In 1659 werd het boek ‘The Dutch-Tutor: or, a new-book of Dutch and English ...’ anoniem in Londen gepubliceerd. In dit boek staan dialogen voor de student over onder andere ‘Morgen groetenissen’,
'Bewoonlick Koutinge van s’ morgene op te staen,’ en wat je moet zeggen bij ‘Een maaltijd van thien persoonen’. Geen van deze twee boeken wordt door Scheurweghs genoemd in zijn in 1960 geschreven artikel ‘English grammars in Dutch and Dutch grammars in English in the Netherlands before 1800’ (Scheurweghs 1960). Blijkbaar werden deze boeken uitgegeven voor mensen in Engeland die de taal wilden leren.

Er waren dus drie groepen van mensen die Nederlands kenden in vroegmodern Groot-Brittannië: immigranten uit de Lage Landen en hun nakomelingen in Nederlandse gemeenschappen; tijdelijke bezoekers van de Lage Landen zoals vissers en kooplieden; en Britten die de taal leerden om meerdere uiteenlopende redenen. Enkele anderen die de taal kenden zoals de stadhouder-koning Willem III kunnen niet makkelijk in een van deze groepen worden gezet, maar in het algemeen is het zo dat degenen die Nederlands kenden in een van deze groepen zaten. Nu zal ik verder ingaan op het hanteren van de taal binnen bepaalde sociale contexten. In dit opzicht is het belangrijk om verschil te maken tussen het schrijven en het spreken van het Nederlands. In een dergelijke historische studie is er uiteraard meer bewijs voor het schrijven van de taal dan voor het spreken ervan. Niettemin, waar er bewijs voor het spreken is, zal dit worden aangehaald.

4. De sociale contexten waarin men Nederlands schreef en/of sprak

In vroegmodern Groot-Brittannië werd in een aantal sociale contexten Nederlands gebruikt. De taal werd thuis, op het werk, op school en in het bestuur van de Nederlandse gemeenschappen gehanteerd. Aan het einde van de zeventiende eeuw had Groot-Brittannië een Nederlandse koning, Willem III. Speciale aandacht zal worden gegeven aan de kwestie van welke taal/talen hij gebruikte toen hij in Engeland woonachtig was. Tussen 1550 en 1700 waren er achttien Nederlandse kerken in Engeland en het is vooral in het kerkelijke domein dat het Nederlands in Engeland werd gehanteerd tijdens de vroegmoderne periode. Ten slotte zal het gebruik van de taal in het culturele en intellectuele gebied worden besproken.

Het privédomijn

Brieven, testamenten en inventarissen laten ons zien dat het Nederlands werd geschreven in het particuliere of privédomijn in vroegmodern Engeland. Immigranten uit de Lage Landen schreven brieven in het Nederlands aan familieleden en vrienden die in de Lage Landen waren achtergebleven.
Onder deze brieven bevonden zich 65 stuks die rond 1567 naar Ieper werden gestuurd. Deze zijn tot in de twintigste eeuw in het Ieperse Stadsarchief bewaard gebleven. In de negentiende eeuw heeft Hendrick Janssen delen van die brieven getranscribeerd, maar helaas zijn de originelen in de Eerste Wereldoorlog verloren gegaan. In een van die brieven die Adrien Walewein op 7 januari 1568 schreef vanuit Norwich aan Gellein Everaert, schepen van Ieper, vertelt Walewein dat hij bezig is om Engels en (beter) Frans te leren: ...
’t welcke ic houde om Inghels en[de] meer Franchois te leerene, tot dat God anders bescicken zal (Janssen 1857: 253 (brief 8)). In een andere brief, geschreven door leerlooier Clais van Wervekin op 21 augustus 1567, eveneens vanuit Norwich, vertelt deze zijn vrouw in Ieper dat de Engelsen heel vriendelijk zijn en dat als zij in die stad kwam wonen, ze nooit meer naar Vlaanderen zou willen terugkeren (Janssen 1857: 226 (brief 56)):

... ende ghy ne soudt nemmermeer gheloooven, hoe vriendelick dat tvolck tsamen es, ende oock de Ynghelschen, hoe minsamich zy tot onser natie vallen, zoo, dat ghy hier waert met ons half goedt, ghy ne soudt nemmermeer peinsen om in Vlaenderen te commen wonen.

Hessels’ verzameling bevat ook brieven van de Nederlandse kerk in Londen die door particulieren zijn geschreven. In 1570 schreef Rachel Jansdochter een brief uit Norwich aan het consistorie van de Nederlandse kerk in Londen, waarin zij beweert dat de kerk haar arbeidsloon van zes jaar geleden schuldig is (H 87: III, i, 101). De brief begint:

Frundelijke Groete gescreven an Ju leve broeder Godefride [Wingius], unde voort an allen den broederen der Consistorie ... De orsake mines scrivens is, om dat wij Ju mannichmal gescreven hebben, om dat suluige arbeydes loen dat ghij ons schuldich sijt van over sesse Jaar geleden ...

Deze brief hoort ook in zekere mate bij het kerkelijke domein. Hessels’ verzameling bevat ook zo’n twintig brieven die door particulieren in Colchester werden geschreven. In het Essex Record Office zijn meer dan dertig testamenten bewaard die tussen 1564 en 1666 in het Nederlands in Essex werden opgesteld. Het merendeel was geschreven in Colchester, maar er is ook een testament uit Halstead. Het testament van Cladys Cleenwerck, woonachtig in Colchester, werd opgesteld in 1601." Het begint en eindigt als volgt:
Cladys Cleenwerck als nu in groote cranckheyt sijnde nae den Lichaeme, doch gesont van verstande …

… Tot kennisse van desen hebbe ick myn ghewoonlyck hantteecken… onder-ghestelt Anno 1601 … by my Cladys Cleenwerck.


Op het werk

Ook op het werk werd Nederlands geschreven. In 1570 werd een reglement in het Nederlands geschreven voor de Nederlandse wevers in Norwich. In eerste instantie weigerde men dit reglement aan de stedelijke overheid te geven. Om die reden moesten enkele ‘Strangers’ in de cel zitten, totdat ze het in het Engels vertaalden en aan de overheid overhandigden (Moen 1887-8: 33). In 1582 werd nog een reglement in het Nederlands in Norwich geschreven voor de wevers.12 Een van de 134 regels luidt als volgt (fol. 25v):

Smouten met olie

Item datmen gheen inslach wulle smouten en sal met olie oft ander quaet smout, maar alleene met boter, op de boete van xv sh. sterling ten profyte van armen …

Als de wevers olie in plaats van boter gebruikten om de wol in te vetten, kregen ze dus een boete van 15 Engelse shillings die aan de armen zouden worden gegeven. In Colchester waren er eveneens wevers, van wie het werk door de gouverneurs van de Bay Hall werd gecontroleerd. De verzameling van Hessels bevat zes brieven die door de gouverneurs in Colchester zijn ge-

Boeken werden in het Nederlands in Engeland gedrukt. In Norwich drukte de Brabantse vluchteling Anthoni de Solempne tussen 1568 en 1570 een aantal boeken in het Nederlands. Destijds was er ook een Hollandse drijker in Norwich, Albert Christiaensz., en mogelijk werkte hij samen met De Solempne (Moens 1887-8: 207-16; Sessions en Stoker 1987: 54, 58). De Solempne heeft minstens vijf boeken in het Nederlands gedrukt:

*De cl. Psalmen Davids wt den Franchoyschen Dichte in Nederlantschen overghesett door PETRUM DATHENUM* (STC 2741);

*Catechismus oft Onderwijissinghe in de Christelicke Leere* (eveneens STC 2741);

*Belijdenisse ende eenvoudige wtlegghinge des waerachtighen gheloofs* (STC 23557);

*Eenen Calendier Historiael* (STC 401.6); en


Er is helaas nogmaals heel weinig bewijs voor het spreken van het Nederlands op het werk. Het bewijs dat we hebben is vooral van anekdotische aard en dan in situaties waarin Britten of mensen uit de Lage Landen die tijdelijk in Engeland bleven, de taal gebruikten. Eén contactsituatie waar het Nederlands werd gesproken was op de Shetlandeilanden. Sommige bronnen vermelden dat velen onder de bewoners van die eilanden goed Nederlands konden spreken, om met de Nederlandse vissers van de haringvangst te kunnen handelen (Sibbald 1845: 16; Barnes 1998: 23). Er zijn inderdaad enkele woorden van Nederlandse afkomst in het Shetlandse dialect, zoals ‘leppel’ (lepel) (Edmonston 1866: 65). In 1640 schreef de dominee van de Nederlandse kerk in Yarmouth, Abraham van Reghemoorter, een brief aan het consistorie van de Nederlandse kerk in Londen. Hierin vermeldt hij dat veel mensen (vooral zeelieden) uit Holland en Zeeland naar Yarmouth
kwamen die geen Engels konden begrijpen en die als er geen Nederlandse kerk in Yarmouth was, ‘s zondags in de kroeg zouden zitten te drinken (H 87: III, ii, 1829). Kunnen we niet aannemen dat deze zeelieden Nederlands spraken toen ze op het werk in Yarmouth waren? In bovengenoemde brief uit Plymouth van 1631 staat dat er 50 a 60 seijllen schepen van Duitchen, ja merder als dat waren die in die haven aankwamen, onderweg naar Afrika en elders. Is het niet waarschijnlijk dat toen de bemanningen aan wal kwamen zij onderling Nederlands spraken? In 1653 groef Cornelis Vermuyden de New Bedford River in Cambridgeshire en Norfolk. Onder de arbeiders bevonden zich Nederlandse krijgsgevangenen die tijdens de Eerste Engelse Zeeoorlog gevangengenomen waren (Bevis 1983: 6; 34-5). In deze en andere gevallen die hier worden besproken is er geen direct bewijs dat men Nederlands sprak in Groot-Brittannië, maar het is zeker mogelijk. Verder onderzoek zou ons hier wellicht meer over kunnen vertellen.

Andere sociale contexten
In sommige Nederlandse gemeenschappen waren schoolmeesters actief. In King’s Lynn was een van de ouderlingen van de kerk, Justus Junius, _negocium agens Scholasticum_ (Rye (red.) 1887: 228). In 1571 waren er drie schoolmeesters uit Vlaanderen woonachtig in Dover in Kent (Overend 1888-9: 111). In 1574 was er een school in Maidstone die door de Nederlandse kerkgemeente was opgericht. Adrianus Obrius uit Sandwich werd uitgenodigd om in Maidstone leraar en predikant te zijn (H 87: III, i, 261). In Sandwich zelf nam de Nederlandse kerkelijke gemeente schoolmeesters in dienst. Uit een brief van 1607 blijkt dat ze dit al sinds 1561 had gedaan (H 87: III, i, 1201). In de Nederlandse gemeenschap in Norwich waren er in het jaar 1568 vier schoolmeesters (Moens 1887-8: 207-16). Een van hen was Jan Ruytinck, die eerder secretaris van Gent was geweest. In 1577 schreef hij een brief in het Nederlands over leerlingen uit Vlaanderen die hij in de kost had (H 87: II, 593-5):

> Voorts zyn my noch onlanx gezonden wt Vlaenderen Jonghers die ic inden cost anueert hebbe neffens tgoet getall van andere die met my ooc woenen ... 


In 1572 verlieten Kapitein Middeler en zo’n 125 soldaten Norwich om naar Vlissingen te varen om de Nederlandse Opstand te steunen (H 87: III, i, 166). In hetzelfde jaar voeren zo’n dertig leden van de Nederlandse kerk in Colchester om dezelfde reden naar Vlissingen (H 87: II, 405-7). Op 2 september 1585 schreef Kapitein Guillaume Suderman uit Oostende dat hij naar Colchester was gegaan om mannen voor het leger te rekruteren en dat zo’n 34 leden van de Nederlandse kerk in dienst waren gegaan (H 87: III, i, 809). We weten niet welke taal deze soldaten spraken toen ze zich verzmelden voordat ze hun vaderland gingen verdedigen, maar m.i. is het wel mogelijk dat ze onderling Nederlands spraken. Er waren ook Nederlandse (en Vlaamse) soldaten in Engeland tijdens de Engelse Burgeroorlog (Stoyle 2005: 95) en tijdens de hele regering van Willem III (1688/9-1702) bleef de Blauwe Garde op de Britse Eilanden. Tot nu toe heb ik geen bewijs kunnen
vinden wat betreft het taalgebruik van deze soldaten uit de Lage Landen, maar als er een groep Nederlandse soldaten is die onder leiding van een Nederlandse officier staat, is het mogelijk zo dat ze onderling Nederlands spraken.

In hoeverre Willem III zelf Nederlands gebruikte toen hij tijdens zijn regering in Groot-Brittannië woonachtig was, is niet makkelijk te beoordelen. Schriftelijk gebruikte hij soms Nederlands, maar soms ook wel Frans. De brieven die hij aan Raadspensionaris Anthonie Heinsius schreef, waren in het Nederlands, hoewel zijn taal in belangrijke mate was verfranst (Van der Heim (red.) 1867-80: passim; Van ’t Hoff 1950: 45-8). Daartegenover is de briefwisseling tussen Willem en zijn in Nederland geboren gunsteling Hans Willem Bentinck in het Frans (Japikse (red.) 1927-37). Wat de taal betreft die Willem in Engeland sprak, hij sprak wel Engels. Het was de taal van zijn moeder, Mary Henrietta Stuart, en de taal die hij gebruikte in de conversatie met Sir William Temple, de Engelse ambassadeur in Den Haag (Haley 1988: 35). Maar blijkbaar voelde hij zich in Engeland niet thuis in die taal. Volgens Stephen Baxter was dit een van de redenen waarom Willem niet zoveel vrienden in Engeland maakte (Baxter 1966: 248). Hij schrijft:

*Although the King spoke English he lacked confidence in his command of the language. He consistently refused to write in it.*


*Steenberck verhaelde … dat de Coningh tegen Dorp, die mede van sijne garde was, geseght hadde: Que dans nostre armée il y avoit beaucoup de catholiques. Hij antwoorde: Ouy, Sire, mais ils ont des espees protestantes.*
[Steenberck vertelde ... dat de koning tegen Dorp die tot zijn lijfwacht behoorde, had gezegd dat er vele katholieken in ons leger waren. [Dorp] antwoordde, ‘Ja, Sire, maar ze hebben protestantse zwaarden.’]

Toen Willem op veldtocht naar Ierland ging, nam hij William Blathwayt mee als Secretary of State, omdat deze goed Frans kon schrijven en spreken (Baxter 1966: 271). Maar Willem wordt wel ook in het Nederlands geciteerd. Op 14 januari 1689, kort na zijn aankomst in Engeland, ontving Willem een deputatie van de Nederlandse kerk in Londen. Een van de predikanten, Samuel Bischop, vroeg de koning om zijn bescherming van de vreemdelingenkerken in Engeland. Willem antwoordde op een onverschillige manier:

_Ick bedancke de Nederlandtsche en Fransche kerkten, en sy mogen staet maecken, dat Ick haer sal Dienste Doen, wat ick kan._


_Naermiddachs bij de Con[inck] wesende, die mij werck gaff tegens de post, seyde hij: ‘Het is warm weer; het is nu Haeghsche kermis. O, dat men nu soo, gelijk een vogel door de lucht, eens konde overvliegen! Ick gaff er wel hondert dusent g[u][l]den om’; en een weynich daer nae: ‘Ja, ick gaf er wel twee hondert dusent g[u][l]den om’._

Het is een aantrekkelijke gedachte dat de herinnering aan de sfeer van de kermis de koning inderdaad Nederlandse woorden in de mond gaf. Eerlijk gezegd is er niet zoveel onderzoek naar dit onderwerp gedaan. Verder onderzoek zou ons kunnen vertellen of er een patroon was voor zijn gebruik van het Frans en het Nederlands in Engeland. Hier moet ook worden vermeld dat Nederlandse diplomaten die in Engeland actief waren, zoals Jacob Hop, brieven in het Nederlands schreven (Japikse (red.) 1927-37).

_In de kerk_
De sociale context waarin men zonder twijfel op grote schaal en in sommige gebieden langere tijd Nederlands gebruikte was de kerk. De eerste Nederlandse kerk in Engeland werd in 1550 in Londen gesticht door Johannes à Lasco, Marten Microen, Johannes Utenhove e.a. Daarna werden er in zo’n twintig steden en dorpen in Engeland kerken gesticht waar de voertaal Nederlands was. In tabel 1 geef ik aan waar deze Nederlandse kerken werden opgericht en hoelang ze actief waren.
Er waren ook mensen die Nederlands kenden die lid waren van vooral Franse of Waalse kerkgemeentes in Canterbury in Kent en Thorney in Cambridgeshire. Het is echter onduidelijk of er in die steden aparte diensten in het Nederlands werden gehouden. Zoals hierboven vermeld, wilde de Nederlandse gemeenschap in Edinburgh een kerk stichten, maar of hen dat daadwerkelijk is gelukt heb ik niet kunnen achterhalen. Sommige kerkgemeentes in Engeland bestonden vrij lang en telden veel leden. In 1568 had de Nederlandse kerkgemeente in Londen 1.910 leden en in 1593 telde de kerk 1.376 leden (Scouloudi 1985: 75). In 1568 had de Nederlandse kerkgemeente in Norwich meer dan 1.132 leden (Moens 1887-8: 207-16), en in 1573 had die van Sandwich bijna 500 leden (Backhouse 1981: 34-6). In de zeventiende eeuw werden nieuwe kerkelijke gemeentes opgericht in Canvey Island, Sandtoft en Mortlake. In Mortlake werden tussen 1622 en 1638 meer dan 90 kinderen ten doop gehouden (Hefford 2002: 49-50). In de tweede helft van deze eeuw waren er twee nieuwe Nederlandse kerkgemeentes in Londen. De ene was een conformistische gemeente, dat wil zeggen, men gebruikte de liturgie van de Anglicaanse kerk (Wright 2007: 627; 637, n. 6). De andere was de koninklijke kapel, de Dutch Chapel Royal, die vanaf 1689 de Queen’s Chapel in St. James’ Palace in Londen gebruikte (Baldwin 1990: 403). In het decennium na 1690 had deze kapelgemeente zo’n 1.000 leden, die volgens Catherine Wright met name bestond uit ondergeschikte ambtenaren van het koninklijke hof van Willem III (Wright 2007: 627).

Tijdens de zeventiende eeuw verminderde geleidelijk het aantal leden van de Nederlandse kerken die in de zestiende eeuw waren gesticht. In 1635 had de Londense kerk van Austin Friars 840 leden; de Nederlandse kerk in Colchester 700 leden; die van Sandwich 500; en die van Norwich 363 (H 87: III, ii, 1690). In 1669 telde de kerk in Great Yarmouth slechts 36 leden, hoewel er 100 à 200 passanten tijdens de haringvangst naar de stad kwamen (H 87: III, ii, 2433). Verder waren veel kerkleden minder vaardig in het Nederlands. Toen in datzelfde jaar een nieuwe dominee, Dom. Teelingh,
naar Yarmouth kwam, was hij verbaasd dat de kerkleden met hem in het Engels wilden spreken (H 87: III, ii, 2444). Dit toont aan dat de leden van de Nederlandse gemeente in Yarmouth goeddeels overgegaan waren tot het Engels.

Niettemin is er veel bewijs dat het Nederlands in deze sociale context gedurende de hele vroegmoderne periode vaak en intensief werd gebruikt. Eerst zal ik het bewijs voor het schrijven van het Nederlands aanvoeren en daarna het bewijs voor het spreken van de taal in het kerkelijke domein.

Ten eerste hebben de vertegenwoordigers en leden van deze kerken duizenden brieven gewisseld, waarvan vele zijn bewaard, getranscribeerd en uitgegeven door J.H. Hessels (H 87). Tot 1570 werden deze kerkbrieven vooral in het Latijn geschreven, pas daarna in het Nederlands. In de uitgave van Hessels zijn ook andere kerkelijke documenten getranscribeerd. Daaronder bevinden zich extracten van het kerkboek van Colchester waarin zonden van de leden worden opgenomen (H 87: III, i, 1193-4); en notulen van kerkelijke bijeenkomsten (H 87: III, i, 1360). In een andere uitgave zijn de notulen (acta) van de bijeenkomsten van het consistorie van de gemeente in Londen tussen 1569 en 1585 in het Nederlands te lezen (Jelsma en Boersma (red.) 1993). De notulen van de colloquia, waar gedeputeerden van de verschillende Nederlandse gemeenten in Engeland tussen 1575 en 1706 bijeenkwamen, werden eveneens in het Nederlands geschreven, en door J.J. van Toorenenbergen ((red.) 1872) getranscribeerd en uitgegeven.

Het Nederlandse doopboek van Colchester dat loopt van 1645 tot 1728 is bewaard,23 alsook een Register van de kerk in Norwich voor de jaren 1676-1912 dat ook grotendeels in het Nederlands werd geschreven. Daarin staan dopen van 1676-1717, een ledenregister en de namen van leden die overleden.24 Van deze laatste zijn er registraties in het Nederlands tot in de twintigste eeuw.

voordat er in Londen gebruik van werd gemaakt (Lindeboom 1950: 18). De Nederlandse kerk in Norwich maakte waarschijnlijk gebruik van de Nederlandse catechismus en geloofsbelijdenis die eveneens door De Solempne werden gedrukt. Het feit dat deze boeken door de Nederlandse kerkelijke gemeentes in Engeland werden gebruikt is bewijs voor het spreken (en zingen) van het Nederlands in het kerkelijke domein. Nu zal verder bewijs worden aangehaald voor het spreken van de taal in dit domein.

In zijn recente discussie over het Nederlands dat in de Nederlandse kerken in Noord-Amerika werd gebruikt, schrijft Roland Willemyns (Willemyns 2013: 204),

*the Nederduits of the Nederduits Reformed Church, an archaic, highly-formal language, was used in the churches and taught in the Dutch schools, since all the preachers ... came from the Netherlands or had received their training there.*

Velen van de predikanten die in de Nederlandse kerken in Engeland actief waren, kwamen ook uit de Verenigde Provinciën of werden daar opgeleid. Negen van de zeventien dominees in Colchester studeerden theologie aan de Universiteit van Leiden. Alle dominees die daar na 1666 werkzaam waren, werden geboren in de Verenigde Provinciën (Moens 1905: 89-91).

In 1569 zei de burgemeester van Sandwich tegen de dominee van de Waalse kerk die voor hem moest verschijnen (Backhouse 1995: 45):

*[you should] observe the order and mynistrenge of the sacrements as the minister in the Eflemishe tonge dothe ...*

Twee jaar later, in 1571, besloot de Aartsbisschop van Canterbury dat er een telling moest worden gehouden van de vreemdelingen in Norwich die de 'divine servis in their owne mother toungs' beleefden. De burgemeester, Thomas Green, heeft de telling uitgevoerd en schreef (Slaughter 1933: 27-9):

*The aforeseyde Straungers, be of twoo severall churches: the Duche churche, and Wallowne churche. And bothe theye do use their divine servis, and the administracion of Sacraments, in their owne Lauguadge ...*

Bij het colloquium van de Nederlandse kerkgemeentes in Engeland in 1599 werd besloten de Nederlandse kerkordening te volgen *soo veel moghelick is* (Van Toorenenbergen (red.) 1872: 99). In 1631 werd, zoals boven vermeld,
De geschiedenis van de Nederlandse gemeente in Engeland

Een Nederlandse kerk opgericht in Canvey Island. Volgens de stichtingsakte moesten de kerkdiensten in het Nederlands worden gehouden.26


> We have a Liturgie of our owne which wee do allwayes use in our churches:
> 1. The reading of severall chapter out of the Canonickal scripture before Sermon.
> 2. The rehearsall of the x Commandements, and of the Apostles Creed.
> 3. The singing of Psalmes, with Prayers, Confessions and thanksgivings.
> 4. The preaching of the Holy word.
> 5. After Sermon publique prayers for all Nations and States.
> 6. The singing of Psalmes.
> 7. The dismission of the assembly with a blessing out of Numb. 6. This Liturgy wee have hitherto used conformably with the Dutch and French Churches beyond sea ...

Dit laat zien dat de Nederlandse kerken hun eigen (Nederlandse) liturgie gebruikten en tevens wat er in deze liturgie stond. In die tijd was een andere eis dat de leden van de Nederlandse kerken die in Engeland werden geboren naar Anglicaanse kerken zouden gaan. Met die eis schreef de bisschop van Norwich aan het consistorie van de Nederlandse kerk in die stad, waarop in februari 1635 werd geantwoord dat (H 87: III, ii, 1690):

> Many [of the members of the Dutch Church, even though they were born in England] also that understand not well the English toungue, shall be little edified by the English prayers and sermons which they shall heare.

Dit betekent dat, hoewel er in die tijd veel minder leden van de Nederlandse gemeente in Norwich waren dan in de tweede helft van de zestiende eeuw (zie boven), er nog steeds leden waren die maar weinig tot het Engels waren overgegaan. Deze twee laatste geciteerde brieven laten ook zien dat de leiders van deze gemeentes goed Engels konden schrijven.

Later, in 1706, vond het colloquium van de Nederlandse kerkgemeentes in Engeland plaats in Londen. Daar werd gevraagd of de vertegenwoordiging...
gers van de kerk in Canvey Island de colloquia nog konden bijwonen. Het antwoord luidde:

*ja, bijaldien zij den dienst in de Nederduytsche taal onderhouden, beroepende zodanigen eenen tot haren Predikant, die in 't Duytsch [= het Nederlands] kan prediken en niet alleen in 't Engelsch.*

Dit toont aan dat het Nederlands tot in de achttiende eeuw werd gebruikt tijdens de diensten van de kerken die destijds nog actief waren, maar ook dat men vreesde dat sommige predikanten in het Engels preekten. Na 1706 bestonden er nog kerkelijke gemeenten in Sandwich, Colchester, Norwich en Londen. Een brief van 1719 (H 87: III, ii, 2791) en de registratie van een doop in 1728 laten zien dat het Nederlands schriftelijk in Colchester nog in gebruik was.\(^{27}\) Enkele bewijsstukken laten ons ook zien dat daar tot in de achttiende eeuw in die taal werd gepreekt. In 1708 werd een vertaling in het Engels uitgegeven van een preek van de dominee in Colchester, Cornelius Pieter Schrevelius. In 1726 schreef een van de rijkere en succesvollere leden van de Nederlandse gemeenschap in Colchester, Sir Isaac Rebow, zijn testament. Daarin stond dat hij £8 per jaar aan de dominee en de armen van de Nederlandse gemeente in Colchester vermaakte zolang ‘there shall be preaching in the Dutch language in the church or chapel.’\(^{28}\) Rebow stierf in hetzelfde jaar en de gemeente bestond daarna nog twee jaar. Tot in de eerste decennia van de twintigste eeuw werden er in Norwich jaarlijks kerkdiensten in het Nederlands gehouden (Woods 1981: 76). Ten slotte zijn er tot op de dag van vandaag nog wekelijks kerkdiensten in het Nederlands in Austin Friars te Londen.

De meeste leden van deze kerken waren mensen die in de Lage Landen waren geboren of hun nakomelingen. Er waren echter ook enkele Engelsen die lid waren of die de diensten bijwoonden. In een brief in het Latijn uit 1573 van het consistorie van de Nederlandse kerk te Londen aan de Privy Council staat bijvoorbeeld te lezen dat vier leden van deze kerk Engels waren (*neque ultra quatuor Anglos in Ecclesia nostra habemus*): twee van hen waren vroeger in ballingschap geweest en een derde was met een Nederlandse vrouw (*uxor Teutonica*) getrouwd (H 87: II, 482). John Gunnell was een Engelsman die in de zeventiende eeuw in Great Yarmouth woonde. Hij was met een vrouw getrouwd die lid was van de Nederlandse kerk in die stad. In 1631 schreef Gunnell een brief in het Nederlands aan het colloquium van de Nederlandse kerken in Engeland om hulp te krijgen omdat hij zelf probeerde lid van de kerk in Yarmouth te worden (H 87: III, ii, 1513-14). Het is
niet bekend of het hem is gelukt, maar hij werd wel enkele keer als passant aan het Heilige Avondmaal in de Nederlandse kerk toegelaten.

Roland Willemyns heeft recent over de Nederlandse kerken in Noord-Amerika geschreven (Willemyns 2013: 204):

*The fact that the Dutch language and the Church remained so closely linked together for more than a century supported the preservation of Dutch in the United States for a long time.*

Mijns inziens is het ook zo dat de aanwezigheid van Nederlandse kerken in Engelse steden zoals Colchester, Great Yarmouth, Norwich en Sandwich, van welke grootte dan ook, het gebruik van het Nederlands in die steden lange tijd heeft laten voortduren.

**Op cultureel gebied**

Voordat ik conclusies ga trekken, wil ik eerst iets zeggen over het gebruik van het Nederlands in het culturele leven in vroegmodern Engeland. Dit is niet zozeer een sociale context, maar dient wel besproken te worden om een zo volledig mogelijk beeld te geven van het gebruik van het Nederlands in deze periode. Dit onderwerp kan in drieën worden verdeeld: gedichten, toneelstukken en proza.


In de eerste decennia van de zeventiende eeuw dichtten in Engeland wonende Nederlandse intellectuelen in het Latijn (*Epicedia* 1622), maar

> **Dar is vor you, and vor you; een, twe, drie, vier, and viue skilling, drinke skellum upsie freese; nempt, dats u drinkgelt.**

[Dat is voor jou en voor jou; een, twee, drie, vier, en vijf [Engelse] shillings, drink, schelm, op zijn Fries; neem ‘t, dat is je fooi.]

In Dekkers ‘The Shoemaker’s Holiday’ (1599), dat veel succes boekte, verschijnt een andere Hans ten tonele. In dit stuk is een aristocratische Engelsman, Lacy, verliefd op een meisje uit de middenstand, Rose Oatley. Hun vaders willen niet dat ze trouwen en de vader van Lacy wil dat hij als soldaat naar Frankrijk gaat, wat Lacy uiteraard niet wil. Lacy stuurt een ander naar Frankrijk in zijn plaats en vermomt zich als de Nederlandse schoenlapper Hans om een baan te krijgen en dan Rose te vinden en met haar te trouwen. Net als Hans van Belch in ‘Northward Ho!’ spreekt de vermomde Lacy geen zuiver Nederlands maar een mengelmoes van (schijn)-Nederlands en Engels. Als hij voor het eerst ten tonele verschijnt (I, iv,
39-44), zingt hij het volgende liedje, dat Firk, een van de andere personages, 'gibble-gabble' noemt:

*Der was een boer van Gelderland,*  
*Frolick si byen,*  
*He was als dronck he cold nyet stand,*  
*Upsolce se byen.*  
*Tap eens de canneken,*  
*Drincke scheve mannekin.*

[Er was een boer van Gelderland;  
Vrolijk zijn zij.  
Hij was zo zat dat hij niet kon staan,  
Op zijn benen.  
Haal eens een kan (bier) uit het vat,  
Drink dronken mannetje.]

Natuurlijk is het zo dat Dekker met deze taal de klank van het Nederlands bespot, maar tevens wil hij hiermee de sympathie van de Engelse toeschouwers voor hun protestantse geloofsgenoten opwekken, tegen de achtergrond van de oorlog tegen de (katholieke) Fransen (Dekker 1975: xix). Uiteraard is Lacy’s plan in deze komedie succesvol en uiteindelijk trouwt hij met Rose.32 Deze toneelstukken werden voor een Engels publiek geschreven. Het gebruik van sommige Nederlandse of Nederlandsachtige woorden veronderstelt een rudimentaire kennis van het Nederlands bij Engelse toeschouwers in Londen in die tijd, wat misschien heeft te maken met het feit dat er zich destijds veel mensen van Nederlandse afkomst in de Engelse hoofdstad bevonden. Hoe Dekker zelf het Nederlands had geleerd is niet bekend. Zijn naam is Nederlands en zijn ouders waren waarschijnlijk van Nederlandse afkomst, maar meer daarover is niet bekend.

Nederlandse volk in Engeland, die werd geïnspireerd door Van Meterens Commentarien. Na Ruytincks dood in 1621 gingen zijn navolgers Cesare Calandrini en Emilius van Cuilemborgh hiermee verder (Ruytinck et al. 1873). Ruytinck heeft eveneens een handschrift geschreven dat uit regels, richtlijnen en gewoontes van de Nederlandse kerk in Londen bestaat (Grell 1996: 191 vv.) en een boek dat de Gulden Legende en de tradities en gewoontes van de Rooms-Katholieke Kerk bespot (Ruytinck 1612). Ten slotte is het ontwerp voor een Nederlandse grammatica Voorreden vanden Noodich ende Nutticheit der Nederduytscher Taelkunste noemenswaardig. Noch de naam van de auteur van deze grammatica, noch de plaats waar zij werd geschreven staan vermeld op het geschript, al staat wel het jaartal 1568 erop vermeld. Het onderzoek van Karel Bostoen laat zien dat de auteur van deze grammatica hoogstwaarschijnlijk de bovengenoemde Johannes Radermacher was. In 1568 was hij woonachtig in Londen en daarom heeft hij een Nederlandse grammatica in de Engelse hoofdstad geschreven (Bostoen 1985).

5. Tot slot

Dit artikel is een eerste poging tot een beschrijving van het gebruik van het Nederlands in vroegmodern Groot-Brittannië. In de loop van de tijd integreerden de mensen uit de Lage Landen en hun nakomelingen in de taalcultuur van hun nieuwe thuisland. Niettemin zijn er voldoende bronnen die laten zien dat er tijdens de gehele periode in het Nederlands werd geschreven, in een aantal sociale contexten en in verschillende soorten documenten. Er is ook aangetoond dat in Groot-Brittannië Nederlands werd gesproken. Het bewijs daarvoor is in zekere mate anekdotisch van aard en is meestal afkomstig uit het kerkelijke domein. Dit heeft ten dele te maken met het feit dat de uitvoerigste bron voor deze studie Hessels' verzamelingen van kerkbrieven is; een voorbeeld van wat Dirk van Miert terecht ‘the contingency of transmission’ noemt (Van Miert 2011: 384).

Men kan zich afvragen waarom het gebruik van het Nederlands in vroegmodern Groot-Brittannië niet eerder is bestudeerd. Heeft het te maken met het feit dat, hoewel er een aantal bronnen beschikbaar is, die minder in aantal zijn dan voor de studie van het Nederlands in het Nederlandse taalgebied? Heeft het misschien ook te maken met het feit dat Nederlandse taalkundigen zich meestal met de Lage Landen bezig houden; of met de buurlanden van het Nederlandse taalgebied en de koloniën van de Verenigde Provinciën? In zekere opzicht valt Groot-Brittannië tussen wal en schip. Het
is geen geografisch buurland van Nederland en er was nooit een Nederlandse kolonie in Groot-Brittannië, in tegenstelling tot Noord-Amerika, Indië of Afrika, die allemaal door Nederlandse taalkundigen zijn bestudeerd (bijv. Willemyns 2013). Deze kwestie reikt ons een goede onderzoeksmogelijkheid aan. Een andere onderzoeksmogelijkheid van deze studie is het taalgebruik van de stadhouder-koning Willem III in Groot-Brittannië. In dit artikel hebben we gezien dat hoewel hij Engels kende, hij de voorkeur gaf aan Frans en Nederlands. Verder onderzoek zal wellicht aantonen met wie, wanneer en in welke sociale contexten hij deze talen gebruikte.

Dit artikel gaat vooral over externe aspecten van het gebruik van het Nederlands: waar die taal werd gehanteerd; in welke sociale contexten enz. De bovenaangehaalde bronnen bieden veel voorbeelden van de schrijftaal in deze periode. Een groot aantal van deze bronnen zijn officiële documenten en brieven geschreven vooral door hoogopgeleide mensen zoals predikanten en klerken; voorbeelden dus van de Sprache der Distanz, om met Koch & Oesterreicher (1985: 23) te spreken. Onder de bovengemelde documenten bevinden zich niet zoveel ego-documenten die ons een beeld van de Sprache der Nähe en dus van de spreektaal zouden kunnen geven. De bronnen die ons de beste kans bieden om een idee van de spreektaal te krijgen zijn de 65 brieven die rond 1567 door particulieren naar Ieper werden gestuurd. Hoewel een paar brieven werden geschreven door hoogopgeleiden zoals de Norwichse dominee Carolus Rijckewaert, werden andere door vakarbeiders geschreven, zoals de leerlooier Clais van Wervekin. Daarom bieden deze brieven ons de mogelijkheid om een eerste poging te ondernemen tot een ‘language history from below’ van het Nederlands in vroegmodern Groot-Brittannië, om met Stephan Elspaß te spreken (bijv. Elspaß 2007; vgl. Nobels 2013: 9 vv.).

Andere onderzoeksvragen zijn: kan er sprake zijn van een pidgin in de contactsituaties tussen het Nederlands en het Engels, toen de immigranten geleidelijk in de taalcultuur van hun nieuwe thuisland begonnen te integreren? En, wat was de maatschappelijke positie van het Nederlands in verband met andere talen in Engeland, vooral Engels, Frans en Latijn? Tot nu toe is het bewijs voor deze vraag helaas slechts van anekdotische aard: Robert Hooke vond het nuttig om Nederlands te kunnen lezen, terwijl Thomas Dekker de taal in zekere mate bespotte. Nader onderzoek zou ons wellicht hier een beter idee over kunnen geven.

Er zijn nog archieven in Groot-Brittannië te bezoeken die wellicht verder bewijs kunnen verschaffen voor het gebruik van het Nederlands. Dit en het bovenaangehaalde bewijs zal ons een uitgebreider beeld kunnen geven van het gebruik van de taal op de Britse Eilanden, wat nuttig zal zijn voor
taalkundigen die over de geschiedenis van het Nederlands schrijven alsook voor degenen die de meertaligheid van die Eilanden beschrijven.35

Noten

1. Sommige leden van deze gemeenschappen waren twee- of meertalig. Zo waren er leden van de Waalse gemeenschappen die Nederlands kenden (en andersom). In de zestiende eeuw waren er in Londen sommigen die Nederlands kenden, zoals Johannes Radermacher (zie beneden), lid van de Italiaanse kerkelijke gemeente, wellicht om contact te maken met Italiaanse kooplui (Bostoen 1985: 10).
3. De helft van de aliens die in 1593 naar de kerk gingen, waren leden van de Nederlandse kerk. Daarom schat ik dat de helft van alle aliens Nederlands (Dutch) waren, maar dat is enigszins speculatief (Scouloudi 1985: 75).
5. Lincolnshire Archives, hs. BB/1/B/1, p. 50.
6. Het devies van de South Cambridgeshire District Council is dat van Vermuyden: Niet Zonder Arbyt.
7. Hoogstwaarschijnlijk verwijst dit naar Humphrey Lhuyd (1527-68), de bekende Welshe cartograaf en auteur.
8. ERO, D/ABW 10/120.
9. Norfolk Record Office (NRO), DN/INV 26/176B.
10. In de conclusie bespreek ik het mogelijke gebruik van ego-documenten in het privédomein, zoals de brief van Clais van Wervekin, om een idee te geven van de spreektaal.
14. NRO, MC 189/1.
16. Er was ook een arts, Matthias de Rijckje, die les gaf aan Janus Gruterus, toen hij in Norwich woonachtig was (Forster 1967: 41).
17. Grell beweert dat Jacob lerares was.
18. (London Metropolitan Archives) LMA hs. 7412/1 fol. 119-122, in Grell (1996: 121) geciteerd. Grell heeft Dien to Doen, maar dat is hoogstwaarschijnlijk fout.
19. Zie Japikse Band 1, die een aantal brieven bevat van Hop aan Anthonie Heinsius uit Westminister.
20. In een brief die in april 1576 in Sandwich werd geschreven, worden de kerken in Coventry en King’s Lynn vermeld. Het is echter niet duidelijk of die kerken in dat jaar nog bestonden (H 87: III, i, 366-7). Zie ook Van Schelven (1908: 204-5).
21. Zoals boven vermeld wilde een Nederlander in Plymouth, Jaen Heindrickxsen Schaets, een Nederlandse kerk in 1631 in die stad oprichten, maar het is niet bekend of het hem is gelukt (H 87: III, ii, 1524-5).
22. Catherine Wright schat dat er in het decennium na 1680 zo'n 1.000 leden waren in de kerk van Austin Friars (Wright 2007: 627).
23. LMA CLC/197/MS07384.
24. LMA CLC/197/MS07385. Een fotokopie van dit register wordt bij het Norfolk Record Office bewaard: NRO, MS 21490.
25. Een kort begrijp der Leerlingen van die waerachtighe ende eender Ghemeynten, dewelcke door de Ghemeynte der Wylandtsichen te London inghestelt is ...enz.; De Catechismus oft Kinderleere die men te London in de Duyttssche Ghemeynte was gehuysckende.
27. LMA CLC/197/MS07384 (Register of Baptisms in the Dutch Church Colchester 19 October 1645-22 December 1728).
28. ERO, D/DHt/F2/1.
29. Voor Radermacher, zie zijn Album Amicorum (fol. 3r.) voor zijn Latijnse versificatie van het verhaal van de zondaars uit Lucas 7 (en Bostoen (red.) 1999: 26-9); voor Van Meteren zie de opdracht aan Jacob Cool in zijn Commentarien (1608) en zijn bijdrage voor het Album Amicorum van Aegidius Anselmus Anthonisz.
33. E. Van Meteren, Commentarien ofte memorien van-den Nederlandtschen staet, handel, oorloghen ende gheschiedenissen van onsny tyden, etc. mede vervattende eenige haerder ghebuuren handelinghen, beschreven door Emanuel van Meteren; ende by hem voor de tweede ende lestereyse over-sien, verbeterd ende vermeeerderd; oock soo verre ghebrocht totten af-standt van wapenen ende vrede, in’t jaer 1608. Op de eerste pagina wordt vermeld: ‘Ghedruckt op Schotlandt buyten Danswijck: By Hermes van Loven voor den autheur’. ‘Schotlandt buyten Danswijk’ is misschien Amsterdam of wellicht elders. Aan het eind van het boek staat het colofon ‘Tot Londen Voor Emanuel van Meteren///1609’. Dit is ook hoogstwaarschijnlijk onjuist.

Bibliografie


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Appendix: illustraties

*Immigrantenvestigingen van de 16de tot de 18de eeuw*
Kaart van Verenigd Koninkrijk
Klok in de kerk te Crail, Schotland, die werd gegoten in 1613 in Rotterdam
Codification and reallocation in seventeenth-century Paris

Anthony Lodge

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Abstract
This paper takes issue with the traditional (standard-oriented) account of codification in French commonly presented in *histoires de la langue*. In them the seventeenth-century grammarians are portrayed (a) as being engaged, in a detached and rational way, in a programme of intellectual and aesthetic perfection of the language, and (b) as being the country’s linguistic legislators, working (teleologically) to design and set up a standard variety of French for the benefit of future generations. Our paper tries to show, first of all, that when we set the process of codification in French within its broad sociolinguistic context, we see the extent to which it was contingent on wider social concerns: codification did not happen in an atmosphere of serene detachment and rationality but was conditioned throughout by the social tensions endemic in a city the size of Paris. The paper then looks at the particular role of grammarians, notably Vaugelas, and notes that he himself makes no claim to be initiating or directing the process of linguistic change, but merely to be reflecting usage. While the grammarians give preference to salient variants possessing the highest social value (bon usage), it cannot be said that they actually set those values. These emerge from a consensus involving directly or indirectly the whole community. The development in the speech of a big city the size of Paris is traditionally seen in terms of top-down standardisation, but it is preferable to see it in terms of dialect-mixing and koineisation. What we see reflected in many of Vaugelas’ *Remarques* is one of the processes involved in koineisation isolated by Peter Trudgill and labelled as ‘reallocation of variants’: the community tacitly accommodates linguistic variants left over from earlier instances of dialect-contact within its overall scheme of socio-stylistic variation.

Keywords: histories of languages, standardisation, codification, koineisation, reallocation
1. Preliminaries

Traditional histories of French are, by definition, standard-oriented, so they focus primarily on the French of the Capital. Since French is a ‘pure language’ which exists independently of its dialects, language change is treated largely as an endogenous process: changes are driven most of the time by language-internal factors, but with external (i.e. social) agencies, located at the top of Paris society, intervening in a decisive way at crucial phases in the language’s history. This traditional view of Paris’ linguistic history sits uneasily with what we know of the size and complexity of the city’s demography. Since the emergence of Paris as a great metropolis in the thirteenth century, the city looks always to have been a cultural and linguistic melting-pot, a prime locus of dialect-contact. The French of Paris is evidently not a closed dialect located on the periphery, but an open dialect located at the centre, and in dialects of this type linguistic change is to a considerable extent exogenous (see Andersen 1988). It seems preferable, therefore, to view the history of Parisian French not as a series of rectilinear developments within a single dialect, but as a permanent interaction between a multiplicity of dialects, that is, as a continuous process of dialect-mixing, dialect-levelling and koinéization (see Lodge 2004).

In early-modern Paris (sixteenth-eighteenth centuries) an impressive army of grammarians, lexicographers and remarqueurs became engaged in defining and codifying the H-variety of French. Traditional historians see this activity as a detached intellectual/aesthetic exercise conducted exclusively within the confines of the cultivated elite, with little involvement of society at large. In this paper I will try to show that in order to understand the codification movement in French more fully, we need to take into account the speech of the community as a whole and their wider social concerns. I will argue that behind much of the lexicographical and grammatical activity in seventeenth-century Paris lay a deeper and more general sociolinguistic process of ‘reallocation’. This process is associated not with standardisation but with koi neization:

Even after koinéization, ..., some variants left over from the original mixture may survive. Where this occurs, reallocation may occur, such that variants originally from different regional dialects may in the new dialect become social-class dialect variants, stylistic variants, areal variants, or, in the case of phonology allophonic variants. (Trudgill 1986 : 126)
Reallocation involves the whole of the speech community, directly or indirectly, and does not require the intervention of grammarians. The role of grammarians, if any are present, is not to initiate or direct the process, but merely to record it and express their preferences (normally for the benefit of speakers seeking access to higher social circles). The fact that grammarians give explicit expression to the selection of particular variants at a particular time may help their fixation and diffusion, but it does not dictate the choices made in the first place. Let us begin by looking at the traditional treatment of the codification of French before setting out more fully our own somewhat different view of the subject.

2. Traditional approaches to the codification of French

The practice of writing *histoires de la langue* developed during the French Third Republic (1870-1940), when the prime national concern was to strengthen the political and linguistic unity of the country. The function of such histories was evidently to record the rise and ultimate triumph of the standard language (in French *la langue nationale*). They sought not so much to explain the process of standardisation, as to promote it. It is from this prescriptivist view-point that they account for the codification of French which occurred in Paris under the Ancien Régime.

The official narrative of the codification of standard French runs roughly as follows: by the end of the sixteenth century, the exuberance of the Renaissance and the anarchy of the religious wars had left language and society in a state of anarchy and disarray. Norms of social behaviour had collapsed, and a firm hand was required to provide a new focus not only for the French nation but also for the French language. To everyone’s good fortune, Cardinal Richelieu (1585-1642) emerged in the first half of the seventeenth century to put the nation and the language back on track. In 1636 he established the *Académie française* to codify the rules of the French language, drawing on the work of such luminaries as François de Malherbe (1555-1628) and Claude Wavre de Vaugelas (1585-1650). These figures and their successors acted as France’s linguistic law-makers, the architects of a linguistic code akin to the Napoleonic codes of civil law, criminal law, commercial law etc. Even today, French grammar is conceived of by many as a sort of jurisprudence. Once its rules had been explicitly formulated, the codified variety was handed down to the French people as *la langue nationale*, after the Revolution of 1789.
In their treatment of the codification movement, traditional historians never try to escape the prescriptive world of the grammarians they are discussing. The label *langue* (= the French language) refers exclusively to the standard, literary language, non-standard varieties being regarded as simply ‘not French’:

*Ce n’est qu’au début du XVIIᵉ siècle que la *langue* arrive à un point de maturité où elle sera normalisée et stabilisée par la génération classique des Malherbe et des Vaugelas. Jusqu’à cette date elle est encore dans une enfance et dans une adolescence, au cours de laquelle elle s’élabore et se construit.*

(Guiraud 1966: 13)

This metonymic use of the term *la langue* is routine in prescriptivist discourse. In the course of previous centuries, French had been ‘maturing’ and ‘improving’, and it finally ‘came of age’ in the seventeenth century with the intervention of a distinguished body of grammarians, lexicographers and *grands auteurs*, who endowed it with a clarity, elegance and logical character superior to all other languages:

*Le 17ᵉ siècle, qui a cru pouvoir tout plier aux exigences de la raison, a sans doute donné à la *logique* l’occasion de transformer dans le sens de la *raison* la langue française. Aujourd’hui encore il est évident qu’elle répond beaucoup plus que toutes les autres aux exigences de la *logique pure*. (von Wartburg 1962: 170)*

The linguistic norm was in no sense contingent: it was anchored in the universal laws of logic and reason. When the grammarians defined the limits of ‘the language’, they did so in an atmosphere of serene rationality and detachment: they stood somehow outside society, and were supremely unaffected by the tensions and conflicts of their time.

In the official histories of the language the grammarians acted like a disinterested group of technocrats engaged in a piece of long-term language-planning. They were working, of course, in the interests of the Nation, but they received little or no input from the general community of speakers:

The role of ordinary speakers was merely to endorse and implement their prescriptions.

This précis of the way traditional histories deal with the codification in French is perhaps unfairly reductive, but the essential point being made is that the process is narrated with scant regard for the demographic context in which it took place and with no attempt to locate linguistic change plausibly within the whole spectrum of varieties which made up the French language.

3. The social context: Ancien Régime Paris (16th-18th centuries)

3.1 Demographic change

Perhaps the characteristic of Parisian demography which has the greatest bearing on the long-term development of the language of the city is its sheer size: Paris was a very big city, and had been one for some considerable time (see Appendix, Table 1). The history of Parisian demography prior to the seventeenth century is marked by brutal fluctuations: the city gained population in times of plenty – when there was surplus population in the countryside – and shed population in times of dearth – when the rural population was diminished by bad harvests, plagues, wars (see Appendix, Figure 1). A second point of relevance to the city’s sociolinguistic history is that the demography of Paris was maintained not by the exceptional fertility of its inhabitants, but by permanent and large-scale in-migration from the city’s hinterland. As happens in growing cities in the modern world, migrants congregated initially on the outskirts before being assimilated into the population of permanent Parisians. Demographic factors such as these provided the conditions for the city to be a permanent linguistic melting-pot, characterised by high levels of variation and change. This was particularly the case during the first half of the seventeenth century, during which time the city’s population doubled its size.

3.2 Social and cultural change: the Renaissance

Medieval Paris, like most medieval towns, had not been a place for the nobility. The bulk of the city’s population – the mass of ‘ordinary Parisians’ – were to be found on the Right Bank, along with the city’s businessmen, merchants and artisans. The Left Bank was more cosmopolitan with the University attracting students from the four corners of Europe. The social composition on the Ile-de-la-Cité was different again – it was the domain of clerics,
lawyers and civil servants. Where was the King and the aristocracy in all of this? The upper échelons of the nobility (*la grande noblesse*), including the royal family, needed to have residences in town, but the general run of noble dynasties felt much more at home in the country leading *une vie de château*. Medieval towns were primarily the domain of the bourgeoisie, and Paris, despite being the centre of political power in the kingdom, was not totally exceptional.

The Renaissance significantly changed the social and cultural make-up of Europe’s cities: imitating cultural models set by the city-states of Italy – Florence, Venice, Rome – the nobility of sixteenth-century Europe developed a taste for urban life. *Urbanity* replaced *courtesy* as the hallmark of the *Cortegiano* / the gentleman / the honnête homme. A date of symbolical importance in Paris is 1527: in that year, for the first time in its history, the King established the royal court on a permanent basis within the city of Paris, in the Louvre. Thereafter, thrusting aristocrats (*la Cour*) began acquiring town houses in Paris on a large scale, and in so doing came into bitter competition with the established Parisian élites composed of urban patricians (*la Ville*). Many of these were highly cultivated people who regarded the aristocratic new-comers with a mixture of suspicion and disdain.

Social-class divisions in Paris were compounded later in the century by a religious division, which plunged the country into three decades of ferocious civil war, with the nobility (*la Cour*) clinging to the old religion, and the City (*la Ville*) leaning towards Protestantism. The social divide between *la Ville* (the bourgeoisie) and *la Cour* (the aristocracy) persisted throughout the Ancien Régime, flaring up again in the middle of the seventeenth century with the mini-civil war known as the Fronde (1649–1652).

It is within the context of an extremely unstable and conflictual urban society that we must set the process of codification which got fully into motion in the second third of the century. The most influential of the grammatical publications – Vaugelas’ *Remarques sur la langue française* – was published in 1647. It is difficult to see the grammarians operating in an atmosphere of serene rationality and detachment, and avoiding being caught up in the anxieties and insecurities of their time. Their evaluation of particular sociolinguistic variants looks to have reflected pretty accurately their subjective attitudes towards the social groups most associated with them (see Reighard 1980).
4. Codification

The codification movement in seventeenth-century Paris was driven by two sets of forces: firstly, a desire felt by scholars and the social elite to endow French with an H-variety embodying the fixity of Latin and rivalling the international prestige of Italian; secondly, a need for practical help felt by ambitious citizens wishing to move into the élite circles of Paris society. I will mention the first of these only briefly, to focus principally on the second.

4.1 The creation of a new H-variety

Medieval Paris had been a diglossic society where the H-functions were performed by Latin and the L-functions by Old French. During the later Middle Ages this diglossia broke down and a new H-variety emerged within French itself. Over the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries the language acquired the lexical and grammatical tools which enabled it to replace Latin in the H functions. By the sixteenth century, this process was more or less complete, but intellectuals were sensitive to the fact that it lacked the fixity and prestige of Latin (and indeed Italian). Pressure mounted to fix the norms in the H-variety through the production of grammars and dictionaries, and to create a refined form of language for the social élite clearly differentiated from the vernacular speech of the populace. The brief given to the Académie française set up in 1637, in imitation of the Florentine Accademia della Crusca, was to produce a grammar, a dictionary and a manual of rhetoric which would:

[...] nettoyer la langue des ordures qu'elle avoit contractées ou dans la bouche du peuple ou dans la foule du Palais, ou dans les impuretés de la chicane, ou par le mauvais usage des courtisans ignorants… (Statuts de l'Académie française, 1637)

The question inevitably arose as to which group in Paris society would form the basis for the norm? The 'best French' was obviously the French spoken by the 'best people'. But who were the best / the most powerful people? Where did the power in the land lie? With the patricians of the Paris bourgeoisie or with the aristocrats at the king's court? Throughout the Ancien Régime the debate about norms was as much about the social allegiance of grammarians as it was about grammar.
4.2 Practical guidance for ambitious citizens

The second strand to the codification process was even more closely bound in with society and was largely practical in its aims: to give practical advice about the social value of particular linguistic variants which might help citizens trying to rise in society to avoid making linguistic faux pas. The level of public interest in questions pertaining to language and appropriate linguistic behaviour was extraordinarily high throughout the time of the Ancien Régime. This can be gauged by the sheer number of metalinguistic works published between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries (see Appendix, Figure 2).

Why was there such intense interest? Why were Parisians so sensitive to language? It is not by chance that this deluge of metalinguistic activity starts immediately after the establishment of the Court in the Louvre in 1527 and the consequential ‘invasion’ of Paris by sections of the landed gentry. From that time on we have increasing amounts of evidence to show the hyper-sensitivity of the population to the variability of Parisian speech and its role in identifying who was who.

*Barguigner* est un mot de la lie du peuple dont je ferais scrupule d’en user en une lettre que j’escrirois a mon fermier. Au lieu de *sans barguigner* dites *sans marchander, sans hésiter*. C’est en Poitou principalement ... (Vaugelas, *Remarques* ... 1647)

*Barguigner* is a word belonging to the dregs of the populace, which I would hesitate to use in a letter I was writing to one of my tenants. Instead of saying *sans barguigner* say *sans marchander, sans hésiter*. It is mostly in Poitou ...

The most influential and the most interesting of the seventeenth-century grammarians working in the practical advice strand was Claude Wavre de Vaugelas, so let us glance at what he was doing.

Vaugelas did not compose a systematic grammar of French, only a sequence of miscellaneous observations on sensitive / salient linguistic variants. The date of publication of his *Remarques* is significant: 1647. Vaugelas’ linguistic prescriptions, although presented as descriptions of good usage, were not devised on the basis of sober rationality and serene detachment from the world. The Paris in which the provincial Vaugelas found himself was a pretty jumpy place, with no king and with civil war just around the corner. The population of the city had doubled during the previous half-century, principally through in-migration (see Appendix,
Figure 1), and great uncertainty reigned with regard to who was who and who belonged where. Vaugelas saw the gap in the market – the anxieties of the linguistically insecure needed to be assuaged with practical guidance on which socially sensitive variants to use and which to avoid.

Vaugelas’ concern was to sort out first of all which variants belonged in the H-variety (bon usage) and, then allocate the rest to their proper place / function down below:

Voicy donc comme on definit le bon Usage ... c'est la façon de parler de la plus saine partie de la cour, conformément a la façon d'escrire de la plus saine partie des Autheurs du temps. Quand je dis la Cour, j'y compren les femmes comme les hommes, et plusieurs personnes de la ville ou le Prince reside, qui par la communication qu'elles ont avec les gens de la Cour participent a sa politesse. (Vaugelas 1647: t.2.3)

[This then is how one defines good usage ... it is the manner of speaking of the sounder part of the Court, in conformity with the manner of writing of the sounder part of the authors of the day. When I say Court, I include women as well as men, and several people from the town in which the Prince resides, who through their frequent dealings with members of the Court share its polite ways.]

As a provincial outsider, Vaugelas was evidently a perceptive sociolinguistic observer. The purpose of his Remarques was entirely prescriptive, but he based his prescriptions on his own observations of real-life usage, giving his work the air of a description. The usefulness of this work from his readers’ point of view was that it informed them about the social value ascribed to sensitive sociolinguistic variables and about the place to which each belonged within socio-stylistic spectrum.

5. Reallocation

The term ‘reallocation’ was introduced by Peter Trudgill in 1986 and subsequently developed by David Britain (1997):

Even after koinéization, ..., some variants left over from the original mixture may survive. Where this occurs, reallocation may occur, such that variants originally from different regional dialects may in the new dialect become
social-class dialect variants, stylistic variants, areal variants, or, in the case of phonology allophonic variants. (Trudgill 1986: 126)

After an initial koineisation in medieval times Parisian speech in the early modern period remained heterogeneous. It contained numerous phonetic, grammatical and lexical variants, some of which would disappear but others of which would be available for re-cycling, that is for reallocation to specific semantic or grammatical functions or as social and stylistic markers.

In his Remarques Vaugelas enumerates a miscellaneous sequence of sociolinguistic variables, allocating each variant to its place in the socio-stylistic spectrum:

(a) areal variants

Certain variants are characterised as having particular geographical origins, which normally excludes them from polite usage:

**Quel & quelle pour quelque**

C’est une faute familière à toutes les Provinces, qui sont de là Loire, de dire, par exemple, quel merite que l’on ayt, il faut estre heureux, au lieu de dire, quelque merite que l’on ayt. Et c’est une merveille, quand ceux qui parlent ainsi, s’en corrigent, quelque sejour qu’ils facent à Paris, ou à la Cour. (Vaugelas, Remarques ... 1647)

[A fault frequently heard in all the provinces south of the Loire is to say, for example, quel merite que l’on ayt, il faut estre heureux, instead of quelque merite que l’on ayt. And it is highly unusual, for people talking like this to correct it, no matter how long they spend in Paris or at Court]

**Il m’a dit de faire**

Cette façon de parler est venué de Gascogne, & s’est introduite à Paris; mais elle ne vaut rien. Il faut dire il m’a dit que je fisse. (Vaugelas, Remarques ... 1647)

[This manner of speaking came from Gascon and has found its way into Parisian speech; but it is completely worthless. You should say il m’a dit que je fisse.]
(b) social-class dialect variants

Vaugelas hierarchised linguistic variants according to the stratification of Paris society as he perceived it, placing the King and *la Cour* unequivocally at the top:

![Diagram of social-class hierarchy]

The five terms which figure in this chart denote the following: *La Cour* = the aristocratic entourage of the king; *la Ville* = the upper échelons of the Paris bourgeoisie, notably wholesale merchants and financiers; *le Palais* = the legal fraternity operating in the Palais de Justice; *le peuple* = the urban proletariat of Paris; *la province* = the predominantly rural population inhabiting the French provinces.

*Je vais, ie va*

Tous ceux qui sçavent escrire, & qui ont estudié, disent, *je vais*, & disent for bien selon la Grammaire, qui conjugue ainsi ce verbe *ie vais, tu vas, il va*; car lors que chaque personne est differente de l'autre, en matiere de conjugaison, c'est la richesse & la beauté de la langue, parce qu'il y a moins d'équivoques, dont les langues pauvres abondent. Mais toute la Cour dit, *ie va*, & ne peut souffrir, *ie vais*, qui passe pour un mot Provincial, ou du peuple de Paris. (Vaugelas, Remarques ... 1647)

[Anyone who can write or who has ever studied says *je vais* and is quite right to do so, for grammar conjugates this verb *ie vais, tu vas, il va*; for in this way each person of the verb is different as regards conjugation, and this makes for the richness and beauty of the language, because there is less of the ambiguity which abounds in poor languages. But everyone at Court says *je va* and will not tolerate *je vais*, which they regard as provincial or belonging to the low-class people of Paris]
Parce que, & pource que

Tous deux sont bons, mais parce que est plus doux, & plus visité à la Cour, & presque par tous les meilleurs Escrivains. Pource que, est du Palais, quoy qu’à la Cour quelques-vns le dient aussi, particulièrement ceux de la Provinçe de Normandie… (Vaugelas, Remarques … 1647)

[Both are acceptable, but parce que is gentler and more frequent at Court and with the best writers. Pource que belongs in the legal chambers, although certain people at Court do say it, particularly those from the province of Normandy]

(c) stylistic variants

A large number of variants are hierarchised principally according to their allotted place on the stylistic spectrum:

Fortuné

Tantost fortuné, signifie heureux, & tantost malheureux, quand il signifie heureux, il est plus noble que le mot d’heureux, & n’est pas tant du langage familier. On dit vn Prince fortuné, vn Amant fortuné, les isles fortunées. Mais dans la signification de malheureux, il est bas, comme ce pauvre fortuné. (Vaugelas, Remarques … 1647)

[Sometimes fortuné means heureux, sometime malheureux. When it means heureux, it is nobler than the word heureux and belongs less to everyday style. You can say un Prince fortuné, un amant fortuné, les Iles Fortunées. But in the meaning malheureux, it belongs to low style, as in ce pauvre fortuné.]

Des mieux

Il n’y a rien de si commun, que cette façon de parler, il danse des mieux, il chante des mieux, pour dire il danse fort bien, il chante parfaitement bien; mais elle est très-basse, & nullement du langage de la Cour, où l’on ne la peut souffrir…. (Vaugelas, Remarques … 1647)

There is nothing so common as this way of speaking, il danse des mieux, il chante des mieux to say il danse fort bien, il chante parfaitement bien; but it is very low and has no place in the language of the Court, which cannot abide it.]
The official histories of French see grammarians like Malherbe and Vaugelas not as observers, but as legislators. They see them actually setting the values which they ascribe to particular sociolinguistic variants. They ignore the possibility that the development of social norms is a process in which the whole community is involved, directly or indirectly. In all speech communities a tacit consensus is established concerning the social value of the various components in its linguistic repertoire. High-value items are reserved for formal style and associated with speakers of the highest status, low-value items are reserved for informal situations and associated with speakers of low social status. This consensus is not static and immutable, rather it is constantly subject to review and renegotiation. There is constant fluctuation in the value attributed to sociolinguistic variants and in the place allotted to them in the socio-stylistic hierarchy. Variants are constantly subject to the process of re-valuation, constantly subject to reallocation. It seems to me that what Vaugelas and his colleagues were observing and making explicit was the tacit process of reallocation at work in the Parisian speech of their day.

6. Conclusion

At the end of this discussion it is reasonable to ask whether ‘reallocation’ really is the right term for what is happening here: grammarians like Vaugelas were certainly indicating the place in the socio-stylistic hierarchy allocated to variants left over after an earlier koineisation. But is allocation the same thing as reallocation? The term reallocation implies some change in their social value. Were the value and function of all these variables changing in seventeenth-century Paris? Such questions are difficult to answer at this distance in time. What I think we can say is that the term ‘reallocation’ is a useful way of characterising the process which Vaugelas and his fellow grammarians were observing within the speech of Paris. It allows us, firstly, to situate the movement of codification within the community at large and not uniquely in the hands of grammarians standing outside society, and secondly, to see that what was happening in the seventeenth century as part of an ongoing process of koineisation, akin to what occurs as a normal part of the linguistic development of big cities (see Bortoni-Ricardo 1985).
Bibliography


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About the author

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## Appendix

### Table 1  The largest cities in Europe, 1000-1900 (population in thousands)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1000</th>
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<td>Population</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Paris</td>
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<td>Cordoba</td>
<td>450</td>
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<td>Kiev</td>
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<td>45</td>
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<td>100</td>
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<td>Thessalonika</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amalfi</td>
<td>35</td>
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<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rome</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Ghent</td>
<td>70</td>
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<td>City</td>
<td>Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
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<td>550</td>
<td>Paris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milan</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Figure 1 Evolution of the population of Paris

Figure 2 Publication dates of grammatical/lexicographical material in France, 1520-1780
(from Thurot 1881: V-VII)
Small but tough

Diminutive suffixes in seventeenth-century Dutch private letters

Judith Nobels

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Abstract

During the seventeenth century, the use of diminutive suffixes in Dutch was changing: the [ka] suffix was making way for the present-day Standard suffix [ja] – a transition which involved many hybrid suffixes – and the present-day substandard [i] also made its entrance. In this paper, the use of the different types of diminutives in private letters of the seventeenth-century Letters as Loot corpus will be examined for regional and social variation. This corpus consists of 595 letters – 545 of which are private – written by men and women of different social backgrounds. Its contents enable historical (socio)linguists to extensively examine seventeenth-century Dutch from the perspective of the language history ‘from below’ for the first time. However, examining the seventeenth-century diminutive suffixes is a difficult enterprise, for the various spelling forms in the letters frequently obscure the difference between the phonological types of suffixes [i] and [ja]. In order to shed new light on the history of Dutch diminutive suffixes, this paper also presents a method of analysis to categorise particular spelling forms as particular phonological types of suffixes.

Keywords: Seventeenth-century Dutch, diminutives, historical sociolinguistics, language history from below, letters, social variation, regional variation

1. Introduction

1.1 Hertie lief

In 1664 Maritjen Jans, who was probably born in Amsterdam around the year 1633, wrote some letters to her husband Pieter Carelsen, helmsman of the ship Het Geloof: The ship was part of the fleet that was sent to Africa
under Michiel de Ruyter to recapture Dutch trading posts that had been taken over by the British. Such sea journeys were very hazardous, so Maritjen turned to her faith and blessed her husband with the following words:

*hertie lief die got van hemel en van aerde sijt met u van nu tot in der eeuwiche-heit.*

‘Sweetheart, may the Lord of heaven and earth be with you from now until eternity.’

The touching term of address *hertie lief* (literally meaning ‘sweet little heart’) that Maritjen uses repeatedly in her letters suggests a loving relationship between husband and wife, but its presence is certainly not only interesting to die-hard romantics or social historians interested in marriage and relationships. The presence of *hertie lief* or – to be more precise – the form of this term of address excites historical (socio)linguists as well. This is because the noun *hertie* contains a diminutive suffix (spelled as *-ie*) that suggests the sound [i], a suffix that is said to have first occurred in spoken Dutch of the seventeenth century (Van Loey 1970: 230). Maritjen's letters contradict the idea that this suffix did not penetrate the written language until after the seventeenth century and thus seem to contain new information on the history of Dutch diminutive suffixes. And there are more private letters to be found written by ‘ordinary’ people like Maritjen. Almost 600 of such seventeenth-century letters were compiled into a corpus within the *Letters as Loot* project at Leiden University. Maritjen's writing suggests that this new corpus may contain much more data that can change or deepen our knowledge of diminutives in seventeenth-century Dutch.

In this paper, I will examine the use of diminutive suffixes in the *Letters as Loot* corpus. The *Sailing Letters* – the collection of letters used to form the corpus – and the construction of the *Letters as Loot* corpus will be presented in §1.2. In §1.3, I will present the diminutive suffixes that were found in seventeenth-century Dutch and in §2 I will show how often these suffixes actually occur in the private letters of the corpus. It will soon become clear that not every spelling form can be univocally interpreted as a particular phonological type of diminutive suffix: especially forms of the type -je, -ie and -ije are ambiguous. In §3 I will explain the method that was used to assign these ‘tough’ spelling forms to particular phonological types of diminutive suffixes all the same. In §4 the regional distribution of the different phonological types of suffixes will be examined, while the subject of §5 will be the relationship of the diminutive suffixes with the
social variables class, gender and age. The final conclusions of this paper will be drawn in §6.

1.2 From Sailing Letters to Letters as Loot

Sailing Letters

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Netherlands and England were often at war. The two nations battled out no less than four Anglo-Dutch wars and they stood on opposite sides in various other conflicts. Although many lives were lost during these struggles, Dutch historical sociolinguists cannot but be delighted about one of their consequences: the preservation of thousands of letters. It all has to do with the fact that privateering was a popular war tactic.

When an English privateer – a private ship authorized by the English government to confiscate enemy ships – had captured a Dutch vessel, the High Court of Admiralty (HCA) started up a procedure to ensure that the captured ship was indeed a ‘rightful prize’. Privateers had to comply with strict rules and if these rules had not been adhered to when capturing a ship, a privateer would not be allowed to keep his precious loot. In order to gather data about the captured ship, crew members were interviewed and the documents that were found aboard were studied. Literally every scrap of paper on board of a captured vessel was thus confiscated, scrutinized and then stored as evidence in the archives of the HCA. Since these captured Dutch ships carried letters written from the Netherlands to the Dutch colonies and to Dutchmen on ships cruising along the Dutch trade routes and vice-versa, the HCA-archives contain a large number of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch letters, both private and businesslike.

The Dutch letters in the HCA-archives were left undisturbed for decades and were only re-discovered at the end of the twentieth century. In 2005 historian Roelof Van Gelder made a first inventory of the immense archive consisting of thousands of cardboard boxes filled with all sorts of documents, such as plantation accounts, bills of lading, textile samples, ship’s journals, old newspapers, lists of slaves and various inventories. Van Gelder estimated that the HCA archives contain about 38,000 Dutch letters, almost 16,000 of which are private letters. The letters kept in the archives were written by all sorts and conditions of people: by men and women (and occasionally even children) with diverse social backgrounds. There are letters sent by people belonging to the lower social strata (e.g. sailors, cooks, soldiers, gunners and their family) and people belonging to the higher ranks in society (e.g. wealthy merchants, high ranked officers in the navy, plantation owners, lawyers and their family). It is the sheer quantity
of the letters combined with their quality (often of a private nature and written by a large number of different men and women from various social backgrounds) that makes this collection so unique.

Language history ‘from below’
Private letters typically contain more elements of language of immediacy – language used spontaneously with spouses, close relatives and friends – than other types of written or printed documents (Koch & Oesterreicher 1985; Elspaß 2005: 26-27). Until now, Dutch historical (socio)linguists examining this language of immediacy could only rely on private documents mainly written by men from the upper ranks in society. Private documents written by women or by members of lower ranks in society were simply rare and not readily available. Research on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch has thus been more often than not limited to printed texts or written administrative documents and usually focused on standardisation (Van der Wal 2006). Now, however, this recently re-discovered collection of letters in the National Archives of Kew, London, offers historical sociolinguists a new view on the history of Dutch, namely a view ‘from below’: a view on language of immediacy, rather than on prestige variants, and a view on language as it was used by the majority of the population, including the members of the lowest ranks in society (Elspaß 2005: 13, Vandenbussche & Elspaß 2007: 146). This view from below on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century language can start to complete the picture of the linguistic history of Dutch as we know it. For this purpose, the research programme Letters as Loot. Towards a non-standard view on the history of Dutch was started at Leiden University in 2008 under the direction of prof. dr. Marijke van der Wal. The data discussed in this paper stem from the corpus of the subproject of this programme that was focused on seventeenth-century data, namely Everyday Dutch of the lower and middle classes. Private letters in times of war (1665-1674).

Letters as Loot
The seventeenth-century Letters as Loot corpus consists of 595 letters written by 441 different writers and contains slightly less than 250,000 words. The majority of these letters – 545 to be precise – are private documents, written by 408 different writers. Given that Van Doorninck and Kuypers (1993: 14) estimated that the rate of literacy in Amsterdam around 1670 was about 70% for men and 44% for women, it was necessary to examine the letters closely and categorise them into three subgroups on the basis of their coming about: the autographs (letters that were written by the actual
sender of the letter), non-autographs (letters that were written by someone else than the sender) and letters of uncertain authorship. The categorisation was done based on the Leiden Identification Procedure (Nobels & Van der Wal 2009; Nobels 2013: 53-76) and involved examining several elements of the form and content of each letter in combination with archival research.

The autograph letters can be safely used for investigations into the relationship between language use and social variables such as age, gender and social class, given that there is a direct link between the language in the letter and the social characteristics of the sender. For the non-autographs and the letters of uncertain authorship it is often unclear who the actual writer of the letter was, which makes these letters unusable for research of social variables. However, the letters in these last two categories can be used when examining the relationship between linguistic variants and region. The structure of the corpus is shown in table 1.

Table 1  The structure of the seventeenth-century Letters as Loot corpus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-corpus</th>
<th># letters</th>
<th># writers</th>
<th># words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>260</td>
<td>202</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autographs (business)</td>
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<td>41</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autographs Total</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>137,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-autographs (private)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Autographs (business)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-autographs Total</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>45,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters of uncertain authorship (private)</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>62,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters of uncertain authorship (business)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letters of uncertain authorship Total</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>62,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-autographs combined with letters of uncertain authorship (private)</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>107,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-autographs combined with letters of uncertain authorship (business)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-autographs combined with letters of uncertain authorship Total</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>107,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entire corpus (private)</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>225,410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entire corpus</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>441</td>
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</table>

For each letter the region was determined with which the letter writer was probably most closely linked. Almost all of the letters in the entire corpus were linked to the regions that are now the Dutch provinces of Zeeland,
South Holland and North Holland. For the autograph letters in the corpus, the gender, age and social class of the writer were established. The social class to which a writer was assigned depended on the occupation of the writer (if the writer was male) or the occupation of a spouse or father (if the writer was a woman or a child). This classification was based on a framework commonly used among Dutch historians (Looijesteijn 2012: 221). The lower class (LC) consists of labourers in employment, carriers, seamen of low rank, soldiers, servants, manual labourers, beggers, have-nots, vagrants, deserted seamen and soldiers, and day labourers. Members of the lower-middle class (LMC) are typically small farmers, low officials, small shop owners, craftsmen and bargemen. Small entrepreneurs, rich farmers, prosperous shop owners and craftsmen, captains, lower officers, officials, teachers, chaplains, notaries public, and clerks form the upper-middle class (UMC). Writers that were assigned to the upper class (UC) were rich merchants, ship owners, entrepreneurs, large land owners, academics, high ranked officials and officers in the army or the navy. Members of the patriciaat (a group of prominent citizens who are not of noble birth) and the nobility are not represented in the corpus.

A corpus of Dutch private documents of this size and written by so many different writers, both men and women, who belong to various social backgrounds is unparalleled. The seventeenth-century Letters as Loot corpus thus allows us to take a fresh look at various language changes and instances of linguistic variation in seventeenth-century Dutch that have not been studied from a sociolinguistic viewpoint before or that have been studied mostly on the basis of texts that do not typically contain language of immediacy. One such phenomenon that was examined as part of the Letters as Loot programme is the use of diminutive suffixes.

1.3 Dutch diminutive suffixes

Over the past century, extensive research and intense linguistic discussions have resulted in a history of the Dutch diminutives upon which most scholars agree. The suffix -kijn is said to have been the central diminutive suffix for Middle Dutch (Van Loey 1970: 225-231). It gradually changed into -je(n) through palatalisation of the [k] and reduction of the ending. Kloeke, who first described this transition, stated that this change took place first in North Holland in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and that this new suffix later spread to the south and to the north from North Holland (1923: 229). Pée confirmed this theory by showing that the Dutch dialects of the early 20th century contained several diminutive suffixes that illustrate a stage in the change from -kijn to -je, such as [ʧə] or [əɣə]. This process took
place gradually, from word to word and from dialect to dialect, and could be traced back to North Holland, to the western regions of South Holland and to Zeeland (Bakema 1997: 207, Pée 1936-1938: 58-60, 107).

This change from \(-kijn\) to \(-je(n)\) was still in full swing in the seventeenth century, and thus several variants ranging from \(-kijn\) to \(-je(n)\) were being used at the time. In his grammar of Dutch, Van Heule (1625: 91) mentions various diminutive suffixes that were used in different parts of the Low Countries: \(-je\) was used in Holland, \(-kje\) was typical for Flanders, and \(-ke\) was found in Brabant. Evidence for variation can also be found in the grammar of Petrus Leupenius, who claimed that two diminutive suffixes were used in Dutch: \(-ke\) and \(-tje\) (Leupenius 1653: 32-33 in Van der Wal & Van Bree 2008: 211-212). A diminutive suffix that was not mentioned either by Leupenius or Van Heule, but that does seem to have occurred in the seventeenth century, is \([i]\), the use of which seemed to have been restricted to spoken Dutch (Van Loey 1970: 230).

Given that the seventeenth-century *Letters as Loot* corpus contains language of immediacy and language use of people from the lower and middle ranks in society, which have not often been the subject of research on seventeenth-century Dutch before, one can expect to get a fresh view on the use of the diminutive suffixes. One particular issue on which this corpus might shed new light is the use of the \([i]\) suffix, as the language use of Maritjen Jans from Amsterdam illustrates. Was this suffix used or was it not used in seventeenth-century written Dutch? And what does its presence or absence in writing tell us about the age of the \([i]\) suffix? Furthermore, the distribution of the different diminutive suffixes in 20th-century Dutch dialects and in present-day Dutch seem to illustrate the spread of the \(-je\) suffix from North-Holland. Can we catch this spread in the seventeenth-century data as well? And finally, the fact that the autographs in the corpus have been written by more than 200 different writers who belong to different social classes offers the unique opportunity to investigate whether the distribution of the diminutive suffixes in seventeenth-century Dutch was in any way related to social variables, such as gender and social class. In §2 below, I will start by giving an overview of the different spelling forms of diminutive suffixes that were found in the private letters of the *Letters as Loot* corpus.6
2. Diminutive suffixes in the corpus

2.1 Variation

The diminutive suffixes in the private letters of the seventeenth-century *Letters as Loot* corpus show an immense amount of variation. If plural forms of orthographic types that already occur in the singular are ignored, the total number of differently spelled diminutive suffixes is as high as 63. This large amount of variety is partly caused by the fact that each type of diminutive suffix may have several variants depending on the auslaut of the root and the quality of the vowel in the last syllable. For instance, the orthographic type of diminutive suffix -ke can occur as -ke in *vis-ke* (‘fish’), as -ske in *boek-ske* (‘booklet’), or as -eke in *matt-eke* (‘rug’). But even if this variation is ignored, there are as many as 12 different orthographical types found in the private letters of the corpus, as table 2 shows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Variants</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ie</td>
<td>eitien</td>
<td><em>meineitien</em> (proper name)</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>entie</td>
<td><em>marrentie</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etie</td>
<td><em>kommetie</em> (‘bowl’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etien</td>
<td><em>tonnetien</em> (‘barrel’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eties</td>
<td><em>kinnenie</em> (‘barrels’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eutien</td>
<td><em>Meijnneutien</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ie</td>
<td><em>briefie</em> (‘letter’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ien</td>
<td><em>stockien</em> (‘walking stick’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iens</td>
<td><em>pratiens</em> (‘rumours’ ‘talk’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ies</td>
<td><em>perkitties</em> (‘budgies’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>itien</td>
<td><em>meijnitien</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pie</td>
<td><em>wellempie</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tie</td>
<td><em>sontie</em> (‘son’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tien</td>
<td><em>Dochterten</em> (‘daughter’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tiens</td>
<td><em>swaentien</em> (‘swans’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ties</td>
<td><em>jaarties</em> (‘years’)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>iie</td>
<td><em>roockie</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Variants</td>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
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<td>------------------------------</td>
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<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ke</td>
<td>aken</td>
<td><em>tannaken</em> (proper name)</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eke</td>
<td><em>tonneke</em> (<em>barrel</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eken</td>
<td><em>kendeken</em> (<em>child</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ekes</td>
<td><em>hannekes</em> (<em>cockerels</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ekens</td>
<td><em>kijnneken</em> (<em>barrels</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ke</td>
<td><em>soen hantke</em> (<em>handblown kiss</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ken</td>
<td><em>wijften</em> (<em>woman</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kens</td>
<td><em>letterken</em> (<em>letters</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kes</td>
<td><em>weeskes</em> (<em>orphans</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>xken</td>
<td><em>packken</em> (<em>parcel</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>je</td>
<td>etje</td>
<td><em>velletje</em> (<em>skin</em>)</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etjen</td>
<td><em>kappetjen</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>je</td>
<td><em>glaesje</em> (<em>glass</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jen</td>
<td><em>dachjen</em> (<em>day</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jens</td>
<td><em>nichtjen</em> (<em>cousins</em> or <em>nieces</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jes</td>
<td><em>bouckjes</em> (<em>books</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tje</td>
<td><em>huijs vrouwtje</em> (<em>wife</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tjen</td>
<td><em>moertjen</em> (<em>mother</em> or <em>grandmother</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tjes</td>
<td><em>kindertjes</em> (<em>children</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ge</td>
<td>etge</td>
<td><em>tonnetje</em> (<em>barrel</em>)</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etgen</td>
<td><em>annetgen</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etges</td>
<td><em>kinnetges</em> (<em>barrels</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ge</td>
<td><em>meere catje</em> (<em>guenon</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gen</td>
<td><em>maetgen</em> (<em>friend</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gens</td>
<td><em>vatgens</em> (<em>barrels</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ges</td>
<td><em>vatges</em> (<em>barrels</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ghe</td>
<td><em>neelghe</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ghen</td>
<td><em>pakghen</em> (<em>parcel</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ghens</td>
<td><em>achtendeelghe</em> (<em>barrel</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tge</td>
<td><em>leckertge</em> (<em>something sweet</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tgen</td>
<td><em>neeltgen</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tgens</td>
<td><em>soontgens</em> (<em>sons</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tger</td>
<td><em>Maertger</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tges</td>
<td><em>meutges</em> (<em>aunties</em>)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tgn</td>
<td><em>aelgn</em> (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Variants</td>
<td>Examples</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ije</td>
<td>eije</td>
<td>vrouwije ('woman')</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eijen</td>
<td>besteijen ('animal')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etije</td>
<td>maretije (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etijen</td>
<td>annetijen (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etijes</td>
<td>kinnetijes ('barrels')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ije</td>
<td>kaasije ('cheese')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ijen</td>
<td>stuijckijen ('part')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ijes</td>
<td>pockijes (smallpox')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tije</td>
<td>santije ('son')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tijen</td>
<td>seeltijen ('bill/list')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tijes</td>
<td>moijtijes ('fine')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>en</td>
<td>en</td>
<td>grijeten (proper name)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>eten</td>
<td>gangeten ('alleyway')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ten</td>
<td>vrouetten ('wife')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ye</td>
<td>tye</td>
<td>maertye (proper name)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etyen</td>
<td>annetyen (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tyen</td>
<td>eessertyen ('head brooch')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tyes</td>
<td>moytyes ('well')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ye</td>
<td>gertye (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yen</td>
<td>scortyen (pinafore')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>gatyes ('holes')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>is</td>
<td>augurikis ('gherkins')</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tis</td>
<td>voogeltis ('birds')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in</td>
<td>grietin (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tin</td>
<td>trijntin (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etin</td>
<td>annetin (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gie</td>
<td>etgien</td>
<td>jannetgien (proper name)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gie</td>
<td>vatgje ('barrel')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gien</td>
<td>vatgjen ('barrel')</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tgien</td>
<td>aeltgien (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tgin</td>
<td>vrootgjen (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>y</td>
<td>hy</td>
<td>magelynhy (proper name)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ty</td>
<td>krystyenty (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td>gryetty (proper name)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kie</td>
<td>ickie</td>
<td>annickie (proper name)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>che</td>
<td>che</td>
<td>elsche (proper name)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>63 variants excluding plural forms, 88 variants including plural forms</td>
<td>1158</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The -ie suffix is without doubt the most frequent diminutive suffix in the private letters of the corpus. It occurs in no less than 43% of the cases. -Ke and -je come in second and third place respectively, each occurring much
less often than -ie: -ke takes up 19% of the occurrences and -je takes up 11% of the occurrences. The suffixes -ge and -ije follow closely with 9% of the occurrences each, but the 7 remaining orthographic types of suffixes (-en, -ye, -i, -gie, -y, -kie, -che) occur only occasionally.

2.2 Issues

The 1158 occurrences of diminutive suffixes and the variation witnessed in table 2 raise high expectations for the analyses that are to follow. Two issues, however, need to be dealt with before turning to the analyses.

First of all, the examples in table 2 illustrate that many of the diminutive suffixes (805 in total) are found in proper names. This is problematic, because diminutive suffixes in proper names might be fossilized. It is impossible to say whether a writer used a specific suffix in a proper name because he/she would use this suffix spontaneously when forming a diminutive or whether the writer only uses this suffix because it is a fixed part of the name he/she wants to write down. Take for instance the letter written by Adam Erckelens. Adam uses -ke suffixes to form diminutives of two nouns: briefken 'letter' and pacxken 'parcel'. However, he refers to a family member as Catharintie nicht 'niece/cousin Catherine' with the suffix -ie. Does this mean that Adam uses both -ke and -ie suffixes spontaneously, or is he using his niece's/cousin's name as it is being used by the rest of his family? Since the use of diminutive suffixes in proper names may be fossilized, I will exclude diminutives of proper names from the data. Unfortunately, this radically diminishes the number of occurrences that can be examined for their relationship with region and social variables from 1158 to 353.

The second issue has to do with the ambiguity of some spelling forms, due to the fact that the letter <j> was a fairly young phenomenon. In the second half of the seventeenth century it was not unusual to represent both the vowel [i] and the semi-vowel [j] by <i>, <j>, <ij>, or <y>. For instance, one can find both spellings iaer and jaer for [ja:r] ‘year’ and iet and jet for [it] ‘something’. This means that diminutive suffixes like -ie, -je, -ije, and -ye cannot be straightforwardly interpreted. This is highly inconvenient, because if we do not find a way to distinguish between the two phonological types of diminutive suffixes [i] and [jə], it is impossible to examine their distribution. To cope with this problem I devised a strategy for disambiguating the occurrences of the -ie, -je, -ije, and -ye diminutive suffixes, which will be discussed in §3 below.
3. Getting beyond spelling

3.1 The <ie>, <ije>, <je> and <ye> spellings

The method that I adopted to identify the ambiguous spelling forms of diminutive suffixes as representations of a particular phonological type was to closely examine the spelling forms used throughout the letter(s) of a specific writer. Such an examination sometimes shows how the spelling of the ambiguous diminutive suffixes may best be interpreted.

The first step in the process is to look for words that contain the same graphemes as the diminutive suffixes under examination and to establish whether these words would be expected to be pronounced with [i] or [jə]. Take for instance the spelling of the diminutive suffixes in two letters written by Dominicus Pottey. The diminutives used by Dominicus are: stuijckies (‘pieces’), fergatie and fergattie (‘frigate’), nightie (‘niece’), kinderties (‘children’), and glaesie (‘glass’). All diminutives have suffixes of the -ie type. When looking at the spelling in the rest of Dominicus’ letter, it becomes evident that this <ie> spelling turns up in words that are very likely to be pronounced with [i]: e.g. sien (‘to see’), die (‘who’ or ‘which’), niet (‘not’), vrienden (‘friends’), colonie (‘colony’), apparentie (‘appearance’), and famillie (‘family’). Given that Dominicus’ spelling in the rest of the letter seems fairly consistent and given that the <ie> spelling for an [i] pronunciation also occurs frequently in morphemes other than diminutive suffixes, we can assume that when Dominicus Pottey spelled his diminutive suffixes as <ie>, the phonological type represented would be [i].

However, this first step alone does not ensure absolute certainty about the phonological type of diminutive suffix that is being represented. There is still the possibility that the letter writer used <ie> not only for [i], but also for [jə]. It would thus add some security to establish that the letter writer used a different spelling for words that probably contained [jə] rather than [i] in their pronunciation. Thus, step two of the process is examining whether the letter(s) contain(s) other spelling forms that seem to represent a different phonological element than that which seems to be used in diminutive suffixes. In the writings of Dominicus Pottey, this seems easy to establish. Dominicus uses the grapheme <j> where we would expect to find [j] in the pronunciation, namely in the words majoor ‘major’, ja ‘yes’, and junij ‘June’. This suggests that Dominicus made a clear distinction between the phonological elements [i] and [j] by using different graphemic representations for them. Let us look at two other examples to illustrate the precise procedure.
The diminutive occurring in Jan Eghbertz’ letter is *vatie* (‘barrel’). Since Jan’s other words with <ie> all represent the pronunciation [i] (*brief* ‘letter’, *die* ‘who’ or ‘that’, *Pieter* ‘Peter’, *niet* ‘not’, *hier* ‘here’), as he spells words containing a [j] with <j> (*Jan* the first name ‘John’, *jans* a surname much like ‘Johnson’, *jannewary* ‘January’, *juny* ‘June’), and since there is not a single <i> spelling to be found that can be linked to the sound [j], it seems safe to conclude that Jan’s diminutive suffix -ie represents [i].

There are of course also letter writers whose spelling habits do not offer a clear picture. Take for instance the letter of Grietje Jans from Amsterdam to her husband Sijewert Leenders. The diminutive occurring in Grietje’s letter is *veschertje*, meaning ‘a fisherman’ or ‘a fishing boat’. When coming across this diminutive with <je> spelling, one is inclined to categorise it as representing [ja], for <j> in the middle of a word is rarely a reflection of another sound. To corroborate this, Grietje seems to use the spelling <j> in words where a sound [j] is expected. At least Grietje can be shown to use a capital letter that should probably be interpreted as <J> in these two cases: *Jans* [jɑns] a surname much like ‘Johnson’ and *Jonge* [jɔŋə] ‘young’. However, if the spelling in the rest of Grietje’s letter is taken into account, the categorisation must be reconsidered, because Grietje uses the spelling <je> four times in words where we would definitely expect the sound [i]: *vriendelijke* [vrintələkə] ‘friendly’, *grjetje* [ɣriti] or [ɣritjə] a proper name for women, *brjef* [brif] ‘letter’, and *tjet* [tit] ‘time’ or ‘period’. On the basis of these various spelling forms, it is impossible to categorize Grietje’s diminutive suffixes as either representing [ja] or [i].

### 3.2 The result of the phonological categorisation

Out of the 353 diminutive suffixes remaining in the corpus of private letters (after having excluded 805 diminutive suffixes occurring in proper names) 298 suffixes could be ascribed to a specific phonological type of suffix. I chose to assign the different spelling forms to 6 different categories of phonological types: a first category of presumed [ka] suffixes, a category of suffixes somewhere in between the velar type and the palatal type for all the orthographic representations containing the grapheme <g>, a category of presumed [ja] suffixes, a category of presumed [i] suffixes, a category of suffixes that might represent either [ja] or [i], and finally a residual category for the rare suffixes that still seem to represent other phonological types.

Table 3 shows the distribution of the different types of suffixes in the corpus. The most popular suffix appears to be the [i] suffix: of the 353 diminutive suffixes no fewer than 134 suffixes (almost 38%) could be identified as [i] types. Next in line is [ja] with 20% of the suffixes. However, for
55 diminutive suffixes (16% of the total) it remained unclear whether they should be interpreted as [jə] or as [i]. This means that the percentages of [i] and [jə] suffixes are in reality higher than presented in this table. The [kə] suffixes occur in 14% of the cases and the suffixes that represent a suffix in between the velar and the palatal type take up 11% of the cases.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[jə]</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i] or [jə]</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[kə]</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In between velar and palatal</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>353</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This large amount of [i] suffixes in the letters changes existing ideas about this relatively young palatal suffix: while Schönfeld (Van Loey 1970: 230) suggested that the diminutive suffix [i] must have occurred for the first time in the seventeenth century, but only in spoken Dutch, the data from the *Letters as Loot* corpus show that the [i] suffix did occur in seventeenth-century writings, albeit in private documents that are more closely related to the language of immediacy. Maybe this diminutive suffix in itself is also slightly older than commonly assumed.

Now that has been established which spelling forms of diminutive suffixes represent which phonological types, it is possible to examine the distribution of the phonological types of suffixes in relation to several independent variables. Let us start with examining regional variation in §4, given that regional variation in the use of diminutives was already described in the seventeenth century and is still visible in present-day Dutch.

## 4. Regional variation

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the different phonological types of suffixes across region. It is based on all the private letters linked to Zeeland, South Holland, the city of Amsterdam and the rest of the province of North
Holland (450 letters written by 331 different writers), which yielded 325 occurrences of diminutive suffixes in total.

It is immediately clear from Figure 1 that there was regional variation in the distribution of the different phonological types of diminutive suffixes in the second half of the seventeenth century, as was expected on the basis of contemporary remarks and regional variation in present-day Dutch. Zeeland, the province located farthest to the South and thus further away from North Holland than South Holland, has the most [kə] suffixes. About 35% of the diminutive suffixes used in the letters from Zeeland are of the [kə] type, while this suffix does not take up more than 10% of the occurrences in the other regions. The palatal suffixes ([i], [jə] and the category of [i] or [jə]) are clearly used most frequently in the province of North Holland (in the city of Amsterdam as well as in the rest of the province) in which they take up more than 80% of the occurrences.

The province of South Holland seems to be a transitional region: more than 40% of the diminutive suffixes used in the letters linked to this region are suffixes that can be categorised as in between the palatal and the velar categories. South Holland is geographically situated in between Zeeland (towards the South) and North Holland (towards the North) and the orthography of the diminutive suffixes in its letters seems to reflect
this position. The high frequency of the ‘in between’ suffixes suggests that the South Holland letter writers were frequently using diminutive suffixes that were not completely velar any longer, but not completely palatal yet either. This was reflected in their orthography with the use of -ge suffixes: the traditional -ke diminutives did not represent their pronunciation any longer, but -ie, -je and -ije were still a bridge too far.

Figure 1 thus clearly shows that the palatal diminutive suffixes indeed spread from North Holland, although the data cannot be used to support Pée’s claim that the suffix [jə] originated in North Holland (1936-1938: 229). The suffix [jə] was clearly being used as often in North Holland as it was used in South Holland and Zeeland by the second half of the seventeenth century. This may be due to the large amount of time that had passed already since the first occurrences of [jə] in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

The [i] suffix seems to be most strongly linked to North Holland and in particular to the city of Amsterdam: it occurs in 46% and in 60% of the cases respectively. Even though in each region a number of suffixes remain ambiguous, it is indisputable that [i] has the largest share in Amsterdam and in North Holland: even if all the ambiguous spellings in Zeeland (13%) and in South Holland (10%) would represent [i] and all the ambiguous spellings in Amsterdam and North Holland would represent [jə], the share of [i] in Zeeland and South Holland would still not match the share of [i] suffixes in Amsterdam and North Holland.

Even though the results do not offer a clear picture of the origin of [jə], the variable region has proved to have quite some influence on the distribution of the phonologically different diminutive suffixes. Will the social variables class, gender and age prove to be influential as well?

5. Social variation

As explained in §1.2, only autograph letters are suitable for an analysis of the relation between language use and social variables. This diminishes the number of letters that can be used and thus the number of occurrences that can be studied. Since the previous section has also shown that there is a large amount of regional variation, the influence of the social variables should ideally be examined per region in order to avoid distortions of the data. Unfortunately, the result of these precautions is that the data for Zeeland and South Holland become too scarce or too badly distributed across gender and social class to yield any results. Only the region of North
Holland (Amsterdam and the rest of the province combined) yielded just enough data to examine the distribution of the different diminutive suffixes across social class, gender and age. Of the 107 diminutive suffixes occurring in private autograph letters linked to North Holland, 90 were assigned to one of the following categories of phonological suffixes: [kə], [jə], [i] or ‘other’. This last category contains the rare suffixes [tə] and [ən]. The 17 remaining suffixes are doubtful cases that might represent either [i] or [jə]. Let us examine what the distribution of these different phonological types of suffixes can reveal about the relationship between the use of particular diminutive suffixes and social variables in North Holland in the second half of the seventeenth century.

5.1 Social class

Table 4 shows how the different suffixes are distributed across the different social classes in the 107 private letters of the corpus that are linked to North Holland and that were written by 90 different writers whose social class is known. Out of the 107 diminutive suffixes, 87 were found in letters written by writers whose social class is known; the 20 diminutive suffixes linked to writers whose social class is unknown have not been taken into account. Unfortunately, there were no diminutive suffixes found in the private autograph letters written by members of the lower class from North Holland.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social class</th>
<th>[kə]</th>
<th>[jə]</th>
<th>[i]</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LMC</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMC</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UC</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although we are not dealing with a very large number of tokens per social class and we should thus be careful with conclusions, it is immediately clear from the table that the upper class stands out. Firstly, while the [kə] suffixes occur seldom in the lower- and upper-middle class, they occur in 36% of the cases in the upper class. Secondly, while [i] seems to be a very popular diminutive suffix in the lower-middle class and in the upper-middle class (occurring in at least 38% and 53% of the cases), it does not occur in the letters written by members of the upper class. Thirdly, the presence of the [jə] suffix is greater in the upper social class than in the lower-middle and upper-middle class. In the lower-middle class the percentage of [jə] suffixes
probably lies somewhere between 19% and 50% (depending on how many of the unknown suffixes actually represent [jə]) and in the upper-middle class it is situated between 22% and 40%, while in the upper-class it takes up 55% of all the occurrences. There is thus no doubt that the writings of the upper class contain the highest proportion of [jə] suffixes, although we do not know exactly how different this share in the upper class is from the shares of [ja] in the two lower classes. It is quite likely though that most of the unknown suffixes rather represent [i] than [ja] and that therefore the share of [jə] suffixes in letters from the upper class is substantially larger than that in letters from the lower social classes. This assumption is based on the fact that the larger part of the spelling forms of the category 'Unknown' (thus either [i] or [ja]) are of the <ie> or <ije> type. All of the <ie> spellings in the corpus that could be categorized successfully turned out to represent [i] and so did half of the <ije> spellings in the corpus that could be categorized successfully. One would thus assume that unknown spelling forms are more likely to represent [i] rather than [ja]. However, since the unknown suffixes are simply impossible to categorize with certainty, it is important to handle them with the utmost caution.

For each class there remain a number of suffixes of which it is unclear whether they represent the [ja] or the [i] category. The consequence is that my conclusions cannot be definite. If the unknown suffixes for the lower-middle class would all turn out to be [i] suffixes, for example, while the unknown suffixes for the upper-middle class would all turn out to represent [ja], this would mean that the lower-middle class and upper-middle class actually differ a lot from each other. But if all the unknown suffixes from the lower-middle class and for the upper-middle class would turn out to be [ja] suffixes, the lower-middle class and the upper-middle class would actually resemble each other more closely. Although I suspect that it is most likely that the larger part of the unknown suffixes represent [i] and that the lower-middle class thus uses the [i] suffix considerably more often than the upper-middle class, the only thing that remains certain, however, is the fact that the upper class writers behave differently. They use the [kə] and [jə] suffixes more often than the other writers, while they cannot be shown to use the [i] suffix.

5.2 Gender

Table 5 shows the results for gender, based on 122 autographs written by the 104 different writers of autograph letters in North Holland. The large number of unknown diminutive suffixes in the letters of women makes it very difficult to draw conclusions on the use of [jə] and [i] suffixes related
to gender. Although all possible distributions of the 7% and the 32% of unknown suffixes with men and women across the [i] and [ja] suffixes are imaginable, it is more likely that a large number of these unknown suffixes actually represent the [i] suffix. Therefore I suspect that the [i] suffix was actually more popular with female writers than with male writers in North-Holland and that the [ja] suffix was slightly more popular with male writers.

Table 5 The distribution of the different phonological forms of the diminutive suffixes in North Holland across gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>[ka]</th>
<th>[ja]</th>
<th>[i]</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Age
The last social variable to be examined is age. In table 6 the distribution of the different phonological forms of the diminutive suffixes is shown across the three different age groups. The table is based on 114 autographs written by the 97 different writers of North Holland whose age is known.

Table 6 The distribution of the different phonological forms of the diminutive suffixes in North Holland across age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>[ka]</th>
<th>[ja]</th>
<th>[i]</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;30</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-50</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;50</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data suggest that the oldest generation in North Holland are keener users of the suffix [ka] than their younger peers, since writers older than 50 use this suffix in 17% of the cases, while younger letter writers use it in only 7% and 6% of the cases. The number of suffixes that cannot be categorised as [ja] or [i] again makes it very difficult to draw conclusions. However, the numbers across the different age groups are quite similar overall for [ja], [i] and the unknown suffixes. If one assumes that most of the unknown suffixes can be interpreted as [i], the only conclusion that can be drawn is that the oldest generation uses the [i] suffix slightly less often than the younger generations.
5.4 Archaic forms, generally accepted ones and relatively young variants

What do these distributions across class, gender and age reveal about the use, and maybe also about the evaluation of the different types of diminutive suffixes in seventeenth-century North Holland? Firstly, the relatively large share of the [kə] suffix in letters of writers older than 50 can be explained most naturally. This diminutive suffix was clearly starting to become archaic in seventeenth-century Holland as it was being replaced by the palatal variants. The fact that it occurs most often with the oldest group of letter writers simply reflects this change in apparent time. At the same time, not only older writers, but also letter writers belonging to the upper class use [kə] more often than average. This can be explained by the fact that archaic forms are frequently seen as more distinguished forms. In 1625 the grammarian Van Heule marked this suffix as the best diminutive suffix (1625 : 91) and in 1653 Petrus Leupenius (1607-1670), a minister and grammarian, first mentions [ka] when discussing diminutive suffixes, before admitting that [ja] is actually being used more often for the sake of a fluent pronunciation (1653: 32). Using the [ka] suffix thus seems to be an older writing convention and it is thus not surprising that specifically the upper-class letter writers use this suffix more often than writers of the lower-middle and lower class. They are more likely to have had a good education and a lot of writing practice (Frijhoff & Spies 1999: 237-238) and were therefore probably more aware of the conventions of written Dutch.

However, even though [ka] was used more often in writing by members of the upper class than by members of other classes, [ka] was not the preferred form for writers of the upper class. Their preferred written form was [ja], as can be gathered from table 4, while the suffix [i] had the largest share in writings from the other social classes. This fits with the idea that [ja] was a variant considered to be accepted in written language – which is illustrated by the fact that it made it to be the standard Dutch variant today – while [i] was a variant which seemed to be used more in the spoken language (Van Loey 1970: 230). Social groups with less writing experience – typically the lower social classes and women in general – are expected to use variants typical of spoken language more often when writing than social groups with more writing experience. This is exactly what we see as far as social class is concerned and what I suspect to be true for gender: although the data are not conclusive, it seems likely that men used the [ja] suffix slightly more often than women did, while women used the [i] suffix slightly more often than men did.
The fact that [i] seems to be used less frequently by the oldest group of writers suggests that it was still an upcoming form in Dutch. However, [i] must have already been quite a popular diminutive suffix in the second half of the seventeenth century, since even the oldest letter writers often use it. Thus one can assume that it must have been around for quite some time already: [i] does not seem to be a very recent innovation in the language use of the seventeenth-century writers and probably occurred earlier than Schönfeld (Van Loey 1970: 230) suggested.

6. Conclusion

In this paper the distribution of the different diminutive suffixes in the seventeenth-century Letters as Loot corpus was analysed. After solving the problem of interpreting certain spelling forms, the relationship between the variables of region, social class, gender and age on the one hand and the distribution of the diminutive suffixes on the other was examined. This resulted in several findings. First of all, it has become apparent that the [i] suffix was not restricted to spoken Dutch in the seventeenth century. What is even more, it is the most popular diminutive suffix in the private letters of the corpus. That [i] has long been believed to be restricted to spoken language is probably due to the fact that until now there has been little attention for the language of immediacy in the historical linguistics of Dutch. However, [i] does still seem to be associated more closely with spoken language than with written language, as is evident from the fact that it is most popular with those groups of writers that are most likely to have a limited knowledge of Dutch writing conventions: women and members of the lower social classes in general.

Secondly, the regional distribution of the different phonological types of suffixes showed that the palatalized variants occurred earlier in North Holland than they did in Zeeland, where the [ka] suffix was still quite popular. The palatalized variants appear to have spread from North Holland southwards to Zeeland, with South Holland as a clear transitional region.

Thirdly, social variables have been shown to influence the distribution of the different phonological types of diminutive suffixes to a certain extent in North Holland. The variable age could be linked to innovations and old conventions: the older letter writers were keener to use [ka], which was linked to old writing conventions, than the younger letter writers, while the suffix [i] – a relatively new diminutive suffix – was used slightly more often by the youngest group of letter writers. Social class and gender proved to be
two other influential social variables that are likely linked to differences in writing practice. Women and members of the lower social classes, groups which in general have less writing practice than men and members of the upper social classes, showed to behave similarly in the use of diminutive suffixes. People with less writing practice in general used fewer diminutive suffixes that fitted in with an old ([kə]) or a new ([ja]) convention in writing and instead seemed to prefer suffixes typically associated with spoken language ([i]).

The uniqueness of the Letters as Loot corpus has thus resulted in new insights in the history of the Dutch diminutive suffixes. This is certainly a result of the Anglo-Dutch wars that Maritjen Jans from Amsterdam would not have expected when she was writing her letters in 1664.

Notes

1. This article is based on chapter 8 from my dissertation (Nobels 2013) which was written at Leiden University within the research programme Letters as loot. Towards a non-standard view on the history of Dutch (see www.brievenalsbuit.nl), funded by The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). I would like to thank Tanja Simons, the editors and the anonymous reviewer for their comments on the draft version of this article.
2. All the letters that have been examined in the Letters as Loot project can be consulted online at http://brievenalsbuit.inl.nl.
4. Careful readers will notice that the number of letter writers in the subcorpora do not always neatly add up. For instance: the total number of letter writers in the subcorpus of autographs (232) is not equal to the sum of the number of writers in the subcorpus of private autographs (202) and the number of writers in the subcorpus of business autographs (41). This is due to letter writers who have written several letters that belong to different subcorpora. When these subcorpora are then combined, the total number of writers is not simply the sum of writers in the separate subcorpora.
5. This palatalization of [k] was likely caused by occurrences of [t] in front of [k] (as in straetkijn ‘street’), rather than by the presence of [i] in the suffix (Marynissen 1998: 253-254).
6. I will only focus on the private letters of the corpus, since these letters can be expected to contain language of immediacy.
7. The phonological interpretation of the remaining suffixes is not always straightforward either, but this is less urgent, since the other ambiguous spelling forms do not occur very frequently. A discussion about the phonological interpretation of the other types of diminutive suffixes can be found in Nobels (2013: 199-200).
8. For this second step of the method it is unfavourable, however, that words containing [ja] or [jj] in their pronunciation are not ubiquitous and that [j] is sometimes represented by what seems like a capital letter at the onset of words, requiring some study to be identified as <j> or as <i>. These facts often make it difficult to discover the necessary extra evidence
in some letters. The success of this procedure depends heavily on the length of the letter(s) per writer and the specific words used by this writer.

9. The data for gender are based on more letters written by more writers than the data for social class in §5.1. This is because I was able to identify the gender of each writer in the corpus, while it was impossible to determine each writer's social class. The letters that were written by writers whose social class is unknown were not examined in §5.1, while they are taken into account when examining the relation between diminutive suffixes and gender.

References


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Abstract
The paper discusses variation and change in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch, reviewing the importance of two types of explanation, the first focusing on dialect contact resulting from immigration as the locus of change, the second stressing the importance of writing conventions. Using a unique corpus of private letters from all social ranks, we discuss various phonological and morphosyntactic variables. We argue that ego-documents offer unique opportunities for historical (socio)linguistics, providing an unprecedented view of the vernacular. At the same time, writers did not consistently put their local dialect to paper. Writing practices such as morphological and syllabic orthographic principles caused the written code to move away from the vernacular. Supralocalization and graphemization, which are topics at the core of historical sociolinguistics, have to be taken into account by anyone interested in the communicative strategies which ordinary people used when they needed to write. At the same time, since supralocalization and graphemization may impede research on spoken language phenomena, they should also be addressed by researchers primarily interested in spoken language phenomena such as dialect contact.

Keywords: language variation, language change, language contact, contact-induced change, writing conventions, supralocalization, Dutch

1. Introduction

The present paper discusses variation and change in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch, reviewing the importance of two types of explanation, the first focusing on dialect contact resulting from immigration as the locus of change, the second stressing the importance of writing conven-
tions. While it is uncontested that dialect contact shapes and reshapes the form of old and new dialects (e.g. Trudgill 1986, Kerswill 2002), it is a matter of debate to what extent spoken language interactions between speakers of different dialects can be investigated on the basis of written documents from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Rutten & van der Wal 2011). This means that it is conceivable and even plausible that dialect contact resulting from immigration has shaped urban vernaculars in the western parts of the Northern Netherlands, as argued by Boyce Hendriks (1998), Goss (2002), Goss & Howell (2006), and Howell (2006). It is uncertain, however, in the absence of spoken language materials, whether this can be investigated using written language. In any case, the possibly interfering influence of supralocal writing conventions should be taken into account. Focusing on these issues, we link up with discussions in the historical sociolinguistic literature on the status of so-called ego-documents such as private letters and diaries (e.g. Martineau 2013), in particular, on their ‘degree of orality’. We will argue that ego-documents are not so much unique sources because they offer direct access to the spoken language, but because they are the complex and interesting result of mainly local, or localizable linguistic features, and supralocal conventions primarily linked to the written code.

As a consequence of their ‘hybrid’ nature (Martineau 2013), ego-documents bring us closer to the spoken language than any other text type. At the same time, however, they may conceal the vernacular by their adherence to writing conventions. In studies focusing on dialect contact and immigration, this hybrid nature of ego-documents has not been fully explored. The existence of writing conventions, supralocal practices (cf. Nevalainen & Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2006), or Schreiblandschaften (Von Polenz 2000: 159) is of particular importance from the perspective of dialect contact and koineization, as they all entail the divergence of the spoken and the written codes. Therefore, we may consider the question whether writing conventions may hamper research on dialect contact and koineization.

In section 2, we will introduce the sources used for the present paper. In sections 3 and 4, we will discuss a series of phonological case studies focusing on the relation between local and supralocal linguistic features. We will argue that research on dialect contact is seriously impeded by the existence of writing conventions, many of which are supralocal. In section 5, we zoom in on a morphosyntactic feature that has been claimed to change under the influence of dialect contact resulting from immigration. We will show that our data do not lead to the conclusion that immigration was a decisive factor in this particular change.
2. The data

The data for this paper are taken from a corpus based on the collection of so-called sailing letters. The sailing letters collection, kept in The National Archives in Kew, London, comprises many different text types, from ships’ journals, plantation accounts and lists of slaves to private and commercial correspondence. These documents, mainly written in Dutch, were aboard ships that were taken by privateers during times of war in which England and the Dutch Republic stood at opposite sides. Private letters, selected from this collection, are at the core of the Letters as Loot research programme, directed by the second author. The original manuscripts of the letters were photographed, on the basis of which a corpus of diplomatic transcriptions has been compiled at Leiden University.

The Letters as Loot corpus currently comprises approximately 2,000 Dutch letters (mainly private letters) from all social ranks, men as well as women. They date from two periods, the 1660s/1670s, the period of the second and third Anglo-Dutch Wars, and the 1770s/1780s, the period of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch War and the American War of Independence. These letters were mostly sent to and from seaport towns such as Amsterdam in North Holland, Rotterdam in South Holland, and Middelburg and Vlissingen in Zeeland, but addressees and senders were also found in smaller towns such as Enkhuizen and Hoorn in North Holland, and Harlingen in Friesland. Most of the letters in the Letters as Loot corpus are linked to North Holland, Amsterdam, South Holland and Zeeland, with additional substantial portions of letters linked to Flanders and Friesland. A map of the main dialect areas within the present-day Dutch language area is presented in Figure 1.

Amsterdam, which is geographically and dialectologically part of Holland, and which is located in the south of the present-day province and dialect area of North Holland, is kept apart in our research for its unique demography. The city attracted many immigrants, throughout the Early and Late Modern periods, from both the Southern Netherlands and from the East and North-East, i.e. from the Northern Netherlands and from the German and Scandinavian language areas (Howell 2006: 214). Successive waves of immigration turned Amsterdam into a metropolis, with, for instance, c. 175,000 inhabitants in 1650, when other cities in the Northern Netherlands such as Rotterdam, Leiden and Middelburg counted between 30,000 (Rotterdam, Middelburg) and 67,000 (Leiden) inhabitants (Howell 2006: 213).
The detailed make-up of the subcorpora used for the case studies presented here will be given in the appropriate sections.

3. Local phonology and supralocal orthographic traditions

It has been claimed many times before that ego-documents, and in particular private letters, offer an unprecedented view on the colloquial language of past periods. As traditional language histories are often 'primarily concerned with unification and standardization processes' (Elspaß 2007: 3), and are often mainly based on literary texts, the language of large parts of the
population remains unknown to us. The approach to language history ‘from below’, on the other hand, focuses on non-literary, everyday language, presumably found in ego-documents such as letters and diaries from lower and middle-class writers. The language of these ego-documents is considered to be as close to spoken language as possible (e.g. Elspaß 2005, 2012, Elspaß et al. 2007). But how close is “as close as possible”? In recent research into sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch on the basis of ego-documents, the traditional account in terms of unification and standardization has been criticized. Drawing on theories of dialect contact and koineization (Trudgill 1986, Kerswill 2002) and using letters and diaries from immigrant families and their offspring, studies such as Boyce & Howell (1996), Boyce Hendriks (1998), Boyce Hendriks & Howell (2000), Goss & Howell (2006), and Howell (2006) tried to reconstruct the formation of new Dutch urban vernaculars in the western part of the Netherlands, mainly in the province of Holland (Amsterdam, The Hague). Since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were characterized by mass immigration from people from other dialect and language areas to Holland, dialect leveling and koineization obviously took place. The studies mentioned used ego-documents in order to trace the ongoing leveling and focusing of variants. Dialect leveling, focusing, and koineization are, however, the result of contact between speakers, i.e. they are spoken language features which, in these studies, were investigated as they occur in writing. The ego-documents, therefore, were assumed to have been written ‘in pure Holland dialect’ (Boyce Hendriks & Howell 2000: 273) and were considered as ‘vernacular letters’ (Howell 2006: 219). Nevertheless, it was admitted that ‘certain orthographic traditions originating in the southern Netherlands continued to influence the written language in Holland’ (Howell 2006: 210). We would like to stress that just these orthographic traditions may veil dialectal variation in written texts of the past.

In a previous study on what we call the degree of orality of private letters (Rutten & van der Wal 2011), we have argued that the private letters in our corpus are indeed closer to the spoken language than any other known source of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch, which renders them excellent material for historical (socio)linguistics. The letters appear to reveal earlier orthographical practices, well-known from Middle Dutch manuscripts, but generally not found in Early and Late Modern Dutch texts. The variables discussed in Rutten & van der Wal (2011) include:

1. the representation of reflexes of Germanic sk, e.g. in *schrijven* ‘to write’, with either the supralocal grapheme <sch> in the onset representing [sχ], or with <sc> or <sk> representing the North Holland pronunciation [sk]
the representation of lengthened [a:] from West-Germanic short vowels (e.g. water ‘water’) as opposed to reflexes of Proto-Germanic ū (e.g. schaap ‘sheep’), and a few other vowels, mainly before [r] (e.g. daar ‘there’), which are palatal in North Holland (e.g. gee ‘goes’, deer ‘there’), whereas these have merged with lengthened [a:] in supraregional Dutch (e.g. gaat ‘goes’, daar ‘there’)

3 the realization of the past participle with either the supralocal prefix ge- (e.g. gekomen ‘come’), or with reduced e- (e.g. ekomen) or a zero prefix (e.g. komen) in North Holland

4 the representation of reflexes of the Germanic laryngeal, either supralocally with <h> (e.g. hemel ‘heaven’) or without <h> (e.g. emel), representing the pronunciation characteristic of many southern dialects, including those of Zeeland, where h is not a phoneme.

Instances of localizable spellings related to variables 1-3 were found in private letters linked to North Holland:

1 In letters sent from Enkhuizen and Monnickendam in the 1660s and 1670s, we found examples such as scrieft ‘writes’, scijnt ‘appears’, scijp ‘ship’ and vrienscap ‘friendship’.

2 In letters sent from Hoorn, Enkhuizen and Monnickendam in the 1660s and 1670s, examples occur such as gee for gaet or gaat ‘goes’, seet for saet or saat ‘seed’, and before [r] or [r] + dental, deer for daer or daar ‘there’, meert for maert or maart ‘March’, and steert instead of staert or staart ‘tail’ were found.

3 Past participles with reduced prefixes also occur in seventeenth-century letters from Enkhuizen, for instance haeldt ‘got’ and weest ‘been’, both lacking the prefix ge-.

In letters sent to and from Zeeland, we found four types of orthographical effects related to the non-phonemic status of h in the dialect of the letter writer:

4 a) The first and foremost of these is prevocalic deletion of <h> as in andt instead of handt ‘hand’, adde instead of hadde ‘had’, uswrouwe for huswrouwe ‘housewife’, and eel for heel ‘whole’. As prevocalic deletion of <h> in orthography points to deletion of [h] in pronunciation, these instances are clear cases of localizable spellings.

b) The second type is prosthesis of <h> before vowels, for instance hacht instead of acht ‘eight’, houde for oude ‘old’, and hueren for ueren ‘hours’. Although there is some lexically diffuse variation in present-day dialects (de Wulf et al. 2005: map 216), indicating that a prevocalic
‘hypercorrect’ [h] sometimes turns up in spoken language, prosthesis of <h> is also (and maybe mainly) an orthographical phenomenon. Prosthesis of <h> thus indicates the influence not only of local or dialectal phonology but also of supralocal orthographical practices.

c, d) The third and fourth types are the substitution of <h> for <a> and of <a> for <h> as in hpril instead of april ‘April’, hl instead of al ‘all’, aebben instead of hebben ‘have’, and aoe instead of hoe ‘how’. As letters of the Dutch alphabet, <a> is pronounced [a:] and <h> as [ha:], but in case of an h-less dialect, <h> is pronounced [a:] as well, with two possible orthographical results representing the same sound. In these cases of substitution, letter writers did not use their local dialect, but the orthographical effects are due to the learning of the alphabet on the basis of dialectal h-less phonology.

At the same time, the degree to which these localizable spellings turned up in the corpus appears relatively low. Whereas 64% of the letters sent to and from Zeeland showed at least one of the orthographical effects related to h-dropping, the letters linked to North Holland contain fewer localizable spellings, occurring in only 8 to 15% of the letters researched. In the case of variable 2, it is of particular interest that the writing system employed by letter writers from North Holland was not phonological, let alone phonetic, but appeared to be syllabic, with the choice of grapheme depending on the syllable being either open or closed. Abstracting away from the vowel quality and focusing on syllable structure, syllabic writing systems are typically written language phenomena. This means that the local spoken language is not directly represented in the written language, where instead a supralocal writing system is used. Private letters from the seventeenth century, therefore, appear to be at the cross-roads of local and supralocal language. To disentangle the local and supralocal elements in written documents from the past is one of the challenges of historical sociolinguistics in general. For our purposes, it is important to conclude that ego-documents in Early and Late Modern Dutch do not give direct access to the local language used. In the next section, we will present our first case study to explain this further.

4. Case study 1: Long e’s in Zeeland

In this first case study, we will examine the interplay of local phonology and possibly supralocal orthography, focusing on the orthographical repre-
sentation of the so-called softlong and sharplong e in open syllables. Many Dutch dialects, especially in the south of the language area, maintain the phonological difference between lengthened ê from originally short vowels in open syllables, and ê from the Westgermanic diphthong *ai. In Dutch historical linguistics, the lengthened ê is traditionally called softlong, while ê is called sharplong. The softlong ê developed through lengthening of the short vowels [e] and [I]. Examples are the vowels in the first syllables of leven ‘live’, rekenen ‘count’, and hemel ‘heaven’ (cf. German leben, rechnen, himmel). Sharplong ê from the Westgermanic diphthong *ai is found in e.g. steen ‘stone’, een ‘one’, heten ‘be called’ (cf. German Stein, ein, heißen).

In present-day standard Dutch, the two different phonemes have merged into one long [eː]. This merger dates back to at least the end of the sixteenth century, and probably started in Amsterdam (Rutten 2009). Dialects from Zeeland distinguish the two long e’s even to the present day, along the lines of most dialects that distinguish both e’s, with softlong ê being rather monophthongish (e.g. [eː]), and sharplong ê being a diphthong (e.g. [Iə], cf. van Bree 1987: 103-104). According to Goossens et al. (2000, map 21), softlong week ‘week’ has a homorganic diphthong [ei], and sharplong steen ‘stone’ (map 128) has a centring diphthong [eə]. Apart from the quality of the vowel, what is most important for our purposes is simply the existence of a phonemic difference. The signs most frequently used to represent either phoneme are <e> and <ee> throughout the history of Dutch.

In the sixteenth century, a writing tradition came into existence that distinguished the two historically different phonemes, especially in open syllables. This phonologically-based writing tradition spread from the south of the language area to the north, and was eventually codified in 1804 in the first official spelling of Dutch (Siegenbeek 1804; cf. Rutten 2009). It was widely used in published texts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Other, morphological and syllabic writing practices, however, also existed, as shown in Table 1, which presents an overview of the spelling of softlong and sharplong e’s in open syllables according to the various writing systems.

Table 1  Softlong and sharplong e’s in open syllable in different writing systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Phonological</th>
<th>Morphological</th>
<th>Syllabic 1</th>
<th>Syllabic 2</th>
<th>PDZ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ê</td>
<td>hemel</td>
<td>hemel</td>
<td>hemel</td>
<td>hemel</td>
<td>hemel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ê + analogy</td>
<td>leven</td>
<td>leven</td>
<td>leven</td>
<td>leven</td>
<td>leven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(sing leef)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ê</td>
<td>steenen</td>
<td>steenen</td>
<td>steen</td>
<td>steenen</td>
<td>stéénen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(sing steen)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stéénen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first column distinguishes soft long \( \ddot{e} \) in open syllable, soft long \( \ddot{e} \) in open syllable with a possible analogy with closed syllables, and sharp long \( \dot{e} \) in open syllables. The phonological system distinguishes \( \ddot{e} \) represented by <e> from \( \dot{e} \) represented by <ee>. The morphological system uses <ee> also for soft long \( \ddot{e} \) when there is an analogical form in closed syllable, usually the singular form. The syllabic systems employ one grapheme, either <e> or <ee>, for any \( e \) in open syllable. Syllabic system 1 equals the present-day standard system. It should be noted that the morphological and syllabic systems depend on graphematic principles, and render the relation between phonology and spelling less immediate. The right-most column gives the distribution used in present-day orthographies of Zeeland dialects, where the phonological difference is also maintained.

In what follows, we will investigate to what extent the phonological difference between soft long \( e \) and sharp long \( e \), which we assume to have been part of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Zeeland dialects, is represented in private letters linked to Zeeland. We hypothesize that this difference is maintained in these letters, which would be in line with both the evidence we have of the spoken language and the phonology-based supralocal writing tradition. Consequently, we expect to find <e> for \( \ddot{e} \) in open syllables, and <ee> for \( \dot{e} \) in open syllables.

We compiled a subcorpus of letters linked to Zeeland, covering both periods that the Letters as Loot project focused on (Table 2).6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>N letters</th>
<th>N words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1660s/1670s</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1770s/1780s</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>58,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this subcorpus of Zeeland letters, we investigated the representation of soft long and sharp long \( e \)’s in open syllable. We extracted all words with a long \( e \) in open syllable, and then divided the data according to both the etymological origin of the vowel (either \( \ddot{e} \) or \( \dot{e} \)) and the orthographical representation (either <e> or <ee>).7 For the 1660s/1670s, this resulted in 1238 tokens. Figure 2 gives the proportions and the absolute numbers of <e> and <ee> for both phonemes.
The results for sharplong ê are very clear: nine out of ten are spelled <ee>. For softlong ê, figures are less straightforward, yet two thirds of all tokens have <e>. The phonological distinction, which we assume to have been present in Zeeland dialects and which is founded on the etymological difference between the two e’s, is fairly well represented in the spelling; moreover, it is in line with the supralocal phonological writing system.

Considering these general results for the seventeenth-century subcorpus, however, it remains undecided to what extent writers wrote in accordance with local dialect phonology, or rather adhered to supralocal writing practices. To solve this problem, we will zoom in on the writing systems in individual letters. As explained above, we have to reckon not only with phonological spelling systems, but also with morphological and syllabic systems and, moreover, with a writing system that might be termed variable. We refer to the spelling system as variable in cases in which writers apparently randomly distribute <e> and <ee> over both long e’s.8

Of the 99 letters in the seventeenth-century part of the subcorpus used here, 72 letters contained enough forms to enable us to draw reliable conclusions on the writing system used. We have only taken into consideration letters with examples from both categories, that is, from both softlong ê and sharplong ê in open syllables. If one of the categories was empty, the spelling system was left undecided. Of these 72 letters, 51 could be allocated to phonological, syllabic and morphological systems. Another 21 did contain many forms, but could not be categorized. The writers of these letters distributed the graphemes seemingly randomly across the phonemes.
Indeed, as Boyce Hendriks (1998: 184) claims, for these writers the notion that variation should be suppressed did not exist, and we categorize their writing systems as variable.

The phonological system was found with a considerable number of writers: it is found in 31 letters (43% of 72 letters). This is the only writing system revealing local phonology in a straightforward way. We thus conclude that as many as 43% of the writers in our seventeenth-century Zeeland subcorpus employed the phonological writing system that was both supralocal and closest to the phonology of their spoken language. At the same time, and despite the assumed presence of the phonological distinction in their base dialects, quite a number of letter writers use other systems, either morphological, syllabic or variable. Morphologization and syllabification are unambiguously linked to and arise from the written code. They represent the so-called graphemization of writing systems, that is, the reduction of phonological considerations and the increase in choices directly linked to the written code. Turning to the eighteenth century, we will see that this graphemization of the writing system increased over time.

For the eighteenth-century part of the Zeeland subcorpus used here, we carried out a similar analysis of the distribution of $<$e$>$ and $<$ee$>$, compared to softlong and sharplong $e$ in open syllable. This resulted in 443 tokens. Figure 4 gives the proportions and the absolute numbers of $<$e$>$ and $<$ee$>$ for both phonemes.
The pattern for sharplong \( \hat{e} \) in open syllable is very stable, with 90% <ee> in the 1660s/1670s (Figure 2), and 89% in Figure 4 representing usage in the 1770s/1780s. The pattern for softlong \( \hat{e} \), however, is reversed. Whereas the seventeenth-century results provided 67% <e>, the main variant has become <ee>, which is used in 62% of all softlong \( \hat{e} \)'s in open syllable. This means that in the eighteenth century, both long e's are spelled <ee> in most cases, which runs counter the phonological difference between the phonemes in most Zeeland dialects. It is also not in line with the phonology-based supralocal writing tradition. For an explanation of this remarkable difference, we have to turn to the writing systems in individual letters.

As above, we have only taken into account letters with examples from both categories, that is, from both softlong \( \hat{e} \) and sharplong \( \hat{e} \) in open syllables. In so doing, we were able to determine the writing systems of 25 (out of 28) letters from the eighteenth-century part of the Zeeland subcorpus, distinguishing between phonological systems, systems with clear morphological or syllabic influence, and variable systems. Figure 5 presents the results.
Apart from the large number of letters in which a variable system was attested, there is a striking difference between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries. While the phonological system was in use in 43% of the seventeenth-century letters, it is only used in 12% of the eighteenth-century letters. At the same time, syllabic systems, and most prominently the presence of <ee>, rise from 14% in the seventeenth century to 48% in the eighteenth century. Phonological spelling seems to give way to syllabic spelling. The written language graphemicizes in that a prototypical aspect of the written code prevails against the phonological differences of the spoken code. Since both long e’s are still distinguished in most Zeeland dialects today, the change in writing systems cannot be interpreted as the orthographical reflex of an ongoing change in the spoken language. The phonological difference being maintained in the spoken language, this graphemization of the writing system implies that the written code is moving away from the spoken language, and that the extent to which the spoken language is represented in the written language decreases.9

To establish the relation between local phonology and possibly supralocal orthography, the present case study leads to the following conclusions. First, local dialect phonology may be represented in the spelling in a fairly straightforward way. This is the position linguists such as Howell and Boyce Hendriks take, and the seventeenth-century results for Zeeland letters clearly seem to corroborate this position, with the vast majority of sharplong ê’s being spelled <ee>, and the majority of softlong ê’s spelled <e>. In other words, there is an orthographic distinction that is in accordance with the
phonemic distinction. Second, there was a strong supralocal writing tradition, originating in the south of the Low Countries in the sixteenth century and spreading northwards. This writing tradition was phonology-based, i.e. founded on the same phonological difference between softlong and sharplong e’s. This implies that the phonological distribution in the Zeeland letters was backed up by supralocal writing conventions, as a result of which it is difficult to decide whether letter writers used the phonological system for phonological reasons, or because they had acquired it when learning to write. Third, there are also other principles, i.e. conventions related to the written code such as morphological and syllabic writing systems, which differ from the phonological writing system as well as from local dialect phonology. Interestingly, the importance of these other principles increased over time, which we interpreted as the ongoing graphemization of the written language. Significantly, the difference between softlong and sharplong e’s was much less clear in the eighteenth-century data, both phonemes preferring <ee> in open syllable. In sum, while it is obvious that writing in the Early and Late Modern periods took place independent from norms similar to present-day standard language norms, it is equally obvious that dialect phonology is often not at all systematically represented in the spelling – on the contrary.

5. Case study 2: Language contact and negation

In the second case study, we will evaluate to what extent language change can be shown to result from dialect contact. We will focus on a morphosyntactic change, viz. the change from bipartite to single negation, not just because there is a well-established research tradition on negation, but also because it has been claimed that this particular change was promoted by dialect contact between Hollanders and immigrants from the north-east of the Netherlands and German-speaking areas. We should note from the outset that it is likely that dialect contact, leveling and koineization took place in the urban centres in Holland in the Early Modern period, and especially in Amsterdam. As has been argued many times in the historical sociolinguistics of Dutch (e.g. Boyce-Hendriks 1998, Goss 2002, Howell 2006), the influence of especially immigrants from the north-east of the Netherlands and from the German language area on the language of speakers from Holland may have been significant for various phonological, morphological and syntactic features. The question we want to focus on here, however, is to what extent we can demonstrate this on the basis of
written sources. After all, dialect contact takes place between speakers, and it is far from evident that speakers put their dialect to paper when writing. We will first introduce the change from what we refer to as bipartite to single negation, then discuss previous research, and finally present and discuss our results.

Changes in negation patterns are well-known from many languages and equally well-researched (e.g. Willis et al. 2013). We will focus on the final stage of the so-called Jespersen’s cycle in the history of Dutch, i.e. the shift from bipartite (1) to single negation (2), taking into account both clausal and local negation. The bipartite negation in (1) consists of the preverbal negator *en*, which dates back to Old Dutch, and the newer postverbal negator *niet*. Note that the terms preverbal and postverbal refer to the position vis-à-vis the finite verb taken by the negators in main clauses. Examples (3–5) contain other, less frequent negators such as, in present-day spelling, *geen ‘no’* (3), *niemand ‘nobody’* (4) and *nooit ‘never’* (5).

\[
\begin{align*}
(1) & \quad \text{ik en verget v niet in mijn gebedt} \\
& \quad \text{I NEG forget you NEG in my prayer} \\
& \quad \text{‘I won’t forget you in my prayer’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(2) & \quad \text{ik vergeet het sterven mijn leven niet} \\
& \quad \text{I forget the dying my life NEG} \\
& \quad \text{‘I won’t forget the dying in all my life’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(3) & \quad \text{ik en sal mijn moeder gen droefheijd aendoen} \\
& \quad \text{I NEG shall my mother NEG sadness cause} \\
& \quad \text{‘I will not hurt my mother’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(4) & \quad \text{Iegenwoordigh jsser niemand die maelt} \\
& \quad \text{at present is-there NEG who cares} \\
& \quad \text{‘at present nobody cares’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
(5) & \quad \text{tabago dat sij nu noijt meer sien sal} \\
& \quad \text{Tobago that she now NEG anymore see will} \\
& \quad \text{‘Tobago, which she will not see anymore now’}
\end{align*}
\]

In the literature on the changes in negation patterns in Dutch (i.a. van der Horst & van der Wal 1979, de Haan & Weerman 1984, Burridge 1993, Hoeksema 1997, Goss 2002, Rutten et al. 2012, Vosters & Vandenbussche 2012), a wide variety of internal and external variables have been discussed. From the literature, we deduce that region and construction type appear to be the most important variables. It has been argued by many (e.g. van der Horst & van der Wal 1979, Burridge 1993, Rutten et al. 2012, Vosters & Vandenbussche 2012) that the change from bipartite to single negation spread from north to south in the Low Countries, affecting different semantico-syntactic
construction types at a different pace. The critical moment of this change appears to have been North Holland in the seventeenth century, where single negation became dominant around 1650, while bipartite negation was much longer in use in more southern areas. The constructional constraint entails that V1 clauses such as directives, as in (6), were more progressive in adopting single negation than V2 main clauses as (7), which were in turn more progressive than V-final (8) subordinate clauses (van der Horst & van der Wal 1979, Burridge 1993, Vosters 2011).

Both the regional and constructional variables are corroborated by present-day dialect data, which show that bipartite negation is mainly, though not exclusively, used in Southern (Flemish) dialects in subordinate clauses.11 Goss (2002: 138-181) mentions, among other factors, immigration as an important factor, particularly immigration from the north-east of the Netherlands and from Germany, where single negation was much more wide-spread. Note that the change from bipartite to single negation took place much earlier in most German dialects than in Dutch (cf. Goss 2002: 146). Goss argues that ‘the influence of immigration in disrupting internal linguistic developments by introducing competing linguistic innovations was shown to be crucial in the development of the negation marking system in The Hague’ (2002: 180), which means that the ongoing change from bipartite to single negation was speeded up by the influx of speakers from en-less dialects, i.e. dialects with only single postverbal negators. The change from bipartite to single negation is, in other words, interpreted as an example of simplification resulting from dialect contact (Goss 2002: 14). In addition, and somewhat surprisingly given the many studies confirming the importance of the different types of construction, Goss questions the relevance of the semantico-syntactic context, arguing for the importance of phonology instead. Here, she draws on de Haan & Weerman (1984: 183-186), who argued that the historical preverbal negator en did not occupy a syntactic slot, which means that there can be no syntactic or constructional
constraints affecting it. As a mere clitic, its disappearance was (or: must have been) triggered by the phonetic environment.

Burridge (1993), who elaborated on the suggestion that the phonetic environment was decisive, and Vosters (2011) present evidence that the left context <n> may promote deletion of the preverbal negator en. Hoeksema (1997), however, only found this effect of the lexeme men ‘one’, and this is also the strongest predictor of single negation in Vosters (2011). Following Burridge (1993), we distinguish three left contexts possibly favoring deletion of the negator, viz. <n>, <en> and men ‘one’. The following examples (9-11), taken from Burridge (1993: 195-196, exx. 24, 27, 28), are all from fourteenth-century Holland. They are early examples of single negation, which would be due to the phonetic left context.

(9)  
\[
\text{dat helpt wel den ghenen die sim spise niet verdwenen } \neg \text{ mach}
\]
that helps well the one who his meal NEG digest NEG can
\[\text{‘that greatly helps those who cannot digest their meals’} \]

(10)  
\[
\text{men } \neg \text{ sal den saffraen niet tevele besighen}
\]
one NEG shall the saffron NEG too-much use
\[\text{‘don’t use too much saffron’} \]

(11)  
\[
\text{die boonen } \neg \text{ stien niet goed te verdwenen}
\]
the beans NEG are NEG good to digest
\[\text{‘beans are hard to digest’} \]

Our corpus offers a unique opportunity to test these various claims. Elsewhere, we have argued that the change from bipartite to single negation arose above the level of social awareness, and that, consequently, the upper ranks of society switched to single negation at a faster pace than the lower ranks (Rutten et al. 2012). In the present case study, we will first evaluate the importance of what have been considered to be the main variables affecting changes in negation patterns in the history of Dutch, i.e. region and construction type. We will then discuss the influence of the phonetic environment, and finally zoom in on the influence of immigration, more specifically of the assumed dialect contact resulting from immigration. The present case study is based on a subcorpus of seventeenth-century private letters, the make-up of which is presented in Table 3. Contrary to the subcorpus used for the previous case study, we have taken letters from all regions represented in our source material.
We extracted all negations from the subcorpus used, mainly by searching for postverbal negators in various spellings, including niet ‘not’, geen ‘no’, niemand ‘nobody’, nimmer ‘never’ and nooit ‘never’. This search resulted in 2,307 tokens, 1,501 (65%) of which were instances of single negations, while 806 (35%) were bipartite negations. We allocated these 2,307 negations to the appropriate regions. Figure 6 gives the regional distribution of the incoming variant, i.e. the proportion of single negation.

The regional differences established in the research tradition so far are neatly borne out by our results. In addition, we are able to detail the regional picture, which so far had mainly consisted in the general observation of north-south differences. Figure 6 shows that, traveling along the coast from the north to south, from North Holland to Flanders, the proportion of the incoming variant single negation steadily drops. In North Holland, single negation peaks at 88%, dropping to 67% in Amsterdam, to 49% and 52% in South Holland and Zeeland, and to 42% in Flanders. A fair number of negations could not be allocated to any region. With its 62% single negation, this category of Unknown patterns is in accordance with the overall results of 65% single negation. We will return to the category Other below.
The constructional constraints that were identified are also corroborated by our results. 1,973 out of 2,307 were either V1 clauses, such as (6), V2 main clauses (7) or V-final subordinate clauses (8). Figure 7 plots the proportion of single and bipartite negation across construction type.

![Figure 7 Negation across construction type (in percentages and absolute numbers)](image)

Figure 7 shows that V1 contexts are very progressive, attracting 89% single negation. V2 main clauses have 64% single negation, while V-final subordinate clauses are the most conservative context, preferring only 56% single negation. As we have shown in Rutten et al. (2012), these patterns are stable when cross-tabulated, meaning that V1 is the most progressive context in any region, and V-final the most conservative.

We now move on to discuss the variables that have been put forward by Goss (2002) as acting as decisive factors, focusing first on the phonetic-left context. Building on Burridge (1993) and Vosters (2011), we distinguish five different phonetic-left contexts: vowels as in *wij* ‘we’ in (12), consonants (but not *<n>* ) as in *tijt* ‘time’ in (13), *<n>* (but not *<en>* ) as in *man* ‘man’ in (14), *<en>* (but not the lexeme *men*) as in (15), and finally the lexeme *men* ‘one’ as in (16).
Excluding both V1-clauses, where the left context is a clause boundary, and ambiguous examples from the analysis, we were able to assign 2,095 negation tokens to the five different phonetic-left contexts. Figure 8 shows the proportion of the incoming variant single negation across left context.

As is shown in Figure 8, there is hardly any difference between preceding vowels, consonants, <n> or <en>. With single negation occurring in 60-66% in these cases, this is completely in line with the overall pattern of 65% single negation. This means that the phonetic-left context does not act as a decisive factor for the negation type. Only the lexeme men constitutes a very progressive context with 23 out of 24 tokens co-occurring with single
negation. This means that there is a so-called haplological effect on the level of the lexemes.

Apart from the phonetic context, Goss (2002) also argues for the importance of dialect contact (as a result of immigration) as a factor influencing the negation type. In the dialect contact situation, the structurally simpler option of single negation is assumed to have developed into the preferred option for most speakers. As most immigrants came from dialect areas where single negation had already become dominant, they are supposed to have promoted the use of single negation, speeding up the change from bipartite to single negation. Although Goss (2002) focuses on The Hague, it is the city of Amsterdam that attracted most immigrants, and that was the topic of studies such as Boyce Hendriks (1998). Table 4, founded on Goss & Howell (2006: 63), lists the growth of major cities in the north-western parts of the Netherlands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Table 4  The population of major cities in the north-west of the Netherlands during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>1550</th>
<th>1600</th>
<th>1650</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alkmaar</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>65,000</td>
<td>175,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delft</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dordrecht</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gouda</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haarlem</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>38,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hague</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leiden</td>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>67,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middelburg</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotterdam</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>13,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaandam</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>16,000</td>
<td>24,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Building on the work of social historians, Goss & Howell (2006: 62) and Howell (2006: 212) point out that during the Early Modern period mortality rates in urban centres were usually very high due to various circumstances such as poor hygienic conditions and poor diet. In fact, mortality rates were often higher than birth rates, which implies that the population would decrease over time. Consequently, the exponential growth of Dutch cities, and of Amsterdam in particular, must have been caused by large numbers of immigrants. If immigration to the north-western parts of the Netherlands was very high in general, it may be difficult to establish quantitative differences resulting from immigration between the various cities. The
development of Amsterdam, however, was absolutely unique compared to that of the other cities. Moreover, Howell (2006: 214) shows that the Amsterdam marriage records of the period 1578-1650 reveal that approximately 80% of the immigrants originated from the Northern Netherlands (42%), Germany (34%) and Scandinavia (5%), while only 10% came from the Southern Netherlands, and another 8% from elsewhere.

With regard to negation, we would hypothesize on the basis of these data that the change to single negation had progressed further in Amsterdam than in other areas, and that this difference should also be visible in our data, which date back to the 1660s/1670s. In order to find this out, we will return to the regional distribution presented above in Figure 6. This Figure shows that Amsterdam, which by far attracted most immigrants, is not exceptionally progressive compared to the other regions. In fact, it perfectly fits into the overall north-to-south pattern: it is less progressive than North Holland, and more progressive than South Holland. The most progressive region is North Holland, which did attract immigrants, but not as many as Amsterdam. What Figure 6 shows, in other words, is regional diffusion, which is undoubtedly the result of contact between speakers of the different regions. Apart from the indicated north-to-south pattern, and the category Unknown, Figure 6 also plots the results of the category Other. To this fairly small category (41 tokens), we have allocated letter writers that could not be linked to one of the other regions, and that provided too few tokens to allow for a separate category. This means that the category Other contains the results of writers with very different backgrounds. Interestingly, however, most of them can be linked to Friesland, to German-speaking areas and to Norwegian-speaking areas. As expected, these writers are very progressive with 91% single negation. We may, of course, hypothesize that their progressive behavior speeded up the ongoing change when they came into contact with speakers from Holland and Zeeland. This is, however, not shown in the results in Figure 6.

It is perhaps impossible to conclude that German and Scandinavian immigrants did not promote the change to single negation, and from the demographic data, it even appears to be probable that they did play such a role. What we can establish, however, on the basis of our results is that there is no conclusive evidence that they were a major factor. The steady north-to-south pattern shown in Figure 6, which is based on the largest data set used so far for this type of research, is strongly in favor of normal regional diffusion.

In sum, the change from bipartite to single negation seems to be first and foremost regionally and constructionally conditioned, while the influence
of the phonetic environment and of dialect contact remain a matter of debate.

6. Discussion and conclusions

The two case studies that we presented in sections 4 and 5, as well as the case studies summarized in section 3, are examples of supralocalization. Following Nevalainen & Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2006: 288), who build on Milroy (1994), we describe supralocalization as an umbrella term to refer to the geographical diffusion of linguistic features beyond their region of origin. In our earlier case studies, we found that the written language of private letters contained both localizable spellings, representing the spoken language, and supralocal features spreading to North Holland and Zeeland, respectively. Thus, we found initial <sk> and <sc>, palatal alternatives to supralocal [aː], past participles without a prefix in North Holland, and h-dropping, h-prosthesis, and the substitution of <h> for <a> and of <a> for <h> in Zeeland. But we also found, and to a larger extent, the supralocal sign <sch>, spellings with <a> for a-like vowels, full prefixes in past participles (ge-), and supralocal usage of <h>. With the long e’s, reported on in section 4, we established similar results. There is evidence that writers from Zeeland adhered to local phonology in their distribution of <e> and <ee>, but there is also evidence of graphemization. In addition, the rise of syllabic spellings in Zeeland in the eighteenth century may be the effect of an adaptation to writing practices typically found in Amsterdam (cf. footnote 9). With regard to negation, it is important to note that bipartite negation was used much longer in the spoken than in the written language, and that it can be found in the Southern Netherlands up to the present day. Rutten et al. (2012) reported on late-eighteenth century examples from Amsterdam, which were infrequent when compared to single negation, but which nevertheless testify to the occurrence of bipartite negation in Amsterdam in the 1770s/1780s. Again, we are witnessing the adoption of a supralocal linguistic feature, i.e. single negation, which is spreading to areas where it is not in accordance with the spoken language, and where, in other words, the written language diverges from the spoken language.

We have discussed examples of supralocalization in order to argue that ego-documents such as private letters and diaries are far from the pure dialect sources that they are sometimes held to be (cf. Boyce Hendriks & Howell 2000: 273). It is true that ego-documents give an unprecedented view of the vernacular, as we have argued elsewhere, and as many have argued
before us (Rutten & van der Wal 2011; cf. e.g. Boyce Hendriks 1998, Elspaß 2005, 2012). Ego-documents offer unique opportunities for historical (socio) linguistics, and in many respects they invite us to reconsider the traditional history of the language. At the same time, writers did not consistently put their local dialect to paper, and it is even improbable that they tried to do so, given the fact that even among writers who used localizable signs, these were generally outnumbered by supralocal ones (cf. Rutten & van der Wal 2011). Moreover, there were writing practices such as morphological and syllabic orthographic principles, which caused the written code to move away from vernacular phonology. We conclude that supralocalization and graphemization, which are topics at the core of historical sociolinguistics, have to be taken into account by anyone interested in the communicative strategies which ordinary people used when they needed to write. At the same time, since supralocalization and graphemization may impede research on spoken language phenomena, they should also be addressed by researchers primarily interested in spoken language phenomena such as dialect contact.

Notes

1. We would like to thank Mike Olson (Utrecht) and an anonymous reviewer for valuable comments on an earlier draft. The research was carried out at Leiden University within the research programme Letters as loot: Towards a non-standard view on the history of Dutch (see www.brievenalsbuit.nl), funded by The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO).
2. Cf. the paper by Nobels in the present volume. See www.brievenalsbuit.nl for more details on the project.
3. See brievenalsbuit.inl.nl for a lemmatized and POS-tagged version of part of the corpus.
4. Present-day dialects of Zeeland show considerable variation in sharplong and softlong e’s, with phonological and lexical conditions influencing their historical distribution; cf. e.g. the relevant maps in Goossens et al. (2000).
5. <e> for ê is common in Zeeland orthographies. The Woordenboek der Zeeuwse dialecten ‘Dictionary of Zeeland dialects’ (Ghijsen 1959-1964) uses <êê> for ê in stêênen. The so-called Noë-spelling, created by the periodical Noë, prescribes <eê> as in steênen, see http://people.zeelandnet.nl/evenhuis/.
6. The research for this phenomenon was carried out at an early stage of the project, when fewer letters than those we have at present were available for research. The imbalance of the relative share of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reflects the fact that fewer ships linked to Zeeland were captured in the eighteenth century.
7. <e> and <ee> were by far the most frequent graphemes, though occasionally a different grapheme was used, such as <eij> for ê. These were counted as instances of <ee> since they only stress the diphthongal realization of reflexes of ê.
8. Phonological and/or lexical conditions could also be at work, cf. footnote 4. One could, for instance, hypothesize that the following consonant influenced the vowel, and that the actual distribution in the spoken language need not be entirely in line with the etymological origin of the vowels. When we focused on following consonants, however, no clear patterns were found. A large number of <ee> spellings occur for softlong e followed by a dental, as in weeten ‘know’ (30 tokens) and mede ‘with, also’ (18 tokens). But these two lexemes are in any case among the most frequent, and are still found much more often with <e>: weten appears 61 times in the letters, mede 90 times. Still, we have to make a fundamental reservation with respect to the fact that there may have been phonological variation partly generating the orthographical variation, however unknown to us and not reconstructable on the basis of the available data.

9. We cannot go into the details here, but this superimposition (Überschichtung, cf. Elmentaler 2003) of phonology-based writing systems by syllabic strategies is in fact a result of convergence to North Holland writing practices, where the two long e’s had already merged, and where the tendency towards the use of syllabic systems began earlier and is more pronounced than in Zeeland. We will take up this matter in the monograph resulting from the Letters as Loot project (publication envisaged in 2014).

10. All examples were taken from the corpus introduced below, except when indicated otherwise.

11. Maps 48b, 49a, 49b and 50a in Barbiers et al. (2008) show that bipartite negation in main clauses is maintained only in Flemish dialects (i.e. French-Flemish, West-Flemish, East-Flemish) in present-day Belgium and the north of France, while map 50b shows that bipartite negation in subordinate clauses is maintained in a larger area, covering not just the Flemish dialect areas but also those of the Brabant area in Belgium, with moreover a handful of attestations in Belgian Limburg (cf. Figure 1 above).

12. Parts of this study have also been presented in Rutten et al. (2012) and Nobels (2013).

13. This result is comparable to Goss (2002: 142) who found 40% single negation in her corpus of private letters and journals from The Hague (which is in South Holland), based on a total of 761 negative statements. Her corpus comprises documents from the 1580s to the 1670s.

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