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9 Diaglossia, individual variation and the limits of standardization: Evidence from Dutch

While the present-day situation of European dialect/standard constellations is often described in terms of *diaglossia*, it is also argued that this stage of diaglossia only recently developed from a previous period of *diglossia*. This paper argues that historical sociolinguistic research shows that the supposed historical development from diglossia to diaglossia cannot be found in western European languages such as Dutch, English and German. Instead, the sociolinguistic situation in the Early and Late Modern period should already be considered as diaglossic. The empirical data provided by historical sociolinguistic studies challenge the empirical validity of earlier descriptions of language history, as well as the related theories of standardization. I will substantiate these claims by an analysis of individual variation in the expression of negation in a corpus of Dutch private letters from the Early Modern period. I will argue that standardization is essentially a metalinguistic phenomenon datable to the late eighteenth century, and not an appropriate descriptive label for ongoing processes of norm convergence in the late- and post-medieval period, for which *supralocalization* is a better term.

Keywords: diaglossia, diglossia, standardization, supralocalization, Dutch, negation, individual variation.

9.1 Introduction

While the present-day situation of European dialect/standard constellations is often described in terms of *diaglossia*, it is also argued that this stage of diaglossia only recently developed from a previous period of *diglossia* (Auer, 2005, 2011; Grondelaers and van Hout, 2011). In this paper, I argue that historical sociolinguistic research shows that the supposed historical development from diglossia to diaglossia cannot be found in western European languages such as Dutch, English and German. Instead, the sociolinguistic situation in the Early and Late Modern period should already be considered as diaglossic. The empirical data provided by historical sociolinguistic studies challenge the empirical validity of earlier descriptions of language history, as well as the related theories of standardization (Sections 9.2 and 9.3). I will substantiate these claims by an analysis of individual variation in the expression of negation in a corpus of Dutch private letters from the Early Modern period (Section 9.4). When discussing the results, I will argue that standardization is essentially a metalinguistic phenomenon datable to the late eighteenth century, and not an appropriate descriptive label for ongoing processes of norm convergence in the

late- and post-medieval period, for which *supralocalization* is a better term (Sections 9. 5 and 9. 6). Section 9. 7 is the conclusion.

9.2 Sociolinguistic space past and present

Auer (2005) offers a typology of contemporary European dialect/standard constellations. He observes that in many European language areas, dialect/standard *diglossia* has given way to a situation with intermediate variants located between the standard and base dialects (Auer, 2005: 22). He uses the notion of *diaglossia* to conceptualize this situation in which the dichotomy implied by the concept of diglossia is replaced by an almost fuzzy continuum of variants which are neither distinctly dialectal nor standard, and which can differ in the extent to which they resemble base dialect forms on the one hand, and standard forms on the other. Such intermediate forms are referred to with the terms *diaglossia* and *diaglossic reportoire* instead of perhaps more common terms such as *regiolect* and *regional dialect*, because "the implication [of the morpheme *-lect*] that we are dealing with a separate variety is not necessarily justified" (Auer, 2005: 22). It makes more sense to think of the space between base dialect and standard as a continuum with non-discrete intermediate structures, and with a "good degree of levelling between the base dialects [...] which at the same time implies advergence to the standard" (Auer, 2005: 22). In Europe today, Auer continues, diaglossic repertoires are found everywhere, from Norway to Cyprus and from Poland to Spain. As a typological label, diaglossia is not an empirically observable phenomenon, but a concept applied to an analysis of linguistic variants in use. It is a general description of the varietal spectrum available to language users in a specific community at a given place and time.

　Focusing on the pluricentric Dutch language area, Grondelaers and van Hout (2011) analyze the present-day situation of diaglossia in Belgium and The Netherlands. They argue that the concept of diaglossia indeed captures sociolinguistic space in the present, although it may be the result from very different processes. Dutch in the north (i.e., in The Netherlands) becomes diaglossic due to top-down norm relaxation, which, for example, leads to increasing tolerance towards regional accents. This is usually called destandardization or substandardization (Grondelaers and van Hout, 2011: 210). In the south (i.e., in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium), on the other hand, intermediate forms emerge in a process of "endoglossic standardization" (Grondelaers and van Hout, 2011: 222), whereby speakers of different regions adopt similar forms in a bottom-up fashion, while discarding the old, supranational standard, which is perceived as northern and exoglossic. The spread of initially localizable forms to areas where they were not in use before is also called *supralocalization* or *supraregionalization* (Milroy, Milroy and Hartley, 1994; Nevalainen and Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 2006; Hickey, 2012).

Although Grondelaers and van Hout build on Auer's model, they propose different diachronies with different time-depths. According to Auer (2005: 23), diaglossia dates back to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Grondelaers and van Hout (2011: 204–205) describe the sociolinguistic situation in Belgium and The Netherlands around 1960 as diglossic, and argue that the change toward diaglossia is an even more recent phenomenon. Auer (2005, 2011) and Grondelaers and van Hout (2011) agree that diaglossia develops from a previous state of diglossia. According to Auer (2005), endoglossic standards arose in Europe from the fourteenth century onward, and made their way into spoken language in the Early and Late Modern period. Grondelaers and van Hout (2011: 202) claim that "a prestige variety" came into existence in The Netherlands in the seventeenth century, "as part of the newly acquired national identity". These endoglossic standards and prestige varieties are supposed to have stood in a diglossic relation to base dialects. In Belgium, the situation was different, according to Grondelaers and van Hout (2011: 203), as "around 1800 Dutch was no more than a concatenation of dialects […] inappropriate for supra-regional use". The standard was imported from the north only afterwards. This view of the history of Dutch in Belgium has been called into question in the historical sociolinguistic literature, where it has been argued that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dutch in the southern Low Countries was a supralocally used written variety not that different from contemporary northern Dutch (Vosters, Rutten and van der Wal, 2010; Vosters et al. 2012).

Whether there was a 'prestige variety' of Dutch in the south or not, from both Auer (2005, 2011) and Grondelaers and van Hout (2011) it can be inferred that the Early and Late Modern period were characterized by a state of diglossia. In a fairly strict Fergusonian approach, however, standard/dialect situations and societal multilingualism generally are not considered instances of diglossia (Ferguson, 1959; Schiffman, 1998; Hudson, 2002). In the strict sense, diglossia as found, for example, in Switzerland, is register-based and not socially indexed, which means that all language users use the H-variety (H for *high*) in specific circumstances, for example rituals, and the L-variety (L for *low*) in other contexts such as informal conversation. This also implies that there is not necessarily a prestige or power difference between H and L. Furthermore, the H-variety typically has no mother tongue-speakers, but is only acquired at a later age, which is one reason why diglossic repertoires are often quite stable over time. For the same reason, when changes to the sociolinguistic situation do occur, L is more likely to displace H. In cases of societal multilingualism, on the other hand, H often correlates with power or prestige and is more likely to displace L. The supposed change from diglossia to diaglossia involves "advergence to the standard" (Auer, 2005: 22), i.e., a development from L towards H, and may lead to dialect loss or loss of L. This would be an atypical result of diglossia.

In historical sociolinguistics, it is customary to attach great value to the informal written language of less-privileged people, for example private letters written by farmers, sailors, soldiers and their wives (cf. Elspaß ,2005; Rutten and

van der Wal, 2014, among many others). If we assume that such texts, dating back to the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and therefore predating the emergence of diaglossia, were written in a diglossic situation, we should be able to decide whether they represent the L or the H variety. In diglossic situations, H is often the only variety used for writing, and it has even been argued that the very introduction of writing and literacy into a speech community constitutes one, if not the main impetus for diglossia to emerge (Coulmas, 2002). From that perspective, the sole fact that the sources investigated by historical sociolinguists are written should qualify them as instances of the H-variety. In addition, the texts usually display many supralocal forms and cannot be considered to be written-down spoken language, as present-day dialects often differ considerably from the language in these sources, being much more easily localizable (cf. Rutten and van der Wal, 2011). At the same time, the language in the sources comprises more localizable elements than contemporary literary and administrative sources, adding significantly to our understanding of geographical variation in the past (Rutten and van der Wal, 2011).

On the other hand, the functional distribution of H and L in a diglossic situation typically involves a formality axis, with L being preferred in informal contexts. The focus on private correspondence in historical sociolinguistics testifies to the importance attributed to informal language use, and it has been argued that what we find in such sources is neither the standard language nor a written version of the everyday spoken language of the past, but rather the contemporary informal written language (Rutten and van der Wal, 2014: 406). Moreover, many of the historical sociolinguistic databases only exist because informal conversations between family and friends were not possible anymore due to migration, and thus had to be continued in writing; this applies, for example, to the emigrant letters studied by Elspaß (2005) and to the so-called *sailing letters* studied by Rutten and van der Wal (2014). From the functional perspective, therefore, the sources may be qualified as L, but as a form of L that differs markedly from the spoken language.

The discussion so far suggests that the present-day state of diaglossia characteristic of many European language areas has not developed from a previous state of diglossia. The difficulty in deciding whether the language in the Early and Late Modern sources used by historical sociolinguists represents H or L indicates that the sociolinguistic situation in the past was perhaps not diglossic. One of the reasons "for restraint in invoking the diglossia concept" mentioned by Dorian (2002: 64) relates to the fact that it "simplifies linguistic space by dividing it into just two categories", which is precisely the difficulty encountered in the previous paragraphs. What I will propose in the following section is that the sociolinguistic situation in the past was actually quite similar to that in the present: it was characterized by diaglossia (see also Rutten, 2016a).

9.3 Sociolinguistic space from below

The approach to language history *from below* criticizes traditional language histories that are largely or exclusively founded on a limited range of texts, often of a formal and/or literary kind and produced by privileged social groups, usually well-educated men from the capital or the center of the language area. Using a limited set of texts, socially, regionally and in terms of register, traditional language histories all too often describe linguistic history as the gradual disappearance of the variation that is so characteristic of medieval sources, and the concomitant rise of uniform standard languages (Elspaß, 2007; Watts, 2012). What remains unnoticed is "the whole range of texts and varieties that oscillate between formal written and informal spoken language" (Elspaß, 2007: 3). Thus, the approach from below "implies a radical change of perspective from a 'bird's eyes' to a 'worm's eyes' view" (Elspaß, 2007: 4), in at least two respects. First, there is a need to include texts by less-privileged people, that is, people from the lower and middle ranks of society, men as well as women, from various regions. In that sense, the approach from below is "a plea for a long overdue emancipation of more than 95% of the population in language historiography" (Elspaß, 2007: 5). Secondly, there is a shift towards "registers which are basic to human interaction and which are prototypically represented by speech in face-to-face-interaction" (Elspaß, 2007: 5). In historical linguistics, this implies a shift towards texts representing everyday language, for example so-called ego-documents such as private letters and diaries (e.g., Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg, 2003; van der Wal and Rutten, 2013).

Historical sociolinguistic studies investigating ego-documents have revealed an impressive variability in the Early and Late Modern stages of well-researched languages such as Dutch, German, English and French, when these are supposed to have transformed into standard languages. What is more, the influence of standard language norms on actual usage patterns is often highly questionable (see Rutten, Vosters and Vandenbussche, 2014a). Elspaß (2005: 275–283), Elspaß and Langer (2012) and Langer (2014: 296–297) show that while polynegation is traditionally assumed to have disappeared from written German by the eighteenth century, it is found in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century informal writing. Another example from German is the so-called *tun-Fügung*, i.e., the use of *tun* 'to do' as an auxiliary as in *er thut Schaf hüten für einen man* 'he tends sheep for a man' (1887, taken from Elspaß, 2005: 264). This construction became stigmatized in the course of seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and subsequently disappeared from higher registers (Langer, 2001). However, many examples can be found in nineteenth-century private letters (Elspaß, 2005: 254–269).

Auer (2014: 165) shows that *you was*, while proscribed in eighteenth-century English normative discourse, was a "highly productive" variant in nineteenth-century pauper letters. Focusing on eighteenth-century men of letters such as Dr Johnson, Addison, Pope and Swift, Osselton (1984: 125) already discussed their "dual

standard of spelling", one public, one private. They seemed to adhere to a similar system in their public writings, while employing a different system in their private letters. Osselton (1984: 129) adds that "traditional accounts of how English spelling developed historically have focused on the rise of one standard, not a variety of standards". Martineau (2007, 2013) and Lodge (2013) list a range of non-standard features in Early and Late Modern French, found in private letters and diaries. Examples include orthographical features such as *malaide* 'ill' (standard *malade*), revealing a local pronunciation [ɛ], *pourcelain* 'porcelain' (standard *porcelain*), signaling the pronunciation [u], as well as morphological variants such as regularized *arrivarent* 'arrived-3plur' (standard *arrivèrent*) and deletion of the negative particle *ne*, where the standard maintains polynegation until the present day (Martineau, 2013: 137–140).

Turning to historical Dutch, Rutten and van der Wal (2014) analyze a corpus of private letters from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (see also below, Section 9.4.2). They found writing practices that are often assumed to have vanished from the written language in the postmedieval period:

(1)   a.   *andt* for *handt* 'hand', *eel* for *heel* 'whole', *ope* for *hope* 'hope'
      b.   *hacht* for *acht* 'eight', *hueren* for *ueren* 'hours', *houde* for *oude* 'old'
      c.   *scip* for *schip* 'ship', *vrienscap* for *vrienschap* 'friendship', *scrijve* for *schrijve* 'write'

The southwest of the Dutch language area is characterized by *h*-dropping. Middle Dutch manuscripts show many instances of both *h*-deletion and *h*-prosthesis in words with an initial vowel. The seventeenth-century examples in (1a,b) illustrate that similar writing practices persisted well into the Early Modern period. In the Middle Dutch period, initial [sk] was common throughout the language area, usually spelled <sc>. With the gradual fricativization of the *sk*-cluster in late Medieval and Early Modern Dutch, [sk] was pushed back to specific areas such as the north of Holland, and <sch> emerged as the supralocal grapheme. The examples in (1c) show that <sc> remained in use well into the Early and Late Modern period.

In addition, these private letters contain forms that are hardly attested at all throughout the history of Dutch:

(2)   *schulde* for *schulden* 'debts', *gesonde* for *gesonden* 'sent', *zij konde* for *zij konden* 'they were able'

Deletion of final *n* is normal in large parts of the language area, though not in the north-east, and is also common in the present-day spoken standard. In writing, from the earliest Middle Dutch onward, final *n* has been used. The data in (2), therefore, parallel those in (1a–c), in that they provide insight into the spoken language of the past. The issue is more complicated, however, since there appears to have been an

alternative writing tradition *favoring* deletion of final *n*, which has been unknown up to the present day. Simons and Rutten (2014: 60–61), analyzing regional variation in the use of final *n* on the basis of the eighteenth-century part of the same corpus of private letters, show that 21% of the tokens linked to the north-east show deletion. This is remarkable, as we have to assume almost 100% maintenance of final *n* in the spoken language in the north-east, in the eighteenth century as well as today. This suggests that a new writing practice was spreading from areas with deletion to areas without deletion, contrary to the familiar supralocal tradition that retained final *n*.

The ego-documents investigated by historical sociolinguists generally comprise much more localizable forms and much more variability than contemporary published texts. As mentioned in Section 2, this does not mean that they can be taken to represent local dialects in an immediate and unproblematic way. On the contrary, it is quite easy to identify variants that should be considered supralocal writing forms that may or may not have been used in the spoken language, such as forms of address, and moreover forms that are unlikely to have been used in the spoken language at all. Epistolary formulae are instances of the latter, for example the extensive health formula, also well-known from the history of English and other European languages: *I let you know that I am in good health / I sincerely hope that the same applies to you / If not, I do regret it / As God knows, who knows the hearts of men* (cf. Davis, 1965; Elspaß, 2012; Laitinen and Nordlund, 2012; Rutten and van der Wal, 2014: 114–121).

In sum, if we think of the history of languages such as Dutch, English, German and French in the Early and Late Modern period as consisting of relatively uniform supralocal printed language on the one hand, and localizable spoken dialects on the other, it will be tempting to describe them in terms of diglossia. However, over the past few decades historical sociolinguistic studies have shown that there is a whole range of texts in between these two poles. Sources *from below* seem to occupy a space between dialect and standard (Fairman, 2007). They display *hybridity* (Martineau, 2013) in that they combine seemingly direct reflections of the spoken language with features typical of the written code. In other words, there seems to be a certain intermediacy typical of diaglossia.

When we take into account that normative discourse came into existence and greatly expanded in the same period, exhibiting *selection* and *codification* in the sense of Haugen (1966), the attested existence of intermediate forms can be taken even one step further. Even where the research literature claims that one variant had been selected in a situation of variation, language users do not necessarily use or prefer this form. This will be discussed in the next section.

9.4 Case study: Negation in Dutch

In this section, I will focus on changes in the expression of negation in the history of Dutch. The case of negation is a well-researched one, and it is precisely against

the background of the wealth of data that have become available over the past few decades that I would like to take the argument one step further. Studies of negation in the history of Dutch have mainly focused on so-called internal factors, viz. syntactic, semantic and lexical conditions, as well as on external factors such as region, rank and gender. Here, I would like to draw attention to individual variation, i.e., to inter- and intra-speaker variation. The main claim will be that the individual repertoires of the writers I will be looking at can be characterized as diaglossic, and hence do not fit the diglossia framework.

9.4.1 The change

I will first explain the change in more detail. As in so many languages, Jespersen-like changes have occurred in the expression of negation in the history of Dutch. The typical development runs from single negation in Old Dutch (until ca. 1150) to bipartite negation in Middle Dutch (ca. 1150–ca. 1550), and back to single negation in Modern Dutch (from ca. 1550 onward). The typical Old Dutch negator is *ne* or *ni*, which occurs preverbally (3). Bipartite negations consist of the preverbal element *ne* and a postverbal negator such as *niet* 'not', *geen* 'no' or *nooit* 'never' (4). In Modern Dutch, the postverbal negator is maintained while the preverbal element is dropped (5).[85]

(3)   **ne** *ist heil*   *himo*   *in*   *gode*   *sinemo*
       neg is   salvation   him   in   God   his
       'There is no salvation for him in his God' (from van der Horst, 2008: 298)

(4)   *wi*   **en**   *moghense*   **niet**   *begripen*
       we   neg   can.them   neg   understand
       'We can't understand them' (from van der Horst, 2008: 516)

(5)   *we kunnen*   *hen*   **niet**   *begrijpen*
       we   can   them   neg   understand
       'We can't understand them'

However, example (6) shows that bipartite negations already occurred in Old Dutch, as did the 'new' single negation with *niet*, particularly in the absence of a finite verb (7).

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85 Note that the term *postverbal* is inaccurate insofar as it only applies to main clauses (and to finite verbs). Modern Dutch subordinate clauses have the verbal elements grouped together in (pre)final position so that all negators occur preverbally.

(6) *wir* ne*willon* **niet** *uergezzan, thaz ...*
    we neg.want neg forget   that
    'We don't want to forget that ...' (from van der Horst, 2008: 298

(7) *... assimilates,*   **niet** *then michelon*
    assimilatus (LAT) neg the   bigger
    '... assimilated, not to the bigger ones' (from van der Horst, 2008: 299)

Example (8) shows that Old Dutch preverbal negation was still used in Middle Dutch, especially with specific verbs such as modals, while (9) shows that single postverbal negation also occurred.

(8) *sy* **en** *caent herhalen*
    she neg can.it   repeat
    'she can't repeat it' (from van der Horst, 2008: 517)

(9) *sech den lieden dat si* **niet** *sorghen*
    tell   the people that they neg   worry
    'tell the people they shouldn't worry' (from van der Horst, 2008: 516)

Finally, the old preverbal negation with *ne* is still in use in the southwest of the language area, particularly in short answers to questions (10). Bipartite negation still occurs in large parts of the south (11).

(10) *Slaapt hij? Hij* **en** *doet*
    sleeps he   he   neg   does
    'Does he sleep? He doesn't'   (from SAND, 2008: map 48a)

(11) *Ik* en *ga* **niet** *naar school*
    I   neg go neg   to   school
    'I'm not going to school'   (from SAND, 2008: map 48b)

While there were syntactic and/or semantic constraints on the use of particular types of negation in most periods,[86] it is clear that all three options, viz. single preverbal, bipartite and single postverbal, occur in each period. This means that Jespersen's cycle may be a useful generalization over diachronic tendencies, but perhaps no more than that (cf. Elspaß and Langer [2012]). It also means that we have to reckon with a considerable amount of variation, perhaps more than the idealized Jespersen's cycle

86 See, e.g., the appropriate sections in van der Horst (2008) and *SAND* (2008), where the constraints are summarized.

can accommodate. In the remainder of this section, I will focus on the change from bipartite to single negation in the Early and Late Modern period.

9.4.2 Conditions on the change from bipartite to single negation

Quite some research has been done on the change from bipartite to single negation (cf. recent studies such as Vosters and Vandenbussche, 2012; Nobels and Rutten, 2014). Here, I will mainly summarize results from Rutten and van der Wal (2014) before focusing on individual variation in Section 9.4.3.

It is usually assumed that the seventeenth century constitutes a decisive period in the history of this change, at least in what is often considered the center of the language area, viz. Holland. Whereas texts from around 1600 have mostly or exclusively bipartite negation, this rapidly changed as texts from around 1650 have almost 100% single negation (Burridge, 1993: 191–192). The obvious first condition identified in the research literature, therefore, is time. However, the rapid change established for the first half of the seventeenth century needs to be put into perspective in many respects. Investigating 2307 tokens of negation in 549 private letters from the second half of the seventeenth century, viz. from 1660s/1670s, Rutten and van der Wal (2014: 365) show that bipartite negation is still an important variant making up 35% of the tokens. The majority of these 806 tokens is related to the Holland area. Rutten et al. (2012) show that even in the second half of the eighteenth century, some letter writers from the Holland area still produced bipartite negations, testifying to its continued existence, even if it had largely disappeared from writings from Holland by that time. Furthermore, Vosters and Vandenbussche (2012) show that bipartite negation was still a common option in southern Dutch administrative writing from the early nineteenth century. Van der Horst (2008: 1941) says that bipartite negation had largely disappeared from writing by the nineteenth century and was mainly used as a literary device for stereotyping less educated or rural characters. In the spoken language, bipartite negation has remained in use until the present day, particularly in large parts of the south of the language area (Flanders, Brabant, cf. (11) above).

A second important condition is region. Single negation clearly spread from the north to the south, creating major differences in the seventeenth century already between Holland in the north and Brabant in the south (Burridge, 1993). In their corpus of private letters from the 1660s/1670s, Rutten and van der Wal (2014) found that single negation was the dominant variant in the northern parts of Holland (88%) and in the city of Amsterdam (67%). The proportion of single negation was much lower in the southern parts of Holland (49%) and in the area immediately to the south of it, Zeeland (52%). Further south, in Flanders, the number was even lower (42%). This ties in with the afore-mentioned results reported by Vosters and Vandenbussche (2012), who found bipartite negations in nineteenth-century administrative language

from the south, at a time when it was largely restricted to stereotypical usages in more formal genres such a literary prose in the north (Van der Horst, 2008: 1941).

Since van der Horst and van der Wal (1979) considerable attention has been given to constructional constraints affecting the choice of negation type. Van der Horst and van der Wal (1979) identified various semantic and syntactic factors that have been confirmed in subsequent research, including recent studies within the historical sociolinguistic framework (e.g., Vosters and Vandenbussche, 2012). Rutten and van der Wal (2014: 368–373) elaborate the constructional constraints distinguishing between six different contexts. Focusing on their preference for the incoming variant, these can be arranged as follows:

(12) V1 > Local > Constituent > Main clause > Inversion > Subordinate clause

V1 clauses such as directives constitute the most progressive context (89% single negation). Local negation follows (82%), then constituent negation (where the second element is not an adverb but a pronoun such as *niets* 'nothing' or *niemand* 'nobody', 77%), main clauses (67%), main clauses with subject-verb inversion (56%), and finally subordinate clauses (56%).[87] In other words, whereas the change is almost complete in some contexts, single and bipartite negation are still about equally frequent in other contexts.

Finally, the change to single negation is a morphosyntactic change that rose quite highly on the scale of social awareness, which is one explanation for its high rate of change in the first half of the seventeenth century (see Rutten and van der Wal, 2014: 385 for a summary). Several Holland-based literary authors consciously switched to single negation around 1640 after having used both single and bipartite negation in earlier writings. Literary authors from the more southern region of Zeeland, however, maintained both variants in their writings throughout their lifetime. In addition, the change was commented upon by grammarians, who mostly prescribed the incoming variant of single negation. Given the fact that many southern dialects maintain bipartite constructions until today, and taking into account the relatively scarce yet extant bipartite examples from later periods, it seems speech and writing developed different conventions. In the spoken language, or perhaps more generally in informal registers, both spoken and written, bipartite negation remained in use. In more formal registers, however, single negation was selected as the norm and thus became standardized, which is how this is often portrayed in linguistic histories (cf. van der Sijs, 2004: 534–537; van der Wal and van Bree, 2008: 217–218).

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87 Other constructional factors mentioned in the research literature such as the choice of negator and the choice of verb were not confirmed by Rutten and van der Wal (2014: 373–378). See Rutten and van der Wal (2014: 378–387) for the importance of additional internal factors including phonetic context and syntactic complexity.

Rutten and van der Wal (2014: 388–391) show that this development was paralleled by social variation, which however differed across regions and across construction type. In Amsterdam, for example, where the change had progressed considerably (67% single negation overall), strong differences between the various social ranks were found for subordinate clauses, but less so for main clauses. In Zeeland, where both options were still very much in use (52% single negation), important differences were established between the lower and middle ranks and for both main clauses and subordinate clauses.

The picture so far is complicated. Considering the fact that 'Old Dutch' single negation as well as bipartite negation have remained in use until today, the change from bipartite negation to single negation in seventeenth-century Dutch is only a relative change, that is, a change of the relative frequencies of the three options single preverbal negation, bipartite negation and single postverbal negation. Several factors conditioning the choice of variants have been established. Time, region and construction type are important. Moreover, from the seventeenth century onward, single postverbal negation appears to have come to index standard language and/or formal registers, whereas other negation types became colloquial, informal and/or forms characteristic of the spoken language. These diverging indexes were paralleled by social differences. In the following section, I will argue that the situation was even more complicated.

9.4.3 Individual variation

In this section, I will zoom in on the individual writers of the private letters analyzed by Rutten and van der Wal (2014), already referred to in the previous sections. The data come from a unique collection of Dutch private letters kept in The National Archives in London, written by people from various social ranks and by men as well as women. These letters make up the *Letters As Loot Corpus* (*LAL Corpus*), which is lemmatized, tagged for parts of speech and electronically available at brievenalsbuit.inl.nl.[88] The corpus that formed the basis of Rutten and van der Wal (2014) comprised 549 letters by 424 writers from the 1660s/1670s (228,000 words) and 384 letters by 292 writers from the 1770s/1780s (196,500 words). The eighteenth-century letters are autographs (i.e., written by the people who sent them). Of the seventeenth-century letters, 260 are autographs, written by 202 individuals. Of these 202 writers, 168 individuals could be assigned to a specific social rank.[89] These 168 individuals produced 219 letters.

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[88] See also www.brievenalsbuit.nl and Rutten and van der Wal (2014) for more background information on the data and the corpus.
[89] Broadly speaking, the corpus comprises letters from all social ranks except the upper class, which has been central to many traditional language histories (cf. Rutten and van der Wal, 2014).

As individual variation is the central topic here, I selected these 219 letters by 168 clearly identifiable individuals for the present study. Rutten et al. (2012) show that the proportion of bipartite negation in the eighteenth-century part of the corpus is very low, and I will therefore only discuss the seventeenth-century results here.

From the selected 219 letters, all negations were extracted, mainly by searching for postverbal negators in various spellings such as *niet* 'not', *geen* 'no', *niemand* 'nobody', *nimmer* 'never' and *nooit* 'never'. A total of 1085 negations were found, produced by 158 individuals; 10 individuals did not use negation in their letters. In a next step, only individuals were kept that produced five negations or more to further the reliability of the results. This meant that 74 individuals with fewer than five tokens were removed from the data set. As a consequence, the data set comprises 895 tokens by 84 individuals. Figure 20 presents the proportion of single negation in the letters of these 84 individuals.

Figure 20 shows that 5 individuals consistently use bipartite negation (individuals 1–5), whereas 21 individuals only use single negation (individuals 64–84). This imbalance is unsurprising as single and bipartite negation were only equally frequent in Zeeland and the southern parts of Holland, while single negation was the dominant variant in the northern parts of Holland including Amsterdam. Figure 20 also shows that all other letter writers (i.e., a majority of 58 individuals) vary between single and bipartite negation, ranging from 13% single negation (individual 6) to 93% single negation (individual 63) with almost all possible proportions in between. In other words, Figure 20 signals a wide spectrum of variation in two respects. First, only 26 individuals are completely consistent in their use of negation, and all others are not. Second, the other 58 individuals are not equally 'inconsistent', but range from only one or a couple of bipartite negations to only one or a couple of single negations.

Since region is such an important factor conditioning the variation, Table 22 splits up the results across region. The *LAL Corpus* distinguishes various regions, the most important being Zeeland and Holland, the main regions along the coast of the northern Low Countries (Rutten and van der Wal, 2014: 11–12). The sizeable Holland region is further divided into South Holland with its main city Rotterdam, and North Holland. Moreover, Amsterdam, which is part of Holland, is kept apart for demographic reasons. Amsterdam was a highly urbanized metropolis attracting many immigrants from the Low Countries and beyond, and as such quite different from the rest of Holland. The writers who produce 5 negation tokens or more are related to these four regions. In addition, two writers are categorized as Other. One comes from the northern region of Friesland, the other has a German background, so both originate from regions where the shift to single negation is dated earlier, and they are among the writers who use single negation all the time (cf. also Rutten and van der Wal, 2014: 367).
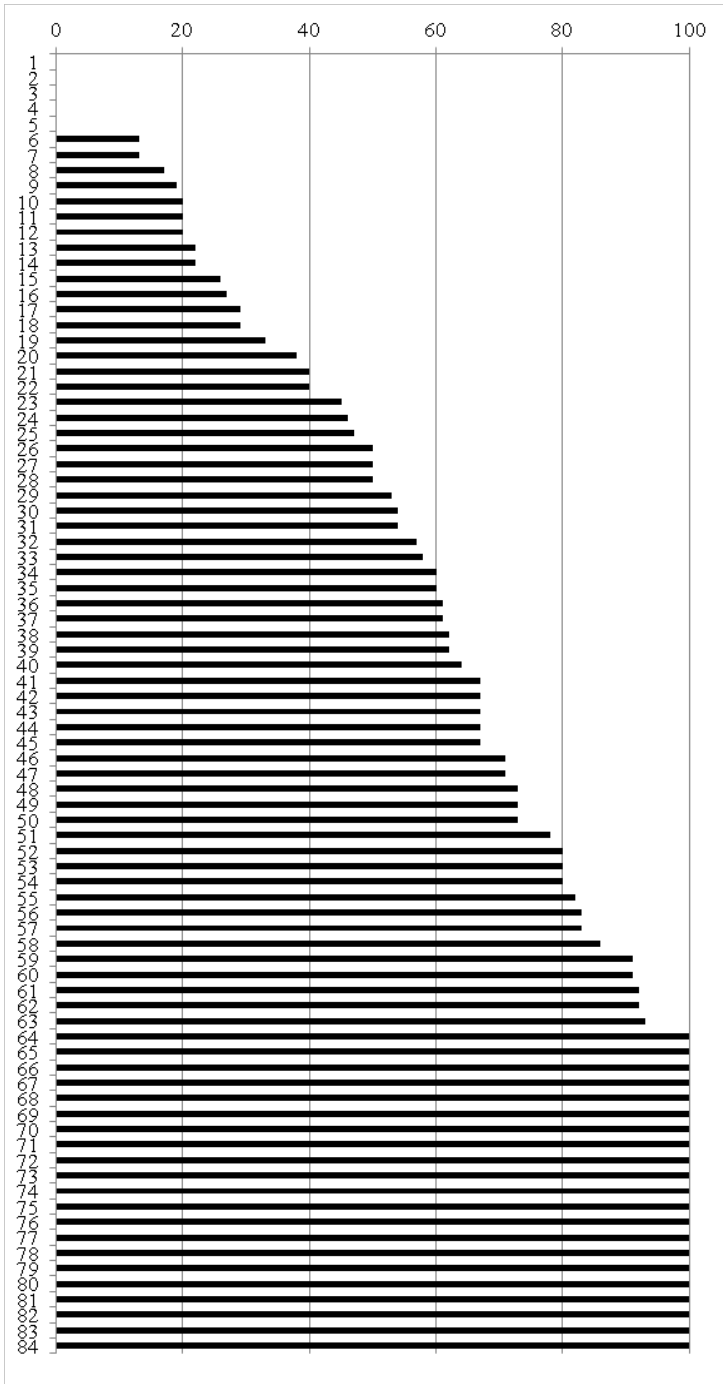
Figure 20. Proportion of single negation with 84 individuals from the 1660s/1670s (*LAL Corpus*) with ≥ 5 tokens of negation

In Table 22, the various proportions of single negation presented in Figure 20 are reorganized into five stages that correspond to the successive segments of the S-curve. The five stages are taken from Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (2003: 54–55) and represent the proportion of the incoming form. They should be interpreted as follows: the change is 1. incipient (below 15%), 2. new and vigorous (between 15 and 35%), 3. mid-range (between 36 and 65%), 4. nearing completion (between 66 and 85%), 5. completed (over 85%).

Table 22. S-curve stages (single negation) with 84 individuals from the 1660s/1670s (*LAL Corpus*) with ≥ 5 tokens of negation, across region

		Individuals		Zeeland		South Holland		Amsterdam		North Holland		Other	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	<15%	7	8	4	13	3	27	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	15-35%	12	12	8	25	2	18	1	5	1	6	0	0
3	36-65%	21	25	6	19	5	45	8	36	2	12	0	0
4	66-85%	17	20	10	31	1	9	5	23	1	6	0	0
5	>85%	27	32	4	13	0	0	8	36	13	76	2	100
		84	100	32	100	11	100	22	100	17	100	2	100

Splitting up the results across region as in Table 22 shows that there are considerable regional differences. The large majority of writers categorized as North Holland and Other score over 85% single negation. The picture is slightly more varied in Amsterdam, where still only one writer scores less than 36% single negation. Table 22 also shows that 23 out of 27 individuals who have >85% are from these categories. For South Holland and Zeeland, the results are very different, with much more individuals in the lower two stages of the S-curve, i.e. below 36%. Despite these strong regional patterns, there are nevertheless quite a few individuals at stages 2 and 3 (15-65%) in Amsterdam and North Holland, whereas the change was nearing completion in Amsterdam (67% single negation, cf. Section 4.2.) and was completed in North Holland (88% single negation). Similarly, Zeeland comprises very conservative as well as very progressive writers. If we assume that bipartite negation was still very much part of the base dialect in Zeeland (Rutten and van der Wal, 2014: 390–391), the number of individuals at stages 4 and 5 is remarkable.

When we zoom in on the language use of specific writers, it becomes clear that the constructional constraints mentioned in Section 9.4.2. do not necessarily apply to individuals. Examples (13) and (14) are taken from a letter by Adam Erckelens dated 12 December 1664. He was a chirurgeon from Amsterdam, so relatively well-educated and socio-economically privileged, and he was probably only in his late twenties at the time of writing. He has 80% single negation, being slightly more progressive than the Amsterdam average (67%), which is in line with his social profile in terms of age,

gender, schooling and rank. This is corroborated by his use of learned lexical items such as *continuatie* 'continuation', *præserveren* 'protect' and the present participle *considererende* 'considering' as well as several quotes from Latin. His letter contains 10 negations, and all regular main clauses and subordinate clauses have single negations. Interestingly, his 2 examples of bipartite negation occur in other contexts (13)–(14).

(13) *indien ghij lieden dat   goet   noch **niet** gestuurt hebt [...]*
     if   you people these goods yet   neg   sent   have *[...]*
    *soo   **en**   gelieft **niet** te   senden*
    so   neg   please neg   to   send
    'If you have not sent these goods yet, please do not send them.'

(14) *dese Eijlanden van   haar   selve **niet** **en**   hebben*
    these islands   of   themselves neg   neg   have
    'These islands have nothing of themselves.'

(13) is a directive with the verb in the first position (V1), which is however preceded by resumptive *so* and the negative particle *en*. (14) is an example of constituent negation with the second element of the bipartite construction being a pronoun in object function instead of an adverb such as *niet* 'not'. V1 and constituent negation are among the most progressive contexts; see (12). Burridge (1993: 192) shows that V1 was already quite progressive or even the preferred variant in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, both in Holland and in the southern area of Brabant.

    The second individual I will discuss is more or less the opposite of Adam Erckelens. On 7 December 1664, the middle-class merchant Jan Willems, who was based in Guadeloupe at that time, wrote a letter to his wife Maaike Hendriks in the town of Vlissingen in Zeeland. His letter contains 9 negations, 2 of which are single (22%), so that he is more conservative than the Zeeland average of 52% single negation. He has main clauses with single and bipartite negations, but also one subordinate clause with single negation (15). Recall that subordinate clauses constitute the most conservative context (12).

(15) *Ick hoore dat   het   **niet** wel   gaen   sal*
    I   hear   that   it   neg   well   go   will
    'I hear that it will not go well.'

Finally, I will focus on two individuals from South Holland who have a proportion of the incoming variant that is in line with the overall South Holland proportion of 49%. The first one is the sailor Lammert Jansen Vermeij who wrote a letter to his wife Maria Adams in the town of Maassluis, when he was in Portugal. His letter has 11 negative constructions, 5 of which are single negations (45%). The second writer is

Anna Pieters van Enkel who wrote to her brother Willem on 2 February 1664. Her letter contains 13 negations, 6 of which are single (46%). Does the incoming variant enter in accordance with the generalization in (12) in Section 9.4.2.? Table 23 presents these individuals' scores for single and bipartite negation across construction type.

Table 23. Single and bipartite negation with two individuals from the 1660s (*LAL Corpus*), across construction type

	Lammert Jansen Vermeij		Anna Pieters van Enkel	
	Single	Bipartite	Single	Bipartite
V1	-	1	1	-
Local	-	-	1	-
Constituent	-	-	-	-
Main clause	3	2	2	4
Inversion	-	1	-	1
Subordinate clause	2	2	2	2
	5	**6**	**6**	**7**

The most progressive contexts of V1, local and constituent negation provide only three tokens, though note that Lammert Jansen Vermeij has one V1-context with bipartite negation. In main clauses and subordinate clauses, which provide the most tokens, both writers distribute single and bipartite negation quite evenly. Single negation is entering main clause contexts, but is simultaneously entering subordinate clauses, and with a similar pace, so that both writers have subordinate clauses with single negation and main clauses with bipartite negation.

The diachronic, regional, constructional and social dimensions discussed in Section 9.4.2 have all been confirmed for the *LAL Corpus* (Rutten and van der Wal, 2014: 363–392). It is clear, as it is from other recent studies such as Vosters and Vandenbussche (2012), that single negation was becoming the main supralocal variant for writing. As argued in Section 9.4.2, the picture is fairly complicated with many different factors conditioning the variation. In this section, focusing primarily on region and construction type, I have shown that the picture is even more complicated at the level of individual writers. In the next sections, I focus on social aspects, and discuss to what extent the supralocalization of single negation constitutes a case of standardization.

9.5 The limits of standardization

Diachronically, bipartite negation disappeared from the written language but lived on in the spoken language, particularly in the south/southwest of the language area (see above, Sections 9.4.1 and 9.4.2). Single negation *supralocalized* as the conventional form in writing. Is this a case of standardization?

As mentioned in Section 9.4.2, negation constitutes one of the most clear-cut morphosyntactic examples of high awareness and of explicit and implicit norms: there are examples from metalinguistic discourse proscribing bipartite negation, and there is evidence that literary authors based in Holland consciously switched to single negation around 1640. Literary authors are often regarded as normative because they disseminate the supposed prestige variety (van der Sijs, 2004: 553–607). Nevertheless, one generation later the majority of our writers do not use single negation all the time (Table 22). In addition, most of the writers with 100% single negation are linked to North Holland, Amsterdam, Friesland or Germany, i.e. to regions where the shift towards single negation was already completed or nearing completion. At the same time, literary authors from Zeeland were far less reluctant to maintain bipartite negation in their writings, probably because bipartite negation was still very common in their base dialects. Nonetheless, there are only a few writers from Zeeland in our corpus who use bipartite negation exclusively. In fact, quite a few individuals from Zeeland are at stages 4 and 5 (Table 22). Focusing on the results for groups of speakers in terms of regional background, gender and socio-economic background, Nobels and Rutten (2014: 41–42) argue that a direct relation between normative discourse and usage patterns is unlikely. Whereas regionally bound distributional differences between social groups and gender groups could be established, there is no unambiguous evidence of a strong top-down effect on the population at large. One important observation in this respect is the still fairly frequent use of bipartite constructions in Amsterdam. Shifting attention to individual writers in Section 9.4.3., I have argued that these do not seem to act in accordance with a supposed norm. Apart from the large amount of inter-speaker variation, the data for individuals also reveal a lot of intra-speaker variation that does not seem to be compatible with a uniform norm.

At this point, it may be wise to repeat that the letter writers in the *LAL Corpus* do not write dialect (Section 9.3). The point is that they neither write in what could be considered the contemporary standard, be it a Holland standard with single negation or a possible Zeeland standard with bipartite negation. They appear to use an intermediate repertoire with variable use of single and bipartite negation. This sociolinguistic situation can be characterized as diaglossic. Discussing the sociolinguistic situation in present-day Flanders, De Caluwe (2009: 17–19) proposes to think of intermediate repertoires in terms of sliding knobs. This is an intuitive way to conceptualize and visualize diaglossia. For each individual language user, a pane with sliding knobs can be drawn, with each linguistic variable being represented by a sliding knob that can take any position between the dialect and standard, depending on the context and individual preferences and experiences.[90] Such a pane with sliding knobs in various positions acknowledges the high inter- and intra-speaker

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90 The situation described by De Caluwe (2009) is slightly different in that he does not talk about dialects, but about the space between regiolects and standard language.

variation that characterizes many diaglossic repertoires. In the present case, Figure 20 in Section 9.4.3. presents the results for one such variable, and for 84 individuals.

Nevertheless, there is an increasing use of single negation in writing. Contrary to the large amount of variation found in actual language use, the discourse on negation is relatively uniform. Single negation is selected early on and codified. As discussed in Section 9.2, the spread of localizable forms to areas where they were not in use before is a common phenomenon that is often called supralocalization or supraregionalization (Milroy, Milroy and Hartley, 1994; Nevalainen and Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 2006; Hickey, 2012). Note, however, that supralocalization also occurs in situations where there is no explicit normative discourse and also applies to phonological variables that are only relevant in the spoken language. In other words, the diachronic, regional, constructional, social and individual factors referred to in Sections 9.4.2. and 9.4.3. may be used to describe and explain the common process of supralocalization that led to the dominance of single negation. From that perspective, the question is whether it is necessary to also draw upon a theory of standardization.

The widespread inter- and intra-speaker variation shown in Section 9.4.3. suggests that the individuals in the *LAL Corpus* did not adhere to a uniform norm, and that the sociolinguistic situation should be characterized as diaglossic. Feeding on its gradual disappearance from the spoken language, bipartite negation also disappeared from the written language. The diachronic, regional and constructional conditions are useful generalizations at the level of groups of writers, but they do not necessarily work at the level of individuals.[91] Similarly, social aspects such as awareness, avoidance and norm-consciousness are part of the community as a whole but are not necessarily important at the individual level. The fact that some individuals switched to an exclusive use of single negation does not imply that individual writers in general strove for a standard language, were aware of a standard or considered themselves to be part of a standard language culture. Important, in other words, is the valuable distinction between supralocalization and standardization, which is connected to the Milrovian concept of standardization as an ideology, the topic of Section 9.6.

9.6 Standardization as a datable phenomenon

It follows from the discussion in Section 9.5 that, in order to incorporate the findings of the historical-sociolinguistic literature into a theory of standardization, we need to distinguish between the linguistic process of norm convergence or *supralocalization*, and the metalinguistic phenomenon or ideology (Milroy and Milroy, 2012) of

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91 See Auer and Hinskens (2005) for an evaluation of sociolinguistic theories and research results connected to the problem of linking indivual verbal behavior to language change at the community level.

standardization (cf. Nevalainen and Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 2006). Supralocalization is a common phenomenon throughout the world's languages, both spoken and written, and easily detectable in historical-sociolinguistic research. Standardization and standard language ideology (Lippi-Green, 2012), on the other hand, are closely related to the formation of the modern nation-states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and should be seen as the linguistic counterpart to the sociopolitical ideology of nationalism. This is a fairly restricted notion of standardization, which however allows to keep it conceptually apart from similar phenomena such as supralocalization. This is necessary as periods of supralocalization can, of course, also exhibit metalinguistic discourse, and the linguistic forms promoted therein can very well be the forms that are simultaneously supralocalizing in usage.

In fact, this is exactly the situation of negation in Early and Late Modern Dutch. Single negation is supralocalizing in writing, a change which is affected by several internal and external factors. At the same time, single negation develops into the preferred variant in metalinguistic discourse. But there is no evidence that single negation should be considered to be the 'standard' variant. The majority of writers in the *LAL Corpus* use both single and bipartite negation. To call single negation the 'standard' form suggests that the variant used by a handful of literary writers and language commentators is favored above the variants used by other writers, most of whom do not favor this one variant. Instead, single negation is just one of the variants in their repertoires.

Another reason to distinguish supralocalization from standardization, and to restrict standardization in the history of western European languages such as Dutch to the age of nationalism, is the changing target audience of metalinguistic discourse through time (Nevalainen, 2014; Rutten, Vosters and Vandenbussche, 2014b). Grammar books and spelling guides in the Early Modern period were often targeted towards quite specific and socially limited groups of writers such as poets, ministers, foreigners or Latin schoolboys. Only in the course of the eighteenth century does the target audience become socially more inclusive. In the Dutch context, the envisaged readership of normative discourse is gradually broadened, and eventually encompasses the Dutch 'nation', i.e., the whole of the population, men as well as women, and people from all social backgrounds. The crucial ideological step includes the aim to spread one form of the language among the population, to eradicate all other forms such as local dialects, to reconceptualize the preferred variety as the only 'real' variety of 'the' Dutch language, and to develop a national educational system to disseminate this one 'neutral' variety (Rutten, 2016b, 2016c). This ideology comes into existence just before 1800 and informs language and education policies in the first decades of the nineteenth century, which includes school reforms and the establishment of national grammar and spelling regulations. In sum, what the northern Netherlands display in the decades around 1800 is the rise of the standard language ideology and its immediate implementation in policy.

One important metalinguistic consequence is the splitting of the sociolinguistic continuum into standard and non-standard (cf. Dorian, 2002). Hierarchization of forms and varieties existed well before 1800, but it is with the construction of the written variety of Dutch used by socio-economically privileged groups as the 'neutral' variety of Dutch that the diaglossic continuum is discursively split into standard and non-standard. The standard is moreover indexed as invariable, even diachronically (Rutten, 2016b, 2016c). This means that, in the northern Netherlands in the era of nationalism, a diglossic interpretation of sociolinguistic space results from a metalinguistic, ideological operation carried out in and applied to a diaglossic situation.[92]

Returning to negation, this means that the diaglossic situation of seventeenth-century Dutch, with many individuals using both single and bipartite constructions, also witnessed supralocalization. The standardization of Dutch, however, is datable to the decades around 1800. By that time, single negation had already become the common supralocal variant in northern Dutch (Rutten et al. 2012), and metalinguistic comments on the use of negation are hardly found after c. 1750.[93] Put differently, there was no need to explicitly select single negation as the standard variant. In the national grammar written by Weiland (1805: 283–284), bipartite negation is only mentioned in a footnote as a historical oddity. With standardization feeding upon earlier instances of supralocalization (Nevalainen and Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 2006), single negation thus became the standard Dutch variant without, however, ever being standardized.

9.7 Conclusions

In this paper, I have argued that the history of Dutch does not display the assumed development from diglossia to diaglossia (cf. Auer, 2005, 2011; Grondelaers and van Hout, 2011). Already in the Early and Late Modern period, sociolinguistic space as evidenced in the written record was diaglossic. Many examples to corroborate this claim can be found in the historical-sociolinguistic literature (Rutten, 2016a); here, I have mainly focused on negation in the history of Dutch. In such a period of diaglossia, one variant may develop into the conventional supralocal form preferred in writing, which is what happened to single negation in this period, fueled, in all probability, by the spread of single negation in the spoken language. The individual repertoires attested in a corpus of private correspondence, and the high degree of inter- and

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92 Note that this does certainly not exclude the possibility that, focusing on the spoken language, standard-dialect situations in the twentieth and twenty-first century can be usefully described as diglossic.
93 Recall that the situation in the southern Netherlands is different (cf. Vosters and Vandenbussche, 2012).

intra-speaker variation, suggest that the supralocalization of single negation was not accompanied by wide-spread norm consciousness, which is one reason to avoid the term standardization to describe this situation. In the final parts of the paper, I have argued that we should limit the concept of standardization to the standard language ideology that came into being around 1800. One consequence of this ideological shift was the metalinguistic simplification of sociolinguistic space into standard and non-standard, i.e., to a state that could be described as diglossic.

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