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## Setting the standard: norms and usage in Early and Late Modern Dutch (1550-1850)

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### Citation

Lismont, E. (2025, April 2). *Setting the standard: norms and usage in Early and Late Modern Dutch (1550-1850)*. LOT dissertation series. LOT, Amsterdam. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4210054>

Version: Publisher's Version

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**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

## Setting the Standard

Norms and usage in Early and Late Modern Dutch (1550-1850)

Traditional accounts of language standardisation often portray it as a straightforward process, presuming that codified norms found in spelling books, grammars, and schoolbooks are seamlessly integrated into language use. This dissertation challenges this view by adopting a historical-sociolinguistic perspective to investigate the interplay between norms and usage during the standardisation history of Dutch from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.

To explore the influence of codified norms on usage, this study compares developments in language norms, drawn from a corpus of normative works, with patterns of variation and change in a multi-genre usage corpus. Through systematic analyses of spelling and grammatical features, it examines whether, how, and under what conditions norms influenced language use. This research further determines the impact of key factors, such as the socio-historical context and the specific properties of the features, on the success of prescriptive interventions.

By defining scenarios of prescriptive influence, this dissertation offers new insights into the relationship between codified norms and actual language use. The typological framework it introduces not only deepens our understanding of Dutch standardisation but also has the potential to inform comparative research in other languages and historical contexts.

ISBN 978-94-6093-473-5  
DOI <https://dx.medra.org/10.48273/LOT0688>

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