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

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Setting the Standard

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Setting the Standard

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Eline Lismont

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

In this dissertation, I investigate the relationship between codified norms and actual language use in Early and Late Modern Dutch (1550-1850). During this period, the Dutch language was standardised in normative works, like spelling guides, grammars, and dictionaries. In these normative works, standardisers, such as grammarians and literary authors (Vandenbussche, 2007), codified the Dutch language and prescribed a set of language norms. While these standardisation attempts are clearly reflected in metalinguistic discussions (cf. Chapter 2), it remains unclear to what extent the prescriptions for ‘proper’ or ‘standard’ forms of Dutch also influenced actual language use.

1 Language standardisation

Many traditional histories of the language approach the relationship between codified norms and usage from the perspective of direct influence of language norms on language use. This implies the assumption that language users would simply adjust their writing practices to align with the imposed norms. This idea of a one-way street of norms influencing language use is also (implicitly) embedded in theories of language standardisation. For example, in the famous model of Haugen (1966), which is widely applied to describe how a *dialect* evolves into a *language*. With his four-box matrix, Haugen (1966) explains the development towards a standard language that contains “minimal variation in form” and “maximal variation in function” (ibid., p. 931).

	<i>Form</i>	<i>Function</i>
<i>Society</i>	Selection	Acceptance
<i>Language</i>	Codification	Elaboration

The first two elements in the model, *selection* and *codification*, relate to the form of the language. A variety needs to be selected to act as the norm of the language. This variety is often the dialect that is spoken in the region that holds cultural, political, and economic power and significance. When there is social agreement

on which variety is selected, it also needs codification. This implies that the form of the language, that is “its linguistic structure, including phonology, grammar and lexicon”, needs to be established in normative works (Haugen, 1966, p. 931). The process of *corpus planning* (Joseph, Rutten & Vosters, 2020, p. 168) ensures that the standard language contains “minimal variation in form”. The other two elements in the matrix, *acceptance* and *elaboration* concern the functional side of the language. *Elaboration* is similar to Kloss’s (1967) concept of *Ausbau*, implying the expansion of the language to different domains to achieve “maximal variation in function”. And finally, the *acceptance* of the codified variety is the most crucial aspect of the standardisation process. Haugen (1966, p. 933) clarifies that a standard language “must have a body of users” and must thus be accepted by the language community to speak of successful standardisation. The term *acceptance* was replaced by the more active term *propagation* in a later paper (Haugen, 1972), and in the most recent model, Haugen (1987) named it *implementation*. For this aspect, Haugen (1987, p. 61) specifically refers to “the spread of schooling to entire populations in modern times”, where prescriptive activities, such as teaching in schools, must aid in the implementation of codified norms by the wider language community.

Milroy & Milroy (2012 [1985]) build on this model, but contrary to Haugen (1966) who strongly focused on the practical outcome of standardisation, they view “standardisation as an *ideology*, and a standard language as an idea in the mind rather than a reality” (Milroy & Milroy, 2012, p. 19). In their perspective, this standard language ideology emerged from negative attitudes towards variation in language use (Joseph, Rutten & Vosters, 2020, p. 170). They emphasise how one variety is deemed superior to other varieties, and thus becomes the only ‘correct’ form of language in the minds of language users (Milroy & Milroy, 2012, p. 19). Although strongly focused on the discursive influence of standardisation, they also recognise the linguistic consequences of this process. Like Haugen (1987), Milroy & Milroy (2012, pp. 22-23) describe how codification is often followed by different hypothetical stages of norm implementation by language users. They distinguish three substages within the implementation stage. The variety first needs *diffusion* at social and geographic level before it is established as the standard. Then, the variety needs to be *maintained* in its superior position and used in as many domains as possible. In *prescription*, the standard variety is disseminated through various means, such as schooling and publishing (cf. also Joseph, Rutten & Vosters, 2020, p. 170).

These theoretical models view standardisation as a process ‘from above’, implying that the standard language is created by the upper ranks of society and subsequently imposed on the broader language community (Rutten & Vosters, 2021). Joseph (1987), however, adds nuance to this top-down view on language standardisation. While he also acknowledges the standardisation process ‘from above’, he distinguishes these attempts of *engineered standardisation* from processes of *circumstantial standardisation* (ibid., p. 60). The latter type comprises the selection of a standard variety as an undeliberate process, and a consequence of socio-historical developments or particular events. This implies that convergence in language use is not only achieved ‘from above’, but can also emerge ‘from below’, for example, due to processes of dialect contact and supralocalisation (Rutten, 2016b; Joseph, Rutten & Vosters, 2020). Such processes often result in what Joseph (1987) calls *language standards*. Since language standards probably existed long before languages were codified ‘from above’, it is important to recall that they form the underlying layer upon which codified norms were modelled (cf. Elspaß, 2014, p. 304).

2 Research objectives

Although traditional language histories and theoretical models of language standardisation are thus often based on the idea that norms are directly implemented in language use, these claims generally lack empirical support. In fact, historical-sociolinguistic studies investigating the relationship between norms and usage find only little evidence of such a direct impact of norms on language use (cf. Chapter 3). In this dissertation, I therefore aim to obtain a better understanding of Dutch standardisation as a process ‘from above’. This means that I empirically investigate the relationship between codified norms and actual language use in sixteenth- to nineteenth-century Dutch.

While the interplay between norms and usage is not completely uncharted for the period of Dutch standardisation, previous studies investigate the influence of prescriptions on usage in a specific period and examine either the Northern or the Southern Netherlands.¹ As I will explain in more detail in Chapter 3, Vosters

¹ I employ the term *Northern Netherlands* to refer to the area that largely makes up the present-day Netherlands, and the term *Southern Netherlands* to denote the parts of the language area that roughly correspond to the Dutch-speaking parts of Belgium.

et al. (2014), for example, explore the relationship between norms and usage in the Southern Netherlands during the period of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815-1830). Nobels & Rutten (2014) and Simons & Rutten (2014) focus on the impact of language norms in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Northern Netherlands. And more recently, Krogull et al. (2017), Krogull (2018) and Krogull & Rutten (2021) investigate the impact of the official language policy in the nineteenth-century North. A diachronic overview of whether and to what extent codified norms were implemented in periods of language standardisation, however, is lacking for Dutch. The goal of this dissertation is therefore to get a comprehensive account of whether and to what extent prescriptivism influenced language use. While the focus of this study is primarily on the influence of norms on usage, it also sheds light on how codified norms may be influenced by language use. As such, I specifically try to formulate an answer to the question what the exact relationship is between codified norms and usage in periods of Dutch standardisation.

Like most studies investigating the impact of codified norms on language use in historical settings, this dissertation is written from a historical-sociolinguistic perspective.² Building on the foundational work of scholars like Romaine (1982) and Weinreich et al. (1968), this relatively young research tradition incorporates social factors – like social class and gender, but also variables like region and genre – to explain patterns of variation and change in historical language use (Auer et al., 2015, p. 4). This also implies that I include social factors in the investigation of the relationship between codified norms and language use (cf. Chapter 4). The combination of both social and linguistic variables in this research facilitates a thorough understanding of prescriptive influence. In fact, drawing on Fishman’s well-known citation (1965, p. 89), the historical-sociolinguistic perspective not only enables to assess whether prescriptivism influenced usage, but also to identify when and where codified norms were effective, and how far their impact reached at a social level.

Through systematic corpus analyses, I examine the relationship between norms and language use for five linguistic features. Together, the individual case studies in this dissertation lead to a broader reflection on the influence of prescriptivism

² For the basic principles, main themes of research, and development of the field of historical sociolinguistics, I refer to Auer et al. (2015) and the references there.

and the relationship between codified norms and language use in Dutch. As such, I aspire to not only fill a descriptive gap in the standardisation history of Dutch, but to also broaden the understanding of standardisation as a process ‘from above’.

3 Dissertation outline

In addition to the introduction, this dissertation comprises ten chapters. In what follows, I give a brief description of what to expect in each chapter.

Following on this introduction, **Chapter 2** summarises the historical process in which norm givers aimed to standardise the Dutch language ‘from above’. This chapter is structured around Haugen’s four-stage matrix to discuss the developments in the Dutch normative tradition. I specifically describe how, under the influence of socio-historical and political events, standardisation evolved from an elite affair into a process that concerned the entire language community.

Addressing the research topic of prescriptivism, **Chapter 3** forms the theoretical framework of this dissertation. Apart from delineating the concept, I reflect on previous research investigating prescriptivism and its possible influences on usage. This chapter illustrates how the relationship between codified norms and usage is ambiguous, yet also reveals certain patterns that may determine the success of prescriptivism.

Chapter 4 outlines the corpora and the methodology of this study. The first part of the chapter addresses the corpus of normative works, which is employed for analysing language norms. The usage corpus against which language norms are compared – the multi-genre *Historical Corpus of Dutch* – is also described. The last part of this chapter expounds the methodological approach for the empirical analysis. I specifically elaborate on the corpus searches and the data analysis.

The empirical analyses are discussed in chapters 4 to 8. The investigation of two spelling variables precedes the discussion of three grammatical features. More specifically, in **Chapter 5**, I present the analysis of the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables. We will see that many prescriptions were formulated on the

change from the spelling variant <ae> to <aa>. The analysis of norms and usage will indicate whether these prescriptions also influenced language use.

In **Chapter 6**, the attention shifts to the second orthographic feature, the spelling of /t/ in *d*-stem verbs. In the second- and third-person singular and the second-person plural of the present indicative, three different variants were applied for representing the final /t/ in verbs with a *d*-stem, like *worden* ‘to become’. I investigate whether the development from the phonetic <t> to <d> and the modern-day <dt> in usage is actuated or strengthened by codified norms.

The complement that is applied in comparative constructions denoting a relationship of inequality, as in *hij is groter dan ik* ‘he is taller than I’, is the subject of **Chapter 7**. Before *dan* was established as the standard comparative marker in these constructions, the marker *als* also emerged in language use. I explore whether norm givers succeeded in turning the tide on this change.

Chapter 8 discusses the development from velar to palatal diminutive suffixes. During the period under investigation, the diminutive suffix in *boekskén* ‘book-DIM’ changed to forms like *boekje*. This change occurred speech and in writing. In this chapter, I analyse whether codifiers interfered in this gradual change to palatal diminutive suffixes in written usage.

The final feature investigated in this dissertation is the plural personal pronoun when applied as a direct and indirect object. This case study is presented in **Chapter 9**, where I devote special attention to the alternation between *hen* and *hun* ‘them’ as respectively the direct and indirect object of the third-person plural pronoun. While we already know that this syntactic distinction was introduced in seventeenth-century language norms, I analyse to what extent the pronoun distinction was implemented in usage.

The results from the empirical chapters demonstrate that prescriptivism possibly impacted usage in different instances. However, the outcome of prescriptive influence is not always the same. Recurring patterns of prescriptive influence are observed across the case studies. These findings are therefore brought together in a discussion on scenarios of prescriptive influence in **Chapter 10**.

Chapter 11 forms the conclusion of this dissertation. In this final chapter, I summarise the main findings of the empirical investigations. For each feature, I determine to what extent prescriptivism influenced usage. I also reflect on the scenarios of prescriptive influence and evaluate the impact of the possible determinants of prescriptive success. Finally, I address the main research objectives of this dissertation. What do these results teach us about the relationship between language norms and usage? And does that have any implications for how we understand the standardisation process of Dutch?

Chapter 2 – Dutch standardisation

In this chapter, I discuss the attempts towards language standardisation that took place in the Low Countries between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Drawing on the model of Haugen (1966, 1987), I specifically illustrate how the process of standardisation is reflected in the normative tradition of Dutch.

1 Selection

Before the Dutch language was standardised, Latin was applied as the codified and high-register variety in the Low Countries. At times of Renaissance, Humanism, and Reformation, however, a general interest in the mother tongue emerged. Also for Dutch, this interest resulted in the wider appliance and an increased study of the vernacular. The clergy, for example, started to use the Dutch vernacular in sermons and liturgical texts (Klifman, 1992, pp. 63-64). With technical innovations like the book printing press also emerging at the time, the call for a codified language of Dutch intensified. As a result, the first normative works of Dutch, with metalinguistic reflections on how the vernacular must be represented in writing, appeared in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Deumert & Vandenbussche, 2003, p. 6; Rutten, Vosters & Vandenbussche, 2014b, p. 7). The norm givers that wrote these works did not strive for a uniform written language for the entire language area straight away, though (Rutten, 2019, p. 110). With a strong focus on orthography, these grammarians proposed an orthography system that was based on the local dialect, often the dialect where the norm giver was from. The first attempts to uniformise the Dutch language therefore implied that spelling practices regionally differed, and that a writer from Brabant applied another spelling system than a writer from Vlaanderen, Holland, or any other region in the Low Countries.

While the first attempts to standardise the Dutch vernacular were taken in the Southern part of the language area, after the Fall of Antwerp in 1585, the cultural, economic, and linguistic heart of Dutch shifted from Brabant in the Southern Netherlands to Holland in the Northern part of the language area. Holland

became one of the most important and richest regions in Europe in the seventeenth century. During Holland's so-called 'Golden Age', Dutch authors like Joost van den Vondel (1587 – 1679) and P.C. Hooft (1581 – 1647) gained fame and cultural importance, and they grew into examples of good language practice. When the call for one uniform language intensified, standardisers selected the literary variety of these Hollandic poets as the model for codifying the Dutch language (Vosters & Rutten, 2013, pp. 5-7).

2 Codification

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, multiple normative works appeared in the Northern part of the language area. These works were often part of the Trivium tradition and appeared in the circle of rhetoricians (Klifman, 1983). The language prescriptions that were laid down in these works generally had the aim of educating a local community of (upper) middle class men (Rutten, 2013, p. 272). While such works from the early periods had little inter-grammarians consistency, and thus also varying prescriptions and codified forms (Rutten, 2016b, pp. 19-22), the eighteenth century brought more consistency in the codification process. After all, when the literary language use of the Hollandic poets was selected as the norm, several grammarians made efforts to codify exactly this variety in normative works (Van der Wal & Van Bree, 2008, p. 233).

In the first half of the eighteenth century, standardisers were mostly poets and ministers, who published prescriptions with one clear-cut aim and target audience in mind. They wanted other (literary) authors and clergymen to implement the 'good' and 'proper' usage for which particularly Vondel had set the example. The grammarians spreading this norm into elite circles are hence called Vondelianists, and they form a distinct normative tradition that is known as the period of *elitist grammar* (1700-1740) (Rutten, 2019, p. 52). Given the target audience of these normative works, it is not surprising that these codifiers made many references to Latin. Since grammar only had the purpose of serving the written language in literature and liturgy, norm givers believed that only the higher social classes who knew the classic languages should be concerned with proper language use (Rutten, 2019, p. 53). Since codifiers made no effort in reaching the broader language community with their codifications, Rutten &

Vosters (2021, p. 69) argue that “if we term this standardi[s]ation, it should be clear that it is of a very local kind, both socially and generically”.

Furthermore, with the literary variety from Holland being selected as the norm, the codification of this variety was primarily carried out by standardisers from the Northern Netherlands (e.g. Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 53; Van der Sijs & Willemyns, 2009, p. 247). Due to the cultural importance of Holland, most normative works were also published in this region. After the political split with the Northern Netherlands, the production of normative works collapsed in the Southern part of the language area. In fact, as Vosters & Rutten (2013, p. 7) summarise, the political border that was created between the Northern and the Southern territories after the Fall of Antwerp (1585) had grown into a cultural and linguistic border in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the Southern Netherlands, and the varieties that were used there, fading into the background in the codification process.

3 Elaboration and implementation

While particularly the higher social strata were involved in the early stages of norm implementation, with the advent of the Enlightenment movement in the eighteenth century, the ideology behind language standardisation changed. After all, the main initiatives within the period of Enlightenment were related to social emancipation, i.e. spreading knowledge and power into the entire population (e.g. Klok & Mijndhardt, 2004). Also embedded within the Enlightenment movement is the rise of nationalism. To construct a nation, and to unite the members thereof, homogeneity is sought from the perspective of political and cultural nationalism. The idea of having a ‘national’ language was one of the major aspects to express unity in a language area (cf. Blommaert & Verschueren, 1998; Elspaß, 2014, p. 305). Creating such a national language therefore involved an ideological change as well. The polished variety of Dutch that was previously codified and expected in elite writings only, now needed to become the legitimate variety to be employed as the neutral language of the Dutch nation (Rutten, 2019, p. 128; cf. Watts, 2011, p. 211 for English). Although this *standard language ideology* is more “an idea in the mind than a reality” (Milroy & Milroy, 2012, p. 23), it anyhow caused a considerable change at the metalinguistic level. In normative works, language was viewed from a diglossic perspective, which

implied that variability in usage was increasingly evaluated as either ‘standard Dutch’ or ‘non-standard Dutch’ (Rutten, 2019, p. 270).

Norm givers now also made efforts to implement the only standard variety in the broader language community (Rutten, 2019, p. 54). Dutch grammarians therefore widened the target audience of grammars from the 1740s onwards. In addition to elite circles, a readership of both adult men and women, and the youth from the upper and middle social ranks now had access to study the grammar of Dutch (Rutten, 2019). Lower classes, conversely, were not targeted yet in this tradition of *civil grammar* (1740-1770) (ibid., p. 53). As Haugen (1987, p. 61) explains, education and schools particularly play an important role in the implementation of the standard variety. Many school grammars therefore appeared in this period, in which grammarians simplified the prescriptions in elitist grammars into comprehensible normative works (Rutten, 2009).

Later in the eighteenth century, from the 1770s onwards, the target audience of normative works widened once again, so that all members of society had access to the standard language. Lower-class citizens were now thus also expected to learn the grammar of Dutch, and especially children were targeted. From the late eighteenth century onwards, normative works thus had the purpose of mass literacy. This also implied that schoolbooks for lower education increasingly included language prescriptions. In fact, the normative works that appeared in the period of *national grammar* (from 1770 onwards) had the aim of spreading the national language on a nation-wide scale (Rutten, 2009, p. 58; Rutten, 2016a, p. 45; Rutten, 2019). In the Northern Netherlands, the broadening of the social embedding of normative works even resulted in a national language policy that was imposed by the government in the early nineteenth century (cf. Siegenbeek, 1804; Weiland, 1805). This language policy was meant to be implemented in all administrative and educational domains in the entire Batavian Republic (cf. Krogull, 2018). These policy measures mark the beginning of a national language culture.

While the Southern Netherlands did not have a substantial role in the selection and codification of a standard variety, comparable efforts of norm implementation were taken in this part of the language area. From the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, the production of normative works strongly increased (Vosters & Rutten, 2013, p. 10). In these works, Southern

codifiers reflected on the Northern prescriptions to also establish a norm in the South (Rutten, 2011, p. 17). However, the norm that was propagated in the eighteenth-century South did not strive for a common language with the North anymore. Due to the emerging standard language ideology and nation-building process, Southern norm givers proposed a standard language which differed from the Northern norm, and as such, the South created an own language culture and identity, with a distinct normative tradition of Dutch (Smeyers, 1959, p. 59; Vosters & Rutten, 2013, p. 9). Alike in the North, a coherent tradition of language prescriptions thus emerged in the South, with numerous schoolbooks disseminating the Southern standard language to the broader language community (Vosters, Rutten & Van der Wal, 2010; Rutten, 2011, p. 140; Vosters, 2011, pp. 17-22).

However, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, the sociolinguistic space of different language identities and separate normative traditions turns. With the end of the French period, the political reorganisation of Europe in the Congress of Vienna (1814-1815) had led to the reunification of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands into the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815-1830). The formation of this political union implied that unity had to be achieved at a linguistic level. Within the one-nation-one-language philosophy of King William I, there needed to be one standard language that was employed in both the Northern and the Southern regions (Willemyns, 2003, p. 188; Van der Sijs & Willemyns, 2009, p. 265). The decades of (linguistic and ideological) divergence, in which the Southern Netherlands had created their own language identity and language norm, were now thus abruptly disrupted by the intense contact with the writing traditions in Northern Netherlands (Vosters, Rutten & Vandenbussche, 2012).

Since the North had already established a national orthography (Siegenbeek, 1804) and grammar (Weiland, 1805) of Dutch, it is assumed that the Northern language policy was simply imposed in the South at the time. Although the language policy was not officially introduced as the common norm, Vosters (2013, p. 51) explains that “the period of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands can certainly be seen as an important step in the discursive construction of the linguistic supremacy of Holland”. As such, in the early nineteenth century, a widespread recognition of the Northern norm arose, with Southern grammarians perceiving the North as a point of reference for good language use.

The condition of Dutch in the Southern Netherlands, conversely, was generally regarded as poor and inferior to the Northern variety (Vosters, 2011, pp. 151-153). Although some codifiers still advocated for a more Southern-oriented standard language, most codifiers in the South therefore shifted their prescriptions to the Northern norm.³ It is particularly after the Belgian independence in 1830 that an ideological struggle between adherents of the Northern norm (viz. integrationists) and proponents for a separate Southern standard language (viz. particularists) erupts (Vosters, 2009; Vosters, 2011, pp. 150-151).

With this outline of the developments in the normative tradition, I aimed to demonstrate that the historical developments taking place in Early and Late Modern Europe resulted in initiatives of language standardisation across the continent. For Dutch, metalinguistic reflection is captured from the sixteenth century onwards. This eventually led to the selection and codification of 'proper' usage in normative works, which first targeted only a restricted high-class audience and specific text genres. It is only with the emergence of the standard language ideology that actual norm implementation was attempted, with the standard language being promoted for the entire language community.

³ For a thorough discussion on language variation in the normative discourse and in actual language use at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, see Vosters & Vandenbussche (2009), Vosters (2009), Vosters (2011), Vosters & Weijermars (2011), Vosters (2013), Vosters & Rutten (2015).

Chapter 3 – Prescriptivism

The many attempts of norm givers to spread codified norms into the language community can be captured under the umbrella term *prescriptivism*. As metalanguage that is set up to codify and maintain a standard of correctness, prescriptivism advocates linguistic norms that language users need to follow. According to Straaijer's (2017) definition in *Oxford Bibliographies*, linguistic prescriptivism comprises "the ideology and practices in which the correct and incorrect uses of a language or specific linguistic items are laid down by explicit rules that are externally imposed on the users of that language".

Since the relationship between metalinguistic activities and language use is the central object of investigation, this chapter provides the theoretical framework of this dissertation. I first navigate through the coverage of the concept prescriptivism, and I define how it is perceived in the context of language standardisation. I then turn to the potential impacts of prescriptivism on usage, where I review previous research into the effects of prescriptivism. I claim that studies systematically investigating the relationship between prescriptivism and usage are necessary for better understanding language standardisation processes.

1 Prescriptivism and language standardisation

The multiple volumes on the topic of prescriptivism that appeared in the last few years alone illustrate that prescriptivism is an actively studied subject in sociolinguistics (e.g. Chapman & Rawlins, 2020; Beal, Lukač & Straaijer, 2023; Yáñez-Bouza, Rodríguez-Gil & Pérez-Guerra, 2024 as the most recent volumes). The vitality of the topic does not come as a surprise, of course. Both in the present-day and in the past, language use is subject to value judgement, in which social power and cultural meaning of language is expressed. Prescriptivism is thus from all times and is everywhere. Metalinguistic commentaries and judgements on language use are obviously present in schools and other educational contexts (e.g. Peterson & Hall, 2023; Cushing & Snell, 2023;

Viðarsson, 2024), but the countless number of language blogs, social media pages, and memes on the topic indicate that prescriptivism's operating ground reaches far beyond the classic grammars, spelling guides, schoolbooks and other language advice publications that are often studied nowadays. In the first part of this chapter, I therefore delve into the different types and strands of prescriptivism.

1.1 Non-institutionalised and institutionalised prescriptivism

Evaluative judgements on what is considered 'good' and 'bad' usage are a natural part of human communication, as Cameron (2012 [1995], pp. 1-2) explains. She covers all metalinguistic reflections on the aesthetics or 'standardness' of usage, which are "born of an urge to improve or 'clean up' language", in the term *verbal hygiene*. Although this concept is employed as an umbrella term that comprises a wide array of metalinguistic practices, it is generally used to refer to activities that lack support from institutional endorsement (Cameron, 2023, p. 20). These metalinguistic efforts are often initiated by an individual agent, and may reproduce norms from language authorities, although they may also rely on local ideologies and community norms.

Non-institutionalised prescriptivism is typically transmitted in spoken communication (Curzan, 2014, p. 16). A common example is the interaction between parents and children, where the parents correct the language use of their offspring. Also efforts of *grassroots prescriptivism* (Heyd, 2014; Lukač, 2018; Lukač & Heyd, 2023) fall within non-institutionalised prescriptivism, since the concept comprises activities such as "writing letters to newspaper editors, calling radio stations and engaging in online discussions on topics related to usage" that are "initiated by lay members of the general public" (Lukač, 2018, p. 26). Since these comments are often transmitted only at a limited scale, with one language user telling the other how to talk, the influence of non-institutionalised prescriptivism is generally restricted to the social network of the prescriptive agent (Curzan, 2014, p. 16).

Although the distinction between non-institutionalised and institutionalised prescriptive practices is not strictly categorical, Cameron (2012, p. 3) distinguishes these acts of verbal hygiene from prescriptivism. It is argued that

the concept prescriptivism generally refers to the kind of verbal hygiene that “has been institutionally endorsed through publication” (Curzan, 2014, p. 16). As such, prescriptivism is defined as the institutional enforcement of elite linguistic norms promoting ‘standardness’ in language, which enforces the use of the norm in published works and disseminates it through education (Cameron, 2023, p. 20). This definition of prescriptivism conforms to what it also considered institutionalised prescriptivism.

According to the definition above, institutionalised prescriptivism requires the existence of a standard variety as the only correct form of language that is to be disseminated into society (cf. Curzan, 2014, p. 32). Since the ideology underpinning the ‘standardness’ of a variety emerged only in periods of Enlightenment and nation building in mostly Western European contexts of language standardisation, this definition relegates institutionalised prescriptivism to the eighteenth century, defining it as a phenomenon that exists solely in the context of “standard language cultures” (Milroy, 2007, p. 133). However, Cameron (2012) and Curzan (2014, p. 13) explain that prescriptivism is also a dynamic phenomenon that evolves along with broader socio-political and socio-cultural changes. Normative activities before the eighteenth century are therefore also considered as institutionalised prescriptivism in this dissertation. Since the grammarians of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are responsible for what Haugen (1966) defines as the selection and codification of the standard language (cf. Rutten, 2019), these norms actually form the precursor to the standard language. While it is true that these early codifiers primarily aimed for spreading a ‘proper’ form of the language to a restricted group of language users, these norms were also institutionally “endorsed through publication” (Curzan, 2014, p. 16). As such, these early products of language codification are also captured under the term prescriptivism in this dissertation.

Strands of institutionalised prescriptivism

In her monumental work on institutionalised prescriptivism, Curzan (2014) argues that not all institutionalised prescriptivism has the same goal. She therefore distinguishes four different (but overlapping) strands of prescriptivism. The main strand that is directly associated with the context investigated in this study is *standardi[s]ing prescriptivism*. As the title suggests,

this strand concerns the codified norms of the standard language. It is the type of prescriptivism that claims there is only one correct form of language; the type that deems the standard variety better than all other non-standard varieties of a language (cf. also Lippi-Green, 2012). As such, the rules that are propagated within standardising prescriptivism “are more ‘laws’ than ‘etiquette rules’” (Curzan, 2014, p. 30).

The ‘etiquette rules’ Curzan refers to are found within the range of usage that is considered ‘standard’. The strand *stylistic prescriptivism* distinguishes stylistic differences in usage, often from an aesthetic point of view. Although different forms are thus considered ‘standard’, some usage expresses a more formal, educated, or a colloquial style of speaking or writing. Since each form contains social meaning, prescriptivism considers certain usage more preferred, for example, in formal writing (Curzan, 2014, p. 34). An example from modern-day Dutch is the variation in the order of the final verb cluster in a clause. Although the order in which the auxiliary verb *heeft* ‘has’ precedes (Example 1) or follows (Example 2) the past participle *gelogen* ‘lied’ are both considered Standard Dutch, and are often used interchangeably, stylistic prescriptivism prefers the former construction in formal styles of writing.⁴

(1) *De matroos gaf toe dat hij heeft gelogen.*

(2) *De matroos gaf toe dat hij gelogen heeft.*

‘The sailor admitted that he has lied.’

In practice, the distinction between *standardising* and *stylistic prescriptivism* is not always crystal clear. This is particularly due to the strong association of stylistic prescriptivism with ‘educated’ language use; the usage of “those who ‘know better’” (Curzan, 2014, p. 33). Since the codified norms of the standard language are often based on the usage of high-class educated writers, the distinction between what is ‘good’ or ‘preferred’, and what is ‘correct’ usage may be blurred sometimes (ibid.).

The third strand that Curzan (2014, pp. 36-38) defines is *restorative prescriptivism*. These activities aim for restoring earlier usage. This strand also shows overlap with the two aforementioned strands. In fact, standardising

⁴ Cf. e-ANS (e-ans.ivdnt.org), section 18.5.7.3.ii. (Nederlandse Taalunie, 2024)

prescriptivism is sometimes also known for being conservative, with grammarians prescribing older, conservative variants. Different from standardising prescriptivism, however, Curzan (2014, p. 37) defines restorative prescriptivism as a small category that promotes usage that is not standard and has no grounds in language use (anymore). The linguistic forms that are propagated within restorative prescriptivism therefore often “[live] in isolation in usage guides, with little to no life outside them”. Based on Curzan’s (2014, pp. 36-38) discussion, it seems that this strand mainly applies to the lexicon of a language. This also connects restorative prescriptivism to *purism*, which comprises the metalinguistic efforts set out to purify language use from foreign and other undesirable elements (Thomas, 1991, p. 12). Although purist activities may be visible in all domains of the language, they also particularly target the lexicon (ibid.). An example from Dutch are the attempts of Flemish purists to eradicate French influences from the Dutch lexicon, as is apparent, for example, in their propagation of the purist word *regenscherm* as an alternative for the commonly used French loan *paraplu* ‘umbrella’. Such invented forms do not have any ground in actual usage and prescriptions for these forms are therefore rarely successful.

Finally, Curzan (2014, pp. 38-39) defines *politically responsive prescriptivism* as a strand of institutionalised prescriptivism. This strand is particularly applicable to modern societies, which have increasing attention for inclusive and non-discriminating language use. While this strand of prescriptivism is typically not included in traditional prescriptive sources, Curzan (ibid.) explains that style guides and other institutional forms of prescriptivism may also adopt progressive prescriptions to respond to socio-cultural and socio-political concerns (cf. also Cameron, 2023). Although Curzan (ibid.) also notes that politically responsive prescriptivism may eventually become part of stylistic prescriptivism, this discussion raises the question of whether this strand is truly different from other strands.

By distinguishing these four strands, Curzan (2014, p. 13) argues that a nuanced look at the diverging goals aids in seeing prescriptivism as a dynamic phenomenon. Prescriptions that were initially set out to standardise the language may eventually become stylistic differences in usage. Investigating the impact of prescriptivism on usage is therefore also considering the goal of prescriptivism and the usage that is targeted. Whereas norms for standardising

Dutch were primarily aimed at a restricted high-class audience who needed to adhere to a 'proper' form of Dutch in the sixteenth to early eighteenth centuries, prescriptivism became more concerned with spreading the 'correct' form of language to the entire public from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards (cf. Chapter 2). As such, considering both the goal and the target audience of prescriptivism shows that it is a dynamic phenomenon that evolves along with the socio-cultural context in which standardisation takes place (Curzan, 2014, p. 13).

1.2 Prescriptivism versus descriptivism

When talking about prescriptivism, it is impossible to ignore its putative counterpart: *descriptivism*. With prescriptivism ascribing a higher value to one variety of the language, most of the time the codified standard (Crystal, 1997, p. 2), it is the malignant other which tells speakers and writers how they should talk and write. Descriptivism, on the contrary, is considered the rational and scientific approach that objectively describes how language is actually used. Although descriptive rules may also discuss the "well-formedness" of the language, this type of metalanguage particularly describes patterns of variation across different sociolinguistic factors, such as time, register, and individual speakers, without attaching a value judgement to any form of usage (Curzan, 2014, p. 21).

Prescriptivism and descriptivism are often portrayed as two opposing forces. The dichotomy into which these concepts are generally pushed, however, oversimplifies the complexity of the individual concepts (Pillière et al., 2018, p. 8). This is illustrated, for example, by scholars like Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2011), Hodson (2006), and Straaijer (2011). In their investigations of the metalanguage of notable eighteenth-century grammarians, they show that these norm givers are not always strictly prescriptive. Normative works often include descriptive statements for some linguistic features, while strongly prescriptive injunctions are found for other items. Ayres-Bennett (2020, p. 207) also points to the descriptive adequacy of the so-called prescriptive icon of French, the seventeenth-century Vaugelas, who in fact "reflect[ed] usage and its variation and change well". Since normative works may include accurate descriptive statements alongside comments on correctness (ibid., p. 187), prescriptive

works may thus also be descriptive. The opposite is probably also true. After all, a descriptive approach also implies selection; certain variants are discussed, while others remain unnoticed or are simply neglected by the grammarian. This selection of variants in descriptive grammars can thus also contain a prescriptive attitude and may imply that readers interpret the descriptive grammar prescriptively. Scholars like Beal (2004, p. 90) and Ayres-Bennett (2020, p. 194) have therefore argued for viewing the distinction between prescriptive and descriptive as a continuum or cline, rather than a simple dichotomy. The latter study, moreover, proposes to not only consider the metalanguage when evaluating the ‘prescriptiveness’ of a work, but also the intent of the writer and the effect of the work on usage (Ayres-Bennett, 2020; cf. also Ayres-Bennett, 2016, pp. 105-106).

In this study, I avoid the binary opposition between prescriptivism and descriptivism, and between prescriptive and descriptive as much as possible, since I do not determine the prescriptiveness of a normative work (cf. Ayres-Bennett, 2020). Only when discussing the prescriptions on individual linguistic items in the empirical chapters, I may refer to injunctions as ‘more prescriptive’ or ‘more descriptive’ when compared to another comment on the subject. This way of classifying prescriptions aligns with the view of positioning the two concepts on a continuum rather than a dichotomy.

A note on the applied terminology

As was indicated earlier in this chapter, *prescriptivism* acts as the central concept of this study. I employ the concept prescriptivism as an umbrella term for all the norm-giving activities by language authorities who spread language norms via publication. Since I rely on the standardisation model of Haugen (1966, 1972, 1987), I consider norm implementation as an inherent part of the standardisation process. This is opposed to the view of Milroy & Milroy (2012), who consider the broader transmission of language norms a separate ‘step’ of the standardisation process, following codification. Taking Haugen’s perspective implies that I consider normative practices of all codifiers in this study attempts for norm implementation.

This does not imply that I neglect the ideological turn of prescriptivism in the eighteenth century. While my operationalisation of the concept prescriptivism

also includes metalinguistic practices that enforce norms of ‘proper’ Dutch, the normative activities that align with spreading one ‘correct’ form of language to the entire language community, are specifically denoted with the concept *standardisation ‘from above’* (cf. Rutten & Vosters, 2021).⁵

Furthermore, when I discuss *(language) norms* in this dissertation, I refer to codified norms that are included in the metalinguistic commentary of grammarians but also to the language practice of the codifiers. With *prescription(s)*, conversely, I solely indicate the explicit and implicit commentary that norm givers formulate regarding a specific linguistic item (cf. Chapter 4).

This also implies that I do not explicitly address the concept *prescription* in the terminology of Milroy & Milroy (2012, pp. 22-23) to refer to a stage within the implementation of the standard language. While these reinforced attempts of norm dissemination, particularly via accessible normative works and schooling of the broader public, are considered in this study, I do not operationalise the different stages of implementation (viz. diffusion, maintenance and prescription) as the Milroys define them.

2 Possible effects of prescriptivism

Norm givers who formulate comments on how language should be used have the goal of having an impact on language use, of course. In the context of language standardisation, the aim of standardisers is to achieve a homogenous language that is used as the standard variety by the entire language community (cf. Haugen, 1966). In this section, I rely on previous empirical research to demonstrate that historical codifiers rarely attained such far-reaching effects in usage. However, with their normative efforts, these norm givers could also exert other influences on the language community.

⁵ Note that what I call *standardisation ‘from above’* is what some other scholars consider *prescriptivism*. See, for instance, the definition of Crystal (1997, p. 2): “prescriptivism is the view that one variety of language has an inherently higher value than other, and that this ought to be imposed on the whole of the speech community. [...] Adherents to this variety are said to speak or write ‘correctly’; deviations from it are said to be ‘incorrect’”.

2.1 Discursive effects

As previously noted in this chapter, standardisation ‘from above’ is typically defined as an eighteenth-century phenomenon. This primarily stems from the close link between the enforcement of a standard language and the rise of a standard language ideology during the era of nation-building processes (Rutten & Vosters, 2021, p. 65). This ideological component of standardisation, in which there is “awareness among language users of a ‘correct’, or canonical, form of language” can be seen as a discursive effect of prescriptivism (Milroy, 2001, p. 535). In fact, as was explained in the introduction of this dissertation, this ideological phenomenon is what Milroy & Milroy (2012, p. 19) consider as standardisation.

According to this theory, the prime achievement of standardisation ‘from above’ is thus situated at a discursive level. The effect of this ideological shift is first visible in the metalinguistic discourse, where an increase in normative activities is attested from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. Rutten & Vosters (2021, p. 77) therefore argue that “standardi[s]ation from above is an intrinsically metalinguistic phenomenon”, with codifiers evaluating language use from a diglossic perspective of standard and non-standard forms (cf. also Rutten, 2019, p. 270). It is also at this time that a discourse community of grammarians with “common interests, goals, and beliefs” increasingly made codified norms available for non-elite audiences (Watts, 1999, p. 43). Although these normative efforts gradually spread through the broader community, they did not necessarily have a linguistic impact on usage. Rutten, Vosters & Vandenbussche (2014b, p. 11) argue that standardisation attempts ‘from above’ primarily made language users aware of the existence of a standard variety.

Stigmatisation

Although the standard variety contains social value as the only ‘correct’ language, codifiers can also ascribe other social values to linguistic features. These forms of metalinguistic evaluation are captured within the concept *stigmatisation*.

An example of metalinguistic stigmatisation from the Dutch context is the use of the masculine definite article *den* instead of the standard article *de*, as in shown in *den man* ‘the man’. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the article *den* was commonly used in Southern varieties of Dutch, and at the time of nation-building processes, codifiers also explicitly associated the article with language practice from the Southern part of the language area (Vosters, 2011; Rutten, 2011).

Another example that is frequently mentioned in the literature on the topic derives from Early New High German. Langer (2001, p. 213) illustrates that German grammarians first stigmatised the *tun*-periphrasis first as ‘bad poetry’, before the stigma intensified to ‘bad German’ in the eighteenth century. In this specific case, the metalinguistic stigmatisation of *tun* eventually led to the disappearance of the construction from Standard German. Such findings show that the dissemination of stigmatisation may result in a change in usage. A linguistic effect following on codifiers’ evaluations is by no means an evident result of stigmatisation, though. The effect of stigmatisation can just as well be limited to the discursive level, with codifiers simply spreading awareness of the stigma among language users.

Although codifiers can ascribe stigmas to variables from different domains of the language, such metalinguistic evaluations are particularly common for spoken features and accents. In a study on grammarians’ attitudes towards pronunciation in nineteenth-century English, for example, Wiemann (2024) shows that grammarians evaluate the absence of the post-vocalic /r/ as in *card*, i.e. [kɑ:d] instead of [kɑ:ɹd], as a feature of Londoners and Cockney speakers. Anderwald (2012; 2016), furthermore, indicates that these nineteenth-century grammarians also find the use of the progressive passive, as in *the bridge is being built*, ‘inelegant’ and ‘awkward’, as they associate the construction with the language use of the lower social classes. While such injunctions do not necessarily have an impact on actual language use, they probably create more awareness among language users of the social values that are assigned to certain (non-standard) usage.

The stigmatisation of (non-standard) usage can be classified according to the level of awareness that language users have of the stigma. In his *hierarchy of salience*, Labov (2001, pp. 196-197) distinguishes *indicators*, which are features

that vary but are not explicitly stigmatised, from *markers* and *stereotypes* (cf. also the indexical orders of Silverstein, 2003). The latter two types comprise features of which language users are aware of the social and stylistic stratification. While markers are subject to some degree of stigmatisation, stereotypes are strongly labelled features characteristic of particular social groups.

2.2 Linguistic effects

Apart from exerting a discursive influence on language users, codifiers can also have a visible impact on usage. The linguistic effects of prescriptivism are less evident compared to the discursive influence. For prescriptivism to manifest an influence in general usage, language users must first accept the variety and individual forms advocated by grammarians (cf. Haugen, 1966). A deliberate action of language users is therefore required to acknowledge prescriptive influence on language use.

Written versus spoken language

Linguistic effects of prescriptivism, with the influence of language norms showing in usage, can be observed in written and in spoken language use. It is important to acknowledge, however, that spoken usage is generally less susceptible to prescriptive influence compared to the written language. When comparing the written and spoken usage of individuals, larger variability is attested in speech than in writing. Due to this inherent variability of the spoken language, Milroy & Milroy (2012, p. 58) argue that historical prescriptivism was generally not successful in standardising the spoken language. Since the spoken language is in a constant state of change, they are convinced that “it is only in the writing system that a high degree of uniformity has been achieved” (Milroy & Milroy, 2012, p. 51).

Scholars like Anderwald (2018, p. 89) and Szmrecsanyi & Bloemen (2023, p. 83) also assert that prescriptivism may influence the written language (to some extent), while the spoken language is more resilient against these influences ‘from above’. This claim is also supported by one of the few studies that investigates the influence of prescriptivism on the spoken language. In their exploration of Quebec French, Poplack & Dion (2009), Poplack (2015), and

Poplack et al. (2015) illustrate that prescriptivism does not influence grammatical constructions, such as the subjunctive, the imperfect *si*-clauses, and the future tense, in spoken usage. The general conclusion of these studies is that spoken usage is subject to constraints that govern the use of variants, and prescriptivism generally fails in capturing this complex conditioning, thereby excluding any influence of prescriptivism on the spoken language, of course. (Poplack, 2015, p. 317; Poplack et al., 2015, p. 49).

In explaining why prescriptivism was generally not successful in standardising spoken usage, Milroy & Milroy (2012, p. 54) point to the written code that prescriptivism often targets. They argue that many prescriptions proposed for eighteenth-century English were “absurd when applied to speech”. This claim is exemplified by the prescriptive proposition of saying *It is I* instead of *It is me* (Milroy & Milroy, 2012, p. 29). A similar example can be found for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dutch. In his study on the genitive case, Scott (2014, p. 113) clarifies that norm givers considered the prescribed synthetic genitive the ‘holy case’, which was to be used in higher registers, while codifiers did probably not expect to find the synthetic genitive in everyday speech. Although such examples indeed indicate that historical codifiers primarily aimed for standardising the written language, the lack of prescriptive influence in contemporary spoken usage also suggests that it is mainly the written code that is susceptible for prescriptive interference.

3 Investigating prescriptive influence

The interplay between imposed norms and actual usage has been the topic of a wide range of studies in historical sociolinguistics. The *Norms and Usage* volume of Rutten, Vosters & Vandenbussche (2014a), for example, showcases different case studies in European languages (viz. English, Dutch, German, French), which all illustrate the complexity of the relationship between prescriptive practices and usage. Although most of these studies compare codified norms with developments from a corpus of actual language usage, investigations of prescriptive influence vary greatly. In this section, I reflect on the diverging scopes and approaches to investigate prescriptive influence, on the one hand, and on the disparate findings that these studies yield, on the other hand.

3.1 Diverging scopes and approaches

Especially the English research tradition accounts for studies that are set out to investigate prescriptivism in a restricted scope, where the impact of one famous norm giver is put central. Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2010, 2011), for example, has worked extensively on the eighteenth-century bishop and grammarian Robert Lowth (1710-1787), while Hodson (2006, 2008) and Straaijer (2011) explored the grammar of Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), and Fens-de Zeeuw (2011) in turn investigated the work of the American Quaker Lindley Murray (1745-1826). While the study of Hodson (2006, 2008) particularly focused on the grammar itself, and the changes that were made between the different editions of the work, Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2011), Straaijer (2011), and Fens-de Zeeuw (2011) also compared norms to the language practice in the personal correspondence of the norm givers themselves.

Studies focusing on the influence of one iconic grammarian are also conducted for German and French. The impact of the seventeenth-century German codifier Justus Georg Schottel (1612-1676) is investigated by McLelland (2011, 2014), and the work and influence of the French *remarqueurs*, and Claude Favre de Vaugelas (1585-1650) in particular, is explored in studies of Ayres-Bennett (1987, 2014, 2018). In these investigations, the imposed norms are also compared to a corpus of language use, comprising texts from different genres and social backgrounds.

Studies with a broader scope, in which the norms of *multiple* codifiers are compared to a corpus of actual language use, have also been carried out for different languages, such as English⁶, French (e.g. Ayres-Bennett, 2004, 2014; Poplack & Dion, 2009; Poplack et al., 2015), and German (e.g. Konopka, 1996; Takada, 1998; Langer, 2001; Auer, 2006, 2009; Havinga, 2018). For Dutch, this approach is taken by Simons & Rutten (2014), Nobels & Rutten (2014), Vosters et al. (2014), Rutten & Vosters (2016), Krogull, Rutten & Van der Wal (2017), Krogull (2018), and Rutten et al. (2020). This large collection of references shows that a wide range of studies into the effects of historical prescriptivism

⁶ e.g. Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2002a; 2002b; 2009), Gustafsson (2002), Auer (2006; 2009; 2014), Auer & González-Díaz (2005), Yáñez-Bouza (2016), Hinrichs et al. (2015), Anderwald (2011; 2012; 2014a; 2014b; 2016; 2017; 2019; 2020)

has been carried out over the last few decades, yet no overall account on whether and to what extent prescriptivism was able to influence usage could be established so far (Rutten & Vosters, 2021).

The reason behind the lack of a broader understanding of prescriptive success may be partly related to the usage corpora that were investigated in previous research. In early studies in Dutch, for example, scholars focused strongly on the development of language norms without referring to what happened in actual usage (e.g. De Vooy, 1931). Even if empirical research was conducted, it was limited to the usage of the norm giver, whose language practice was simply equated with general usage, which constitutes a distorted picture of the success of prescriptivism, of course. It is not until the emergence of the field of historical sociolinguistics that researchers empirically correlate patterns in language norms to actual usage. Even more recently, many scholars investigating the effects of prescriptivism employ a multi-genre usage corpus, including genres with varying degrees of formality or editorial interventions, to discern differences in the extent to which language norms are implemented in usage.

Large differences are also observed when looking at the linguistic features that are investigated. Most researchers measuring the influence of prescriptivism do so for one or two linguistic features. In English studies, for instance, Gustafsson (2002) investigated the past participle forms, Auer (2009) explored the subjunctive, Yáñez-Bouza (2014) focused on the influence of prescriptivism on preposition stranding, and Hinrichs et al. (2015) analyse the use of relativisers. Auer (2009) also investigated the impact of codified norms on the use of the subjunctive in Austrian German, and the previously discussed study of Langer (2001) strongly concentrated on the disappearance of the auxiliary verb *tun* in German. Similar studies, albeit with a slightly larger scope, have also been conducted for French (e.g. Ayres-Bennett, 2004, 2014) and for Dutch (e.g. Simons & Rutten, 2014; Nobels & Rutten, 2014), where the focus was on a few features from different domains of the language. Although all these studies present a highly detailed account of prescriptive interference, the discussed possibilities of influence do not reach beyond specific spelling or grammatical features.

What probably also hinders an overarching account of prescriptive influence is the wide variety of periods and specific socio-historical contexts that are explored in studies of prescriptivism. In most research, the impact of

prescriptivism is investigated in a century that is considered important for the standardisation process. Scholars like Konopka (1996) and Takada (1998) respectively investigate the periods from 1720-1775 and from 1640-1700, and also McLelland (2011, 2014) focused on the influence of German prescriptivism in the seventeenth century. Other scholars investigate norm implementation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (e.g. Gustafsson, 2002; Auer, 2009; Yáñez-Bouza, 2016; Anderwald, 2014a, 2016), and still other studies examine the influence of prescriptivism in highly specific contexts within these broader periods, as Havinga (2018, 2019), for example, investigates the linguistic effect of the educational reforms of 1774 on Austrian German.

Determining prescriptive success in specific socio-historical contexts is also apparent in studies on Dutch. Most of the research that has been carried out for Dutch is strongly embedded within investigations of standardisation ‘from above’, and thus focused on the effect of deliberate language planning in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Krogull, Rutten & Van der Wal (2017), Krogull (2018), Rutten et al. (2020), and Krogull & Rutten (2021) investigate the effect of the national language policy that was imposed by the government on nineteenth-century Northern usage, while Vosters (2011), Vosters et al. (2014), and Rutten & Vosters (2016) explore the effect of language planning activities in the Southern Netherlands at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815-1830).

With this overview, I aimed to show that, despite the numerous studies that are set out in different languages to answer similar questions of prescriptive influence on written usage, diverging approaches and scopes are taken for investigating the issue. Due to the focus on individual linguistic features, on the one hand, and on specific socio-historical and language-political contexts, on the other hand, an overarching account on prescriptive success is lacking for many European languages, including Dutch.

However, one of the most comprehensive studies on prescriptive success is provided by Anderwald (2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2018, 2020), who investigates the influence of prescriptivism in British and American English. Considering different features related to verb categories and verb morphology that were undergoing change in the nineteenth century, Anderwald systematically compares metalinguistic comments in a large corpus of

grammars, i.e. *Corpus of Nineteenth-Century Grammars (CNG)* to patterns of variation and change in different corpora with nineteenth-century usage data, such as *ARCHER* (Biber, Finegan & Atkinson, 1994), *CONCE* (Kytö, Rydén & Smitterberg, 2006), and *COHA* (Davies, 2010) (cf. Anderwald, 2012; 2016).⁷ Since these are multi-genre corpora, Anderwald is able to carefully map out differences in text frequencies between varying genres, including newspapers, fiction, drama, and ego-documents. Although focusing solely on the nineteenth century, these fine-grained analyses illustrate how adopting a more systematic method for measuring prescriptive influence enables us to understand various types and mechanisms of prescriptive success more effectively.

3.2 Elusive findings

Not only the methods and scopes of research into prescriptive influence differ, also the findings of these studies diverge greatly. In this section, I will show that some scholars detect clear and unmistakable influences of prescriptivism on historical language use, while other researchers cannot find any impact of codified norms on usage, which leads to disparate conclusions on the role of prescriptivism in language change.

Possible influence

Scholars identifying an influence of prescriptivism on usage discerned this impact primarily in language use and the normative practices of fellow grammarians (e.g. Konopka, 1996; Takada, 1998), or in the language use of other elite members of society, who were often connected to the circle of the norm giver who made the codifications. The latter is observed by McLelland (2014), who notes that Schottelius's prescriptions were sometimes simple reflections of actual usage, yet for a few spelling features, such as the spelling *um* instead of *umb*, the grammarian possibly succeeded in spreading the modern-day variant before it was dominant in writing practice. McLelland (2014, pp. 263-264), moreover, argues that these successful prescriptions were probably implemented gradually in usage, with the preferred forms spreading to writers

⁷ For some case studies, Anderwald also triangulates the findings from nineteenth-century norms and usage to developments in present-day British and American English, employing mainly the usage corpora *BNC* and *COCA* (Anderwald, 2016).

close to the circle of the authoritative norm giver before they reached the broader language community. Such a pattern of norm dissemination is reinforced by another scenario that is discussed in this paper, where Schottelius introduces the spelling *-kk-* instead of *-ck-* in words like *wecken* ‘to wake’. McLelland (2014, pp. 266-267) shows that the innovative *-kk-* forms were adopted in usage only after Schottelius’s prescription. Nonetheless, the new form was implemented only by elite writers, who used the spelling only for a short period of fifty years. The spelling did thus not get established in the long term, which implies that prescriptivism was only briefly successful in influencing (elite) usage.

Also the previously discussed research of Langer (2001) indicates that prescriptivism can be successful in influencing the disappearance of a stigmatised variant from written usage in German. Together with Elspaß (2005) and Langer (2014), however, this study also illustrates that the auxiliary verb *tun* remained in use in dialects and informal language use (of the lower social classes).

Furthermore, Gustafsson (2002), Auer & González-Díaz (2005), Auer (2006, 2009), and Yáñez-Bouza (2006, 2014) detect possible effects of prescriptivism on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English usage. While Gustafsson (2002) shows that the modern-day past participle of the irregular verb *to write*, i.e. *written*, was being standardised in usage due to prescriptive interference in the eighteenth century, codifiers at the time also influenced the English usage for other grammatical features. More specifically, eighteenth-century grammarians were successful in declining the use of preposition stranding (Yáñez-Bouza, 2014), and in temporarily reviving the use of the inflectional subjective (Auer & González-Díaz, 2005, p. 325; Auer, 2006, 2009). In both instances, the effect of prescriptivism was visible across multiple formal and informal genres.

Another example where prescriptivism manages to impact usage is found in case studies of Dutch. When investigating the relationship between norms and usage in eighteenth-century Northern Dutch, Simons & Rutten (2014, p. 67) observe “a clear and unambiguous influence of language norms on language use” for the deletion of the final *-n* as an orthographic variable, whereas no convincing impact of prescriptivism was attested for grammatical features, such as the marking of the synthetic genitive (ibid., pp. 68-69; cf. also Nobels & Rutten (2014) for

seventeenth-century Dutch). When investigating the effects of the imposed national language policy in the nineteenth century, Krogull (2018) observes an influence of the national language policy for different spelling variables, such as the spelling of the verb-final /t/ and of the word-medial and word-final /s/. However, not all orthographic features under scrutiny were influenced by the prescriptions of Siegenbeek (1804) (Rutten et al., 2020, pp. 265-267).

No influence

These examples in which prescriptivism appears successful in (temporarily) influencing usage are in sharp contrast with other studies on the topic. In their investigation of double comparatives, as in *more healthier*, Auer & González-Díaz (2005) point to a complete lack of prescriptive influence on usage, since these double comparatives disappeared from usage before they were even noticed by grammarians. Also McLelland (2011, 2014) reports on prescriptions of the leading grammarian Schottelius that did not find access to language use. Similar results are attested in nineteenth-century Dutch, where prescriptions for uncommon spelling variants did not gain ground in usage, as Rutten & Vosters (2010a, 2010b) illustrate for the spelling of the long *e* in the Southern Netherlands. With language use not adapting to the prescriptions, any influence of prescriptivism on usage is ruled out, of course.

Restricted or uncertain influence

In still other case studies, norms and usage are not entirely detached, though. More specifically, it appears that codifiers also succeed in capturing changes that were ongoing in usage. These changes are consequently reflected in their normative practice. This is indicated, for example, by Ayres-Bennett & Sejjido (2011) and Ayres-Bennett (2004, pp. 193-201, 2014, p. 193), who argue that the prescriptions of *Remarqueurs* like Vaugelas generally followed changes that were well underway in language use. Also in the case of German, McLelland (2011, 2014, pp. 260-261) claims that, for some spelling features, the prescriptions simply backed the variants that were already widespread in usage, and as such, the codification of the norm actually followed the selection by language users. The fact that norms rather adapt to usage than vice versa is also shown in the *which*-hunting study of Hinrichs et al. (2015). This study relates the increase of the informal but prescribed relativiser *that* in English usage to

broader colloquialisation processes, and not to a direct impact of prescriptivism. Hinrichs et al. (2015, p. 831) conclude that prescriptivism followed an ongoing trend, and therefore probably aided only in “reinforcing and accelerating an existing trend in the direction of colloquiali[s]ation”.

In addition to studies that either hint at or rule out the possibility of prescriptive interference, case studies in English and Dutch also proved that it can be difficult to determine whether prescriptivism played a role in language change. For example, in her study on past tense inflections of irregular verbs in English – that is the variation between forms such as *leapt* and *leaped* – Anderwald (2011, 2016, 2019, pp. 98-99) notices that variation was often acknowledged by codifiers. Krogull et al. (2017) arrive at a similar conclusion for the use of neuter relativisers in Dutch. Due to the reigning variability in codified norms, it was in fact difficult to assess whether the increase of *hetwelk* ‘which’ in nineteenth-century newspapers was indeed induced by prescriptive injunctions.

Although the actual impact of prescriptivism is thus not always evidently ascertained, in cases where an influence can be assumed, research shows that the effects are often restricted to specific genres and text types. This is most notably indicated in the research of Anderwald (2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2019). In the case study on the rise of the passive with *get*, for example, she explains that this feature often appears in fictional texts because the *get*-passive is viewed as characteristic of spoken and informal language use. Although the construction is not fiercely criticised in nineteenth-century grammars, Anderwald (2016, 2017, 2019, pp. 96-98) claims that the negative comments of grammarians possibly facilitated the temporary slowdown of the form in fictional texts.

The most apparent example of text-type sensitivity of prescriptivism, however, is the case of the progressive passive as in *the bridge is being built*. Here, nineteenth-century grammarians noticed that these constructions started to replace older constructions like *the bridge is building*, and proscribed against the use of the progressive passive. Since the progressive passive was particularly salient in newspaper language, Anderwald (2012, 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2019) argues that codifiers’ proscriptions only caused a temporary decline of the construction in the highly edited genre of newspapers. In overall, Anderwald (2019, p. 103) concludes that “[m]assive prescriptive criticism can obviously be

successful”, yet “a measurable influence is quite rare”. If it occurs, she continues, the effect is most likely small, restricted to specific text types, and visible only for a short period of time (ibid.).

As such, with prescriptivism clearly changing usage in some cases, and language use fuelling normative injunctions in other instances, the discussion in this section illustrated the complexity of prescriptive influence. However, determining the role of prescriptivism in language change is even more complex. As I already indicated earlier in this chapter, prescriptivism is a phenomenon that evolves along with other social, cultural, and political changes (cf. Curzan, 2014). That also implies that historical codifiers and language users operate in the same socio-historical context, which in turn may influence how prescriptivism and language users behave (Vosters et al., 2014).

To illustrate the matter, let us briefly review the study of Vosters (2011) and Vosters et al. (2014), who investigate the relationship between norms and usage in the nineteenth-century Southern Dutch. For different features that were investigated, nineteenth-century norms and usage were rapidly changing and developing in the same direction. Although an impact of prescriptivism could be assumed, Vosters et al. (2014, p. 96) claim that it is not prescriptivism, but the specific socio-political context that triggered the change in usage. After all, the investigated period also comprised the timeframe of the political reunification of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands into the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815-1830). The research of Vosters (2011) and Vosters et al. (2014) indicates that, (the period leading up to) the political reunification made Southern grammarians and language users adopting writing practices that were common in the Northern Netherlands at the time. Vosters et al. (2014, p. 96) therefore argue that investigations of prescriptive influence should “move beyond a simple dichotomy of norms on the one hand and usage on the other hand, [and] fully recogni[se] their shared basis in the broader sociolinguistic context in which they arose”. Not only the systematic comparison of norms and usage, but also the broader socio-political and socio-cultural changes are thus of prime importance when evaluating prescriptivism as the driving force of language change.

3.3 Possible determinants of prescriptive success

In the previous sections of this chapter, I argued that prescriptivism most likely had a discursive influence, with language users being made aware of the existence of a correct form of language from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. I also tried to demonstrate that normative activities and prescriptive attempts do not necessarily have a linguistic outcome on language use. In fact, previous research shows highly disparate findings, which provide only limited insight into how influential historical prescriptivism actually was. Scholars note that not all features and contexts appear equally susceptible to prescriptive interference, and they have therefore argued that “prescriptive influence depends on multiple factors” (Kostadinova, 2020, p. 96). Also Rutten & Vosters (2021, p. 78) recently claimed that “there is no one-size-fits-all answer” to the question of prescriptive success. As such, to arrive at a broader overview of the impact of prescriptivism, Rutten & Vosters (2021) argue for more studies systematically comparing patterns in norms to language use. Furthermore, based on the disparate findings from previous research, they propose five (interrelated) factors that possibly interfere in the influence of prescriptivism. Since the role of these potential determinants is investigated in this study (cf. Chapter 4), the last section of this chapter gives an outline of the individual determinants.⁸

3.3.1 Chronology of language change

The first, and perhaps the most important factor that needs proper consideration is the chronology of language change. If we observe codifiers introducing, let us say, a new spelling variant, which is subsequently adopted by language users, this chronology of change enables a direct effect of prescriptivism initiating this change. I discussed one example before, with the German grammarian Schottelius spreading a spelling innovation to other elite writers, who used the form for a short period of time. Previous research has also indicated, however,

⁸ The discussion of the possible determinants of prescriptive success is based on the book chapter of Gijsbert Rutten and Rik Vosters in *The Cambridge Handbook of Language Standardization* (Ayres-Bennett & Bellamy, Eds., 2021). However, the link that I make between progressive and conservative norms and the S-curve of language change was not covered in their chapter.

that such a chronology of change, with codifiers possibly initiating changes in usage, is rare.

A more common scenario is where a change takes place in language use and is then captured by codifiers who comment on the change. Although this chronology of change does not allow for prescriptivism to initiate changes, it still allows codifiers to intervene in ongoing changes in usage. This is suggested, for example, in the research of Anderwald (e.g. 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2019). She illustrates that grammarians proscribed against an innovation in usage, which may have (temporarily) slowed down the variant from increasing in usage. The research of Krogull (2018), for example, shows that codifiers can also prescribe forms that are already widespread in usage. By prescribing the form, grammarians may subsequently speed up the ongoing change in usage. Determining the chronology of language change is thus vital to ascertain whether prescriptivism could have influenced language use. If so, the chronology of change also reveals whether these norms were possibly able to initiate or merely accelerate or decelerate a change that was already underway in usage.

However, a right chronology of change, with prescriptions preceding a change in usage, is not sufficient to speak of prescriptive success. Auer & González-Díaz (2005) and Auer (2006) have pointed to the necessity of a time lag of a few decades between the promotion of a form in norms and the adoption thereof in usage. Even if that temporal correlation is right to allow for prescriptive influence, the chronology alone does not imply a causal relationship (Anderwald, 2016, p. 234). If a causal relationship is presumed without sufficient evidence, a misconception of prescriptive influence lurks, which Moschonas (2020, 2022, p. 40) characterises as the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* fallacy. He therefore emphasises the importance of demonstrating that “the change detected in the [usage] corpus is not due to any other factors, that other possibilities are excluded, that the change in question could not have occurred otherwise” to prove that prescriptivism is the driving force behind the change (ibid.).

Moreover, as the research of Anderwald (e.g. 2014a, 2014b, 2016, 2019) clearly indicates, prescriptive influence is often visible only in specific genres. She shows that highly edited genres, like newspapers, are more sensitive to prescriptive interference compared to informal, or speech-based genres (cf. also Krogull, 2018). Rutten & Vosters (2021, p. 79) therefore propose to not only carefully

determine the chronology of language change, but to also consider genre differences when investigating prescriptive impact.

3.3.2 Progressive versus conservative norms

As another potential determinant, Rutten & Vosters (2021) discuss the variants that are prescribed by grammarians, where it is relevant to distinguish between codifiers promoting progressive, incoming forms or conservative variants that are outgoing in language use. After all, many language users in the past and today believe that “at some time in the past, language was in a state of perfection”, which conforms to what Labov (2001, p. 514) defines as the *Golden Age Principle*. This pessimistic view on language change is also shared by many grammarians who aimed for language standardisation. With the general believe that all language change leads to decay, many grammarians thus praised archaic variants in their prescriptions, while innovations were rejected for usage.

There are some examples in which the prescriptions for historical constructions were successful, as is illustrated, for example, with the revival of the synthetic genitive in nineteenth-century Dutch. Although the synthetic genitive had been in decline for multiple centuries in favour of the analytical construction with *van* ‘of’, Krogull & Rutten (2021) showed that the construction increased again. This revival was probably caused by the conservative prescriptions of Weiland (1805) as part of the official language policy. Despite some successful examples, however, previous research has also observed that prescriptions for variants that have no grounds in language use (anymore) are generally less successful compared to norms promoting innovative variants that are backed by language use (e.g. Konopka, 1996; McLelland, 2014 for German; Rutten & Vosters, 2010a for Dutch).

Although historical codifiers generally prefer archaic variants, Anderwald (2012) shows that grammarians do not always criticise new and incoming writing practices. In her study, Anderwald (2012) relates codifiers’ criticism with the S-curve of language change. More specifically, she investigates the correlation between the codifiers’ stance towards the innovation in usage with the rate of the change and its stage on the S-curve.

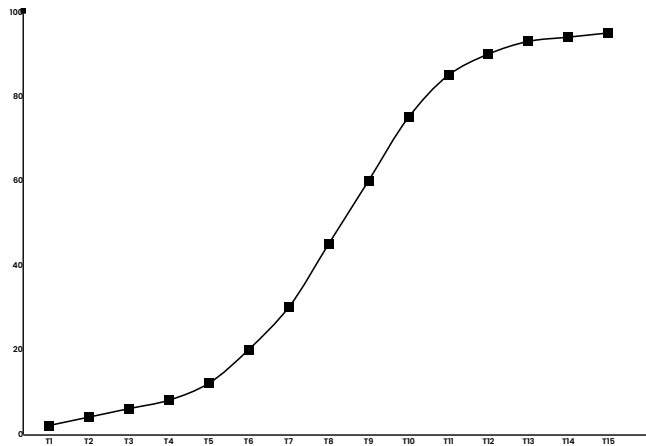


Figure 1: the diachronic distribution of an innovation in the shape of an S-curve

The model of the S-curve has its origins in the exact sciences. In 1838, a Belgian mathematical biologist, Pierre-François Verhulst, proposed a logistic function to depict the diachronic growth of a population (Bradley, 2001, p. 94). The logistic model has later also been applied by other sciences, for instance, in economics, where the curve represents the adoption process of innovations, new technologies or products. However, the most recognisable context with an S-curve pattern is perhaps the infection rate during the COVID-pandemic, where the curve represents the number of infections over time. Although only a few people were infected in the beginning, that number grew rapidly, with an increasing amount of people being infected and in turn also infecting someone else. The multiplication of that process represents the steep slope in the middle of the curve. Eventually, there are little people left to get infected, so the infection rate decreases. This slowdown marks the tail of the S-curve.

In the 1970s, the S-curve model was first used in linguistics, where it is applied to reflect the distribution of linguistic innovations (Anderwald, 2012, p. 41). Previous scholarship (e.g. Labov, 1994; Denison, 2003; Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg, 2017 [2003]) described language change as a process is marked by a slow start, a swift ascent, and a slow ending, which thus aligns with the trajectory of the S-shaped curve. Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg (2017, pp. 54-55), moreover, distinguish different stages on the S-curve: (1) incipient changes

(below 15%), (2) new and vigorous changes (15-35%), (3) mid-range change (36-65%), making up the steepest middle part of the curve, (4) changes nearing completion (66-85%), and (5) completed changes (over 85%).

Figure 1 shows only an idealised graph of linguistic change. The different real-time changes discussed in Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg (2017) illustrate how patterns of language change can diverge, with the S-curve not always being clearly pronounced, or with only part of the curve showing. Such deviations from the S-curve trajectory may, of course, point to a change that reversed or was eventually not completed, possibly due to the influence of external factors, such as broader social changes (*ibid.*, p. 78), or prescriptive interference (Anderwald, 2012).

Although thus highly insightful, S-curves may give an oversimplified picture of language change. This is particularly because these curves are generally drawn by positioning two variants in competition, or by visualising one variant's growing proportion over time. Especially in the latter case, it is important to realise that synchronic language use is always variable (Anderwald, 2012, p. 42). Anderwald (*ibid.*), following Kretzschmar et al. (2003), explains that, from a synchronic point of view, language change rather aligns with an asymptotic A-curve, where "one or few variants are exceptionally frequent, and many other options are equally (or almost equally) infrequent". As such, when choosing to plot the diachronic development of only one variant, and thereby neglecting the existing variation in usage, the growing proportion of the variant along the A-curve typically results in the S-curve pattern of change (*ibid.*). This does not counter the relevance of S-curves. As Anderwald (2012, p. 42) summarises in a footnote: "whichever way we conceptuali[s]e language change, S-curves are empirically real, and theoretically necessary".⁹

Turning back now to the correlation between normative commentary and the S-curve pattern of language change, Anderwald (2012, p. 38) classifies codifiers'

⁹ As will be elucidated further in Chapter 4, for each linguistic feature under investigation, I draw S-curves by weighing the absolute proportion of the incoming variant (i.e. the variant that ultimately became the standard variant) against those of the outgoing variant(s). Although this way of plotting the diachronic distribution of variants relies on the theoretical assumption of linguistic equivalence between the different variants (e.g. Denison, 2003, p. 65; Anderwald, 2012, p. 42), the rather narrow delineation of linguistic features in this study ensures the equivalence of the variants.

injunctions according to their preference for either conservative or new forms (cf. also Anderwald, 2016). In the diachronic investigation of multiple grammatical changes, she notices that these changes were situated at different stages of the S-curve in the nineteenth century. The rise of the *get*-passive, for example, occurred rather slowly, and only showed the beginning of the change at the time, while the progressive passive inclined rapidly in the nineteenth century, thereby portraying both the incipient and middle stages of the S-curve (Anderwald, 2012, pp. 33-34; 45). When these different stages and rates of change are correlated with normative commentary, Anderwald (2012, p. 44) argues that negative comments on the incoming forms arise as soon as grammarians observe the change, which appears to happen only when the change has progressed beyond the incipient stages. A rapid change in usage is therefore also picked up more easily by grammarians (ibid.).

Despite the general preference of grammarians for conservative forms, not all investigated changes were met with resistance in language norms. It is especially in the later stages of the S-curve, when the change is nearing completion, that codifiers start seeing older variants as incorrect (ibid.). Based on Anderwald's (2012) study, the possible determinant discussed here – progressive vs. conservative norms – therefore appears to be intertwined with the stage and the rate of the change under investigation.

3.3.3 Nature of the variable

Another factor that is most likely decisive in the implementation of language norms is the domain of the language that is targeted by prescriptivism. Previous research has suggested that orthographic features are more sensitive to prescriptive interference than grammatical variables. That is partly because spelling is only applied in the written language, which makes it an explicitly learned aspect of the language. It is therefore not surprising that spelling features are frequently discussed in different types of normative works. Prescriptions on orthography not only appear in spelling guides but are also found, for example, in schoolbooks. Since such works were often reprinted, Nevalainen (2014, p. 107) assumes that spelling prescriptions “reached the widest section of the population”. Although the great visibility of orthography does not mean that spelling norms were evidently adopted by language users,

earlier research (e.g. Takada, 1998, pp. 296-299; Ayres-Bennett, 2004, p. 224; McLelland, 2014; Vosters et al., 2014, p. 94; Krogull, 2018, p. 268) has suggested that prescriptivism appears to have a greater impact on influencing spelling than grammar. Due to the strong focus on spelling and grammatical features in research into the norms and usage, this difference in prescriptive influence is more apparent for these domains. However, the hypothesis could potentially be extended to other domains of the language, of course.

3.3.4 Complexity of the variable

As a second factor, Rutten & Vosters (2021) propose the complexity of the variable as a possible determinant for prescriptive influence. Whereas some features consist of a binary opposition of forms which are mutually replaceable without difficulties in linguistic embedding, other variables often encompass a range of possible variants and a complex linguistic embedding of variation. This is exemplified with the case of the neuter relative pronoun in Dutch. When investigating the influence of the national language policy on nineteenth-century usage, Krogull et al. (2017) and Krogull (2018) observed that Weiland (1805) prescribed at least four possible variants, i.e. *dat*, *wat*, *welk*, *hetwelk*, which use depended on the type of antecedent that the relativiser referred to. For example, in the context of an indefinite pronoun like *alles* ‘all’ as antecedent, the grammarian clearly preferred the relativiser *wat*, as in *alles wat ik gedaan heb* ‘all that I have done’. The results from a multi-genre corpus, however, revealed greater variability than was prescribed in norms, which makes an influence of prescriptivism on usage less probable.

It is crucial to recognise, of course, that while some features are portrayed as simply binary oppositions in norms, the reality of language use reveals a much broader spectrum of variation. The notion of A-curves underscores the importance of not being misled by the fixation on the two most frequent variants in usage. Although it is true that almost all linguistic features may indeed exhibit multivariate usage patterns, this does not negate the notion that certain features possess greater linguistic complexity than others. In fact, to uncover the complexity of linguistic features, language norms often provide valuable insights into the features that consist of structured variability, as also the example of neuter relativisers shows.

With the complexity of the variable as a possible determinant of prescriptive success, Rutten & Vosters (2021) thus hypothesise that prescriptions on binary features will get implemented in language use more easily compared to more complex variables.

3.3.5 Metalinguistic salience

As a final factor, Rutten & Vosters (2021) point to the importance of salience and indexicality. Whereas some linguistic features change below the radar of norm givers, and are therefore never commented on in grammars and other normative works, other changes in language use are highly salient in terms of metalinguistic attention and are thus vehemently criticised by grammarians. The latter type of features often undergoes negative stigmatisation in language norms. Anderwald (2012, p. 46) adds that features which rarely occur in language use are often stronger criticised by grammarians compared to variables that are highly frequent in language use. With large differences in the degree of metalinguistic attention that linguistic features attract, Rutten & Vosters (2021) hypothesise that language users are also more aware of these salient features, which possibly implies that prescriptivism is more successful in influencing usage; especially when compared to features that are barely criticised in normative works.

Note that Rutten & Vosters (2021) describe this determinant as ‘indexicality’. In line with Labov’s (2001) *hierarchy of salience*, and Silverstein’s (2003) *orders of indexicality*, they thereby primarily indicate features which are stigmatised in comparison to features that are not subject to social or stylistic evaluation. In this study, however, salience is operationalised differently in the sense of the amount of normative attention that is devoted to the feature (cf. Poplack et al., 2015, pp. 26-28). I therefore refer not to salience or indexicality, but to *metalinguistic salience* as a determinant of prescriptive success.

The strength of the metalanguage

The amount of normative attention necessitates an understanding of the nature of the metalanguage and explicit injunctions that are formulated by grammarians. After all, in their critiques, codifiers often go beyond expressing their preference for one linguistic variant over another. Their metalanguage

frequently encompasses judgements about variability in language use as well. More specifically, codifiers apply different strategies to explain away variability in usage (cf. Poplack & Dion, 2009; Poplack et al., 2015). While striving for form-function symmetry is probably their main goal, research by Poplack & Dion (2009) and Poplack et al. (2015) indicates that grammarians assign different functions to one form, highlighting the inconsistency between these injunctions.

In addressing variability in their metalinguistic comments, grammarians outright dismiss a disfavoured variant, or they assign the form to a different social, linguistic, or stylistic context. Declaring that *variant x is reserved for informal spoken usage*, for instance, signifies a register-based distinction in metalanguage. Such practices resonate with what Curzan (2014) calls *stylistic prescriptivism*. Britain & Trudgill (2005, pp. 184-187), moreover, apply the concepts of socio-stylistic and structural reallocation, the former also attributing variants to specific social or stylistic contexts, while the latter relegates the use of variants to a different linguistic context.

Moschonas (2020, 2022, pp. 4-5), discussing the characteristics of metalanguage, identifies different types of prescriptions: *correctives proper* and *permissives*. The latter embodies a more variable stance, accommodating linguistic variability within defined boundaries, and thereby supporting the reallocation of existing variation. Permissives are generally phrased as: *one may say or write X, under condition C₁, or Y, under condition C₂*, permitting for some degree of variation in language use. Correctives proper, on the contrary, are more rigid in that they do not allow for variation. In these prescriptions, grammarians delineate forms which are deemed correct or incorrect. Correctives proper typically adopt the following pattern: *one should neither say nor write X* (i.e. the prohibitive or proscriptive part); *one should say and write Y instead* (i.e. the normative or prescriptive part)', to which an explicative *because Z* part may be added (ibid.). Moschonas (2022, p. 33) points to distinct attitudes towards language variation encapsulated by these different metalinguistic practices. Since correctives proper are more direct in promoting forms that are deemed acceptable, Moschonas (ibid.) hypothesises that these strict prescriptions are “more ‘powerful’ than permissives” in their prescriptive impact on usage.

3.4 Conclusion

In sum, previous research indicates that an influence of prescriptivism on language use should not simply be assumed. An impact of codified norms on usage was often lacking, and when an influence was possible, norm givers often temporarily affected specific genres. To thoroughly examine the impact of norms on usage, studies like these are therefore best carried out on a multi-genre corpus, including both printed and handwritten texts with different degrees of formality, to determine the reach of the prescriptive effect. Furthermore, the possible determinants that were discussed suggest that different factors could play a role in the success of prescriptive interventions. Whether these factors actually contributed to the implementation of codified norms will be investigated in this dissertation.

Chapter 4 – Corpora and methodology

The influence of prescriptivism on historical language use is typically investigated by mapping out patterns of variation and change in two different corpora. First, language norms and prescriptions are uncovered in a corpus of normative works, containing historical grammars and other metalinguistic publications propagating codified norms. The impact of such normative injunctions on usage is then determined by comparing these developments to a usage corpus that comprises texts representing actual language use. Since I follow the same approach, I elaborate on the two corpora that are employed in this study in section 1 and section 2. In the second part of the chapter, in section 3 and section 4, I shift the attention to the analysis for investigating the influence of prescriptivism on usage.

1 Corpus of normative works

For the purpose of this study, a new reference corpus of the Dutch normative tradition in the Early and Late Modern period was compiled. In this section, I present the corpus of normative works by discussing the selection procedure, and the temporal and geographic spread of works in the corpus. An overview of all the relevant details of each normative work in the corpus concludes this section.

1.1 Selection procedure

For the selection process of grammars and other normative works in this corpus, I was guided by the protocols established for previous normative corpora of English, such as Yáñez-Bouza & Rodríguez-Gil (2013), Anderwald (2016), and Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2019).

As a rule in the selection process, I included printed works that were published in either the Northern Netherlands or the Southern Netherlands (including Frans-Vlaanderen and Brussel) with a first publication date between 1550 and

1830. I did not strive for an exhaustive selection of normative works, and I solely focused on publications and grammarians that have an authoritative nature. In defining whether a work or grammarian could be considered authoritative, I applied indicators which point to the importance and status of the grammarian and the work in the normative tradition of Dutch. These indicators are (1) the renown of the grammarian and the publication, (2) the geographical spread of the work, and (3) the number of reprints the work enjoyed. Although this led to a selection of the most well-known and widespread normative works, the corpus is an accurate representation of the normative tradition of Dutch from 1550 to 1830.

I consulted main reference works on the history of Dutch to decide which normative works are considered important in the normative tradition of Dutch in the Early and Late Modern period. The lion's share of the selection derives from entries in Vanderheyden (1971), Bakker & Dobbins (1977), Van der Sijs (2004, 2021), and Van der Sijs & Willems (2009), Rutten (2011, 2019), and Vosters (2011). This inventory primarily led to a collection of spelling guides and grammars that appeared in the form of a classic spelling guide or (school) grammar or a pamphlet. Additionally, a small number of other text types formulating normative comments are included. These works can be classified as (1) (a part of) a literary work (Ampzing, 1628; Vollenhove, 1685; Elzevier, 1761; De Haes, 1764), (2) a preface to another publication (De Hubert, 1624; Francius, 1699; Weiland, 1799), or (3) a language-historical study (Ten Kate, 1723). This broader selection of works implies that both normative publications aimed at an elite audience written by prestigious grammarians, such as Moonen (1706), as well as widespread and highly accessible schoolbooks meant for elementary children, such as Van Niervaart (1669), are marked as authoritative and are potentially influential at a linguistic level. However, each work still had to meet some additional criteria before it was included in the corpus of normative works:

- The work had to be written substantially in Dutch by a native speaker of the language;
- The normative publication had to target a readership of mother-tongue language users;
- At least two implicit prescriptions on predetermined linguistic features had to be mentioned in the work.

One exception is made regarding the language of the normative work. Because of the scanty number of Dutch normative publications in the sixteenth century, I included one spelling guide that is written in Latin, viz. Sexagius (1576). I also allowed for one grammar that is written by an author of British descent who temporarily lived in the Low Countries at the time of writing the work, i.e. Dafforne (1627). This grammarian, however, can be considered a naturalised speaker of Dutch (cf. Sundby et al., 1991, p. 15). Another grammarian in the corpus with an English background is Willem Séwel (1708, 1712). Apart from his famous grammars of Dutch, he wrote multiple language books in English, such as *A Compendious Guide to the Low Dutch language* (1700). Séwel lived in England for a couple of months, and fellow grammarians of his time have therefore argued he was an English citizen (De Bonth & Dibbets, 1995, p. 100). However, he was born in Amsterdam, where he returned to after his short stay in England. He was also highly proficient in Dutch, which is why he can be considered a native speaker of the language (Blok & Molhuysen, 1933, p. 1018).

I strived to always include the first edition in the corpus of normative works. If a first print was not available, the earliest preserved reprint of a normative work is considered. In that case, I refer to date of the reprint in the further course of this study. Because of the large amount of self-plagiarism and the number of barely adapted books that were reissued (under a different title), not every reprint is included in the corpus (cf. Anderwald, 2016 for English). Only if a reprint differs substantially from the first edition, viz. when large parts of text are added or when changes are made in the relevant prescriptions, they complement the first edition, and the most reworked version of the book is also included on top of the first edition (e.g. Nylöe, 1703; 1707). I selected reprints that are delivered by the original author. Only in one instance (viz. De Gelliers, 1661), the original print was not available, and the first reprint of the famous schoolbook was already adapted by Johannes Arcerius. This earliest available reprint is therefore the only reprint that is provided by a different author but is still admitted to the corpus. 65 publications were eventually integrated in the corpus as a first edition, whereas for 8 works, a reprint was considered since the original book was not preserved or could not be tracked down (cf. section 1.4).

The selection process resulted in a corpus of 73 normative works written by 62 grammarians. I have interpreted the definition of a normative work rather broadly, since I included actual spelling guides and (school) grammars but also

other contributions that discuss language norms, while other normative works needed to be excluded for the purpose of this study. Journal articles discussing linguistic norms, for instance, are certainly an influential source of language norms, yet they are not included in the corpus from a pragmatic point of view. For many of these journal articles, the author cannot be ascertained, and since such contributions are often written as concise rebuttals going back and forth from one grammarian to the other, it is not possible to isolate them as distinct normative works. Also normative texts dealing with prescriptions on a highly restricted number of linguistic features (e.g. Van den Vondel, 1654), or publications solely about the lexicon of Dutch, like dictionaries, are not considered in this research. The latter group of works might contain implicit prescriptions, but such works are often multilingual and are therefore not strictly meant for mother-tongue language users. Although this selection procedure led to a rather traditional selection of works, and there are certainly lacunae in this corpus with publications that are also considered authoritative not being included, this selection corresponds well with the aim of the present study. Table 1 presents an overview of the authors and normative works that are included in the corpus.

When the corpus of normative works was built in the first year of this PhD project (2019-2020), almost all selected works were available via the online databases of Google Books and Dagenta (<https://dagenta.ivdnt.org>). For the normative works that were not digitised yet, I had access to scans made by Rik Vosters (cf. Vosters, 2011), and for a few other publications I made scans myself. Note that this corpus is a collection of digitised normative publications. The corpus is thus not annotated nor digitally searchable via search expressions, which implies that the normative works in the corpus can only be searched manually.

GRAMMARIAN	YEAR	PL. OF PUB.	TITLE
Joas Lambrecht	1550	Gent	<i>Néderlandsche Spellinghe</i>
Antonius Sexagius	1576	Leuven	<i>Orthographia Linguae Belgicae</i>
Pontus De Heuter	1581	Antwerpen	<i>Nederduitse orthographie</i>
[Hendrik Laurensz. Spiegel]	1584	Leiden	<i>Twe-spraack vande Nederduitsche letterkunst</i>
Cornelis Dirckz. Van Niervaart	1669 [± 1600]	Alkmaar	<i>Oprecht Onderwijs Van de Letter-konst</i>
Jacob Van der Schuere	1612	Haarlem	<i>Nederduydsche Spellinge</i>
Anthonis De Hubert	1624	Haarlem	<i>Noodige waarschouwinge aan alle liefhebbers der Nederduijtze tale</i>
Christiaan Van Heule	1625	Leiden	<i>De Nederduytsche Grammatica ofte Spraec-konst</i>
Richard Dafforne	1627	Amsterdam	<i>Grammatica ofte Leez-leerlings Steunsel</i>
Samuel Ampzing	1628	Haarlem	<i>Nederlandsch Tael-bericht Aen Den Goedwilligen/ ende ver-standigen Lezer/ ende Lief-hebber van onse Nederduytsche Tale</i>
Cornelis Gijsbertsz. Plemp	1632	Haarlem	<i>Speldwerk of waerschouinge an den Neerduitschen Schrijver van den spelding</i>
Christiaan Van Heule	1633	Leiden	<i>De Nederduytsche Spraec-konst ofte Tael-beschrijvinghe</i>
Petrus Montanus	1635	Delft	<i>Bericht van een nieuwe konst, genaemt de spreekkonst</i>
Carel De Gelliers	1661 [± 1640]	Franeke	<i>Trap der Jeugd</i> [edited by Johannes Arcerius]
Allardus Lodewijk Kók	1649	Amsterdam	<i>Ont-werp Der Neder-duitsche Letter-konst</i>
Dirckz. Van der Weyden	1651	Utrecht	<i>Inleydinge tot een vast-gegronde Nederduytsche Letter-stellinge</i>
Petrus Leupenius	1653	Amsterdam	<i>Aanmerkingen op de Neederduitsche taale</i>
Guilielmus Bolognino	1657	Antwerpen	<i>Ni'uwe noodelicke orthographie</i>
Johan Van Atteveld	1682	Utrecht	<i>Nederduytsche Letterklank, ofte Korte onderwyzinge van de Nederduytsche spelling</i>
Johannes Gosens van Helderens	1683	Amsterdam	<i>Neerduitse Spelkonst</i>
Wigardus à Winschooten	1683	Leiden	<i>Letterkonst</i>
Joannes Vollenhove	1686	Amsterdam	<i>Aan de Nederduitsche schryvers</i>
Johannes Duykerius	1696	Amsterdam	<i>Schouburgh der Needer-Duytsche letter, spel en leeskonst</i>
Barend Hakvoord	1746 [1697]	Deventer	<i>De nieuwe Nederduitse spel-, lees- en schryf-kunst</i>
Petrus Francius	1699	Amsterdam	<i>Aan den lezer</i> [preface to <i>Van de mededeelzaamheid</i>]
Jacques-François Van Geesdalle	1700	Gent	<i>Le parallèle de la grammaire des deux langues Françoise & Flamende, contenant en abrégé toutes les règles fondamentales de ces deux langues</i> <i>De vergelykinge van de spraek-konste der twee talen de Fransche ende de Vlaemsche, behelsende in het kort alle de gront-regels deser twee talen</i>
Jacobus Nyløe	1703	Amsterdam	<i>Aanleiding tot de Nederduitsche Taal</i>
Johannes Hilarides	1705	Franeke	<i>Nieuwe Taalgronden Der Neederduytsche Taal</i>
Arnold Moonen	1706	Amsterdam	<i>Nederduitsche Spraakkunst</i>
Jacobus Nyløe	1707	Leeuwarden	<i>Aanleiding tot de Nederduitsche Taal, Merkelyk vermeerderd</i>
Willem Séwel	1708	Amsterdam	<i>Nederduytsche spraakkonst</i>
Willem Séwel	1712	Utrecht	<i>Nederduytsche spraakkonst</i>
E.C.P. [Gillis De Witte]	1713	Utrecht	<i>Ontwerp van eene Nederduytsche spraek-konst</i>
Andries Stéven	1784 [1714]	Tielt	<i>Nieuwen Néderlandschen voorschrift-boek</i>
Lambert Ten Kate	1723	Amsterdam	<i>Aanleiding tot de kennis van het verhevene deel der Nederduitsche sprake</i>
Balthazar Huydecoper	1730	Amsterdam	<i>Proeve van Taal- en Dichtkunde; in vrijmoedige aanmerkingen op Vondels vertaalde Herscheppingen van Ovidius</i>

Jan Van Belle	1748	Haarlem	<i>Korte wegwijzer, ter spel- spraak- en dichtkuden</i>
Jan Domien Verpoorten	1752	Antwerpen	<i>Woorden-schat, oft letter-konst, gedeylt in twee deelen</i>
Jan Van Belle	1755	Haarlem	<i>Korte schets der Néderduitse spraakkunst</i>
P.B.	1757	Antwerpen	<i>Fondamenten ofte grond-regels der Neder-duytsche spel-konst</i>
Jan Domien Verpoorten	1759	Antwerpen	<i>Woorden-schat, oft letter-konst, gedeylt in twee deelen; veel vermeerderd en verbeterd</i>
Jan Des Roches	[1761]	Antwerpen	<i>Nieuwe Nederduytsche Spraek-konst</i>
Kornelis Elzevier	1761	Haarlem	<i>Een proef eener nieuwe Nederlandsche spraakkunst</i>
Frans De Haes	1764	Amsterdam	<i>Nederduitsche spraakkunst</i>
Kornelis Van der Palm	1769	Rotterdam	<i>Nederduitsche spraakkunst, voor de jeugdt</i>
Ernst Zeydelaar	1769	Amsterdam	<i>Régelmaatige Néderduitsche spél-konst</i>
Bastiaan Cramer	1777 [± 1769]	Deventer	<i>Geldersche Trap der Jeugd</i>
J. Ballieu	1792 [1771]	Antwerpen	<i>Néderduytsche spel- en spraek-konst</i>
Ernst Zeydelaar	1772	Amsterdam	<i>Vervólg dér Régelmaatige Néderduitsche spél-konst</i>
P.J. Van Belleghem & Daniël Waterschoot	[1773]	Brugge	<i>Deure oft Ingang tot de Nederduytsche Tael</i>
L. Van Boterdael	1776 [± 1774]	Kortrijk	<i>Gemakkelyke wyze om op korten tyd grooten voordgang te doen in de Nederduytsche spelkonst</i>
Balduinus Janssens	[1775]	Brugge	<i>Verbeterde Vlaemsche spraek- en spel-konste</i>
Ernst Zeydelaar	1781	Utrecht	<i>Néderduitsche spraakkunst, ten dienste der Néderlandsche taalbeminnaars</i>
L. Van Boterdael	1785	Brugge	<i>Gemakkelyke wyze om op korten tyd grooten voordgang te doen in de Nederduytsche spelkonst; kort begryp van de Nederduytsche Spraek-Konst</i>
Lambertus Van Bolhuis	1793	Leiden- Deventer- Groningen	<i>Beknopte Nederduitsche spraakkunst</i>
Hendrik Wester	1797	Groningen	<i>Bevatlyk onderwys in de Nederlandsche spel- en taalkunde</i>
Gerrit Van Varik	1799	Leiden- Deventer- Groningen	<i>Rudimenta of Gronden der Nederduitsche spraake</i>
Petrus Weiland	1799	Amsterdam	<i>Nederduitsch Taalkundig Woordenboek [introduction]</i>
Matthijs Siegenbeek	1804	Amsterdam	<i>Verhandeling over de Nederduitsche spelling ter bevordering van eenparigheid in dezelve</i>
Petrus Weiland	1805	Amsterdam	<i>Nederduitsche Spraakkunst</i>
Olivier Schilperoort	1806	Groningen	<i>Proeve van nieuwere taalkunde, op de Nederduitsche spraakkunst toegepast</i>
Nicolaas Anslin	1814	Leiden	<i>Nederduitsche spraakkunst voor eerstbeginnenden</i>
F.L.N. Henckel	1815	Gent	<i>Nieuwe Vlaemsche spraek-konst</i>
Filip Jacob De Neckere	1815	Ieper	<i>Bewerp van Vlaemsche spelling, gevolgd van eenen oogopslag op de nederlandsche dichtkunst</i>
Jan Abraham Ter Bruggen	1817-1818 [1815]	Antwerpen	<i>Nederduytsche spraek-konst ten gebruyke der schoólen</i>
Pieter Behaegel	1817	Brugge	<i>Nederduytsche spraakkunst [volume 1]</i>
Josef Bernard Canaert	1823	Gent	<i>Iets over de Hollandsche tael, noch voor, noch tegen</i>
Jan-Jacob Moke	1823	Gent	<i>Nederduitsche spraakkunst naar het Hollands, ten bijzonderen gebruike der Vlaamsch-sprekenden</i>
Jan Frans Willems	1824	Antwerpen	<i>Over de Hollandsche en Vlaemsche schryfwyzen van het Nederduitsch</i>
Pieter Behaegel	[± 1825]	Brugge	<i>Nederduytsche spraakkunst [volume 2]</i>
Willem Bilderdijk	1826	Den Haag	<i>Nederlandsche spraakleer</i>
David De Simpel	[1827]	Ieper	<i>Taalkundige tweespraak</i>
Pieter Behaegel	[± 1829]	Brugge	<i>Nederduytsche spraakkunst [volume 3]</i>

Table 1: overview of normative works included in the corpus

1.2 Temporal spread

I initially aspired to obtain an equal spread of normative works across the four periods investigated in this study. However, the production of normative works was not stable across the different periods, with the only a small number of spelling guides appearing in the sixteenth century, and the production of important schoolbooks and grammars booming from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. Because of the social reorientation of grammars (cf. Rutten, 2019, chapter 4), especially the period 1750-1800 is strongly represented in the corpus of normative works, as is also shown in Figure 2. Although the target audience of grammars widened even more in the nineteenth century, and the production of normative works did thus certainly not diminish, many of these publications were derivatives of the national language policy in the Northern Netherlands (Schoemaker, 2018, pp. 158-162). Since the prescriptions in these works were often copied verbatim from the national language policy, the derivations of the national language policy were not included in the corpus of normative works. This particularly explains the decline of normative works in the corpus in the first half of the nineteenth century.

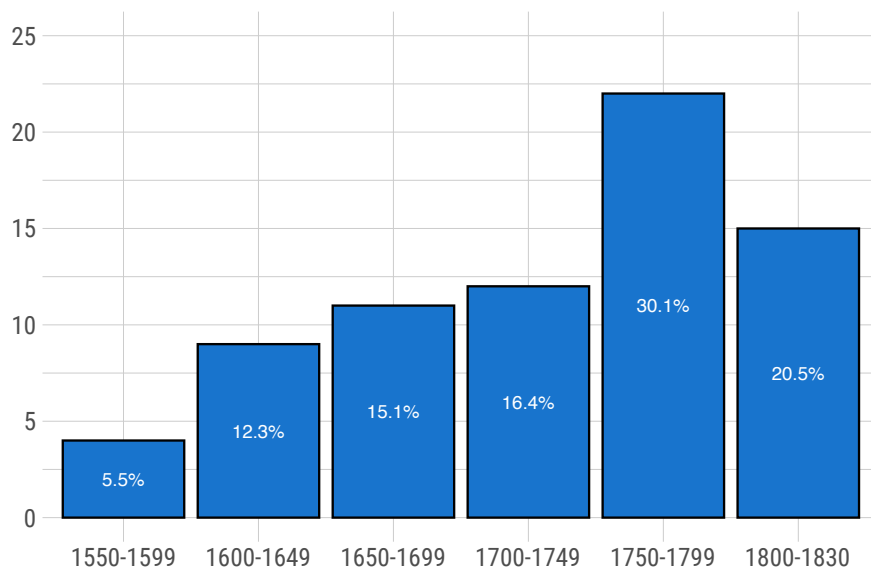


Figure 2: diachronic spread of normative works in the corpus

1.3 Geographical spread

Previous scholars investigating the influence of historical prescriptivism in Dutch often focused on either the Northern Netherlands (e.g. Nobels & Rutten, 2014; Simons & Rutten, 2014; Krogull, 2018) or the Southern Netherlands (e.g. Vosters, 2011; Vosters et al., 2014). As such, the normative corpus applied in these studies is also limited to publications deriving from respectively the Northern or the Southern part of the language area. Since the current study explores the impact of prescriptivism in the entire language area, this corpus of normative works includes spelling guides, grammars, and other normative works from the Northern and the Southern part of the language area. These normative works are also classified in terms of the geographical area in which they were (intended to be) employed.

Earlier historical-sociolinguistic research investigating the effect of prescriptivism in more than one language area (e.g. Anderwald (2016) and Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2019) for British and American English), grouped the normative works according to the place of publication, as the majority of the English grammar books and spelling guides were used in the country in which they were published. In the case of Dutch, however, the place of publication did not always align with the intended geographical audience of the normative work. For example, De Heuiter (1581) still published his work in the Southern Netherlands whilst targeting a Northern readership, and contrary to what his grammar indicates, E.C.P. (1713) published his work in Holland (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 132) while explicitly orienting towards a Southern readership. A classification based on the place of publication alone is therefore less expedient in this study.

When classifying the normative works into the most relevant language area, I therefore also considered the area where the grammarian was active when the work was published. Although these indicators mostly coincide, the parameters sometimes result in a rather atypical geographical classification, particularly for a work like E.C.P. (1713), which is classified as a Northern work in this study. Nonetheless, in the analyses of prescriptive influence, I account for the possible influence this work exerted both on Northern and Southern language users.

As opposed to the distinction between different regions in the usage corpus (cf. section 2), the corpus of normative works distinguishes only between the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. For the normative component, operationalising different regions was not possible due to the highly centralised production of normative works in the region of Holland. Yet, as Figure 3 illustrates, also the limited number of (preserved) normative works from the Southern territories made a detailed classification into different regions practically unworkable.

While most normative works derive from the Northern part of the language area, with Northern norms compellingly representing each of the investigated periods, only 24 of the 73 normative works in the corpus originate from the Southern Netherlands. As was also pointed to in Chapter 2, the lower proportion of Southern works may point to a less-established normative tradition in the Southern Netherlands in the sixteenth to early eighteenth centuries. However, also the strong oral tradition of norm dissemination by rhetoricians, for example, may explain the low number of printed normative works in the Southern Netherlands. The smaller proportion of Southern works is attested only in the seventeenth century and in the first half of the eighteenth century. It is particularly the elitist stage of grammar writing, with normative works that are aimed at high-class writers, that is less distinct in the Southern normative tradition. The social reorientation of normative works in the second half of the eighteenth century, on the contrary, is equally pronounced in the Southern part of the language area (cf. Rutten 2011; Vosters 2011).

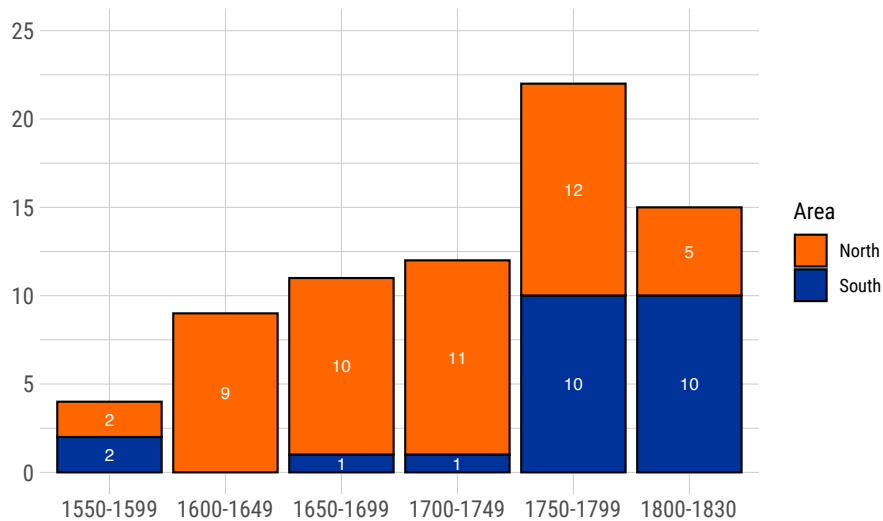


Figure 3: diachronic spread of normative works in the corpus per part of the language area

1.4 Discussion of normative works

For each publication in the corpus of normative works, I offer a concise overview of the codifier and the normative work, in which their importance for the Dutch normative tradition is covered. This discussion is chronologically structured, based on the name of the codifier and the year of publication of the normative work. Since some grammarians are included in the selection with more than one spelling guide or grammar, all selected works of the author are discussed in the same section.¹⁰ First, I provide an overview of the most relevant biographical information about the author. The focus of these summaries is furthermore on the content and the structure of the normative work itself. I mainly reflect on the goal of the grammarians, their target audience, and the social reach of the normative work.

The biographical and bibliographical information in these summaries derives from reference works and linguistic biographies, such as Witsen Geysbeek (1822, 1824), Frederiks & Van den Branden (1888-1891),

¹⁰ Only the work of Verpoorten (1759) is discussed in a separate section, since it is an explicit rebuttal on the grammar of P.B. (1757).

Bakker & Dobbets (1977), Knol & Maas (1977), Van Bork & Verkruijsse (1985), Van der Sijs (2004, 2021) and Van Anrooij et al. (2004).

Lambrecht (1550)

One of the first authors committed to publishing an orthography of Dutch is Joas Lambrecht (± 1491 – ± 1556): a book printer, publisher and typesetter from Gent, who was also involved in the chambers of rhetoric, where he did the printing of multiple refrains and plays. He is often seen as an early humanist, not only because of his reformational mindset, but also through his endeavours in the development of the Dutch language. This is particularly clear in his publishing business: out of approximately 70 of his printed publications, 42 of them are written in Dutch, whereas only a minority is still printed in Latin (Waterschoot, 1992, p. 27). One of the works in which Lambrecht strives for an independent Dutch language is his *Naembouck* (1546), a Dutch-French translation dictionary, mainly aimed at speakers of French (Pleij, 2007, p. 691).¹¹ The innovative mentality is further manifested in his activities as a typesetter and in his printer's mark: *Cessent solita, dum meliora* 'quit the traditional methods, as there are better ones now', which vouches his progressive position towards the use of the Dutch as a universal language, following the example of Latin and French (Waterschoot, 1992, p. 27; Pleij, 2007, p. 691).

The veneration of the Dutch vernacular is again apparent in his *Néderlandsche Spellinghe/ uutgheteld by vrághe ende andwoorde/duer Joas Lambrecht Lettersteker. Tot onderwijs der Jonghers voor haar ear-ste beghin* 'Dutch spelling composed with questions and answers by Joas Lambrecht typesetter. To be used for the first education of the youth', which rolled off his own presses in Gent in 1550. In the 'first spelling guide of Dutch'¹², Lambrecht does not propose a uniform writing system throughout the Dutch language area. The author endorses a phonetic orthography based on his own dialect. To realise his spelling system, he even introduces some unfamiliar diacritical characters into the Dutch language, such as the diagonally crossed out <e> (Dobbets, 1977, p. 24). He argues

¹¹ *Naembouck* (1546) is not included in the corpus of normative works, as it is not directly aimed at speakers of Dutch and as it is mainly set up as a dictionary, without clear prescriptions.

¹² Lambrecht's work is considered the first spelling guide of Dutch. The only manuscripts about the spelling of Dutch written before Lambrecht (1550) are those of Van Varenbraken (± 1530), but these were not published until the twentieth century (i.e. Braekman, 1978).

that every individual phoneme should be represented by one specific grapheme. This way, he aims to uncover differences in pronunciation depending on the regional descent of the author.

The spelling guide itself comprises 72 unnumbered pages, is set up as a dialogue between the *Measter* 'schoolteacher' and a *Learknecht* 'pupil' and is also meant for usage in schools. Three main chapters are distinguished in the work: the first one concerning the letters of the alphabet, where the author discusses the vowels and consonants in terms of their pronunciation. In the second part, the student learns to combine consonants and vowels to produce syllables and words. Punctuation and grammatical figures, such as prothesis and apocope, are subjects that are dealt with in the last chapter. The design of the book indicates that Lambrecht was familiar with Latin and French predecessors, as they applied the same structure years before he did (De Keyser, 1928, p. 1352). Although both the structure and the full title of the work suggest that the spelling guide was meant for an educational context, it is unlikely that the book was seen as an influential source in language teaching (Dibbets, 1977, pp. 24-25). It is assumed that only one original copy of the work survived the test of time, and the book was also not reprinted in the following decades or centuries (De Keyser, 1928, p. 1346).¹³ It is therefore unlikely that the book spread outside the region of Gent. However, the importance of the work for the Dutch normative tradition is undeniable. Lambrecht was clearly familiar with different language varieties of Dutch, which he tried to describe with this phonetic spelling system. This shows that his intention indeed was to facilitate supralocal written communication (Rutten, 2019, p. 110).

Sexagius (1576)

In 1576, *Orthographia Linguae Belgicae* came out in the press of Masius in Leuven. As the title already suggests, the work discusses the spelling of the 'Belgian' language, i.e. the variety of Dutch that is spoken in the Southern part of the language area. More specifically, the book is oriented towards the orthography of Dutch words according to the pronunciation of Brabantians (Goemans, 1899, pp. 175-176).

¹³ The surviving copy is preserved in the library of Ghent University. A heliotypic facsimile edition of the spelling guide appeared in 1882 by *Maatschappij der Vlaamsche bibliophilen* (Dibbets, 1977, p. 36).

The author of spelling guide is Antoon van t'Sestisch, better known as Antonius Sexagius, a lawyer who had already published a legal work in 1573 that was reprinted several times (Goemans, 1899, p. 177). Born in Brussel (1535) and deceased in Mechelen (1585), Sexagius was a real Brabantian himself. Accordingly, the aim of his work was to develop a spelling system of Dutch, explicitly based on the pronunciation of the Brabantians and not on the one of speakers from Vlaanderen (Goemans, 1900-1902, p. 75). Although he makes a distinction between the pronunciation in the Brabantic cities Brussel, Leuven, and Antwerpen, it remains unclear which accent his orthography is actually based on (Goemans, 1900-1902, p. 76). The author did not want to achieve a common language for the entire language area but aspired to describe his own vernacular (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 250). Thus, just like Lambrecht (1550) did for the Ghentian dialect, Sexagius wrote his work from a local point of view. The similarities between the intent and method of both authors at least suggest that Sexagius read Lambrecht's work. Yet, the author asserts he is not aware of the existence of a previous orthography of Dutch (Goemans, 1899, p. 172).

Although the spelling guide is fully written in Latin, the author's intention for writing the book undoubtedly sprouts from the admiration of his mother tongue.¹⁴ As a father, he noticed the difficulties his sons had with the study of Latin, caused by the differences in character use between Dutch and Latin. Due to the lack of actual spelling regulations in Dutch, Sexagius was determined to develop an orthography system for his vernacular that corresponded with the one of Latin. By first learning to read and write in the mother tongue, he hoped to facilitate the study of Latin (Goemans, 1899, pp. 180-181). In his attempt to adjust the orthography of Dutch to the one of Latin, he opts for a phonetic analogy between both languages, but he quickly encounters a shortage of graphemes to describe all phonemes in Dutch. As the <v> is pronounced as /w/ in Latin, <w> is not recorded in his spelling system. To represent /v/, he uses the reversed digamma that was applied in Latin. For the spelling of the 'bleating' variant of the vowel /ɛ/, he came up with a new sign as well. It is described by the grapheme <ɛ> (Goemans, 1900-1902, pp. 68-70).

¹⁴ For a full understanding of the content of the work, I make use of the original publication, the reissue of the spelling guide by Goemans (1899), and a discussion of Sexagius's prescriptions in Goemans (1900-1902).

The spelling guide comprises 64 unnumbered pages and consists of three chapters on the orthography of (1) vowels, (2) diphthongs and (3) consonants (Goemans, 1900-1902, pp. 65-66). The latter part is concise and, according to Goemans (1900-1902, pp. 69; 72-74), less meticulously compiled compared to the other sections of the book. The author uses the spelling of <c> and <k> inconsistently, which causes irregularities in the prescriptions and in his own language use. The wordlist in the appendix of the work, however, offers examples of each grapheme and allows to uncover and clarify the (implicit) prescriptions. As the orthography guide aims to describe a local vernacular, is written in Latin, and was never reprinted, the work did probably not spread to the wider community or across the entire language area. Sexagius had an impact on later codifiers, such as De Heuiter (1581), who was familiar with his spelling guide (Dibbets, 1968, p. 49). De Heuiter (1581, pp. 29-30) explicitly referred to the work to learn *plat Brabants* 'the Brabantine dialect' (Goemans, 1899, p. 173).

De Heuiter (1581)

The earliest orthography written by a grammarian from the North of the language area is by the hand of Pontus de Heuiter (1535 – 1602), a canon monk who was born in Delft, but who ended up in the Southern Netherlands, after various wanderings from Leiden and Paris to Gorinchem, where he could escape from imprisonment by the Sea Beggars in their battle for an independent Dutch republic in times of the Spanish rule. In his escape to the South, De Heuiter settled again as a canon in Brabant and Vlaanderen, but he temporarily moved back to the Northern Netherlands in 1572. Eventually he was forced to migrate again to the South in 1591, where he died in exile in 1602 (Dibbets, 1972, p. vi). Because of his experiences with different language varieties across the Netherlands, De Heuiter is the first one to advocate a spoken standard for the entire language area in his *Nederduitse orthographie* 'Dutch spelling', published by Plantijn in Antwerpen in 1581. To bring uniformity to the melting pot of spoken languages, he wants to create a euphonious *gemeingelde Tale* 'mixed language', which should arise from the best elements of each vernacular (De Heuiter, 1581, pp. 29-30; p. 93). He claims to merge the Brabantic, Flemish, Hollandic, Guelderish and Kleverlandish varieties into one neutral language, referring to ancient Greek where Ionica, Attica, Dorica and Aeölica formed the base for the koine (De Heuiter, 1581, p. 93). All chosen varieties of Dutch endure the author's criticism, but he also acknowledges their charming features. It is the Hollandic

variety that the author prefers, although typical elements of Brabantic and Flemish are also blended into the proposed common language (Dibbets, 1968, pp. 175-176).

Compared to his precursors, De Heuiter does not want to introduce new diacritical characters to designate a specific phoneme, although he also adjusts the Dutch language to the Latin example, at least in terms of phoneme-grapheme correspondence. As he favours a phonetic spelling system, he opts for the orthography to be clear and practical (De Vooy, 1917, p. 11). He therefore suggests the omission of all redundant graphemes, which he exemplifies with the use of the spelling *oorzake* 'cause' for *oirzaecke*, since both <e> and <c> are not pronounced in the word (De Heuiter, 1581, pp. 83-84; cf. Dibbets, 1972, p. 68). He also rejects any influence from foreign languages, including German (cf. De Heuiter, 1581, pp. 93-94; p. 98; Dibbets, 1977, p. 25).¹⁵

Although De Heuiter expresses his desire for a grammar of Dutch, he only discusses orthographical features in his work. The spelling guide contains 112 pages and commences with multiple prefaces before the grammarian moves on to the letters of the alphabet, which are followed by an extensive discussion on the pronunciation, the use and spelling of vowels, consonants, diphthongs and triphthongs. From page 82 onwards, he discusses 16 spelling regulations, mainly concerning the correct use of graphemes and Dutch equivalents for foreign words. In addition, he examines the specific features of each language variety. He distinguishes, for instance, the Brabantic language because of *t'lelic gegaap der diphthongen* 'the ugly yawning of diphthongs' and *t'lainc gelei der vocalen* 'the lingering sound of vowels' (De Heuiter, 1581, p. 94).

The preface of De Heuiter's work indicates that his spelling guide was primarily intended for schoolteachers (De Vooy, 1917, p. 7; Dibbets, 1972, p. 14). Although the work was never reprinted, it was certainly read by later grammarians, such as Van Heule (1625, 1633), Dafforne (1627), Ampzing (1628) and Moonen (1706), who explicitly commented on his ideas (Dibbets, 1968, pp. 54-62).

¹⁵ A thorough analysis of Pontus de Heuiter, his *Nederduitsche orthographie*, and the applied spelling system can be found in Dibbets (1968).

Spiegel (1584)

In 1584, only three years after the publication of De Heuiter's spelling guide, the first full grammar of Dutch appeared. The *Twe-spraack vande Nederduitsche letterkunst* 'Dialogue of the Dutch language' was published anonymously at the Leiden branch of Christoffel Plantijn. The title page of the book mentions the blazon *de Kamer In Liefde Bloeyende* 'the chamber blooming in love', which assigns the work to the well-known Amsterdam chamber of rhetoric *De Eglentier*. Although the grammar book is their most famous and widespread linguistic publication, the literary company also conducted three smaller language books in the second half of the sixteenth century, all of them related to the dialectica and rhetoric of Dutch. For all these works, it is assumed that Hendrik Laurensz. Spiegel (1549 – 1612) is the main author. I will henceforth refer to Spiegel as the author of the grammar.

Spiegel's main goal is to refine the Dutch language. He already deems the vernacular a *ryke, cierlyke ende verstandelyke spraack* 'rich, graceful and intellectual language', but as it is lacking uniformity, the author wants to create a tool to make language norms accessible for the wider language community – and not only for poets and the elite (Caron 1962, p. 4). However, as the book appeared in the tradition of Trivium grammars, it was mainly applied for the language education of adult men from the upper and middle ranks of society (cf. Klifman, 1983). The author anyhow strived for the book to be used for language education. The grammar is therefore set up as a dialogue between Roemer (Visscher) and Gedeon (Fallet), both members of the literary society, respectively fulfilling the role of an Amsterdam student, and a language teacher originating from Brabant in the Southern Netherlands.

The *Twe-spraack* consists of 128 pages, of which 16 pages are devoted to the preface, written by Spiegel's friend, Dirck Volckertsz. Coornhert, who praised the grammar for its ambition for language purification. Most of the book deals with orthography and pronunciation, a section that is elaborated on meticulously. Prosody, etymology and syntax are also discussed.

Van Niervaart (1669) [± 1600]

In the early years of the seventeenth century, a small book by the hand of Cornelis Dirckz. Van Niervaart (? – ?) appears in the Northern Netherlands. The work is called *Oprecht Onderwijs Van de Letter-konst* ‘True education of spelling’ and is meant for use in primary schools. The subtitle of the work, however, also signifies that everyone, including adults who did not learn the alphabet, can employ the book to familiarise themselves with reading and writing in their mother tongue (Smeyers, 1959, p. 167).¹⁶ Rather than prescribing actual spelling regulations and rules of grammar, the book offers very basic principles regarding correct language use, such as thematic word lists and glossaries with translations of Latin and French terms. These are typical subjects in schoolbooks aimed at members of the lower ranks of society at the time (De Vroede, 1970, pp. 48-49; Rutten, 2011, pp. 37-38). Besides learning to read and write, other basic skills, such as simple mathematic exercises and catechisation in the form of prayers, but also rules of conduct in school and good manners are taught (ibid.).

Probably due to the low-quality impression, the first edition of the book, dating from ± 1600, is not preserved, nor are the exact data of the printer. Yet, the book is reprinted multiple times until the late eighteenth century. In 1752, also a Southern reprint of the book rolls off the presses in Antwerpen. Later Southern editions appeared by other printers in Antwerpen, but also in Brussel, Dendermonde and Gent. The work remained also popular in the North of the language area, with reprints appearing at least until 1776 (Smeyers, 1959, p. 117).¹⁷ Some of the Southern reissues are edited by ‘N.V.M.’, but the content of the work stays the same, with only slight changes and additions in the word lists. The applied spelling is sometimes adjusted, mostly because of regional differences related to the place of publication, or temporal evolutions in terms of spelling. In some editions of the book, the part about the school ordinances is left

¹⁶ Full title: *Oprecht Onderwijs Van de Letter-konst / Bequaem om alle personen / soo Mans / Vrouwen / Dochters en Jonge-gesellen / als alle andere aenkomende Scholieren in korten tijt wel en volkomenlijck te leeren spellen en lesen. Alwaert oock datse in hare jeught noch A. noch B. geleert en hadde / gelijck men sulcx (die dit Boecxken sullen veur lesen) breeder hooren sal.* ‘True education of spelling meant for everyone, both men, women, daughters and young gentlemen, as well as all other young pupils, to learn how to spell and read in short term. Also for those who did not learn the alphabet in their youth, alike one (who will read out this small book) will learn more about’.

¹⁷ Smeyers (1959, p. 117) and Dibbets (1977, p. 366) even mention reprints in the beginning of the nineteenth century, although these editions could not be found in universities and royal libraries across Belgium and the Netherlands.

out. The edition applied in this dissertation is the earliest preserved edition. This reprint dates from 1669 and is printed in Alkmaar. According to the title page, the edition is corrected and supplemented with terms and names in the word lists. The edition from 1669 comprises 64 pages, whereas later versions vary from 48 pages (with the omittance of the school ordinances) to 56 pages. There are no substantial differences regarding the language prescriptions across all editions.

Although explicit language prescriptions are not discussed in the schoolbook, the work is seen as a crucial source in language teaching. Not only the large number of reprints, but also the widespread distribution and the frequent use of the work in schools, emphasise its importance for the dissemination of language norms.

Van der Schuere (1612)

In 1627, the *Nederduydsche Spellinge* 'Dutch spelling' was printed at the press of Kasteleyn in Haarlem.¹⁸ The writer of the spelling guide chose to stay anonymous in the first place, but from the title page of the book, we can deduce that the work is written by a spelling enthusiast (i.e. *lief-hebber der zelve*). Zwaan (1957, p. ix) confirms the identity of the writer elsewhere, more specifically in the preface to a collection of elegies that appeared in 1612. In this work, the translator of the poems alludes to be the composer of the spelling guide. Zwaan (ibid.) therefore assumes that the main author of the orthography is Jacob van der Schuere (1576 – >1643), a poet from Meenen (Vlaanderen), who moved to Haarlem at a young age, where Van der Schuere became a schoolteacher of French and mathematics. In line of the latter subject, he published a famous arithmetic work in 1600, which was reprinted multiple times (Zwaan, 1957, p. x). Apart from that, he was also a member of *De Witte Angieren* 'The white carnations', a chamber of rhetoric, founded by a group of Southern immigrants in Holland (Porteman & Smits, 2016, p. 158). As the pupil of Karel van Mander, Van der Schuere made translations of literary works and wrote poems (Zwaan, 1957, pp. x-xi). By producing poetry, Van der Schuere discovered irregularities in the language, which he wanted to eliminate with his spelling guide (Zwaan, 1957, p. xii). The

¹⁸ Full title: *Nederduydsche Spellinge/ ofte Een korte verklaringe / Zoo van elke Letter in't byzonder / twee-klanken ende drie-klanken / als van de Spellinge in't gemeen*. 'Dutch spelling or a short explanation of each letter in particular, diphtongs and triphthongs, and of the orthography in general'

Nederduydsche Spellinge only embraces the domain of spelling and is set up with an alphabetical discussion of each grapheme, for which the author starts with possible combinations of the letter with other vowels and consonants. Furthermore, he elaborates on the discussion of vowels and consonants, as well as on the diphthongs and triphthongs. A short piece of the work is dedicated to punctuation. Despite the small size of the book (68 pages) and the unpretentious approach of the author, Van der Schuere's aim was clear: he wanted a uniform, but euphonious language for producing literature (Dibbets, 1977, p. 42). Echoing the goal of the *Twe-spraack*, his proposed spelling mainly derived from Holland, although some influences from Vlaanderen can be detected (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 258).

De Hubert (1624)

In 1624, Anthonis De Hubert (1583-1644), a legist and specialist in the Hebrew language, provided the Dutch translation of *De Psalmen des Propheeten Davids* 'The psalms of the prophet David', a book that is printed by Pieter Muller in Leiden. To justify his language use in the translation copy, he included a report on the Dutch language as a preface to the actual work. The comments mainly concern the applied spelling and are bundled in the 10-page chapter *Noodige waarschouwinge aan alle liefhebbers der Nederduijtze tale* 'Necessary warning to all lovers of the Dutch language' (Dibbets, 1977, p. 44).

De Hubert was born in Zeeland but moved to Holland in 1622. He first lived in Amsterdam, where he was part of the assembly to discuss linguistic issues for the translation of the *Statenbijbel*. During that gathering, he was closely collaborating with the famous poets Joost van den Vondel and P.C. Hooft (Zwaan, 1939, p. 12; Dibbets, 1977, p. 46). The former even dedicated his *Hecuba* to De Hubert, indicating the sincere relationship and the high value that was attached to the grammarian. Not only literary authors had a good esteem of De Hubert, also other codifiers, such as Ampzing (1628) and Van Heule (1625, 1633) referred to the author as a linguistic authority (Zwaan, 1939, pp. 12-13).¹⁹ Although the author had a direct impact on writers and grammarians in the seventeenth century, there is hardly anything to say about the influence other

¹⁹ Still in the nineteenth century, De Hubert is called *een' onzer beste en oordeelkundigste taalopbouwers* 'one of our best and judicial language constructors' (Witsen Geysbeek, 1822, p. 427).

codifiers had on him. In his comments, De Hubert only mentions Spiegel's *Twe-spraack*, albeit with a lot of criticism (Zwaan, 1939, p. 13). In his strive for good usage, the author explicitly aims for clarity in language norms as these are directly associated with a correct pronunciation (Zwaan, 1939, p. 15; Dibbets, 1977, pp. 49-50). Although he is aware that his language report is not comparable to other spelling guides, he hopes his work can stimulate the study of the mother tongue (ibid.).

As mentioned above, the normative comments comprise 10 pages, which mainly deal with linguistic issues De Hubert could not find an answer for in previous normative works. The report is therefore not an exhaustive collection of the author's ideas on correct language use. No fixed structure is followed in the work. The author commences with the discussion of some morphosyntactic features, including the inflection forms and the gender of nouns, and ends with the domain of spelling.

Van Heule (1625) and (1633)

The mathematician, Christiaan van Heule (? – 1655), enriched the seventeenth century with two important grammars of Dutch. *De Nederduytsche Grammatica ofte Spraec-konst* 'Dutch grammar' appeared in 1625 at the presses of Daniel Roels in Leiden, whereas the sequel, *De Nederduytsche Spraec-konst ofte Tael-beschrijvinghe* 'Dutch grammar or language description' was printed eight years later (1633) by Jacob Roels in the same city. Both works are seen as the first real grammars of Dutch after Spiegel's *Twe-spraack* (1584) (Rutten, 2019, p. 113).

Van Heule is introduced as the most eminent grammarian of the seventeenth century (Dibbets, 1977, p. 58). However, not much is known about the author, even his regional descent is uncertain. Some scholars assume he is born in Delft (e.g. Caron, 1953, p. vx), whereas others suggest a Southern ancestry (e.g. Geerts, 1966, pp. 68-85). Van Heule was active in the Northern Netherlands and maintained friendships with Van der Schuere, De Hubert and Ampzing. This is indicated by his involvement in their linguistic ventures. He read their linguistic works, reissued Ampzing's *Tael-bericht* (1628), and dedicated his second grammar to De Hubert (Caron, 1953, p. xviii). Van Heule shares their idea of a common language, although he argues that the written language is already invariable in written form. In his opinion, it is only the spoken language that

varies (Van Heule, 1633, p. 161). For example, in his grammar, he repeatedly contrasts the Hollandic pronunciation, which he considers best, with the Brabantic and Flemish varieties (De Vooy, 1917, pp. 213-214). The proposed norm in both grammars is therefore based on the language use of eminent Hollandic writers (Van Heule, 1625; Dobbins, 1977, p. 48). Although Van Heule (1633) emphasises that his second grammar only structurally differs from the first book, there are substantial adjustments in terms of content. While the earliest version of the work consists of 136 pages (including a 16-page word list), the second grammar is expanded to a 168-page book, in which the word list is omitted (Caron, 1953, p. xxvii). The most innovative aspect of both works is probably the large number of pages that is devoted to etymology and morphosyntactic issues. This thorough and overarching analysis makes Van Heule's grammars even more comprehensive compared to the *Twe-spraak* (1584) (Dobbins, 1977, p. 58).²⁰

Dafforne (1627)

The only grammar in the corpus of normative works that is produced by a non-native speaker of Dutch is written by Richard Dafforne (? – ?). He is an Englishman, born in Northampton at the end of the sixteenth century. According to other publications by his hand, he lived quite some time in Amsterdam, where he presumably learned Dutch, before he moved to London in 1630 (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 263). Knowing he is a foreigner, who is not as proficient in Dutch as other codifiers in this corpus, he positions himself in a humble manner in his *Grammatica ofte Leez-leerlings Steunsel* 'Grammar to support reading', which is published by Evertsz. Kloppenburgh in Amsterdam. The references to other grammarians are omnipresent. The author thus clearly indicates that he is indebted to other norm givers (Dafforne, 1627, pp. 155-156). His sources of inspiration include De Heuter (1581), Spiegel (1584), Van Heule (1625, 1633) and Van Niervaart (1669). Since the references from earlier grammars and spelling guides are generally very explicit, Dafforne's work can be read as a compilation of existing Northern-oriented language prescriptions (De Vooy, 1917, p. 214; Dobbins, 1977, p. 41). The grammar is thus not innovative

²⁰ Especially the version from 1633 is more comprehensive, as the first edition (1625) only discusses 5 pages of spelling and 12 pages of prosody, compared to respectively 111 and 141 pages in 1633. Van Heule (1625) argued that orthography was already sufficiently discussed by other codifiers (Dobbins, 1977, pp. 50-51).

content-wise but is perhaps more accessible for the wider audience compared to previous normative works, as the book is aimed at schoolteachers to help their pupils learn to read in Dutch. The 156-page work is compiled as a dialogue between L. (*Lees-ghier*, 'one who is eager to read') and B. (*Berichter*, 'messenger'), and mostly discusses spelling issues. In between the language prescriptions we find some didactic ideas as well.

Ampzing (1628)

An important normative publication in the seventeenth century is written by Samuel Ampzing (1590 – 1632), a Calvinist preacher in the city of Haarlem. Already in his student years, in 1616, Ampzing published *Het Lof der Stadt Haerlem in Holland* 'The laudation of the city Haarlem in Holland'. A reissue of the book appeared in 1621, and in 1628, it is published with the title *Beschryvinge ende Lof der Stad Haerlem in Holland* 'Description and laudation of the city Haarlem in Holland'. As a prologue to the latter version, the author composed *Nederlandsch Tael-bericht Aen Den Goedwilligen/ ende ver-standigen Lezer/ ende Lief-hebber van onse Nederduytsche Tale* 'Dutch language report for the benevolent and well-informed reader and for the admirer of our Dutch language' (henceforth: *Nederlandsch Tael-bericht*) (Zwaan, 1939, p. 22). The first edition of the language advice book consists of 50 pages of prescriptions and is thus part of a larger book that discusses different writings related to the Hollandic city. Only in 1649, *Nederlandsch Tael-bericht* is reissued with slight changes by Christiaan van Heule. Although it is years after his death, Ampzing's voice still echoes through the book. In the preface, Van Heule (1649, p. 5) explains why the language report is reprinted in separate form.

Dat selve [is] een groot en kostelijk boek, dat yder niet gelegen en is te kopen, ende te bekostigen: so hebbe ik [...] Tael-bericht aldus alleen tot nut vanden gemeynen man doen drucken

'Beschryvinge ende Lof der Stad Haerlem in Holland is a large and expensive book. Not everyone is able to buy and finance it. That is why I decided to publish *Tael-bericht* for the ordinary men only'

It is no surprise that especially Van Heule took care of the reissue. Both authors appreciated each other's work (Caron, 1953, p. xx). Affected by the principles of De Hubert (1624) and Van Heule (1625), Ampzing's intention was to purify the written language by establishing language norms, and specifically in the domain of orthography (De Vooy, 1917, pp. 278-279; Zwaan, 1939, p. 24). The book's preponderance is thus clearly fixed on spelling, yet some morphological features, such as the inflection of nouns and pronouns, are also dealt with. Rather than creating a fully-fledged normative resource, the author's purpose is to justify his own language use, just like De Hubert (1624) did a few years before him (Dibbets, 1977, p. 49). In his prescriptions, Ampzing (1628) does not ignore ordinary usage, but admits that the language of intellectuals should always be pursued (cf. Ampzing, 1628; Dibbets, 1977, p. 48).

Plemp (1632)

One of P.C. Hooft's closest friends, Cornelis Gijsbertsz. Plemp (1574 – 1638), a lawyer by profession and a mediocre poet, wrote a new collection of poetry in 1631. A year later, he justifies the spelling applied in his literary work in *Speldwerk of waerschouinge an den Neerduitschen Schrijver van den spelding* 'Spelling or warning to the Dutch writer of spelling' (henceforth: *Speldwerk*), which is published in Amsterdam by Adriaen Hoflant. Plemp's main concern is the orthography that is proposed 50 years earlier. Referring to Spiegel (1584), he claims that the spelling prescriptions are too far-reaching in leaving the older writing tradition behind. He therefore advocates 15 instructions in hope to reintroduce his preferred, old way of spelling (Dibbets, 1977, p. 42). It is striking, however, that Plemp is not always loyal to his own regulations. In the proposition to write *heb-en* instead of *hebben* 'to have', he must have overlooked his own language use when consistently applying the double-consonant spelling himself. This indicates how common the doubling of the grapheme already was (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 268). From the other proposed norms, one can generally deduce a preference for a phonetic spelling, based on the orthographic conventions that were in use before 1584 in the North of the language area (Dibbets, 1977, p. 42). The spelling guide is never reprinted, but in 1637, Plemp translates his work into Latin and reissues it in enlarged form as *Orthographia Belgica*.²¹ It is reasonable to

²¹ The original version consists of 15 pages, whereas the Latin edition comprises 48 pages and 24 spelling regulations. The reprint is not included in the corpus of normative works.

assume that both the original work and the reprint are written for an elite audience as an attempt to convince writers and other grammarians to change their spelling back to traditional and older writing practices (cf. Plemp, 1632, p. 3).

Montanus (1635)

A rather exceptional book in the precept corpus is *Bericht van een nieuwe konst, genaemt de spreekkonst* 'Report of a new art, called the art of speaking' (henceforth: *Spreekkonst*), that appeared in 1635 at the presses of Ian Pietersz. Waalpot in Delft. The author is Petrus Montanus (1595 – 1638), a preacher from Delft who wrote the book for usage in schools. The peculiarity of the work lies in its complete overview of the seventeenth-century phonetics of Dutch; something that was never discussed before in any of the normative works. In the author's opinion, one should first learn how to pronounce words correctly, before one can move on to reading and writing. That is why Montanus thought this book would be an asset in the teaching practice (Dibbets, 1977, p. 60). In the preface, the author explicitly addresses the policymakers in Holland and western Friesland and pleads to introduce his book in schools (Montanus, 1635, pp. *2-*3). Yet, the work provides a detailed and technical description of the articulation and the speech organ and it consists of many unfamiliar linguistic designations that were not in use in the seventeenth century (Dibbets, 1977, p. 61; p. 69). This all suggests that Montanus's work was not accessible enough to be applied in schools (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 157).

De Gelliers (1661) [± 1640]

Whereas most of the normative works in the corpus only experienced one or two reprints, a few books enjoyed a tremendous number of reissues across multiple centuries. One of these works is *Trap der Jeugd* 'Stairs of youth' by Carel de Gelliers (? – 1644), a schoolteacher in Leeuwarden in the upper north of the language area.²² The first print of the book is not preserved but it probably appeared in 1640 in Leeuwarden (Dibbets, 1977, p. 99). A second edition

²² Full title: *Trap der Jeugd of Letter en Leeskunsts onderwys: synde een nette en effene maniere, om Jonge en Oude licht en bondig te leeren spellen en leesen*. 'Stairs of youth for the education of writing and reading: being a decent manner to succinctly teach youngsters and older people how to spell and read'.

followed in 1661, fifteen years after the author deceased. This version is edited and printed by Johannes Arcerius, also in the province of Friesland. More than 25 reissues, spread over Holland and the upper Northern region of the Netherlands, ultimately emerged during the eighteenth and in the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. The last edition, edited by D. Nyland, rolled off the presses in 1808 (Dibbets, 1977, p. 352). The (sub)title of the book knows many variations across all reprints but the content stays more or less the same. If changes are made, it is in terms of reformulations or additions of word lists and prayers. As the book is used in education, it cannot just be read as a grammar or a traditional spelling guide. It mainly discusses large sequences of word lists to help the pupils with reading and writing (Dibbets, 1977, p. 99). Like many similar seventeenth-century schoolbooks, *Trap der Jeugd* also discusses moral lessons and prayers (Rutten, 2011, p. 45). Given the target audience and the large number of (cheap) reprints, this schoolbook had a place in many classes and households (Blok & Molhuysen, 1911). The book was probably not only read by children in schools but also by their (lower-educated) relatives.

The second edition of the work (1661) that I am considering in this dissertation, contains a preface by Petrus Leupenius. In the preface to the work, Johannes Arcerius points out that the proposed spelling of Leupenius should be followed. He explicitly addresses the schoolteachers in *Vriesland, soo inde Steeden als ten platten lande* 'Friesland, both in cities and in the countryside' (De Gelliers, 1661, Voor-reeden A3). I can thus assume that the work was aimed at people in the upper Northern region only, yet later editions of the book also appeared in the region of Holland (e.g. Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht, etc.).

Kók (1649)

In 1639, a concise and schematically designed school grammar appeared at the presses of Johannes Troost in Amsterdam. The 58-page book was written by Allardus Lodewijk Kók (1616 – 1653), a Hollandic philosophy professor and a translator of multiple Latin publications. For the latter job, he is well-known due to his avoidance of foreign words in the Dutch translations (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 378). This purist nature is also expressed in his *Ont-werp Der Neder-duitsche Letter-konst* 'Design of the Dutch spelling', in which he managed to translate all

grammatical concepts – formerly described in Latin – into Dutch.²³ Although some of these designations derive from earlier codifiers (De Vooy, 1920, pp. 48–49), the author is praised for his effort in the development of the vernacular as an independent (scientific) language (Dibbets, 1981, pp. xxiv–xxvi). Since Kók clearly based his work on Van Heule (1625, 1633) (Geerts, 1966, p. 85), the book is sometimes negatively depicted because of its recapitulation of previous Latin and Northern normative works (Dibbets, 1981, pp. xxxi–xxxiii). Kók may therefore not be an independent observer of the language himself (De Vooy, 1920, p. 50), but his work is appreciated by Moonen (1706), Zeydelaar (1772) and still in the nineteenth century by Ilpeij (1812) (Dibbets, 1981, p. xxix). While the book is never reprinted, De Vooy (1920, p. 50) characterises it as *de brug die Van Heule naar Moonen voert* ‘the bridge that leads Van Heule to Moonen’, emphasising its importance within the period of Trivium grammar (Rutten, 2013, pp. 272–274). Thus, as expected, not many new prescriptions are laid down by the author. In addition to that, the structure of the grammar is quite traditional, as deals with orthography, prosody, etymology and morphosyntax in chronological order.

Van der Weyden (1651)

Another work meant for use in primary education is *Inleydinge tot een vast-gegronde Nederduytsche Letter-stelling* ‘Introduction to a grounded Dutch spelling’. The schoolbook is published in Utrecht by weduwe Dirk van Rijsbeek in 1651. The author is Dirkz. Van der Weyden (? – ?), who wrote the 47-page book as an aid in reading and writing (Rutten, 2011, p. 46). This way, the schoolteacher could help the pupils learn to spell and pronounce letters and sounds correctly (Rutten, 2011, p. 90). According to the author, the book does not only come in handy for students, but also adults can apply the language guide as they please (Van der Weyden, 1651, p. 3). In terms of content, the schoolbook does not offer new language prescriptions, but it implements norms of previous codifiers who *dapperlijk gezweet hebbe* ‘sweat bravely’ to improve the Dutch language (Van der Weyden, 1651, p. 7). The author specifically refers to the

²³ Full title: *Ont-werp Der Neder-duitsche Letter-konst. Uit de Natuur der Neder-duische Taal/ de redelijke ghe-woonte en 't ghe-bruik der ghoede Schrijvers/ ten besten van alle Lief-hebbers der zelve in de noódigste Uyt-beeldingen/ Schif-tingen en Ghrondt-reeghelen t' zaâm-ghe-stelt/ door A.L. Kók* ‘Design of the Dutch spelling. From the nature of the Dutch language, the reasonable habits and the usage of good writers, in the first place meant for all lovers of the Dutch language with essential illustrations, distinctions and precepts, composed by A.L. Kók’.

Twe-spraak (1584), Van der Schuere (1612), and De Gelliers (1661) to compose the spelling regulations in his book.

Leupenius (1653)

The in England born Petrus Leupenius (1607 – 1670), was a clergyman in Holland, first in Leiden and later in Amsterdam, where he practiced the profession until his death (Dibbets, 1999, p. 113). Besides theology, he was interested in the development of the Dutch language. In 1651, he published the bulky work *De geessel der sonden* ‘The scourge of sins’, in which the author turns against loan words in Dutch, clearly being influenced by Spiegel’s *Twe-spraak* (1584) and also by Christiaen van Heule (1625, 1633) (Caron, 1958, p. xi; Dibbets, 1999, pp. 113-114). His second publication, *Aanmerkingen op de Neederduitsche taale* ‘Remarks on the Dutch language’, appeared two years later at the presses of Hendryk Donker in Amsterdam. In this 80-page book, Leupenius proposes comments on the works of earlier codifiers, such as Spiegel (1584), De Hubert (1612), Van Heule (1625, 1633), Ampzing (1628) and Kók (1649) (Caron, 1958, p. xiii). Building on Van Heule, who only strived for uniformity in writing, Leupenius goes beyond that and advocates a common spoken language as a neutral variety, in addition to the regionally marked vernaculars (Rutten, 2019, p. 114). He thereby proposes one ‘unmarked’ variety that is preferred above the other regional dialects. By erasing all alternative variants, the author arrives at the alleged neutral language that is found in highly respected literature and in other printed books. Leupenius thus argues that the ‘neutral’ spoken variety should be based on the written language use of the Hollandic writers Vondel and Hooft.

Most attention in Leupenius’s work is paid to spelling, and specifically to the doubling of vowels and consonants, where the author generally follows the phonological principle (Caron, 1958, p. xvii). However, in open syllables, he chooses the morphological principle and prescribes a single-grapheme spelling in words like *dagen* of which the singular form is *dag* ‘day’. When there is a stressed open syllable in the singular form, he opts for the double-grapheme spelling (e.g. *vaader* instead of *vader* ‘father’) (Caron, 1958, p. xvii; Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 272). The latter prescription was not common in the seventeenth century and was therefore often criticised by fellow norm givers. Joost van den Vondel, for example, reacted polemical on Leupenius in his *Noodigh Berecht over*

de nieuwe Nederduitsche misspellinge 'Necessary message on the new Dutch spelling mistake' (1654), that was added to the print of the famous play *Lucifer*.

Bolognino (1657)

The corpus of normative works only comprises one seventeenth-century work from the Southern Netherlands. The spelling guide, *Ni'uwe noodeliicke orthographie* 'New necessary orthography', is a 40-page book that is published in Antwerpen by Jacobus Mesens in 1657.²⁴ Guilielmus Bolognino (1590 – 1669), a canon monk and priest in the city of Antwerpen, is the author of the work. The idea of writing this spelling guide was conceived when the author tried to translate the Latin bible into Dutch (Bolognino, 1657, p. 3; Dibbets, 1977 p. 40). Encountering spelling difficulties when pondering on the representation of certain sounds, Bolognino proposed spelling regulations based on what he considered the best variety of Dutch: the vernacular spoken in Antwerpen (Bolognino, 1657, p. 8). Alike the Southern codifiers from the sixteenth century, Lambrecht (Gent) and Sexagius (Brabant), Bolognino pleads for a phonetic spelling, in which every grapheme represents one sound (Rutten, 2011, p. 85; Bolognino, 1657, p. 5). Bolognino's work is thus still locally oriented. His spelling prescriptions are therefore rather odd at times that Northern codifiers were already striving for a supraregional language. Nonetheless, the Southern poet and priest, Godefridus Bouvaert, still applied Bolognino's spelling system around 1712, implying that he at least had some impact in the Southern part of the language area (Rutten, 2011, pp. 199-200).

Van Atteveld (1682)

In 1650, Johan van Atteveld ([±1600] – [1674]) wrote a very brief spelling guide, called *Wat nius. D'oude vry-eygen letter-klanc* 'Something new. The old free and unique letter sound'. The book was printed by Van Paddenburgh in Utrecht and consists of only eight pages describing the spelling of vowels. The book does not provide sufficient explicit language prescriptions to be included in the corpus of

²⁴ Full title: *Ni'uwe noodeliicke orthographie, Tot het schrijven en't drucken van onse Neder-duytse Tale: Sonder vvelke het eyghen gheluydt der vvórdén oft sillaben der selve, nit en kan uytghedruckt vvorden, noch de verscheydenyheydt der vvór-den in't geluydt ende beteekenisse*. 'New necessary orthography, for the writing and printing of our Dutch language: without it, the particular sound of words and syllables cannot be expressed, nor can the distinction between words concerning the sound and meaning'.

normative works. However, after the death of the author, a reissue appeared in 1682 at the press of Rudolph van Zijl in Utrecht. The title of the work is changed to *Nederduytsche Letterklank, ofte Korte onderwyzinge van de Nederduytsche spelling* ‘Dutch sound of letters, or a short teaching of the Dutch spelling’. In the preface, one reads that Van Atteveld (1682, p. 2) thought his first book needed some corrections. He therefore decided to edit and reissue the spelling guide as a schoolbook. The publication appeared only after he deceased on request of some language enthusiasts. The second edition is larger, but still consists of only eleven pages. This book offers a more detailed discussion of spelling issues. As opposed to the first work, the reprint examines enough orthographic features to include the schoolbook in the corpus of normative works. Although the number of language prescriptions remains limited, Van Atteveld generally relates to the Northern normative tradition. Different from other grammarians, is his proposition to double all graphemes in every long vowel, which results in the <aa>-spelling – something which multiple Northern codifiers agree on – but he also prescribes <ii> to represent the long /i/, which is not common at all (Van Atteveld, 1682, p. 3).

Gosens van Helderer (1683)

Another book meant for usage in schools in the Northern Netherlands is written by Johannes Gosens van Helderer (? – ?). A first edition of his *Neerduitse Spelkonst* ‘Dutch spelling’ seem to have appeared already in 1679, but the title page of this book mentions *Gedrukt voor den Auteur* ‘printed for the author’. Some reference works (e.g. Dobbins, 1977, p. 41) mention that the actual first edition was printed only in 1683 by Jacob vande Velde in Amsterdam. The edition from 1683 was probably printed in a larger impression, which is why I consider this book in the corpus. The schoolbook consists of 16 pages and discusses 12 spelling lessons. Besides the elaboration on letters and sounds, the author demonstrates the differences between the old and new ways of spelling, such as *vis* instead of *visch* ‘fish’ (Gosens van Helderer, 1683, p. 10). In all examples, he opts for brevity. Other enumerations that are dealt with include a word list with the pronunciation and meaning of foreign words, as well as a discussion on punctuation marks. Although the author is aware of variation in language use, Gosens van Helderer seems to prefer the Northern spelling.

Winschooten (1683)

Wigardus à Winschooten (1639 – ± 1685) was born in Amsterdam, where he went to the Latin school, but he moved to Leiden afterwards to become a schoolteacher. Being fond of the Dutch language, he published a dictionary of sailor jargon: *Seeman* ‘Sailor’ in 1681. In 1683, his *Letterkonst* ‘Spelling’ appeared in Leiden. It should have been the first part of a larger grammar work, but later elaborations were never published (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 277). This 78-page book is subdivided in different chapters, which all discuss spelling features. Besides an alphabetical explanation of all letters and their orthographical challenges, the author briefly discusses syllables and accents. In his prescriptions, the author generally follows the seventeenth-century Northern tradition, by supporting the uniformity principle and the idea that good usage can only derive from one language variety: the language of elite writers from Holland (Dibbets, 1977, p. 42; Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 278). Moreover, just like in Greek, Winschooten (1683, p.74) distinguishes different dialectal regions. The division into Southern (Vlaanderen and Brabant), Western (Zeeland and Holland), Eastern (Gelderland, Overijssel) and Northern (Groningen and Friesland) varieties reminds of De Heuiter’s classification (1581) (Rutten, 2019, pp. 114-115). Although the author is thus aware of different language varieties across the Netherlands, Winschooten clearly prefers the Hollandic variety for the standard language.

Vollenhove (1686)

An authoritative figure in the Northern normative tradition is Joannes Vollenhove (1631 – 1708). He was not only a minister in the north-western region of the Northern Netherlands and later in Den Haag, but he also wrote sermons and was regarded as a meritorious poet. In fact, he is considered ‘the artistic son of Vondel’ (Dibbets, 2003b). Both authors indeed had an incredible appreciation for each other; Vondel was fond of Vollenhove’s poetry and likewise was Vollenhove influenced by Vondel, both thematically in his literary work and linguistically when providing language advice (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 106; Rutten, 2019, pp. 11-12; p. 83). The impact of Vondel is also clear in the poem *Aan de Nederduitsche schryvers* ‘To the Dutch writers’, in which Vollenhove discusses

language issues in 320 lines of verse.²⁵ The author reviews both the orthography and different aspects of morphology. In terms of orthography, Vollenhove almost exclusively follows Vondel's linguistic practice (Dibbets, 2003b, p. 42). He prefers the spoken variety over the written variety, and he also criticises the stiltedness of poets and opts for a simple writing style without abundant words. Vollenhove (1686, pp. 571-572) argues:

*Pöeten zelfs [...]
of rymers, die zo heten,
Verlegen om te vinden maat en rym,
En hecht aan een te smeren, als met lym,
Bezwalken d'eer der kunst met dees gebreken,
En wanen noch Parnassus taal te spreken.*

'Even poets
or rhymers, who are called alike,
Shy to find beat and rhyme,
And connect one to the other, as with glue,
Tarnish the honour of art with these faults,
And pretend to speak Parnassus's language.'

The citation above emphasises the elite target audience of Vollenhove's work. He explicitly addresses other writers and poets. This attempt appears successful, as his poem is referenced by different grammarians in the eighteenth century (Dibbets, 1995, p. 155). In addition, he was often approached by other writers and grammarians for linguistic advice. For example, he acted as a mentor for Jacobus Nylöe (Dibbets, 2003a, pp. 101-102; Dibbets, 2003b, pp. 19-20). As such, Vollenhove was generally considered a 'renowned connoisseur of the Dutch language' (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 128).

Duykerius (1696)

A schoolbook to be used particularly in a smaller part of the Netherlands only is *Schouburgh der Needer-Duytsche letter, spel en leeskonst* 'Theatre of Dutch letter, spelling and reading', which appeared in Amsterdam in 1696. Like other language books that were meant for use in primary schools, the aim of this book

²⁵ Although the poem was already written in 1678, it only appeared in the bundle *Poëzy* 'Poetry' that was published in 1686 by Boom in Amsterdam (Dibbets, 1991, p. 34).

is to help pupils with the basic practice of reading and writing. Unlike similar publications, the book explicitly mentions that it is meant to be used in schools in the province of Holland and the western part of Friesland (Duykerius, 1696). The author, the theologian and Spinozist Johannes Duykerius (ca. 1661 – 1702), argues that previous schoolbooks contained several mistakes and foreign words. He thereby specifically criticises the works of De Gelliers (1661) and Winschooten (1683) (Duykerius, 1696). The schoolbook consists of 88 pages, is divided in small chapters and it mainly deals with spelling prescriptions, lists of glossaries, a discussion on interpunction and some moral-philosophical sayings. In his language norms, Duykerius generally follows the Northern tradition (Rutten, 2011, p. 90). Whether and to what extent Duykerius's work is used and spread across the country is not known. Yet, the schoolbook at least had an impact on Gillis De Witte, who is also known as E.C.P., when he wrote his grammar in 1713 (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 156).

Hakvoord (1746) [1697]

There is no doubt that Barend Hakvoord (1652 – 1735) was a much-discussed and controversial person in the seventeenth century. This precentor and catechist from Zwolle published some religious and linguistic books towards the end of the seventeenth and in the beginning of the eighteenth century. He also ventured into Spinozist circles, something that led to his eventual accusation. This impeachment led to a ban on publishing any of his religious works from 1708 onwards (Van der Wal, 2017, p. 304). The language books, however, continued to be printed. These works are briefly described below.

The author wrote three language guides: *Gemeene zend-brieven* 'General letters', which was first published in 1696, *De nieuwe Nederduitse spel-, lees- en schryf-kunst* (1746 [1697]) 'The new Dutch art of spelling, reading and writing', and lastly, *Oprecht onderwys van de letter-kunst* 'True education of spelling', which probably appeared around 1702 (Van der Wal, 2017). These books were all printed in large impressions and were reprinted until the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. While the first book offers guidelines on how to write letters, and is therefore less interesting for this study, the other two are more oriented towards spelling and correct language use. *De nieuwe Nederduitse spel-, lees- en schryf-kunst* (1746) appeared as a new schoolbook, because earlier schoolbooks, such as the ones of Van Niervaart (1669) and De Gelliers (1661),

were – according to the author – full of mistakes and foreign words (Van der Wal, 2017, p. 307). The book consists of 96 pages, and in terms of content, it is similar to previous schoolbooks. Besides glossaries, writing instructions and a description of interpunction, Hakvoord presents an alphabetical discussion of spelling prescriptions. Some grammatical issues, such as the difference between personal pronoun *hem* ‘him’ and reflexive pronoun *zich* ‘oneself’, are illustrated in *Kort Taal-Berigt* ‘Short language report’ (pp. 81-85). However, it appears that not only the title of this small chapter is literally borrowed from Ampzing’s *Nederlandsch Tael-bericht* (1628), also the prescriptions in this part are copied from his predecessor (Van der Wal, 2017, p. 312).

The most recent language book by the hand of Hakvoord, *Oprecht onderwys van de letter-konst*, is nothing more than a concise version of *De nieuwe Nederduitse spel-, lees- en schryf-kunst* (1746). It has the same structure with glossaries, writing instructions and the copied *Kort Taal-Berigt*, only the discussion of spelling norms is lacking (Van der Wal, 2017, p. 310). I therefore consider the first, and most complete edition of the schoolbook in the corpus of normative works, i.e. *De nieuwe Nederduitse spel-, lees- en schryf-kunst*. After the earliest preserved edition of this book, that appeared in 1746 by Abraham van Wezel in Deventer, there are at least eight, barely modified reissues that followed up until 1800 (Van der Wal, 2017, p. 307). That many reprints appeared in a period of 50 years suggests how immensely the schoolbook must have been used in the Northern Netherlands. Yet, it seems that all reprints in the period 1746-1800 were published in the north-western region of the Northern Netherlands (Groningen, Leeuwarden, Deventer), which could imply that the schoolbook only knew a rather confined regional spread.²⁶

Francius (1699)

Petrus Francius (1645 – 1704) was a respected man who practiced different professions. Within the region of Amsterdam, he was a poet, a gifted orator and a professor of classical eloquence. His orations and poems were both written in Latin and Dutch, yet he was also fluent in Greek. In 1699, he translated an oration of the fourth-century church father Gregorius den Nanzianzener from Greek into

²⁶ In the preface of the book, Hakvoord (1746, Voorreden) mentions that he does not aim to spread the work across the whole country, as it is impossible to have everyone apply the same spelling system.

Dutch. Not only did he provide the translation of *Van de mededeelzaamheidt* 'About the mercifulness for the poor', but he also offered a report on his applied language use as a preface to the book and a note to the reader (Dibbets, 1995, p. 151). This linguistic commentary of 74 pages is called *Aan den lezer* 'To the reader' and envisions an elite readership of (future) clergymen (Dibbets, 1995, p. 178). The report mainly discusses spelling issues that writers would not make if they would read the works of the best writers (Dibbets, 1995, p. 156; Rutten, 2019, p. 84). While focused on a high-class audience and a specific genre of texts (i.e. sermons), Francius (1699, pp. 35-37) argues that the variety used in poetry and prose should be considered the best language use. As a matter of course, both Moonen and Vollenhove had an impact on Francius (Dibbets, 2003a, pp. 117-120). In fact, Francius even sent his manuscript with language norms to Vollenhove with the message: *om van u, die meester in deeze kunst zyt, gelezen en verbeterd te worden* 'to be read and corrected by you, who masters this art' (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 118). However, also Francius is seen as an important source in the development of the Dutch language. Multiple grammarians in the eighteenth century refer to his work, and he was also involved in the preparations of Moonen's grammar (1706) (Dibbets, 1995, pp. 151-153).

Van Geesdalle (1700)

After a long period of only Northern normative works, a new Southern grammar appears in 1700 at the presses of Maximilien Graet in Gent.²⁷ The title of the work already gives an impression of the structure of the book:

Le parallèle de la grammaire Des deux Langues François & Fla-mende, contenant en abrégé toutes les règles fondamentales de ces deux Langues

De vergelykinge van de spraek-konste Der twee Talen de Fransche ende de Vlaemsche, behelzende in het kort alle de Gront-regels deser twee Talen

'The comparison of the grammar of two languages French and Dutch, briefly comprising all foundations of these two languages'

Since we are dealing with a contrastive grammar of Dutch and French, it is not surprising that the author is bilingual. Jacques-François Van Geesdalle (1672 –

²⁷ See Boone (2000, p. 336) for a discussion on the date of printing. The applied edition in this study dates back from 1700. The book mentions 1699 as the date of approbation.

1748), was born in the French-speaking Hainaut (part of present-day Wallonia), but moved to Gent, where he probably kept a boarding school (Willems, 1824, p. 37). After the publication of his grammar, he became a schoolteacher in the Flemish cities Waregem and Tielt (Boone, 2000). The author's profession also explains the didactic approach of the work, which suggests that Van Geesdalle probably applied the book in his own teaching practice. With its 309 pages, the grammar is more comprehensive compared to the typical schoolbooks that were published in the middle of the seventeenth century. It is thus reasonable to assume that the author had a broader audience in mind, ranging from adults who wanted to increase their proficiency in the mother tongue, to second-language learners aiming to become fluent in Dutch or French (Boone, 2000, p. 338). In terms of structure, the book is fully oriented towards Dutch and French readers. It discusses the same language prescriptions in French, in the left-hand column, and in Dutch, on the right-hand side of the page. The three large chapters of the book include a first part on spelling and pronunciation, a second – most substantial – part on morphology, and a last chapter on syntax. The proposed language norms are clearly distinct from what can be observed in Northern normative works (Rutten, 2011, p. 118). Also Willems (1824, p. 37) also recognises the book as a real Southern grammar that had some influence on language use, although this influence is probably limited to the region of Vlaanderen.

Nylöe (1703) & (1707)

Jacobus Nylöe (1670 – 1714), a preacher and poet from the north-east of the Northern Netherlands, is seen as the pupil of Joannes Vollenhove (Rutten, 2019, p. 84). Submissive to Vollenhove's linguistic ideas, Nylöe wrote his *Aanleiding tot de Nederduitsche Taal* 'Incentive to the Dutch language', that was published in 1703 by Gerardus Borstius in Amsterdam.²⁸ The work can be considered a stylistic guide that also comments on spelling, morphological inflection and good language use in general (De Bonth & Dobbets, 1995, p. 19).

Four years later, in 1707, an enhanced edition of the work appears at the presses of Hero Nauta in Leeuwarden. This time, the name of the author is announced

²⁸ The name of the author is not mentioned in the work. On the title page is mentioned *Door een Liefhebber dezer tale ten nutte zyner Landtgenoten opgesteld*, 'Composed by a lover of this language for the benefit of his fellow countrymen'.

below the preface but still not on the front page. The title of the book remains the same and the subtitle mentions *Merkelyk vermeerdert* 'significantly increased'. The 43 pages of the first print are indeed more than doubled in the second edition, which now consists of 90 pages of language prescriptions and an annex of 32 pages about proverbs and expressions. The added chapters in the second edition mostly deal with style and do not include explicit language prescriptions. The resumed parts of the work, however, are revised and amply expanded with discussions of additional linguistic features.

In 1711, again four years later, another reprint appears at the same printing house. This version is identical to the second print, except for an added sequel of 36 pages, that deals with a few remarks on the spelling of diphthongs and long vowels, the gender of nouns and some more examples of proverbs. The latest edition of the work is reprinted five times in the eighteenth century, without any more changes in the content of the book. Compared to the first three prints, which all appeared in the north-western region of the Northern Netherlands, all later reissues are published in Amsterdam, which implies that the style guide spread from the upper north of the language area to region of Holland. As the second reprint (1707) is extensively reworked compared to the first edition (1703), both the first and the second print are considered in the precept corpus. The third version (1711) is only slightly different from the second print and does not discuss many additional linguistic features. It is therefore not included in the corpus of normative works.

The stylistic prescriptions in *Aanleiding tot de Nederduitsche Taal* are illustrated by citations from the most famous writers (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 422). Not only Hooft and Vondel, but also Moonen and Vollenhove are listed as main examples of good language use (Nyløe, 1707, p. 4).²⁹ Nyløe (1703, pp. 3-4) convincingly argues which other language praxis writers should follow:

²⁹ Although Nyløe (1707, p. 4) considers Moonen as one of the best writers, he does not agree with all the linguistic ideas that are proposed in Moonen's grammar, especially not regarding spelling. For an elucidation on this matter, I refer to Dibbets (2003a, pp. 121-126), who discusses the correspondence between Vollenhove and Nyløe that is related to the appearance of Moonen's *Nederduitsche Spraekkunst* (1706).

Men kan en moet hier ook met het gebruik te rade gaan, en onderzoeken hoe de taal doorgaans gesproken wort by menschen die hier keurig en net op zyn; het geen men nergens beter dan in Hollant vint, daar de Nederduitsche taal best en aangenaamst gesproken wort, inzonderheit by menschen van aanzien, en die hier hun werk van maken.

‘One should also consider usage and investigate how the language is generally spoken by people who are neat on their language; something one will not find better than in Holland, where the Dutch language is spoken best and most appealingly, especially by people of standing, and by those who do this by profession.’

Hilarides (1705)

In 1705, in the upper Northern region of the language area, in the province of Friesland, appeared a grammar entitled:

Nieuwe Taalgronden Der Neederduijtsche Taal; Weegens het Gebruik der Voorleedekens/ de/ den: die; deeze/ dit/ dat/ het; en de Neederlantsche Woordrekkinge: voor Daavid van Hoochstraaten Med. Doct. En conrector t’ Amsterdam

‘New linguistic grounds of the Dutch language; for the usage of the articles *de / den: die; deeze/ dit/ dat/ het*; and the lengthening of Dutch words: for Daavid van Hoochstraaten Med. Doct. and vice rector in Amsterdam’

The author of the book is Johannes Hilarides (± 1648 – 1726), a Frisian rector at the Latin school and a book seller, who wrote his grammar as a rebuttal on the well-known gender list of his opponent, David van Hoogstraten, which appeared in Amsterdam five years earlier. The author’s main exasperation lies in Van Hoogstraten’s choice to prescribe the literary norm of the writers Hooft and Vondel. According to Hilarides, the Hollandic language gets too much credit, whereas the varieties spoken in the other Northern provinces should also be considered. It is the Frisian variety that he chooses for the supraregional norm (Rutten, 2006, p. 379; Rutten, 2019, p. 197). This preference is clear in his 63-page work, in which the author mainly discusses grammatical features and illustrates, for example:

*Zoo zal een Hollander zeg-gen / paard, vaardig, naargestig, baard, staart, gaarne.
Een Geldersman alles met (æ) paerd, vaerdig, enz. Maar in de gemee-ne taal / is
dat alles met (ee) peerd, veerdig maar in't Friesch is feerdig*
(Hilarides, 1705, p. 20)

'An inhabitant from Holland will say *paard, vaardig, naargestig, baard, staart, gaarne*. A man from Gelderland will say everything with (æ) *paerd, vaerdig*, etc. But in the common language is all that spelled with (ee) *peerd, veerdig* but in Frisian it is *feerdig*'

Because of the Frisian-based language prescriptions, Hilarides's work is coarsely criticised by Van Hoogstraten (1711, p. 158), who blames *een botterik in Vrieslant* 'a blunt man in Friesland' for disparaging the authority of the Hollandic literary writers (Rutten, 2006, pp. 378-379; Dobbets, 1996, pp. 62-65). Although the author prescribes a less-common Northern variety as the norm, note that the Southern varieties (of Brabant and Vlaanderen) are not mentioned at all. This again emphasises the prominent role of the North of the language area, and especially the region of Holland in the normative tradition of Dutch.

Moonen (1706)

The *Nederduitsche Spraekkunst* 'Dutch grammar' of Arnold Moonen (1644 – 1711) is perhaps one of the most well-known normative publications in the history of Dutch. After several decades without a new Northern grammar, the Amsterdam printer François Halma encouraged Moonen to write a comprehensive work in which language norms were laid down again. The minister from Deventer started writing the grammar in 1697. He initially aspired to publish the work in 1700 but it only rolled off Halma's presses in 1706 (Dobbets, 2003a, p. 116). Following the belief that grammar must serve literature, Moonen occupies an eminent position in the tradition of grammarians who aim their language norms at the highest ranks of society (Rutten, 2009, p. 57). Alike other codifiers in this tradition, the author's norms derive from the language use in the literary works of P.C. Hooft and Joost van den Vondel (Rutten, 2019, pp. 84-85).

With its 359 pages of language prescriptions, the grammar is the most extensive normative work in the corpus so far. The author splits up the book into *Woortgronding* and *Woortvoeging* (Schaars, 1988, pp. 76-77). The first part of

the work is devoted to spelling (44 pages), including remarks on pronunciation and prosody. Morphological issues, such as the inflection and gender of nouns, comprise the biggest part of the work (211 pages) and are also addressed in the chapters covered by *Woortgronding*. The last 88 pages deal with syntax and are attached to the concept *Woortvoeging*.³⁰ Although the grammarian offers a detailed discussion of the linguistic features, his reliance on the famous literary authors is again apparent when he copies examples from Vondel's prose to illustrate his syntactic arguments (Schaars, 1988, pp. 59-63). Nevertheless, Moonen is considered one of the most influential codifiers of the eighteenth century. Many grammarians, such as Van Belle (1748, 1755), Elzevier (1761), De Haes (1763) and Van der Palm (1769), deeply respected the author and took his book as a basis for their own normative works (Rutten, 2011, p. 34).

Séwel (1708) and (1712)

In the early years of the eighteenth century, a high number of important normative works appeared (Rutten, 2019, p. 54). Willem Séwel (1654 – 1720) also contributed to the production of these works. The writer and translator, from English descent but born in the Low Countries, wrote different dictionaries and grammars for second-language learners of English and Dutch (De Bonth & Dibbets, 1995, p. 49). His insights into the linguistics of his mother tongue are covered in multiple of his contributions to the journal *De Boekzaal* 'The Library', which were published between 1700 and 1708 (Dibbets, 1977, pp. 65-66). It is also in 1708 that the author's full grammar of Dutch appears at the presses of Assuerus Lansvelt in Amsterdam. In his *Nederduytsche spraakkonst* 'Dutch grammar', Séwel (1708) emphasises that he carefully read the books of Moonen (1706) and Nylöe (1703), and he also praises the language of the literary authors Hooft and Vondel. Compared to other grammarians, who only target their language prescriptions to the written variety in specific registers, Séwel prefers the Hollandic dialect to form the written language (De Bonth & Dibbets, 1995, p. 49; Rutten, 2019, p. 117; Rutten, 2006, pp. 373-378). The orientation on the spoken variety was rather odd in the eighteenth century, as the prevailing idea was to base language norms on the written language use of literary authors (Rutten, 2019, p. 117). This focus consequently caused a divided reception of Séwel's grammar. For example, David van Hoogstraten and Adriaen

³⁰ For a detailed discussion on the structure and content of the grammar, see Schaars (1988).

Verwer (± 1655 – 1717) argued that the author wrote a *Spreekkunst* ‘speech guide’ rather than a *Spraakunst* ‘grammar’ (De Bonth & Dibbets, 1995, p. 93). In his defense, Séwel (1708, pp.139-140) asserted that the speech should be considered for the written language. He explains that writers should not simply write down any spoken variety, but *de taal welke men in een vertoog, óf in een ernstig gesprek, behoort te spreken* ‘the language one should use in an expostulation or in a serious conversation’ (Dibbets, 1977, p. 78).

The grammar comprises language norms in the domains of orthography (35 pp.), morphology and etymology (151 pp.), syntax (21 pp.) and prosody (23 pp.). A second edition of the work appeared in 1712 and is extensively modified by the author.³¹ Not only was the grammar published in enlarged form (452 pages compared to 230 pages in the first print), but it also consists of a gender list of nouns (60 pp.) and a discussion on grammatical and rhetorical figures (20 pp.). Although the structure of the book stays more or less the same, the existing language prescriptions are often clarified or exemplified in the second edition of the work. Later reissues, that appeared in 1733 and 1756, are identical to the second print.³² Willem Séwel is generally considered one of the most important grammarians of the eighteenth century (Rutten, 2009, p. 58).

E.C.P. (1713)

In 1713, the Jansenist cleric Gillis De Witte (1648 – 1721), who was born in Gent, published his *Ontwerp van eene Nederduytsche spraek-konst* ‘Outline of a Dutch grammar’, using the pseudonym E.C.P. (Egidius Candidus Pastor) (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 133). The front page of the work mentions that Theodorus vanden Eynden published the book in Meenen (Vlaanderen), but it seems that the printer never had a branch in the Flemish city. It is thus more likely that the book was

³¹ Title: *Nederduytsche Spraakkunst, doorgaans veel vermeerderd, en met eene lyst van de Geslachten der Naamwoorden, die onder geene vaste Regelen betrekkelyk zyn; nevens eene Verhandeling van de Redenkonstige Figuren, en andere Taalcieraaden, verrykt*. ‘Dutch grammar, generally largely enhanced and enriched with a gender list of nouns, which differ from the common norms, as well as a discussion on grammatical figures, and other language improvements’, published in Amsterdam by Robert Blokland.

³² There are two different Amsterdam editions that mention ‘second print’: the other one was published in 1724 (De Bonth & Dibbets, 1995, p. 49). Because the reprint from 1712 is generally considered as the second edition, I consider both the first print (1708) and this second (1712) edition in the corpus of normative works.

printed in Utrecht, especially because the Hollandic city was also De Witte's place of residence back then (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 132). Showing the Southern city as the place of publication must have been the author's way of indicating the target audience of his grammar (ibid.). The subtitle *Opgedragen aen de Schôl-mee-sters der Stadt van Gendt* 'Dedicated to the schoolteachers in the city of Gent' gives an explicit idea of who the grammar is meant for. The school grammar is clearly oriented towards a Southern readership, and it specifically targets Flemish schoolteachers.

Although De Witte takes a clear stance in rejecting typical Flemish elements for some features, he is more tolerable towards language variation when it comes to other features, such as the gender of nouns. Linguistic differences between the Southern and Northern Netherlands are then observed but not condemned for usage (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 148). The reader of the grammar can clearly discern influences of the linguists Moonen, Nylöe and Séwel, which indicates that the author has a slight preference for the Northern variety (Dibbets, 2003a, pp. 140-147).

De Witte's grammar is divided into nine chapters. The part on orthography is alphabetically arranged and is discussed first (pp. 7-34). It is followed by the chapters on morphology (pp. 34-91), before the book is concluded with general remarks on the language (pp. 91-100). Although the grammar is still well received by nineteenth-century grammarians, such as Willem Bilderdijk and Jan Frans Willems, it was less known by fellow codifiers in the eighteenth century (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 131). The Southern descent of the author and the target audience of the book possibly explain why Northern grammarians did not refer to the schoolbook.

Stéven (1784) [1714]

In 1714, a book oriented towards schoolteachers and pupils appeared in Vlaanderen. The work, written by 'A.S.', goes by the title *Nieuwen Néderlandschen voorschrift-boek* 'New Dutch book of prescriptions'. As the first print is not preserved, the original place of publication is unknown. However, we know that the author behind the initials is Andries Stéven ($\pm$ 1676 – 1747), a rhetorician and schoolteacher in Frans-Vlaanderen, the area in the western part of Vlaanderen that was annexed as part of France in the seventeenth

century (Huyghebaert, 1983, p. 382). Although the content of the schoolbook stays more or less the same in the large number of reprints that appeared between 1714 and 1833, the work is enriched with a *Byvoegsel* 'Appendix' of eight pages from 1734 onwards (Rutten, 2011, pp. 20-21). The first available edition, and thus also the one that is applied in this study, dates from 1784. This version was printed in Ieper and is presumably a pirated copy from the edition of 1734 (Schmook, 1977, p. 78; Rutten, 2011, p. 22).

Rather than a purely linguistic book, the work is a moral guide, in which the author also presents catholic rhymes and examples of New Year's letters. Both the moral comments and the language norms are alphabetically arranged, and for each letter follows an enumeration of about 18 prescriptions. Explicit spelling regulations comprise 33 pages and are discussed in the *Byvoegsel* (pp. 46-53) and in the chapter *Korte aen-merkingen op het verbasteren der Néder-duytsche tael* 'Short remarks on the bastardising of the Dutch language' (pp. 21-45). The structure of the book, combining both moral norms and language prescriptions, is characteristic for normative works that were applied in eighteenth-century schools, as they were meant to be read in class by teachers and pupils in primary education (Rutten, 2011, p. 22). In general, Stéven wants to achieve a uniform written language without foreign elements. Words of foreign descent that are used in regional speech and writing are described as glosses in the margins of the text, but only correct Dutch words are considered in the actual prescriptions (Smeyers, 1959, p. 113). In order to establish a consistent spelling system, he builds on language norms that were already in use in the North and the South of the language area.

As mentioned above, the book has been in print during the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century. Smeyers (1959, p. 113) suggests that Stéven's work was used as a schoolbook in Vlaanderen during this entire period. Huyghebaert (1983, p. 393) and Rutten (2011, p. 24) also argue that the book was aimed at an audience beyond Frans-Vlaanderen, and that it consequently might have had an immense impact on the South-Western part of the language area. The influence on later grammarians, such as Van Belleghem & Waterschoot (1773), Janssens ([1775]) and the author of *Snoeijmes der Vlaemsche Tale* ([± 1750 – 1760] 'Pruning knife of the Flemish Language', cf. Vosters & Rutten, 2013) is also suggested (Rutten, 2011, p. 20; p. 202).

Ten Kate (1723)

A normative work, written in two separate and bulky volumes, appeared in 1723 at the presses of Rudolph and Gerard Wetstein in Amsterdam. Each part of *Aanleiding tot de kennisse van het verhevene deel der Nederduitsche sprake* ‘Introduction to the knowledge of the elevated part of the Dutch language’ comprises approximately 750 pages and is therefore the most voluminous work in the corpus of normative works. The author of the book is Lambert ten Kate (1674 – 1731), a Hollandic member of a merchant family, who was also captivated by art, science and religion. It is especially the history of languages and the similarities between languages that sparked his interest. In 1711, Ten Kate starts writing his magnum opus, *Aanleiding tot de kennisse van het verhevene deel der Nederduitsche sprake*, but it is published only in 1723. Fellow grammarians might have read some parts of the book before it was in print, as Séwel (1712), for example, refers to Ten Kate in his grammar (De Bonth & Dibbets, 1995, p. 118). Together with other eighteenth-century grammarians, also Balthazar Huydecoper seems to rely on Ten Kate’s book (Van der Wal, 2002, p. 60).

Compared to other eighteenth-century grammars, Ten Kate does not explicitly target literary writers, although he adheres to Vondel’s language use in most of his prescriptions (Rutten, 2019, p. 197). Different from other codifiers, he aims to discover and explain similarities between languages. And rather than advocating his own language norms, he builds on the etymology of languages to establish the spelling and grammar rules of Dutch (Noordegraaf & Van der Wal, 2001). The book is considered a scientific publication, which is meant to be read by the higher ranks of society (Rutten, 2019, p. 53). Another aspect in which the work differs from other normative publications is the attention for variation in language use, something Ten Kate discusses consistently in terms of how variation can be applied in three distinct registers and writing styles. He distinguishes (1) the sublime style, (2) the solemn style and (3) the plain style. The first writing style refers to ancient usage that should be applied by scholars. The second and third style approach daily usage, but the solemn style is more formal as shortenings are not allowed whereas they can occur in the plain style. Ten Kate remarks that even the latter, least formal writing style does not relate to *de platte Spreek- en Straettaal* ‘the vulgar and colloquial language’ (Ten Kate, 1723, I, p. 334; Van der Wal, 2002, pp. 56-57).

Both orthography, morphology and syntax are examined in Ten Kate's book. Each volume comprises a part with discussions on the Dutch language in the form of dialogues between 'L' – short for *Liefhebber* 'lover' or the name of the author, Lambert, and 'N', which refers to the author's preceptor, Adriaan Verwer (Jongeneelen, 1992, pp. 203-206). The author also discusses phenomena in other Germanic languages (e.g. German, Saxon, Gothic, ...), which are mainly debated in the first volume. Besides the discussion of language issues, both books comprise extensive appendices, for example, gender lists of nouns, and an etymological dictionary of Dutch.

Huydecoper (1730)

One of the most-read authors from the classical period is the Roman poet Ovidius. Over time, his work *Metamorphosen libri xv*, is translated into different languages, both in prose and in verse. Also for Dutch, the work knows a number of translations with multiple reprints. However, it is the translation of 1671 by Joost van den Vondel which is best known in the Dutch language area. The third print of this translation appeared in 1730, together with an essay on Vondel's language that was used in the translation copy. Both the publication of the translation and the essay on Vondel's language use were provided by the Amsterdam-based poet and administrator, Balthazar Huydecoper (1695 – 1778), and were sold by Visscher and Tirion in Amsterdam.³³ As many readers already possessed one of the previous translation copies of the book, the potential reader could also opt to buy only Huydecoper's essay (De Bonth, 1998, p. 37-38). In this study, I consider the essay entitled *Proeve van Taal- en Dichtkunde; in vrijmoedige aanmerkingen op Vondels vertaalde Herscheppingen van Ovidius* 'Essay on the study of the language and poetry; bold remarks on Vondel's translation of metamorphoses by Ovidius' (henceforth: *Proeve van Taal- en Dichtkunde*).

The essay includes remarks on Vondel's language and literary usage, especially on the language use in the translation copy. Huydecoper discusses linguistic mistakes in Vondel's work and asserts that pointing out the incorrect usage of the famous authors would help others write correctly. Alike Ten Kate,

³³ For a detailed discussion of Huydecoper as a linguist and the essay in particular, see De Bonth (1998).

Huydecoper searched for the norm in historical usage. Although he praises Vondel for his good language use, the grammarian argues that even Vondel makes mistakes and he claims the purest language can be found in the thirteenth century, especially in the works of Melis Stoke (1235 – ± 1305) and in the writing practice of Flemish authors (De Bonth, 1998, pp. 35; 97-98; Rutten, 2019, p. 85). In one of his letters Huydecoper wrote:

En ik mag wel zeggen dat de vlamingen vroeger begonnen hebben de taal te beschaaven, en met naauwkeurigheid te schryven, dan de Hollanders
(De Bonth, 1998, p. 100)

‘And I can say that the Flemish have started earlier in cultivating the language and writing more correctly compared to the people in Holland’

According to the author, the written norm should be based on the language use of these thirteenth-century authors, as their usage is closest to the origin of Dutch (De Bonth, 1998, p. 110). He specifically targets literary authors and elite writers in his essay, since he did not want them to make the same mistakes as Vondel did (De Bonth & Dibbets, 1995, p. 158). The work was widely read in literary circles in the second half of the century, and Huydecoper is therefore considered one of the most important grammarians in the eighteenth century (Jongeneelen, 1996; De Bonth, 1998).

The essay comprises 694 pages, of which 682 pages discuss the language use of Vondel. In addition to the introduction and appendices, the work is further divided into fifteen chapters. Each chapter is called *Boek* ‘Book’ and is numbered from 1 to 15. The length of the chapters ranges from 18 to 96 pages, in which both orthographical and morphosyntactic features are discussed. Throughout the essay, Huydecoper consistently examines individual utterances in Vondel’s translation, and he corrects them by referring to the language use of medieval writers or to the writing practice of Vondel in his other literary works.

Van Belle (1748) and (1755)

Jan van Belle (± 1690 – 1754) was a schoolteacher in Haarlem and was one of the first codifiers to write a schoolbook that was largely based on the foundational work of the elitist grammarians from the first half of the eighteenth century.

Compared to these voluminous and complex grammars, Van Belle managed to simplify the language norms by making them didactically attractable and comprehensible for the wider community, i.e. the middle ranks of society (Rutten, 2019, p. 54). Van Belle's first work appeared in 1748 and was printed by Izaak van de Vinne, who also lived in Haarlem. The title of the book is:

Korte wegwyzer, ter spel- spraak- en dichtkunden. Tót gemak voor 't geheugen van Ouden en Jongen, in Neederduitse Dichtmaate, op 100 Bladzyden gesteld

'Short guide, for spelling, speech and poetry. For the convenience of the memory of old and young, in the format of Dutch poetry, written on 100 pages'

As the title suggests, the work indeed consists of exactly 100 pages (not counting the five concluding pages). The manual was not only intended for young learners but also for adults. The structure of the work may even hint to these differences in target audience. The language norms are all formulated in verse, which is quite unique in the history of normative works, and particularly schoolbooks. As the prescriptions are written in rhyme, the idea is that learners would memorise them more easily. The more advanced pupils or adults can consult the footnotes for an explanation of the prescriptions. Such a didactic approach is innovative at the time. Furthermore, Van Belle, introduces other teaching methods, such as tables, charts, word lists and mnemonics to help the pupils memorise the language norms (Rutten, 2008, pp. 99-100). The book comprises prescriptions on spelling issues and morphosyntactic features, which were also covered in the works of Moonen, Séwel and Ten Kate. The author explicitly refers to his predecessors, and he addresses many of the same arguments, but in a less nuanced manner (Rutten, 2008, p. 203).

In 1755, after Van Belle's death, another grammar by his hand was published at the presses of Christoph Henrich Bohn in Haarlem. This time, the book was entitled:

Korte schets der Néderduitse spraakkonst, Waar in, op eene zeer korte en beknópte wyze, niet alleen de waare Gronden van de Né-derduitse Taale worden aangewezen, maar ook, inzonderheid, de waare Eigenschap der Naambuigen, (Declinatien,) en der Tydvoegingen, (Conjugatien,) wor-den voorgesteld, en met duide-lyke, en voor elk bevat-baare, Voorbeelden bevestigd

‘Short sketch of the Dutch grammar, in which, in a very short and concise manner, not only the true foundations of the Dutch language are pointed out, but in particular also the true properties of the inflections and of the conjugations are presented, which are illustrated with clear and comprehensible examples’

The grammar from 1755 targets the same audience but is even more concise compared to the previous one. It covers 55 pages and one foldable sheet with examples of verb conjugations. The book is written in prose, which allows the author to give a more detailed definition of certain concepts. Van Belle generally discusses the same topics as in his previous book: spelling (pp. 1-14), different types of nouns, grammatical case (pp. 14-45) and verb conjugation (pp. 46-55) complete the work.

Verpoorten (1752)

In the second half of the eighteenth century, several schoolteachers who were based in Antwerpen wrote schoolbooks to innovate and improve language education in the Southern Netherlands. One of these teachers is Jan Domien Verpoorten (1706 – 1773). He wrote an instruction book in 1752 that was printed by Weduwe Du Caju in Antwerpen. The work was entitled: *Woôrdenschat, oft letter-konst, gedeylt in twee deelen* ‘Vocabulary, or grammar, split up in two parts’. As the title indicates, the book was divided into two separated parts which had different subtitles. Each subtitle largely covers the content of the piece.

The subtitle of the first part (pp. 4-56) is:

Nut voôr alle Jonkheyd, om doôr de selve, met hulpe van hunnen Meester, in de uyterste volmaektheyd te leeren spellen, uytspreken ende schryven van alle woôrden af-geteekent met hunne verscheydene teekentiens van uyt-spraek

‘Useful for all youth, to thereby, with the help of their teacher, to learn to spell, pronounce and write all words in utter perfection, with regards to different characters of pronunciation’

And, the subtitle of the second part (pp. 3-46):

Inhoudende meest alle de gebastardeerde of vervalschte woorden die hier in onse nederlandsche taele gebruykt worden, gestelt op den ABC. Nut voôr die sig genegen vinden de selve te gebruyken ende geërne den eygendom daer van soudén willen weten

‘Comprising most bastard words or falsified words that are in use in the Dutch language, compiled on the basis of the ABC. Useful for all who consider using these words and would like to know its Dutch counterpart’

As the subtitles of the work suggest, the book was meant to be used in schools for non-elite citizens, who were not familiar with the French or Latin language. With the aid of the teacher, the pupils would learn to read and write correctly. Besides its appliance in schools, the book is meant for an older readership. The first part of the book comprises 52 pages and is devoted to orthography and pronunciation. The author distinguishes the different letters of the alphabet, which includes 24 letters instead of 26. Furthermore, he discusses syllables, diphthongs, diacritical characters, and punctuation marks. The first section is concluded with multiple word lists, for which Verpoorten presumably relies on other normative sources. The second part of the work includes an alphabetical list with loan words and their Dutch equivalent and is largely based on Lodewijk Meijers’s *Nederlandsche Woorden-schat* ‘Dutch vocabulary’ (1654). However, the book is not without mistakes. In the second part of the schoolbook, the alphabetical order is not always correct, and some words appear twice in the list (Rutten, 2011, pp. 38-39). One of Verpoorten’s most important spelling innovations is to simplify the orthography system. He suggests omitting redundant graphemes, such as <j> and <v>, but also <-h>, <-t> and <-c> are omitted in the following clusters: <gh->, <-dt> and <-ck> (Verpoorten, 1752, A1v-2r). The multiple word lists in the book are the author’s way of introducing the system. Learners who want to become proficient in writing should, according to the author, simply copy the word lists frequently.

P.B. (1757)

A few years later, in 1757, another work to be used in schools appears. This time, the author is more mysterious, as only the initials ‘P.B.’ are mentioned on the

front page of the book. De Vos's assumption (1939, p. 50) that P. Bincken wrote the work is nowadays more or less accepted and the idea becomes even more presumable when we consider that Hubertus Bincken (1724 – 1804) was the publisher who printed the work in Antwerpen. The printer's father was called Petrus Bincken, and in previous studies (cf. Rutten, 2011; Vosters, 2011) it is believed that he could be the author of this work. However, as this presumption is still uncertain, I will refer to the author as P.B. The full title of his schoolbook is:

Fondamenten ofte grond-regels der Neder-duytsche spel-konst. Om de zelve in korten tyd in d'uyterste volmaektheyd te leeren. Waer by gevoegt zyn eenige Regels van de Wel-gemaniertheyd, als ook eenige gemeyne Brieven. Alles zeer nut ende profytig voôr de jongheyd.

'Foundations or ground rules of the Dutch orthography. To learn the orthography in utter perfection in short time. Attached are some rules of conduct, as well as some general letters. All of this is extremely useful and profitable for the youth'

According to the title and the preface of the book, P.B. targets the same audience as Verpoorten (1752). He explicitly wants to reach teachers and pupils in a school context, but the book is also meant for less-proficient adults (Rutten, 2011, p. 42). Unlike Verpoorten, P.B. did not impose the method of copying word lists on the pupils. The work mentions some thematical word lists, yet the approach does not expect the readers to learn the spelling of the words by heart. Students should first learn the alphabet and other concepts that are relevant for spelling, such as sounds and signs, but also the principles of analogy and uniformity, before one starts to actually write (Rutten, 2011, p. 45). The structure of the book follows this idea, as it is divided into six chapters; word lists and rules of conduct are added as addenda. All letters and sounds are addressed in the chapters, as well as comments on spelling issues and morphological topics. Capitalisation and punctuation are mentioned in the last chapter of the 93-page book. As mentioned before, P.B.'s approach is didactically more modern compared to the method of Verpoorten. This is probably also the reason why the book of P.B. was reprinted a few times and in different cities, both in Brabant (Antwerpen, Leuven) and in Vlaanderen (Brugge). Even though the work seems an innovation compared to Verpoorten's book, the structure with the thematic word lists and the rules of conduct are very reminiscent of the schoolbooks that

were in use in the Northern part of the Low Countries, such as Hakvoord (1746) and Van Niervaart (1669) (Rutten, 2011, p. 56). Nevertheless, the popularity of the work and the modern approach of the author probably influenced other Southern teachers, like Ballieu (1792) and were also an incentive for Verpoorten to write a new and better work in 1759 (ibid.).

Verpoorten (1759)

Seven years after the publication of his first schoolbook, Verpoorten's *Woorden-schat, oft letter-konst* was published again at the presses of Gerardus Berbie in Antwerpen. According to the title page, the work is *veel vermeerderd en verbeterd* 'much expanded and improved'. Indeed, the author added 60 pages of language norms to the new schoolbook. The full title of the schoolbook is also adjusted to:

Woorden-schat, oft letter-konst, gedeyld in twee deelen, Volgens de Nieuwe, en kortere maniere van schryven na den Oorsprong der Taele nevens de uytlegginge, hoe; ende waerom de af-laetinge der Letteren geschied, hoe, ende waerom de Woorden veranderd worden van den tegenwoôrdigen tyd in den onvolmaekten, nevens de Veranderingen der Naem-woorden, dienstig voôr onze nieuws-gierige Tael-schryvers. Doôr J.D. Verpoorten, Schoôl-meester binnen Antwerpen

'Vocabulary, or grammar, split up in two parts, according to the new and shorter ways of writing, based on the etymology of the language, besides the explanation how and why the omittance of letters is applied, how and why the words change from the present tense to the imperfect, next to the changes of nouns, useful for our curious writers. By J.D. Verpoorten, schoolteacher in Antwerpen'

The work still consists of two separate volumes. The second part, which includes a list with foreign words, remains the same as in the first print of 1752. The first part of the book is expanded with new spelling prescriptions and morphological items, which are largely based on P.B.'s injunctions of 1757 (Rutten, 2011, p. 49). Verpoorten now omits the principle of copying word lists, and visualises the norm with more attractive grids with the old and new ways of spelling. Furthermore, the author also seems to rely on E.C.P. (1713) and on Northern grammarians, like Nylöe (1703, 1707), Moonen (1706) and Séwel (1708, 1712), which suggests that some Southern authors indeed considered the Northern grammarians as the example to follow in the Southern Netherlands as well (Rutten, 2011, p. 56).

Des Roches (s.d. [1761])

Born in Den Haag as the illegitimate child of a maid, Jan Des Roches (± 1740 – 1787) had a difficult childhood and moved to the South of the language area in 1757 to pursue a career there.³⁴ He first became a schoolteacher in a boarding school in Antwerpen, the institution of which he would later become the director. Very soon, he also skilled himself in French and Latin. Apart from teaching these two languages in school, he taught reading and writing in Dutch. He later also had his say in the education policy in the Austrian Netherlands as superintendent and director of the scholastic department. Thanks to these prestigious positions, he is considered one of the most influential persons in the eighteenth-century Southern Netherlands, both from a political and a linguistic point of view. Already at young age, in 1761, Des Roches wrote his *Nieuwe Nederduytsche Spraek-konst* ‘New Dutch Grammar’, which was published by J. Grangé in Antwerpen.³⁵ The printer also delivered two other works by the author in the same decade: a French grammar in 1763 and a French-Dutch translation dictionary in 1769.³⁶ In this study, I will only consider the Dutch grammar, of which multiple reprints appeared across the Southern Netherlands in the eighteenth and in the beginning of the nineteenth century (De Clercq, 2000, p. 136). Jan Frans Willems (1824, pp. 39-40) emphasises the importance of the book when arguing that Des Roches’s grammar has the most authority of all grammars in the Southern Netherlands. Yet, Willems also claims that the book is only rarely used in Brabantine schools.

Nieuwe Nederduytsche Spraek-konst consists of 89 pages of language prescriptions and is innovative in different ways. Rather than simply discussing spelling norms and some separate grammatical issues, as was often the case in earlier works, Des Roches moves beyond such restricted discussions by highlighting all aspects of a traditional grammar. He elaborates on spelling in alphabetical order and the morphology of all word classes, but he also dedicates a part of his work to syntax. The aim of the author clearly is to use the work in

³⁴ For the brief description of the life and work of Des Roches, I rely on Smeyers (1951), Rutten (2009), and Vosters (2011). For an extensive discussion, see Rutten (2011, chapter 4).

³⁵ The date of publication is controversial: the work mentions 1761 as the date of approbation, but some of surviving prints call this a third edition. This is possibly a sales trick, and it is plausible to consider 1761 as the year of publication (De Clercq, 2000, p. 136).

³⁶ The works are entitled: *Nieuwe Fransche spraek-konst* (1763) ‘New grammar of French’ and *Nieuw Nederduytsh en Fransch woorden-boek* (1769) (New Dutch and French dictionary’.

schools. He specifically targets pupils of the middle classes, and he applies didactic principles, such as mnemonics, to help them study the imposed language norms. Rutten (2009, p. 367) therefore considers this book the first full school grammar that appeared in the Low Countries.

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Des Roches is seen as a particularist, who clings to Southern dialects in the search for language norms. However, the author does not prescribe a dialectal norm, and his work is rather a combination of Northern and Southern influences. Whereas his spelling prescriptions are largely based on the work of P.B. (1757) and Verpoorten (1752, 1759), he also consulted the grammars of Northern predecessors Moonen (1706) and Séwel (1708, 1712) for other (grammatical) prescriptions, and he also considers Vondel one of the *zuyverste Schryvers der Nederduytsche Tael* ‘one of the purest writers of the Dutch language’ (Rutten, 2011, p. 61).

Elzevier (1761)

The Rotterdam-based poet and member of the literary society *Nature et Arte*, Kornelis Elzevier (1717 – 1761), wrote a grammar that was published together with a collection of poems. The volume was entitled *Drie dichtproeven, bestaende in drie dichtstukken: De Waere dichtkonst, zedezang: God verheerlykt in zyne werken of reis door 't heelal: En eerkroon voor de matigheid. Benevens een proef van een nieuwe Nederduitsche spraekkonst*, ‘Three pieces of poetry, consisting of three poems: The True art of poetry, hymn: God glorified in his works or a journey through the universe: and honorary crown for the temperance. In addition, also an outline of a new Dutch grammar’, and appeared in 1761 by J. Bosch in Haarlem.

In this study, I will only consider the grammar: *een proef eener nieuwe Nederlandsche spraekkonst* ‘outline of a new Dutch grammar’, which comprises 100 pages of the 140-page book. The author discusses the most common grammatical issues: the case system, different types of (pro)nouns, verb conjugations, etc. Spelling is mentioned throughout the morphosyntactic topics and in the concluding pages of the book. Many of the examples that illustrate the prescriptions derive from Vondel’s work, which implies the continuing leading role of the literary author as the example of correct language use (Rutten, 2003, p. 136). Like other grammarians at the time, Elzevier tried to make the language

norms accessible for the wider community by simplifying the prescriptions that were imposed by early eighteenth-century codifiers. He relies most heavily on the work of Moonen (1706), to whom he often refers explicitly (Rutten, 2003, p. 148). Also Frans de Haes seems to have influenced Elzevier's work to a large extent. Although his grammar only appeared in 1764, parts of the work were already circulating in the literary circle of *Nature et Arte*, of which De Haes was also a member (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 212).

De Haes (1764)

Frans De Haes (1708-1761), a cotton merchant and accountant in the city of Rotterdam, was a member of *Nature et Arte*, the literary society that published several pieces of poetry of some Rotterdam-based writers.³⁷ As was clear in the discussion of another member of the group, Kornelis Elzevier, the society was also involved with normative reflection on the Dutch language. Already around 1740, De Haes wrote a grammar, which circulated in the literary group, and which influenced Elzevier to write his normative work. It is only after the De Haes's death, in 1764, that his grammar was published, together with a collection of poems. The book was entitled *De nagelaten gedichten, en Nederduitsche spraekkunst* 'The posthumous poems, and a Dutch grammar', and appeared at the presses of Pieter Meijer in Amsterdam. Alike Elzevier, the author aims to simplify the norms of Moonen (1706) and Séwel (1708, 1712) to reach an audience of middle-class citizens who only enjoyed limited schooling. De Haes (1764, p. 1) clarifies:

alleen voor Nederduitschen, voor menschen die in Nederland wonen, [...] [die] by gebrek van goed onderwys [...] niet dan een kreupel spellen en verminkt lezen leeren, of geleert hebben

'only for Dutch people, who live in the Netherlands, who, due a lack of proper education, learn or have learned nothing but a crippled spelling and mutilated reading'

According to Van der Palm, however, the members of *Nature et Arte* target their works at a more scholarly audience and not directly at pupils in schools (Rutten,

³⁷ For a content-based discussion of the work, the sources and the influence of the author, I refer to Dibbets (2003a, chapter 11).

2019, p. 59). Compared to the grammars of Van Belle (1748, 1755), for example, the didactic approach is indeed missing in the works of Elzevier and De Haes, suggesting that the books were not meant to be used in primary schools. *Nederduitsche spraekkunst* comprises 171 pages and is divided into two different parts. The first 125 pages are subdivided in 24 chapters on orthography and the morphology of word classes. Syntax and comments on the lexicon are discussed in the 16 chapters of the second part.

Van der Palm (1769)

The elementary instruction books were long used in education to teach pupils to read and write. It is not until 1769 that a first full school grammar of Dutch appears in the North of the language area. The book is similar to the grammar of Des Roches (s.d. [1761]) that was published a few years earlier in the Southern Netherlands. The author of the Northern grammar is Kornelis van der Palm (1730 – 1789), who was a schoolteacher in Rotterdam. Importantly, he is also the father of Johan Hendrik van der Palm (1763 – 1840), the Minister of Education who was responsible for the language and education policies in the early nineteenth century, and who subsequently decreed the spelling of Siegenbeek (1804) and the grammar of Weiland (1805) as the official language regulations at the time (Rutten, 2011, p. 14). Kornelis van der Palm's grammar, *Nederduitsche spraekkunst, voor de jeugd*. 'Dutch grammar, for the youth', is printed in Rotterdam by Reinier Arrenberg. Alike other grammarians in the second half of the eighteenth century, the author aims to simplify the prescriptions of Moonen (1706) and Séwel (1708, 1712). Yet, he also considers the structure of the elementary instruction books that were applied in schools before. He specifically tries to combine both perspectives – viz. the traditional grammar and the basic schoolbooks – into a full grammar for usage in education (Rutten, 2008, 2009). As the author offers a grammar that is tailored to the pupils, with the basic rules and without complex sentences, this book can be seen as the first pedagogical grammar in the Northern Netherlands (Rutten, 2019, p. 53). The grammar is written in the structure of a dialogue to facilitate the learning and understanding of the imposed norm. Unlike the seventeenth-century dialogue books I have discussed before, this work is not intended to be read out loud in class. The book consists of four different parts that are all devoted to a different aspect of the language. The first chapter (pp. 1-52) deals with spelling and a word list with frequent homonyms. The second

part (pp. 1-104) is fully devoted to the declination of different word classes, cases and the conjugation of verbs, whereas the third booklet discusses syntax and interpunction (pp. 1-68). An alphabetical word list with the gender of nouns and some additional spelling comments makes up the last part of the grammar (pp. 1-110).

Zeydelaar (1769), (1772) and (1781)

Ernst Zeydelaar (1742 – 1820) was an Amsterdam teacher, who moved to Gelderland in 1778 to become a boarding school keeper in the city of Tiel. During his time in Holland, he first published a bilingual booklet in 1768, in which spelling rules in Dutch and French are discussed.³⁸ Only one year later, in 1769, his *Régelmaatige Néderduitsche spél-konst* ‘Regular Dutch spelling’ was printed in Amsterdam by Steven van Esveldt. With its 402 pages, the book is quite bulky for normative works at the time, especially when compared to the majority of schoolbooks that had appeared. Zeydelaar’s book is set up in dialogue form, in which the discussion of prescriptions appears alphabetically. For each letter follow a few related prescriptions and a glossary with the different meanings of a selection of words. Although the title suggests that the book only deals with spelling, we also find prescriptions on grammatical items, such as the conjugation of verbs and the inflection of grammatical cases.

A sequel to this spelling guide appears at the same presses in 1772 and is entitled *Vervólg dér Régelmaatige Néderduitsche spél-konst* ‘Sequel of the Regular Dutch spelling’. Zeydelaar (1772, pp. xii-xiii) prefaces this work with the following words:

Men zal dus uit dit mijn Vervólg zien dat ik ‘er mij weesenlijk op toegeleid hèbbe, om mijne voorige misslagen te verhelpen, én dat ik ‘er eene eere in stèlle, dat ik, na een naauwkeurig onderzoek, mijne gedagten hèbb’ verbéterd.

‘One will therefore see from this continuation that I have truly made an effort to correct my previous mistakes, and that I take pride in having, after thorough investigation, improved my opinions.’

³⁸ The title of the work is *Grammaire générale raisonnée & hollandoise of Algemeene beredeneerde Fransche en Neder-duitsche spraak-konst* ‘General and reasoned grammar of French and Dutch’

In this book, the author does indeed stick to rectifying his misconceptions. Following the structure of his previous spelling guide, he explains the improved language norms and additions to the earlier prescriptions in 210 pages. Page by page, he thus discusses the revisions to the first edition of his work.

As it was the author's aim to also write a grammar of Dutch, he published his *Néderduitsche spraakkonst, ten dienste der Néderlandsche taalbeminnaars*, 'Dutch grammar, at the service of Dutch language lovers' in 1781. This time, the work was printed in Utrecht. The book comprises the different aspects of a traditional grammar. The part on spelling is similar to his previous works, in which the prescriptions are discussed alphabetically (pp. 1-138). A report of the different word classes and their inflection and conjugation patterns is discussed (pp. 138-260) before the author moves on to syntax and interpunction (pp. 260-295). The work concludes with a glossary in which homonymous words and their meanings are explained (pp. 195-392).

As was already indicated, Zeydelaar is a rather exceptional case in the normative tradition of Dutch. Especially when considering his spelling prescriptions in 1769 and 1772, we observe a system that reminds us of the spelling proposals of the Southern grammarians Lambrecht (1550), Sexagius (1576) and Bolognino (1657), in which a range of diacritical marks is used to indicate pronunciation differences. For example, he distinguishes six different sounds for the long *e* and is not always consistent in his own spelling practice (Rutten, 2011, p. 103). Diverging spelling practices are even found in the same word. For example, the spelling *dood* is attested in the work next to *dóód* 'death' (Rutten, 2011, p. 118). For his morphosyntactic prescriptions, the author mainly consulted the work of Moonen (1706), and the discussion on the grammatical cases is entirely copied from De Haes's grammar (1764) (Dibbets, 2003a, p. 220).

Cramer (1777) [± 1769]

Another schoolbook meant for primary education rolled off the presses probably in 1769 and was at least reprinted (in adjusted form) until 1888 (Buijnsters & Buijnsters-Smets, 1997, pp. 44-45). The title of the schoolbook is *Geldersche Trap der Jeugd* 'Gelderland's staircase of youth', which already suggests that the book was primarily used in schools in the province of Gelderland. Later editions of the work were also printed in Holland and Overijssel. The actual audience of the

book might thus well have been larger than the middle and eastern region of the Northern Netherlands.

The author of *Geldersche Trap der Jeugd* is Bastiaan Cramer (? – ?), who was a schoolteacher and a cantor in Gendringen, and in Arnhem (Gelderland). Following the example of Carel de Gelliers, he wanted to develop a manual for teachers, in which reading and writing instructions could be taught to primary schoolchildren. He considered the works by van Niervaart (1669), Hakvoord (1746) inadequate, and the grammars by Moonen (1706) and Séwel (1708) too complicated to be used in education (Cramer, 1777). Cramer mainly discusses basic reading and writing instructions, but also some morphosyntactic features are raised in order to familiarise pupils with the basic concepts of grammar. For the latter group of prescriptions, he relies heavily on Séwel's work (1708) (Schoemaker, 2018, pp. 243-244). In this dissertation, the edition of 1777 is applied. This is the third print of the schoolbook, and the earliest surviving print I could find in Dutch libraries. The reprint appeared at the presses of J. de Lange in Deventer (Overijssel). Although the first edition has not survived, the third print may give a good idea of what the original edition looked like. When comparing the reprint of 1777 to later reprints, I noticed that the content of the work remains largely the same. The differences between the editions are mainly situated in the grammarian's own language use. And, from 1805 onwards, the prescriptions are adapted to the official spelling of Siegenbeek (1804). The schoolbook is set up as a dialogue and comprises 144 pages, of which the largest part is devoted to spelling and thematic word lists (pp. 15-106). The morphosyntactic items, such as the grammatical cases, are briefly discussed and only include a few pages (pp. 106-119). They are followed by a part on interpunction (pp. 119-128), simple mathematic exercises (pp. 129-131), general rules of conduct and prayers (pp. 132-144).

Ballieu (1771) [1792]

In 1771, a new grammar was published in Antwerpen with the title *Néderduytsche spel- en spraek-konst* 'Dutch spelling and grammar'. According to the author of the work, as many as 2000 copies of the first edition were sold (Ballieu, 1792, II, p. 2). A second print of the same work was published more than 20 years later, in 1792, and was printed by J.E. Parys in Antwerpen. As the original print cannot be traced in archives and libraries in Belgium or the

Netherlands (cf. also Vosters, 2011), I will consider the edition from 1792 in this dissertation. This version of the grammar is substantially supplemented with a 130-page *byvoegsel van naedere bemerkingen* ‘addendum of further remarks’, which was not included in the first print of the work. The author of the grammar is a certain J. Ballieu (? – ?), about whom hardly anything is known. From the title page of his book, we can deduce that he was a schoolteacher in the city of Antwerpen, and according to archival documents (cf. Vosters, 2011, p. 62), he taught Dutch, French, Latin, reading and writing, but also mathematics in school. Although it is assumed that his *Néderduytsche spel- en spraek-konst* was probably used as a schoolbook, the author also had a broader audience in mind, as he also elucidates on the front page of his work:

niet alleen voór de Né-derlandsche Jongheyd, maer zelfs voór alle Vreémdelingen om deéze tael met gemak en in de uyterste volmaektheyd op korten tyd te leeren en ook dienstig voór alle minnaers der zelve

‘Not only for the Dutch youth, but even for all foreigners to learn this language in the utmost perfection in a short time and also for all lovers of this language’

The grammar is structured as a dialogue, in which spelling issues, and a number of word lists are addressed in alphabetical order (pp. 1-72). For this part, the author is largely inspired by P.B. (1757) and Des Roches (s.d. [1761]). In a first appendix, Ballieu discusses morphosyntactic features of the language, such as different word classes and their inflectional forms, and the conjugation patterns of verbs (pp. 72-120). The addendum, that is attached to the edition of 1792, is preceded by a new preface and comprises comments on earlier prescriptions but also focuses on other spelling features and morphosyntactic items (pp. 1-130). This newly added chapter is largely based on Des Roches (s.d. [1761]) and the author also explicitly mentions his dependence on Zeydelaar (1769) (Smeyers, 1959, pp. 120-121).

Van Belleghem & Waterschoot (s.d. [1773])

A rather odd publication with the title *Deure oft Ingang tot de Nederduytsche Taele* ‘Door or entrance to the Dutch language’ was printed by Joseph van Praet in Brugge, probably in 1773. The book is written by two authors: P.J. van Belleghem (1704 – 1779), about whom we know hardly anything, except that he

was a schoolteacher in Brugge, and Daniël Waterschoot (1732 – 1775). The latter, also a schoolteacher, is somewhat better known because he also published other works, such as a piece about the parish of Zele (Vlaanderen), the town where he lived, and a Dutch translation of a moral lesson. *Deure oft Ingang tot de Nederduytsche Taele* is meant for educational use, and consists of three larger parts, which are all divided into small chapters. The domain of spelling is introduced, before the authors move on to an alphabetical discussion of orthographic issues (pp. 8-40). In the second part, morphological, phonological and lexical items are discussed (pp. 41-124), and finally, some general writing instructions and an almanac follow in the third part (pp. 125-178).

Huyghebaert (1988) argues that only the latter part is written by Van Belleghem, whereas the other two parts are delivered by Waterschoot. In their prescriptions, the grammarians strive for a common written norm, in which dialectal features and regional forms are excluded. Compared to other Flemish grammarians at the time, they oppose to the reigning idea of particularism, and Flemish as an independent language (Smeyers, 1959, p. 121). For example, the authors illustrate that enclitic constructions like *dak* and *damme* are regional, and therefore incorrect forms for *dat ik* ‘that I’ and *wat wy* ‘what we’ (Van Belleghem & Waterschoot, s.d. [1773], pp. 78-79) (cf. Smeyers 1959). The spelling prescriptions are clearly based on the work of Stéven (1784), whereas there is no noticeable influence of more recent publications, such as the ones of the Brabantine grammarians P.B. (1759), Verpoorten (1752, 1759) and Des Roches (s.d. [1761]) (Rutten, 2011, p. 146). Although the work is criticised by De Vos (1939, p. 51) and Huyghebaert (1988, p. 69), who call it a linguistic low point in the eighteenth-century South, Put (1988) considers it a ‘schoolbook bestseller’ in the late eighteenth century.

Van Boterdael (1776) [±1774] and (1785)

Another grammarian about whom little is known is L. Van Boterdael (? – ?). According to the title page of his normative work, is he a schoolteacher of Dutch and French in the city of Harelbeke (Vlaanderen), and he apparently also worked as a teacher in Gent (Vosters, 2011, p. 66). His schoolbook was entitled: *Gemakkelyke wyze om op korten tyd grooten voordgang te doen in de Nederduytsche spelkonst* ‘Easy way to make great progress in a short time in the Dutch spelling’ and appeared in Kortrijk in 1776. This print, however, was a

second print of a book that was published in 1774 or 1775, but the first edition is probably not preserved (Smeyers, 1959, p. 125). An expanded third print was published in Brugge in 1785.

I consider both the second and third print of the book in this dissertation. The work from 1776 comprises 80 pages, whereas the enlarged version of 1785 consists of 107 pages and includes a *kort begryp van de Nederduytsche Spraek-Konst* 'short description of the Dutch grammar', in which some grammatical features are discussed in a more detailed manner (pp. 107-139). Also included in the latter version, is a part on *Les principes les plus utiles de la langue françoise* 'The most useful principles of the French language' (pp. 140-171). Given the focus on the French language, this part is not considered in this dissertation. Both books are clearly meant to be used by pupils in class. The author first discusses spelling issues in alphabetical order and later on the morphology of different word classes. Each chapter is concluded with a small poem, in which Van Boterdael emphasises the core idea of the chapter. He also encourages his pupils to study the language rules in a letter that follows each chapter. Both approaches, i.e. the poem and the letter, can be seen as new didactic methods to help the pupils comprehend the prescriptions (Rutten, 2011, pp. 151; p. 165). As a grammarian in Vlaanderen, Van Boterdael is not influenced by Stéven's prescriptions (1784 [1714]). Although the author aims his work at a readership in Vlaanderen, he also indicates that he wants to focus on the Hollandic spelling (1776, p. 6). His actual spelling practice and prescriptions, however, lean heavily towards the proposals Des Roches (s.d. [1761]) made more than a decade earlier (Rutten, 2011, p. 151).

Janssens ([1775])

Another publication that appeared in Vlaanderen is the work of Balduinus Janssens (? – ?), a grammarian about whom we only know that he was a schoolteacher in Brugge. The book is printed in Brugge by Joseph De Busscher, mentions 1775 as date of approbation, and is published together with the author's *Fransche spraek- en spel-konste* 'French grammar and spelling'. The work that I consider in this dissertation is the *Verbeterde Vlaemsche spraek- en spel-konste, waer in onzydig de gevoelens tegengesproken worden der volgende schruvers, Richelet, Desroches, J.B. en bijzonderlyk Van Bellegem* 'Improved Flemish grammar and spelling, in which the sentiments of the following writers

are neutrally opposed, Richelet, Des Roches, J.B. and especially Van Bellegem'. As the title suggests, Janssens explicitly sets himself against the Brabantine normative tradition, which includes the work of Des Roches (s.d. [1761]), P.B. (1757) and Verpoorten (1752, 1759). In fact, Janssens ([1775], p. 16) advocates for a normative work that codifies the language spoken in Vlaanderen. He thereby not only set himself against the schoolbooks that were published in Antwerpen, he also fiercely criticises Van Belleghem, another Flemish schoolteacher. In the last five pages of his work, he discusses critical comments which are explicitly oriented towards Van Belleghem (pp. 55-59). Rather than a linguistic feud, however, Huyghebaert (1988, p. 67) considers this insult a personal dispute between the two Flemish teachers.

The author mainly discusses orthographic issues in his 59-page book. For the first chapter, in which he complains about the condition of Dutch and the advocacy of the Flemish language, he relies strongly on Stéven (1784). In his spelling prescriptions, he continues advocating the Flemish aspects of the language, and thereby often proposes language norms that are very different from those of his predecessors (cf. Rutten, 2011). Despite the deviating prescriptions, Willems (1824, p. 41) concludes that this work was very popular among inhabitants of Brugge.

Van Bolhuis (1793)

Minister and university lecturer of Dutch in Groningen, Lambertus van Bolhuis (1741 – 1826), became a member of the *Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde* 'Society for Dutch Language and Literature' in 1780. This influential society, which is mainly concerned with language-oriented activities, had the aim of spreading language and other actions of education and emancipation across the entire nation. With that purpose in mind, they organised a contest in 1792 in which they searched for a new and comprehensible grammar that was particularly meant for the education of the youth in schools. One of the contributions was submitted by member Van Bolhuis himself, who wrote a grammar that was largely based on his edited version of the work of Klaas Stijl (1778). His *Beknopte Nederduitsche spraakkunst* 'Concise Dutch grammar' won the gold medal, and was published one year later, in 1793, by the *Nederlandsche Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen* 'Dutch Society for the Benefit of the Common Good' in Leiden, Deventer and Groningen. Van Bolhuis submitted his

grammar with a saying he borrowed from his predecessor Lambert Ten Kate *het past ieder volk zijne eigene taal op te bouwen* ‘it suits every community to build its own language’. With the idea of building a fully-fledged language for an entire nation, he aimed to make the grammar of Dutch more accessible for the wider public.

Consisting of 100 pages, the grammar was indeed more concise and easier structured compared to earlier works in the eighteenth century, such as the grammars of Moonen (1706), Ten Kate (1723) and Huydecoper (1730). One would thus assume that this work could help pupils get a better understanding of the Dutch grammar. Despite the many examples given to illustrate the prescriptions, his work was deemed ineligible for children to learn the grammar of Dutch. The book was therefore used for teachers, and at a university level (Noordegraaf, 2004). Although Van Bolhuis’s work was thus not applied by pupils in elementary schools, his grammar is considered an important contribution in the transition from normative works that are used by upper- and upper-middle class citizens to publications meant for the entire nation, including men and women from the lower-class ranks of society (Rutten, 2019, p. 166). However, due to the inadequacy of the work for primary education, the *Nederlandsche Maatschappij tot Nut van ’t Algemeen* still had to look for another grammar that was suitable to be used in schools. This work was ultimately provided anonymously by Gerrit van Varik in 1799.

The 100 pages of Van Bolhuis’s grammar are divided into 68 short chapters, which mainly deal with morphosyntactic issues, such as a discussion on the different word classes and their inflections. Contrary to other works at the time, spelling only makes up a limited part of the book, and is discussed after the morphosyntactic prescriptions. The focus of the work is thus not on orthography itself, but rather on understanding of what someone says and the different ways of how someone else expresses himself at a pragmatic level (Noordegraaf, 2004). As Van Bolhuis considers actual language practices in his work, his prescriptions are also more closely tied to everyday language use. For example, he was the first grammarian to only prescribe the less formal analytical form of the genitive, while other grammarians still preferred the synthetic form or prescribed both the synthetic and analytic variants (Rutten, 2019, p. 66).

Wester (1797)

Ik bied hier geene regelmatige Spraakkunst aan [...]. Ook bied ik geene Rudimenta aan [...]. Ik geef een Spel- en taalkundig onderwijs voor de schooljeugd. Mijn doelwit was, om, in een schoolboekje, de noodigste beginselen onzer Nederlandsche spel- en taalkunde, op eene eenvoudiger en bevatlyker wyze voor te draagen

'I do not offer a regular grammar. Also not a rudimenta. I offer orthographic and grammatical education for schoolchildren. My goal was to teach the necessary principles of our Dutch orthography and grammar in a simple and comprehensible manner in a small schoolbook'

With these words, Hendrik Wester (1752 – 1821) commences the prologue of his *Bevatlyk onderwijs in de Nederlandsche spel- en taalkunde* 'Comprehensible education in Dutch orthography and grammar', which appeared at the presses of J. Oomkens in Groningen in 1797. Wester, who was a schoolteacher in Groningen, aimed to create a textbook to be used in primary schools that comprised both orthography and grammar. He wrote this grammar under the wings of his mentor, Lambertus van Bolhuis, who also published a similar book in 1793. The schoolbook is indeed very much alike Van Bolhuis's grammar, as it applies accessible language use, an easy structure, and many examples to underpin the prescriptions. The grammar was therefore eminently suitable to be used in primary schools in the northeast of the Northern Netherlands. The work had known eight reprints by 1814. Compared to earlier textbooks for primary schools, this 92-page book does not consist of thematic word lists that needed to be read out loud in class. About half of the work discusses spelling prescriptions (pp. 1-51), and in the remaining chapters, the author elaborates on the inflections of word classes and cases, which are sometimes presented in diagrams to help the pupils memorise the correct forms (pp. 52-76). He also explains homonyms and the correct use of words that are often used interchangeably, such as the difference between the accusative *hen* and dative *hun* 'they' (pp. 77-82). Some concluding remarks are devoted to interpunction (pp. 82-92).

Van Varik (1799)

As the grammar of Van Bolhuis (1793) was not deemed suitable for usage in primary schools, the *Nederlandsche Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen* asked Gerrit van Varik (1763 – 1825) to rework his already written but not yet published grammar into a school grammar (Van Varik, 1799, pp. iii-iv). The author accepted the proposition, and in 1799 appeared *Rudimenta of Gronden der Nederduitsche spraake* ‘Rudimenta or Principles of the Dutch language’ in Leiden, Deventer and Utrecht.

Van Varik (1799, p. vii), who was a school holder in Amsterdam, advised the teachers in the prologue of his grammar to only use his book with children *die reeds in het leezen zoo verre gevorderd zijn, dat zij met verstand en oordeel kunnen leezen* ‘who are already advanced in reading that they can read with reason and judgement’. The fact that this book is not meant for novice learners is also apparent via the content of the book. Rather than first explaining every letter of the alphabet in much detail, Van Varik starts with an explanation of the gender and plural of nouns, the case system, and a discussion of the different word classes, after a short introductory lesson on the different vowels and consonants. Spelling is discussed rather briefly in the schoolbook (pp. 47-69). The book is divided into 42 different lessons, comprising 85 pages, of which the pupils should acquire one lesson every week. This way, the schoolbook lasts for an entire year of teaching. Additionally, as the author explains in the prologue, the teacher should provide practical exercises for the pupils in order to rehearse the inflection of nouns and verbs.

Weiland (1799) and (1805)

Pieter (later Latinised to Petrus) Weiland (1754 – 1842) was born in Amsterdam, studied theology in Leiden and became a minister in the city of Rotterdam. In 1789, the *Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde* ‘Society for Dutch Language and Literature’ had the aim to compile a comprehensive dictionary of Dutch, and they asked Weiland to become a member of the society. He accepted, and as a lexicographer, Weiland decided to write the *Nederduitsch Taalkundig Woordenboek* ‘Dutch Linguistic Dictionary’, which was printed in eleven volumes and appeared between 1799 and 1811 by order of the *Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*. Before Weiland commences with an alphabetical

enumeration and explanation of the Dutch lexicon, he devotes the first 196 pages of the first volume of the dictionary to an introduction. In this prologue, which is the only part of the book I consider in this dissertation, he discusses spelling and grammatical issues, such as the different word classes and case inflection. The book is – besides a dictionary – thus also a full grammar of Dutch.

Furthermore, in 1801, The Batavian government wanted to develop an official language policy for Dutch that should be used in all educational and administrative domains in the Northern Netherlands. The Minister of Education, Johan Hendrik van der Palm, requested Weiland to codify this national grammar of Dutch. He accepted, and his *Nederduitsche Spraakkunst* ‘Dutch Grammar’, which was largely based on the introduction to the dictionary (1799), appeared in 1805 in Amsterdam (Noordegraaf, 2018, p. 146). For this grammar, Weiland was also influenced by the work of Ten Kate (1723) and the *Umständliches Lehrgebäude der deutschen Sprache* (1782) ‘Elaborate instructional framework of the German language’ of the German grammarian Johann Christoph Adelung (1732-1806). Weiland follows the latter work very closely, to the extent that some parts of his grammar are even literally translated (Noordegraaf, 2018, p. 155).

Weiland’s grammar consists of 328 pages of language norms, and the book is divided into two large parts: *Spelling* ‘Spelling’ and *Woordvoeging* ‘Syntax’. It is the first part that is largely a revised version of the introduction from 1799, whereas the second part of the grammar is devoted to syntax.³⁹ Because this grammar had to be available for the entire nation, Weiland wanted to create a practical grammar that particularly targeted civil servants, schoolteachers, and so on (Noordegraaf, 2018, pp. 153-154). Due to the setting in which the grammar appeared, with the aim of spreading language norms on a national level, the work can be considered an influential publication. The grammar is reprinted multiple times in the nineteenth century, and one year after its first print, the book is also adapted into a school grammar. Other textbooks were also based on Weiland’s grammar (Noordegraaf, 2018, p. 146).

³⁹ See Noordegraaf (1985, pp. 182-190) for a thorough description of the content of the grammar.

Siegenbeek (1804)

While Petrus Weiland was requested to write the national grammar of Dutch, the Batavian government also needed an author to provide the national orthography of Dutch. Their choice fell on Matthijs Siegenbeek (1774 – 1854), a clergyman from Amsterdam, who became a professor in Leiden in 1797, and who is often considered the first professor of Dutch. Although Siegenbeek was not the first to teach Dutch at university, he remains the first professor to hold a chair that is solely devoted to Dutch (Rutten, 2018, p. 26). Besides his professorship, Siegenbeek was also involved in the *Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde*. He was an active member, and he published several works on Dutch literary history and linguistics, but his best-known work is his share of the *Schrijftaalregeling* 'Written language regulation': the national orthography of Dutch. Alike Weiland's official grammar, Siegenbeek's *Verhandeling over de Nederduitsche spelling ter bevordering van eenparigheid in dezelve* 'Treatise on the Dutch spelling for the promotion of uniformity therein' is commissioned by the Batavian Republic, and the imposed spelling was meant to be used in all official domains in the Northern Netherlands, such as administration and education. The book was published in 1804 (a year before Weiland's national grammar) by Johannes Allart in Amsterdam.

Siegenbeek's spelling guide comprises 336 pages plus an alphabetical word list of 50 pages and is divided into two main parts: the first one discussing the *algemeene regelen der spelling* 'the general spelling regulations', while the second part, *over de geschilpunten in de spelling der Nederduitsche taal* 'on the contentious points in the spelling of Dutch', deals with actual prescriptions on orthographic issues. Before elaborating on the prescriptions, Siegenbeek explains the underlying principles for his spelling system in the first part of the work. He distinguishes three main concepts on which his orthography is modelled (e.g. Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 282; Van der Wal & Van Bree, 2008, pp. 318-322):

1. *Schrijf, zoo als gij spreekt* 'Write as you speak' (Siegenbeek, 1804, pp. 13-14); which indicates a phonological principle as the most fundamental of all, because the speech should always be the guideline for writing. Not just any speech, of course, but the purest and most polite pronunciation, as can only be heard in Holland (Siegenbeek, 1804, p. 18, p. 20; Rutten, 2018, p. 34);

2. Second, the *Afleiding der Woorden* ‘Derivation of words’, by which he refers to the etymological principle;
3. and lastly, *Het algemeen erkend en aangenomen gebruik* ‘The generally acknowledged and accepted usage’, which is closely related to the previous principle, because only considering the etymology for spelling is not enough. One should also take account of the principle of uniformity ‘*gelijkvormigheid*’ in order to ensure morpheme consistency (Siegenbeek, 1804, p. 29).

Siegenbeek’s official spelling guide gained authority at a national level, as he contributed to “construct[ing] a homogeneous and unmixed Dutch language, symbolising the Dutch nation” (Rutten, 2018, p. 44). Alike Weiland’s grammar, Siegenbeek’s orthography is adjusted to a spelling guide that is specifically meant for usage in schools, and his spelling system is also followed and copied in many other normative works that appeared in the nineteenth century. Many schoolbooks that were reprinted after 1805 also adapted their title (and prescriptions) to emphasise the appliance of the regulations of Siegenbeek and Weiland (cf. Schoemaker, 2018, pp. 158-160).

Schilperoort (1806)

One of the first grammars that was published after the official orthography of Siegenbeek (1804) and grammar of Weiland (1805) is by the hand of Olivier Schilperoort (1781 – 1851), who was a teacher at a military school in Holland at the time of writing, but he later moved to the Southern Netherlands where he became the secretary of the mayor in Antwerpen (1812) (Blok & Molhuysen, 1921). Besides a grammar of Dutch, he wrote different schoolbooks on mathematics and geography (De Vooy, 1934, p. 17). In his *Proeve van nieuwere taalkunde, op de Nederduitsche spraakkunst toegepast* ‘Proof of a newer grammar, applied to the grammar of Dutch’, which was published by J. Oomkens in Groningen, he criticised Weiland’s grammar but also the orthography of Siegenbeek was not without its failures, he believed. In his opinion, a good grammar should consist of five different parts: (1) pronunciation, (2) spelling, (3) etymology, (4) syntax, and (5) the correct use of words. Schilperoort (1806, p. 4) argues that the grammar of Weiland does not discuss the first and the last domain, which is why he writes a new grammar in which these items are included. After a critical review of Weiland’s work in the first five pages of his grammar, Schilperoort discusses the pronunciation (pp. 6-16), spelling

(pp. 17-24), the traditional morphological items, such as word classes and cases (pp. 25-112), a short part on syntax (pp. 113-122) and the correct use of words (pp. 123-131).

In his grammar, Schilperoort thus reflects on both the orthography of Siegenbeek and the grammar of Weiland, and he explicitly refers to prescriptions and normative comments that the national codifiers have, in his opinion, falsely or insufficiently approached. However, it is not only criticism that is formulated in his grammar. The author generally agrees with Siegenbeek's spelling and he applies the orthography system in his own work as well (Schilperoort, 1806, p. 17).⁴⁰

Anslijn (1814)

Nicolaas Anslijn (1777 – 1838) started working as a schoolteacher in Amsterdam, and he later became the head of a school in Haarlem. With his pedagogical background, he wrote several schoolbooks that were meant to improve the reading skills of the pupils. Although Anslijn's social background and professional experiences are similar to those of other grammarians, with his *Nederduitsche spraakkunst voor eerstbeginnenden* 'Dutch grammar for beginners', he is an odd one out in this corpus of normative works. This is because Anslijn discusses grammar from a structural perspective. He thus centralises the analysis of the sentence (Noordegraaf, 1985, pp. 19-28). This means that the focus of the schoolbook is partly on sentence parsing and analysing the sentence structure by recognising the subject and objects of the sentence, something which is not discussed in other normative works (pp. 1-19). Apart from that, also the traditional morphosyntactic issues, such as the inflection of word classes and verb conjugations, are addressed by the author (pp. 19-130). In his prescriptions, Anslijn generally follows Weiland (1805), although he does not acknowledge the existence of a case system. Instead, he defines and interprets every representation of an utterance in terms of its function in the sentence, thus by referring to it as subject, object, a clause, etc. (Anslijn, 1814, p. 34; Van der Woude, 1981, pp. 145-147). Furthermore, the schoolbook is innovative as all language prescriptions are taught deductively.

⁴⁰ See De Vooy (1934) for an extensive discussion of Schilperoort's criticism on the national grammar of Weiland.

The pupils first learn the specific rule, and subsequently the school grammar offers a few sentences and exercises, which the students must correct or fill in by applying the norm correctly. The work was therefore a popular school grammar at the time. By 1861, the *Nederduitsche spraakkunst voor eerstbeginnenden* was already at its tenth edition (Schoemaker, 2018, p. 299).

Henckel (1815)

The first work that appeared in the Southern Netherlands at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands is written by F.L.N. Henckel (1753 – 1835).⁴¹ After Henckel was expelled from the monastery of Lo, which he had joined in 1772, he became a boarding school keeper, and later a teacher in Gent, Oudenaarde, Aalst, and Kortrijk. Apart from his official profession, he was a member of different Flemish chambers of rhetoric. He ultimately died in solitude in an asylum for the mentally ill in Brugge in 1835. Henckel had extreme particularistic and puristic ideas when it comes to the Flemish language. For example, he organised a poetry competition in which he banned the use of loan words and the Hollandic Siegenbeekian spellings.

In his *Nieuwe Vlaemsche spraek-konst, geschikt na de spelling der hoogleeraeren Siegenbeek en Weiland, Voor zoo veel die niet tegenstrijdig zij aen de woordgronding en regels onzer Vlaemsche Moeder-tael, en gestaefd op het gezag der beste Tael-bebouwers van Vlaenderen en Brabant*. ‘New Flemish grammar, adapted to the spelling of the professors Siegenbeek and Weiland, insofar as it is not contradictory to the etymology and regulations of our Flemish mother tongue, and evidenced by the authority of the best language makers of Vlaenderen and Brabant’, Henckel argues in favour of a unified language in the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, which should not just be based on the orthography of Siegenbeek (1804) and the grammar of Weiland (1805). The author by no means pleads for an autonomous Southern language policy, but he aims to arrive at a consensus between the two varieties by merging the best elements of each variety into a common language. Although he suggests adopting some Southern spelling practices, such as the <ae> spelling, his own language use sometimes adheres to the Siegenbeekian norm (Vosters, 2011, p. 142).

⁴¹ The description of Henckel (1815) is entirely based on Vosters (2011, pp. 77-79) and Huygebaert (1990).

Besides building on the work of Northern codifiers, he also refers to Southern grammarians, such as Van Belleghem, Janssens, Bincken and Des Roches (ibid.). In the introduction of his grammar, which is meant to be read by schoolteachers *bezonderlijk ten platte lande* 'especially in the countryside', Henckel emphasises that he is satisfied with the regime of King William I, in which the Dutchification of the Southern Netherlands is put central. He also explains that one can only find reputable language use in his work. After the introduction, follows a list with translated words out of French and Latin, which are all related to linguistics (pp. 1-4), a short part on orthography (pp. 4-9), an extensive discussion on the traditional morphological items (pp. 9-96), and a chapter on syntax (pp. 96-160). At the end of the grammar, the author includes two dialogues: one on the differences between the Hollandic and Flemish language (pp. 160-177), and another that takes place between a teacher and a student (pp. 177-186), and which foregrounds Henckel's ideas and feelings towards the Northern language norms (cf. Vosters, 2011, chapter 4).

De Neckere (1815)

In the same year as the grammar of Henckel, another normative work appeared that was aimed at a readership of Southern language users. The author of the book is Filip Jacob De Neckere (1740 – 1811) from Geluwe (Vlaanderen), who was a clerk, bailiff, and a notary in the western part of Vlaanderen.⁴² A few years after his death, his grammar was published in Leper by J.B. Smaelen-Moerman. The book is entitled: *Bewerp van Vlaemsche spelling, gevolgd van eenen oogopslag op de nederlandsche dichtkunst* 'Objection of the Flemish spelling, followed by a glance on Dutch poetry'. In this grammar, the author examines the spelling that was in use in the Southern Netherlands, and he compares the orthography with its Hollandic counterpart to point out differences between the two systems. He thereby refers to a number of normative works, which he either criticises or praises. In the category of excellent grammarians, he includes the Northern codifiers Siegenbeek and Weiland, whom he specifically admires for their effort for the Dutch language in the Northern Netherlands. De Neckere therefore aims to achieve the same uniformity in spelling and grammar for Dutch in the Southern Netherlands. De Neckere (1815, p. 3) clarifies:

⁴² This summary is entirely based on Vosters (2011, pp. 79-81) and Huyghebaert (1996).

Onze pooging evenwel bepálen wy tot de vlaemsche spelling: want wat de spraekkunde [...] betreft, wy sien daer ontrent by de Hollanders voor ons eerder véel te leeren, dan iet te verbeteren.

‘With our attempt we concentrate on the Flemish spelling: because in terms of grammar, we have noticed that we can learn a lot from the Dutch, more than we can correct them.’

Although De Neckere is fond of Siegenbeek’s national orthography, he deems the system inadequate for the Southern Netherlands. In his own work, he mainly builds upon the norms of Des Roches (s.d. [1761]), and he explicitly refers to his predecessor, for example when distinguishing the etymologically distinct vowels (De Neckere, 1815, p. 146). For some of his other prescriptions, the author relies on normative works from the sixteenth century, such as the grammar of Spiegel (1584). De Neckere’s grammar consists of 227 pages, in which he mainly discusses spelling issues, but he also elaborates on the traditional grammatical items, such as the gender of nouns and verb conjugations. He also focuses on lexical differences, by discussing words that differ in the Northern and Southern part of the language area (pp. 127-146), and he offers word lists in which the differences between the different types of vowels are illustrated. A short chapter at the end of the book is devoted to poetry in Vlaanderen.

Ter Bruggen (1817-1818) [± 1815]

Jan Abraham ter Bruggen (1755 – 1819) was born in Utrecht, but moved to Antwerpen, where he became a schoolteacher.⁴³ Apart from his profession, he was a member of *het Antwerpsch Taal- en dichtlievend Genootschap Tot Nut der Jeugd* ‘the Antwerp linguistic and literary society for the benefit of youth’, which he co-founded with some colleagues, after the Northern *Maatschappij tot Nut van ’t Algemeen*. Within the society, he gave several lectures, among them one about the unity of the Hollandic and Brabantine language. In this contribution, he argued that there was no actual difference between both varieties, apart from the accent and spelling (Ter Bruggen, 1817-1818, pp. 57-59). Concerning the orthography, the norm is clearly situated in the Northern Netherlands, he asserts. Ter Bruggen was very active within the society, which resulted in the publication of his *Nederduytsche spraek-konst ten gebruyke der schoólen* ‘Dutch

⁴³ The bio- and bibliographical data derive from Vosters (2011, pp. 81-83).

grammar to be used in schools', of which the first edition probably appeared in 1815. Yet, this version is not preserved, and the earliest edition dates to the first reprint of 1817-1818. The grammar, which is divided into two volumes of approximately 100 pages each, mainly discusses spelling, interpunction, and several word lists in the first volume, whereas the second part is largely devoted to a discussion of the traditional grammatical items. In this book, the author explicitly mentions Verpoorten, Des Roches, and Ballieu as his examples, and although Ter Bruggen is indeed inspired by these grammarians, his work cannot be read as a simple copy of these eighteenth-century grammars. Although his orthographic prescriptions are in line with what Des Roches prescribed, his word lists are quite innovative, as they discuss abbreviations and words for which the spelling is different in the Northern Netherlands and the Southern Netherlands. Although the author thus intends to follow the Northern norm, his work is strongly associated with the Southern normative tradition. The grammar was very popular in the Southern Netherlands. Already in 1822, a fifth edition rolled off the presses.

Behaegel (1817), (s.d. [± 1825]) and (s.d. [± 1829])

Pieter Behaegel (1783 – 1857) is one of the most well-known Southern grammarians of the nineteenth century. He is often considered a leading character in the Flemish particularistic opposition, which vehemently fought against the *commissiespelling* 'commission spelling' between 1830 and 1840 by protesting the implementation of a spelling system in Vlaanderen that strongly leaned towards the Siegenbeekian norm.⁴⁴ Behaegel, who was born in Tielt and who became a boarding school keeper in Torhout, was already very active at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. He published several books on language and education, but his most popular work is the *Nederduytsche spraekkunst* 'Dutch grammar', which appeared in three separate volumes. Dating this grammar is not evident. The work first appeared in individual issues between 1815 and 1817, and all the issues of the first part were then printed into one volume in 1817 in Brugge. The first issue of the second volume appeared in 1820, and when all issues were printed separately, the second volume was published. When considering the three volumes of the grammar, the second and third part are not dated, which makes it hard to determine the actual date of

⁴⁴ The bio- and bibliographical data derive from Vosters (2011, pp. 84-86).

publication. However, following Janssens & Steyaert (2008, p. 245) and Vosters (2011, p. 85), the three volumes were probably published separately between 1817 and 1829 in Brugge. The second part is then most likely issued around 1825, whereas the third volume is probably released around 1829.

The three bulky volumes respectively comprise 529, 500 and 678 pages. The first part mainly deals with spelling and pronunciation, whereas the traditional morphosyntactic items and a dictionary (pp. 501-684) make up the second part. The third volume is devoted to an in-depth discussion on the grammatical items, such as the inflection of the different word classes. In the latter part, Behaegel commences with an extensive prologue (pp. xv – xxxx), in which he addresses the current language-political context in the Low Countries.

The structure of his grammar is not traditional, to say the least. The author frequently elaborates on philosophical discussions on linguistic ideas, which result in a collection of language norms which are not straightforward to interpret. As Behaegel's arguments often remain vague, the work is considered an unintelligible grammar (Couvreur, 1973, p. 61). Nonetheless, the work illustrates that Behaegel is well informed about the normative tradition in the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. He literally refers to the Northern grammarians Siegenbeek, Weiland and Ten Kate, and he praises them for their achievements in the Northern Netherlands. But, as a particularist, he also criticises Siegenbeek and Weiland, particularly for not considering the Southern usage in their prescriptions (Behaegel, 1817, pp. ii-iii). In the second volume of the grammar, Behaegel is less lenient towards the Northern codifiers, and he calls for the Northern norms not to be implemented in the Southern Netherlands (Behaegel, s.d. [± 1829], pp. xxiv), yet he strives for a common norm in both language areas, which is based on the best elements of each variety (Behaegel, s.d. [± 1825], p. 8). In the last volume of the grammar, the author is less Flemish-minded, and he partly adjusts his prescriptions to the spelling norms of Siegenbeek, for instance by prescribing <aa> in closed syllables. A few years later, however, Behaegel again turns to a particularistic ideology (Vosters, 2011).

Cannaert (1823)

In 1823, a publication with the title *Iets over de Hollandsche tael, noch voor, noch tegen, latende elk dienaengaende vry en verlet als naer goedvinden, in eenige*

familiaire brieven ‘Something about the Hollandic language, neither in favour, nor against it, leaving each person free in his own judgement on the matter, in the form of several private letters’ appeared at the presses of A.B. Stéven in Gent. Although the author preferred not to share his name, the work was assigned to the Ghentian lawyer Josef Bernard Cannaert (1768 – 1848).⁴⁵ The book consists of 45 numbered pages, in which the author discusses a number of linguistic features. He categorises these variables as typically Southern practices, and offers their Northern – often Siegenbeekian – counterpart in his normative explanation. The focus of the work is clearly on orthographic variables, for which the differences between the Southern and the Northern spelling are laid out, but also some morphosyntactic and phonetic discrepancies are discussed by the author (cf. Rutten & Vosters, 2017, pp. 143-44). As the title of the work suggests, Cannaert generally does not explicitly express a preference for either the Southern or the Northern way of spelling. Yet, an implicit preference for the Northern variety can sometimes be observed. The author is convinced that Southern language users should acknowledge that the Northern variety is more developed and refined. Cannaert (1823, pp. 42-43) therefore refers to the Northern part of the language area as *de noordelyke gewesten van ons vaderland, alwaer de moedertaal, sinds lange, met het beste gevolg, is beoefend geworden* ‘the Northern regions of our homeland, where the mother tongue has long been practised with the best results’. Particularly because of the ongoing Frenchification in Vlaanderen, Cannaert argues that the Southern citizens are not proficient enough in their mother tongue, and he therefore strives for all Southerners to acquire the Northern variety. For example, in the introductory chapter to his prescriptions, he refutes the arguments of many Southerners who do not want to adapt to the Northern norm. With this work, he thus wants to persuade and support them in learning the language properly (Cannaert, 1823, pp. 4-7).

Moke (1823)

Another grammarian who wanted the Southerners to apply the Northern language norms is Jan-Jacob Moke (1771 – ?), a school holder and teacher in Gent and Aalst. He published a few works on language-related issues, but the book I consider in this dissertation is his *Nederduitsche spraakkunst naar het Hollands*,

⁴⁵ For more background information on the author, see Vosters & Rutten (2011).

ten bijzonderen gebruike der Vlaamsch-sprekenden ‘Dutch grammar after the Hollandic, especially to be used by speakers of Flemish’, which appeared in 1823 at the presses of J.-N. Houdin in Gent. The work consists of 138 pages and the structure of the grammar is quite traditional. The author discusses spelling features and grammatical items, such as the gender of nouns and the inflection of word classes. In his prescriptions, he generally follows Siegenbeek for orthography and Weiland for grammar, which emphasises his commitment to the Northern variety. This preference for Northern language norms is also clear in his correspondence with J.F. Willems, who praised his work and asked Moke to join the *Antwerpsch Taal- en dichtlievend Genootschap Tot Nut der Jeugd* (Vosters, 2011, p. 96).

Willems (1824)

Jan Frans Willems (1793 – 1846) was born in Lier and was later active as a poet in Antwerpen, where he was a prominent member of the *Antwerpsch Taal- en dichtlievend Genootschap Tot Nut der Jeugd*. After the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, Willems pleaded for the use of Dutch in the public life, and he explicitly supported the Dutchification policy of William I at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. He advocated that no longer French, but Dutch should be the language of the Belgian nation. In order to accomplish this shift in public life, he took an integrationist perspective, and thus wanted to implement the Northern variety in Vlaanderen. Willems wrote several works on the linguistics of Northern and Southern Dutch. His most important publication is included in the corpus of normative works and is entitled *Over de Hollandsche en Vlaamsche schryfwyzen van het Nederduitsch* ‘On the Hollandic and Flemish spelling of Dutch’. The piece first appeared in 1824 as a closing on his *Verhandeling over de Nederduytsche Tael- en Letterkunde, opzigtelijk de Zuydelyke provincien der Nederlanden* ‘Treatise on the Dutch language and literature, notably in the Southern provinces of the Netherlands’, which he had submitted to a contest about *het bestaande verschil in onze taal, tusschen de Hollandsche en Vlaamsche spelling* ‘the existing difference in our language, between the Hollandic and Flemish orthography’ (cf. Weijermars, 2012). Although the title suggests that the author focuses on spelling differences, he also discusses grammatical issues, in which he consistently compares the Northern and the Southern language practices. This way, he wants to arrive at a written variety of Dutch that can be applied in both language areas. Willems (1824,

p. 140) argues that *Bataven en Belgen [...] op het altaer van broederlyke hereeniging, onderinge beschaving en volmaking [...] voortaan geen Vlaemsch, geen Hollandsch meer schryvende, maer NEDERDUITSCH!* 'Batavians and Belgians on the altar of fraternal reunification should from now on not speak Flemish or Hollandic anymore in order to arrive at civilisation and perfection, but DUTCH!'

Willems thus wants to achieve a common norm based on both varieties to guarantee language unity in the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. Yet, he continues that there are no authoritative linguists in the South, and he therefore prefers the norms of Siegenbeek and Weiland for the Dutch language. Willems (1824, p. 106) explains:

De Hollanders hebben werkelyk getoond, dat zy hunne tael ter harte namen, en met den besten uitslag beoefenden. [...] Dat hebben de Brabanders niet gedaen, die hunne tael toen juist hebben gaen veranderen, wanneer zy de zelve begonnen te verwaerloozen

'The Hollanders have truly shown that they took their language to heart and practiced it with the best result. The people from Brabant have not done that, who precisely then went on to change their language, when they began to neglect it'

However, the Northern norms should not just be adopted in the Southern Netherlands, he argues. Also the spelling of Siegenbeek and the grammar of Weiland need to be adjusted to some extent (Willems, 1824, p. 15). Nonetheless, Willems can certainly be considered a Southern proponent of the Northern variety, but he still looks for a compromise in which the Northern and Southern writing practices are unified.

Bilderdijk (1826)

Willem Bilderdijk (1756 – 1831) was a lawyer but is mostly known as a poet with an impressive oeuvre. Although the Holland-based writer was mainly occupied with literature, he also wrote works about philosophy, religion and linguistics.⁴⁶ In the latter category, he had already published about the gender of nouns, but his most important book on linguistics is the *Nederlandsche spraakleer* 'Dutch

⁴⁶ For a full biography of the author, I refer to Kollewijn (1891).

grammar', which rolled off Immerzeel's presses in Den Haag in 1826. In this grammar, Bilderdijk discusses pronunciation and orthography (pp. 18-74) in a first chapter. The traditional grammatical issues, such as the cases and the inflection of the different word classes (pp. 75-261) make up the largest part of the grammar in a second chapter, and a discussion on syntax (pp. 262-378) and prosody (pp. 379-390) is included in the two last chapters of the book.

Bilderdijk generally intends to base his (spelling) prescriptions on the principle of etymology, and with that, he fiercely criticises Siegenbeek's orthography system. When Siegenbeek replied to Bilderdijk's remarks, Bilderdijk reproaches the professor in a few publications by calling him a tyrant who was not up for the task he had to accomplish, viz. writing the national orthography of Dutch (Matthijsen, 1988, p. 131). When comparing both orthography systems, however, there are only small and often meaningless distinctions. For example, Bilderdijk argues that <y> should be used for <ij> in some words, and that one should write *nogthands* instead of *nogtans* 'however' (cf. Matthijsen, 1988). Despite these small disagreements, both authors had their followers. Bilderdijk particularly received support from some young poets (ibid.).

De Simpel (s.d. [1827])

The last Southern work included in the corpus of normative works is written by David De Simpel (1778 – 1851), who was born in Moorslede. He first delved into the study of Dutch and French literature, before he was involved in rhetorician's circles. In 1803, he joined the chamber of rhetoric of Hooglede, and later, he became a teacher.⁴⁷ De Simpel was also active in the domain of linguistics. It is in 1827 that his most comprehensive linguistic work was published at the presses of F.-L. Smaelen in Ieper. The grammar appeared with the title:

Taalkundige tweespraak, waarin de Hollandsche taalregels van Weiland en de spelling van Siegenbeek tegen die der voornaamste Vlaamsche taalopbouwers opgewogen, of tegengesproken en verdedigd worden, enz. Zeer dienstig voor alle Schoolonderwijzers, publieke Ambtenaren, en allen die wenschen het wezenlijk verschil tusschen de Hollandsche en Vlaamsche spelling, woordschikking, enz. te leeren kennen.

⁴⁷ The bio- and bibliographical data derive from Vosters (2011, pp. 101-102) and Huyghebaert (1977).

‘Linguistic dialogue, in which the Hollandic language norms of Weiland and the spelling of Siegenbeek are compared to those of the most important Flemish grammarians, they are either refuted or justified, etc. Highly appropriate for all schoolteachers, public servants, and everyone who wishes to know the actual difference between the Hollandic and Flemish spelling, syntax, etc.’

As the title already suggests, the work is structured as a dialogue between ‘A.’, a skeptical Flemish citizen who is seeking advice on language use, and ‘B.’, a friend of A. and an expert of the Northern language norms, in particular those of Siegenbeek and Weiland. Although A. has numerous doubts and prejudices about the Hollandic norms, B. manages to refute these concerns and convince A. to follow the Northern prescriptions. With this work of 266 pages, De Simpel thus clearly takes an integrationist perspective in advocating for the implementation of the Northern norms in the Southern Netherlands (cf. De Simpel, s.d. [1827], p. 6). The aim of the grammarian is apparent: he wants the Flemish citizens to excel in cultural and intellectual domains and, according to the author, that is only possible if the Southerners follow the example of Holland on a linguistic level (De Simpel, s.d. [1827], p. 8). His suggestion of adopting the norms of Siegenbeek and Weiland was therefore appreciated by many members of the chamber of rhetoric, but others considered it government propaganda and did not want to accommodate to De Simpel’s prescriptions. After the independence of Belgium (1830), however, De Simpel switched his extreme integrationist mindset to a particularistic one. This is especially clear in his pamphlet *Den waeren vaderlander of den getrouwen belg* (1830) ‘The true patriot or the faithful Belgian’, in which he exchanges the Northern spelling practices for a Southern writing tradition which reminds of Des Roches in the eighteenth century (Vosters, 2011, p. 102).

1.5 Summary

The corpus of normative works shows great diversity in the publications that are set out to ordain codified language norms of Dutch. The discussion of the individual normative works illustrates that some codifiers argued that their proposed norms were applicable only to a specific region in the Low Countries, with particularly grammarians in the sixteenth century viewing language codification as a local phenomenon, while grammarians increasingly propagated

norms for a larger region in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Eventually, the normative injunctions were oriented towards the entire North or South in the context of nation building (Rutten, 2019, p. 25). Furthermore, the discussion of individual works also shows that some grammarians formulated norms only for a restricted audience of literary and other high-class writers, while – also in the context of nation building – other authors aimed for spreading codified norms to large parts of the language community. The latter type of codifiers often had a clear pedagogical focus, making the grammar of Dutch accessible for usage in schools (Rutten, 2019, p. 25).

As such, for each normative work in the corpus, Table 2 summarises the way in which the grammarian conceptualises the Dutch language (area) and the readership that is targeted. The table also indicates whether the codifier intended the normative work to be used in a school context. In addition, the table mentions for which language domains explicit prescriptions (cf. section 4.1) are found in the work. Note, however, that the classification of the normative works into distinct categories in terms of target audience and language conceptualisation is based on a generalisation of the concepts and categories, on the one hand, and of the normative works in the corpus, on the other hand. In alignment with the developments in the stages of normative grammar (Rutten, 2019, pp. 51-59), I opt to distinguish between the levels ‘elite’, ‘(upper) middle class’ or ‘(U)MC’, and ‘general public’ for target audience, and between ‘local’, ‘supraregional’, and ‘primarily national’ as levels for the conceptualisation of the language (area).

Many normative works in the corpus do not belong to one distinct category. For some parts of a work, or some works in general, the codifiers express their intended readership explicitly (e.g. Vollenhove, 1686; Van Niervaart, 1669), while for other parts or books, the target audience is less straightforward. These works thus often fit into more than one category of target audiences (e.g. Verpoorten, 1752, 1759; Zeydelaar, 1769; 1772; 1781). The categories that are assigned to a particular work should therefore be read as the level to which the normative work is the closest related. Still, for some grammars and schoolbooks, the intended readership could not be determined with sufficient certainty, which is why the target audience for these works is left blank.

The same is true for the conceptualisation of the Dutch language (area). While the author's incentive of writing the work can sometimes be found in the introduction or foreword, and in the concluding statements of a normative work, grammarians mostly do not share their view explicitly. The normative injunctions may also shed light on the norm giver's idea of the geographical coverage of their prescriptions. This is illustrated, for example, in the work of Janssens ([1775], p. 16), who attests differences in the language that is used in Holland, Brabant, and Vlaanderen. Based on the following citation, we can assume that he pleads for a distinct language norm – or at least diverging language regulations in schoolbooks – in the region of Vlaanderen.

[Several books] zyn lauter Hollands, of Brabands, en teénemael onvoldoende aen de gemoederen van vele Vlamingen, als gantsch strydig aen hunne Spraeke; [...] zy [have] uitdrukkingen, die met onze wyze van spreken niet overeenkomen, en die wy niet verplicht zyn te volgen [...] om welke oórzaeke de School-meesters die Boekskens in de vlaemsche Scholen niet gedooft hebben

'Several books are purely Hollandic or Brabantine, and entirely inadequate to the minds of many Flemish people, being completely contrary to their language use; they contain expressions that do not correspond to our way of speaking, and which we are not obliged to follow for which reason the schoolteachers have not allowed these books in Flemish schools'

Since not all normative works enable such an interpretation of the conceptualisation of the language (area), the classification is made based on the grammarian's discourse in the normative work, viz. how the grammarian perceives the language in its geographical context, but also on the socio-historical and language-political context in which the normative work appeared.

Finally, in establishing whether a normative work had a pedagogical purpose, I included (school) books that were (meant to be) used in schools for children. Publications for which the grammarian explicitly intended the work for usage in schools, but where it is unlikely that the book was actually applied for educating children (e.g. Montanus, 1635) are indicated with an '(x)'. Spelling guides or grammars that were used for the education of adults are not considered pedagogical (e.g. Kók, 1649).

In overall, Table 2 aligns with the different stages of grammar defined by Rutten (2019), with supraregional norms changing into a national orientation only in the context of the nation-building enterprise at the end of the eighteenth century in both the North and the South. This change in the conceptualisation of the language area is also accompanied by the social broadening of language norms. Although some early spelling manuals and schoolbooks, like Van Niervaart (1669) and Hakvoord (1746), were also set out to spread codified norms to the wider public, language norms at the time were particularly meant for the elite and high-class audiences. A gradual broadening of the target audience takes place only in the second half of the eighteenth century (Rutten, 2019, pp. 51-59). Table 2 also indicates that the domain of spelling is most saliently discussed by Northern and Southern codifiers, with every normative work in the corpus explicitly commenting on spelling issues. Explicit discussions on grammatical items show up regularly in the seventeenth-century normative discourse, yet it is only in the eighteenth century that codifiers consistently formulate prescriptions on the grammar of Dutch.

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GRAMMARIAN	YEAR	AREA	REGION	AUD.	LG. AREA	PED?	SPELL.	GRAMMAR
Lambrecht	1550	South	Vlaanderen		local	x	x	
Sexagius	1576	South	Brabant	elite	local		x	
De Heuiter	1581	North	Holland		suprareg.	x	x	
Spiegel	1584	North	Holland	(U)MC	suprareg.		x	x
Van Niervaart	1669 [± 1600]	North	Holland	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	
Van der Schuere	1612	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	
De Hubert	1624	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Van Heule	1625	North	Holland		suprareg.		x	x
Dafforne	1627	North	Holland	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	
Ampzing	1628	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Plemp	1632	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	
Van Heule	1633	North	Holland		suprareg.		x	x
Montanus	1635	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.	(x)	x	
De Gelliers	1661 [± 1640]	North	North-east	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	
Kók	1649	North	Holland	(U)MC	suprareg.		x	x
Van der Weyden	1651	North	Holland	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	
Leupenius	1653	North	Holland		suprareg.		x	
Bolognino	1657	South	Brabant		local		x	x
Van Atteveld	1682	North	Holland	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	
Gosens van Helderer	1683	North	Holland	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	
Winschooten	1683	North	Holland		suprareg.		x	
Vollenhove	1686	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Duykerius	1696	North	Holland	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	
Hakvoord	1746 [1697]	North	North-east	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	
Francius	1699	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	
Van Geesdalle	1700	South	Vlaanderen	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	x
Nyløe	1703	North	North-east	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Hilarides	1705	North	North-east		suprareg.		x	x
Moonen	1706	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Nyløe	1707	North	North-east	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Séwel	1708	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Séwel	1712	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	x
E.C.P.	1713	North	Holland		suprareg.	x	x	x
Stéven	1784 [1714]	South	Vlaanderen	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	
Ten Kate	1723	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Huydecoper	1730	North	Holland	elite	suprareg.		x	x
Van Belle	1748	North	Holland	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	x
Verpoorten	1752	South	Brabant	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	
Van Belle	1755	North	Holland	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	x
P.B.	1757	South	Brabant	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	x
Verpoorten	1759	South	Brabant	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	x
Des Roches	[1761]	South	Brabant	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	x
Elzevier	1761	North	Holland	(U)MC	suprareg.		x	x
De Haes	1764	North	Holland	(U)MC	suprareg.		x	x
Van der Palm	1769	North	Holland	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	x
Zeydelaar	1769	North	Holland		suprareg.	x	x	x
Cramer	1777 [± 1769]	North	North-east	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	x
Ballieu	1792 [1771]	South	Brabant	(U)MC	suprareg.	x	x	x
Zeydelaar	1772	North	Holland		suprareg.	x	x	x

Van Belleghem & Waterschoot	[1773]	South	Vlaanderen	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	x
Van Boterdael	1776 [± 1774]	South	Vlaanderen	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	x
Janssens	[1775]	South	Vlaanderen		suprareg.	x	x	
Zeydelaar	1781	North	Holland		suprareg.	x	x	x
Van Boterdael	1785	South	Vlaanderen	gen. public	suprareg.	x	x	x
Van Bolhuis	1793	North	North-east	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
Wester	1797	North	North-east	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
Van Varik	1799	North	Holland	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
Weiland	1799	North	Holland	gen. public	primarily national		x	x
Siegenbeek	1804	North	Holland	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
Weiland	1805	North	Holland	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
Schilperoort	1806	North	Holland	gen. public	primarily national		x	x
Anslijn	1814	North	Holland	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
Henckel	1815	South	Vlaanderen	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
De Neckere	1815	South	Vlaanderen		primarily national		x	x
Ter Bruggen	1817- 1818 [1815]	South	Brabant	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
Behaegel	1817	South	Vlaanderen		primarily national	(x)	x	x
Cannaert	1823	South	Vlaanderen	gen. public	primarily national		x	x
Moke	1823	South	Vlaanderen	gen. public	primarily national	(x)	x	x
Willems	1824	South	Brabant	gen. public	primarily national		x	x
Behaegel	[± 1825]	South	Vlaanderen		primarily national	(x)	x	x
Bilderdijk	1826	North	Holland	gen. public	primarily national		x	x
De Simpel	[1827]	South	Vlaanderen	gen. public	primarily national	x	x	x
Behaegel	[± 1829]	South	Vlaanderen		primarily national	(x)	x	x

Table 2: overview of the target audience, conceptualisation of the Dutch language (area), pedagogical orientation, and language domains discussed in normative works

Target audience

Before moving on to the usage corpus that is applied in this study, still a short remark on the relationship between the different target audiences of normative works and prescriptive influence. Whereas bulky and Latin-based grammars written by eminent literary authors and ministers in the eighteenth century are evidently the precepts on which later grammarians built to write their grammars and schoolbooks (Rutten, 2019, p. 54), and are thus perhaps seen as the ultimate language authorities, it is important to keep in mind that elitist grammars enjoyed only a limited social reach. McLelland (2021, p. 283) therefore argues that this elitist approach to grammar writing might reduce the possibility of prescriptive influence of these highly prestigious normative works on general language use. Normative publications meant for spreading language norms to the general public, conversely, are considered less prestigious overall, but they often have a wider social reach. Since many of the latter type of works are applied in an educational context, it is more likely that the prescriptions in these works actually reached a broader audience. In sum, McLelland (2021, p. 283) thus poses that the possibility of prescriptive impact on usage may increase when the prestige of the work decreases.

Since this normative corpus spans over multiple centuries and comprises normative works with a restricted elite audience, on the one hand, and highly accessible schoolbooks, on the other hand, it is important to consider such differences in target audience when investigating prescriptive impact in this study. We can assume that an influence of prescriptivism is most likely in the language practice of the intended readership of the work. This implies, for example, that it is unlikely for elitist grammars meant for high-class audiences only to directly influence the language use of middle- or lower-class writers. The expectations of prescriptive influence should thus align with the usage that is investigated.

2 Historical Corpus of Dutch (*HCD*)

The usage corpus that is employed in this study is the *Historical Corpus of Dutch* (henceforth: *HCD*). This corpus was recently assembled by colleagues in Brussel and Leiden (cf. Van de Voorde et al., 2023), and it was specifically compiled as part of the doctoral study of Iris Van de Voorde (2022). At the time that I used the corpus for the empirical analyses in this dissertation, the *HCD* had not yet been tagged.

Like ARCHER is for English, and GerManC is for German, the *HCD* is a **diachronic** corpus that focuses on Early and Late Modern Dutch. Spanning the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, the corpus includes textual material from the middle 50 years of each century, i.e. the periods 1530-1570, 1630-1670, 1730-1770, and 1830-1870, which allows for mapping out diachronic developments in language use (Van de Voorde et al., 2023, p. 118).

The *HCD* is also structured at a **diatopic** level. The corpus comprises a balanced proportion of texts from the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, yet this regional distinction can even be explored in more detail. More specifically, since the corpus was originally designed for investigating historical pluricentricity in Dutch (cf. Van de Voorde, 2022), it consists of textual material from central and peripheral regions in the Northern and Southern territories. For the Northern Netherlands, that is the present-day Kingdom of the Netherlands, the culturally and economically important region of Holland (HO) is included as the central region (i.e. the entire dark green region in Figure 4, while Zeeland (ZE) fills the peripheral region. In the Southern Netherlands, which roughly correspond to the Dutch-speaking regions of the modern-day Belgium, Brabant (BR) is considered as the central region, where texts from the provinces Vlaams-Brabant and Antwerpen are included (i.e. the dark blue colour in the map). Vlaanderen (VL), conversely, encompasses the peripheral region in the South (i.e. the two light blue regions on the left-hand side of Brabant). Note that Vlaanderen thus refers to Oost- and West-Vlaanderen as provinces, and not to what is today considered Vlaanderen (Van de Voorde et al., 2023, p. 118).



Figure 4: diatopic spread in the *HCD*. Map retrieved from Van de Voorde (2022, p. 63)

Importantly, the *HCD* is also a **multi-genre** corpus consisting of textual material from three distinct genres: administrative texts, ego-documents, and pamphlets. The genre of administrative texts (ADM) is a handwritten yet formal genre, comprising similar types of documents like reports of council meetings and legislation texts for guild members. Due to the similarity of the documents, the administrative texts are a homogenous genre that is entirely provided by experienced writers. Since certain semi-official documents were meant to be preserved, it is possible that some degree of editorial work has been applied to these texts. For example, a draft version may have preceded the final document that is included as an administrative text in the corpus (Van de Voorde, 2022, pp. 66-67).

As a handwritten genre but with an informal and personal nature, the ego-documents (EGO) in the *HCD* are probably least influenced by standardisation

attempts and prescriptive activities. These personal documents have been applied numerously in historical-sociolinguistic research to investigate texts that come closest to the historical spoken language (Elspaß, 2012, p. 156). Although they certainly do not form a simple reflection of the spoken language, personal correspondence appears most fruitful for representing spoken usage due to the dialogic nature of the document (Elspaß, 2012, p. 158). However, such documents could, due to a lack of suitable textual material, not be included in the *HCD* (Van de Voorde, 2022, p. 75). Instead, although generally monologic of nature, and therefore probably further away from the 'language of immediacy' (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1985), diaries and travelogues were selected as one genre of ego-documents in the corpus. Although there is some social stratification among the writers of ego-documents, most texts are provided by members of the broad middle class, with wealthy merchants, notaries, civil servants, teachers, and village pastors contributing a diary or travelogue to the *HCD* (Van de Voorde, 2022, p. 76). This means that, contrary to the authors of the administrative texts, the writers of ego-documents have more diverse backgrounds and were no professional writers. Furthermore, the selected documents are all written from a personal point of view, without the purpose of reaching a broader readership or publication (ibid., p. 77).

In addition to two handwritten genres, the *HCD* is composed with pamphlets (PAM) as a third and printed genre. Since different types of documents fall within the concept 'pamphlet', this is the most heterogenous genre in the corpus. Although all pamphlets are printed, and thus subject to editorial practices, the array of different text types, such as tidings, ordinances, supplications, and placards discussing public and current affairs showcase the diversity of the genre.

The *HCD* comprises a total of 463.248 words deriving from 209 documents, divided across the sociolinguistic dimensions of the corpus: time, region, and genre, as Table 3 shows. Each document in the corpus is enriched with metadata of the author, the year and place of writing, and the archival details. Despite a few lacunae in the corpus compilation, particularly in the sixteenth century due to scarcity of available material, the corpus is well balanced with an average

10.000 words per segment (Van de Voorde, 2022, p. 65).⁴⁸ As the usage corpus against which normative developments are compared in this study, the *HCD* thus enables a detailed investigation of Dutch language use across time, space, and genre.

	16C	17C	18C	19C
Administrative texts				
Holland	9.710	9.902	10.007	9.817
Zeeland	9.821	10.043	10.350	9.623
Brabant	9.936	9.902	9.943	10.945
Vlaanderen	4.889	9.938	10.170	9.857
Ego-documents				
Holland	10.134	10.031	9.932	10.024
Zeeland	3.156	10.043	9.873	9.948
Brabant	9.177	9.446	10.711	7.129
Vlaanderen	10.232	9.935	9.763	11.140
Pamphlets				
Holland	4.946	12.199	10.638	10.212
Zeeland	0	11.962	11.975	10.143
Brabant	10.145	9.911	9.878	10.571
Vlaanderen	10.678	14.710	9.871	9.856
Total	92.824	128.048	123.111	119.265

Table 3: word count in the *HCD* across period, region, and genre (Van de Voorde, 2022, p. 65)

⁴⁸ More details on the data collection and annotation of the corpus can be found in Van de Voorde (2022).

3 Selection of linguistic features

As outlined in Chapter 3, this research aims for investigating the impact of the possible determinants of prescriptive success, as they were proposed by Rutten & Vosters (2021). To recap, the factors that potentially interfere in prescriptive success are:

- (1) the chronology of language change
- (2) progressive versus conservative norms
- (3) the nature of the variable
- (4) the complexity of the feature
- (5) metalinguistic salience

While factors (1) and (2) are operationalised in the empirical analyses of each linguistic feature (cf. *infra*), the determinants (3) to (5) are implemented in the overall design of the study, more specifically in the selection of linguistic features. In this section, I explain how the linguistic variables were selected for investigation.

Based on previous historical-sociolinguistic corpus studies of Dutch (e.g. Vosters, 2011; Nobels & Rutten, 2014; Simons & Rutten, 2014; Rutten & Vosters, 2017; Krogull, 2018) and exploratory analyses in the corpora applied in this study, a selection was made of features that were standardised in the Early and Late Modern period. All these features were also undergoing change in usage in the periods under investigation. To control for the nature of the variable, I selected two orthographic and three grammatical features. In operationalising this twofold distinction, I can detect differences in prescriptive influence for spelling and grammatical features. Furthermore, each linguistic feature was defined in terms of complexity, for which I considered the number of possible variants in usage. A distinction is made between binary and multivariate linguistic variables. Although I am aware that, also for binary features, more variability than reported here is probably attested in usage (cf. Kretzschmar et al., 2003), I decided to base the classification of complexity on the number of main variants in the *HCD*. Finally, the amount of metalinguistic attention is considered in the selection of features. Here, the frequency of explicit prescriptions determined whether a feature is categorised as high, medium, or low salient at a metalinguistic level.

While the distinction appears to be threefold, the factor is actually considered twofold. The threefold distinction primarily lies in the difference between spelling and grammar. The domain of spelling is inherently more frequently addressed in normative works. Therefore, low metalinguistic salience, with less than half of the normative works formulating an explicit prescription on the issue, was not attested for the selected spelling features. Essentially, the distinction is thus binary both for spelling (high vs. medium salience) and grammar (high vs. low salience). These criteria eventually led to five linguistic features that are investigated in this dissertation:

- (1) spelling of long /a/ in closed syllables
- (2) spelling of final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs
- (3) comparative marker
- (4) diminutive suffix
- (5) direct and indirect object of the plural personal pronoun

Each of the selected features has different characteristics in terms of the nature of the variable, the complexity of the feature, and metalinguistic salience, leading to diverse combinations of factor levels, as Table 4 also summarises. Further details on the possible variants and metalinguistic salience of each feature are discussed in the empirical chapters (cf. Chapters 5-9).

	nature	complexity	met. salience
long /a/	spelling	binary	high
final /t/	spelling	multi	medium
comparative marker	grammar	binary	low
diminutive suffix	grammar	multi	high
object 3pl. pron.	grammar	binary	high

Table 4: characteristics of the selected linguistic features

The diversity of features allows for evaluating the role of the potential determinants in the corpus analyses. After the individual case studies have been investigated, I thus also reflect on how these factors impact the success of prescriptivism.

4 Analysis

Before we can arrive at an overarching evaluation of prescriptive success, the possible influence of prescriptivism is thus first investigated for individual linguistic features. In the empirical case studies, I investigate the developments in language norms before I explore the patterns of variation and change in the *HCD*. Only after the individual developments in norms and usage have been uncovered, we are able to compare developments in norms and usage to evaluate the possibility of prescriptive influence on language change. The impact of the possible determinants of prescriptive influence is evaluated in the conclusion of this dissertation. In what follows in this section, I explain how each part of the analysis is conducted in the individual empirical chapters.

4.1 Language norms

For each investigated linguistic feature, the corpus of normative works was manually searched for relevant metalinguistic commentaries and prescriptions regarding the feature. Since all normative works were digitally available, the relevant sections were saved via screenshots. The searching of the normative works for relevant normative comments was done by the author of this thesis and multiple student-assistants. The retrieved metalanguage was subsequently classified according to the type of prescription. In this study, the distinction is made between *explicit prescriptions* and *implicit prescriptions*. As both terms suggest, the former discusses the feature explicitly, with the grammarian devoting a (short or long) part of the work to a metalinguistic comment. Implicit prescriptions, conversely, do not relate to the feature directly. In this case, the prescription relates to the feature, but the broader setting is lacking in the metalanguage. For example, from the prescription on the spelling of the final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs in Example 1, we can infer that the grammarian prefers the spelling <d> in the third-person singular, as is indicated by the example *hij bid* ‘he prays’ in the enumeration of conjugations in the present indicative. However, the codifier does not discuss this preference for the spelling <d> explicitly. Also enumerations in word list and glossaries often include implicit prescriptions, but the majority of implicit prescriptions derives from codifiers who give an example in which the feature is used while they are discussing another linguistic item.

- (1) *De aentonende wijze is, waer door men iet regtsdraets na de verscheidenheid der tijden aentoont of veerklaert; als: ik schrijf; gij begrijpt, hij bid; wij ontfangen, gij-l. ver-liest; zij maeken*
(Henckel, 1815, pp. 23-24)

‘The indicative tense is that by which one directly shows or explains something according to the variation of tenses; as in: *ik schrijf; gij begrijpt, hij bid; wij ontfangen, gij-l. ver-liest; zij maeken*’

To illustrate the difference between an explicit and implicit prescription, Example 2 discusses an explicit prescription on the spelling of the final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs.

- (2) *Alle werkwoorden hebben in den tweeden en derden persoon van den tegenwoordigen tijd, in het enkelvoudige getal, eene t, als: gij en hij zegt, leest, enz. (*) Zoo ook die werkwoorden, welke eene d in hun zakelijk deel hebben, als: gij en hij brandt, zendt, bidt, wordt enz.*
(Weiland, 1805, p. 149)

‘All verbs in the second and third person of the present tense, in the singular form, take a *t*, as in: *gij* and *hij zegt, leest*, etc. The same applies to those verbs whose root contains a *d*, such as: *gij* and *hij brandt, zendt, bidt, wordt*, etc.’

Although the distinction between explicit and implicit metalanguage appears straightforward, what can be considered an explicit or implicit prescription depends strongly on the linguistic item. Whereas spelling issues are mostly discussed explicitly in the text, grammatical items are often part of a case paradigm, with codifiers not always formulating additional comments on the feature. Since case paradigms immediately capture the attention of the reader when consulting a normative work, they are also considered explicit prescriptions, at least for the linguistic items to which the paradigm is devoted. Although the classification of normative comments into explicit and implicit prescriptions thus follows the general guideline outlined in this section, small adaptations are considered for specific features. Each empirical chapter therefore also specifies what is considered an explicit and implicit prescription for the variable under scrutiny.

The prescriptions that are retrieved from the corpus of normative works are annotated for the variant that is prescribed. When a codifier allowed for variation, and thus prescribed multiple forms, all these variants are annotated as prescribed form. Also other variants that are mentioned in the metalanguage, and that the norm giver either rejects or allows for usage (under certain conditions) are annotated. Apart from the diachronic view on the prescribed variants, each empirical chapter therefore also includes a discussion on alternative variants which sheds light on the codifiers' stance towards variation for the feature under investigation. For each investigated feature, an annotation protocol is designed for the coding of language norms.

In developing the protocol for the first case studies, I aimed to streamline the annotation (of the prescribed and proscribed variants) and categorisation (into explicit and implicit prescriptions) of the metalanguage. Although establishing the protocols and annotating the language norms are performed by the author of this dissertation, initial validation of the protocol involved tasking a student-assistant with coding the same set of prescriptions based on the protocol. This process allowed for refinement of the protocol, ensuring consistent annotation of language norms.

In addition to mapping out developments in the prescriptions and normative comments of the codifiers, also the language practice of the grammarians is investigated. I therefore consider the language use that is applied in the normative work, yet only the parts of the book that were most likely written by the codifier are considered. As introductions, prefaces, and epilogues are sometimes delivered by another author, only the part of the actual normative comments falls within evaluation for the language use of the grammarian. References and citations, however, were not included in the analysis of the codifier's usage. For each normative work in the corpus, the majority variant in that grammarian's language use was selected based on ten randomly selected observations of the investigated feature. If no variant was dominantly used, all employed variants were coded as majority forms.

The language norms are analysed using the quantitative method of grammaticography (cf. Anderwald, 2014a). This includes the categorisation of norms into different types – explicit and implicit prescriptions and grammarians' usage – providing a comprehensive understanding of the diachronic evolution of

normative preferences. Additionally, the distinction is made between language norms of Northern and Southern codifiers. The quantitative analysis is carried out using the programming language *R* (R Core Team, 2021). I employed packages from *tidyverse* (Wickham et al., 2019), more specifically *dplyr* (Wickham et al., 2023) for data manipulation, and *ggplot2* (Wickham, 2016) for data visualisation. The package *hrbrthemes* (Rudis, 2020) is employed for customising the theme of the plots.

Note that, in visualising the results of language norms in bar plots, I chose to emphasise variability rather than frequency. The focus lies on comparative trends across sociolinguistic variables, like period and area, and less on the absolute number of norms in a particular period and area. To this end, I opted for normalised bar charts, while still including raw frequencies as annotations on the bars for reference.

4.2 Language use

For the investigation of actual language use, the selected linguistic features need to be retrieved from the *HCD*. For each of the investigated features, regular expressions were therefore compiled in *R* to extract the relevant textual material from the usage corpus. An overview of the applied regular expressions can be found in the Appendix.

The obtained data were manually filtered to remove false positive results from the dataset. The accompanying metadata of the results in the usage corpus, such as the individual document (*id*) in which the datapoint is attested and the extralinguistic variables (*period*, *region*, and *genre*), were also collected. In addition to regional differences in the data, I also account for geographical differences in terms of the language area to align with the discussion of language norms. The data from the independent variable *region* are therefore also recoded into a new variable *area*. This concretely means that the levels ‘Holland’ and ‘Zeeland’ from the predictor *region* are merged into the level ‘North’, while the variants ‘Brabant’ and ‘Vlaanderen’ are aggregated into the level ‘South’.

Although this study particularly investigates the influence of the sociolinguistic predictors *period*, *region* and *area*, and *genre*, intralinguistic variables were

manually added to the dataset as well. Where applicable, the matching lemma of the datapoints is annotated, together with other relevant language-internal factors. More details on the regular expression, the filtering and annotation of the usage data are discussed in the empirical chapters.

After cleaning and annotating the data, the results are explored and visualised in *R*, using the same packages as for the analyses of language norms (cf. *supra*). The data are quantitatively analysed across the extralinguistic factors: *period*, *region* and *area*, and *genre*. Particular attention is devoted to the interaction of these independent variables. Since these interactions sometimes resulted in low data frequencies, both the relative and absolute frequencies are involved in the discussion of the results.

Statistical analysis

The descriptive statistics of the results in language use are supplemented with inferential statistical techniques. I generally employ a mixed-effects logistic regression analysis for the interpretation of the results; however, if the usage data do not support such complex statistical modelling (e.g. because of data scarcity and complete separation), I use a binary logistic regression model with fixed effects. I choose for a mixed-effects design, since these advanced statistical models allow for controlling related datapoints which “share characteristics other than straightforward predictor variables”, such as datapoints of the same writer, and items relating to the same lemma or word (Gries, 2021, p. 394). Apart from *period*, *region* or *area*, and *genre* as possible fixed predictors, this study thus also considers the individual document in the corpus (*id*) and the lemma corresponding to the datapoint (*lemma*) as random intercepts.

Since the response variable is categorical in all case studies, the relationship between the outcome of each linguistic feature (i.e. response variable) and the predictor variables is modelled in a logistic regression (Winter, 2020, p. 198). As Levshina (2015, p. 253) notes, this statistical technique “is particularly popular in probabilistic multifactorial models that explain and predict the speaker’s [or writer’s] choice between two or more [...] variants on the basis of conceptual, geographic, social, pragmatic and other factors”. I always opt for a *binomial* (mixed-effects) logistic regression model due to its simplicity and interpretability when compared to multinomial models. In fact, given the sample

size of the results from the usage corpus, binary logistic regression provides more stable estimates, maximising statistical power in examining the relationship between the predictors and the response variable. The possible linguistic variants that are part of the descriptive analysis are therefore recoded into a binary response variable, in which the distinction is made between an incoming variant and (an) outgoing variant(s). Table 5 illustrates that this approach only needs simple recoding for the features which already have an opposition of possible variants (e.g. spelling of long /a/ in closed syllables), yet for multivariate features, the incoming form is weighed against all other variants, which are classified as outgoing (e.g. diminutive suffix).

descriptive analysis		statistical analysis
long /a/	<ae> vs. <aa>	outgoing variant: <ae> incoming variant: <aa>
diminutive suffix	-kin/ke(n) vs. -ge(n) vs. -je(n) vs. ie(n)	outgoing variant: -kin/ke(n), -ge(n), and -ie(n) incoming variant: -je(n)

Table 5: coding of the linguistic variants in the descriptive and statistical analysis

For model building, I was guided by the procedure outlined by Gries (2021, pp. 414-450) for mixed-effects regression modelling.⁴⁹ After proper exploration of the data distribution across the main predictors of interest, the model is fit with the function *glmer* (or *glm* for a fixed-effect logistic regression), which is part of the package *lme4* (Bates et al., 2015). The variables that are considered for inclusion in the model are *period*, *region* or *area*, and *genre* as fixed predictors, while *id* and *lemma* are involved in the random-effect structure of model building using random intercepts. Due to convergence problems when starting model selection from a maximal model, however, I began with a minimal model with an intercept only. A forward selection process based on significance testing with *anova* and the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) is used to add predictors and interactions to the model until an optimal model is obtained. Afterwards, the function *drop1* is applied to perform backward elimination by dropping one term at a time from the model, and subsequently evaluate the impact of the model fit to check whether any predictors could be removed. For each empirical chapter,

⁴⁹ Note that the software packages applied for the statistical modelling in this study differ from what is described by Gries (2021), since he discusses examples of linear mixed-effects regression models.

the model selection process and the final model are specified in the results section of the respective chapter.

The diagnostics of the final model are verified, checking the residuals and possible collinearity, using respectively the packages *DHARMa* (Hartig, 2022) and *car* (Fox & Weisberg, 2019). A confusion matrix is created to assess the performance of the model, using the package *caret* (Kuhn, 2022). In addition to the parameters in the confusion matrix and the R^2 conditional as indicators of model performance, the C-statistic was generated using the function *somers2* from the package *Hmisc* (Harrell, 2022).

Performance indicators like the C-statistic are often a lot higher in mixed-effect models than in regression models with only fixed effects (Gries, 2021, p. 400). Also in this study, the C-statistic of the mixed-effects models often suggests excellent or even outstanding discrimination by the model (Levshina, 2015, p. 259; Gries, 2021, p. 327). However, with such high scores on the model's evaluation, and the generally modest frequency of usage data on which the model is built, it is important to consider the risk of overfitting (cf. Gries, 2021, p. 385). For the features where overfitting could be expected, I also assess the model's performance on a stratified dataset using the package *tidymodels* (Kuhn & Wickham, 2020). This approach builds the model on a training set of 80% of the data, and only after reaching a final model, tests it on a test set of the remaining 20% of the data to avoid data leakage (Kuhn & Silge, 2022). Nonetheless, with still very high scores for classification accuracy of the model on the testing dataset, no issues with overfitting were attested.

The results from the regression analysis are presented in regression tables which are generated using the package *sjPlot* (Lüdtke, 2022). This summary of the statistical results is supplemented with a visualisation of the significant effects employing the packages *effects* (Fox & Weisberg, 2019) and *ggplot2* (Wickham, 2016). The results from the statistical analysis are discussed together with the descriptive statistics in the results section of the empirical chapters.

4.3 Prescriptive influence

After the patterns of variation and change are investigated in language norms and usage separately, both developments are also analysed next to each other to determine whether prescriptivism influenced language use. To that end, the results in norms and usage are compared in more detail to uncover possible instances of prescriptive interference. As was explained in Chapter 3, the chronology of language change not only reveals whether prescriptivism interfered in language change, but also suggests which type of impact prescriptivism had on usage.

Although I explored the possibility of investigating the correlation between language norms and usage statistically via a simple logistic regression (on aggregate data), the regression model had little predictive power, particularly due to the low frequency of data for language norms and the considerable number of predictor variables. These issues led to convergence problems, large confidence intervals, and thus unreliable predictions. I therefore decided to evaluate prescriptive influence only empirically via the comparison of the observed patterns of variation and change in norms and language use.

The approach of comparing developments in norms to developments in usage is the common method of evaluating prescriptive impact on language use. As opposed to previous research, which either analyses the impact of specific norms or codifiers on usage, or investigates the influence of a broader set of prescriptions on usage in a specific period, this study is set out to explore the impact of prescriptivism in a broader timeframe of four centuries. The impact of prescriptivism is thus investigated by diachronically visualising the prescriptions in norms and the developments in usage per year from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. For each case study, I therefore generate two scatterplots, one for norms and another for usage, in which the datapoints of the different variants (e.g. <ae> and <aa> for the spelling of long /a/ in closed syllables) are projected onto distinct points on a numeric scale on the y-axis (e.g. 1-2 in the case of the long /a/ in closed syllables). By also distinguishing between developments in the North and the South, these scatterplots offer a detailed overview of the prescribed variants in each part of the language area, on the one hand, and of the observed frequencies in Northern and Southern usage,

on the other hand. Moreover, this method of visualising enabled adding a locally estimated smoothing to illustrate general trends in the data. These trends are indicated by the coloured lines in the scatterplots.

A careful comparison of the chronology of change allows me to detect possibilities in which prescriptivism potentially impacted usage. Each of these options of prescriptive influence subsequently undergoes in-depth qualitative investigation, also considering the strength and the target audience of the prescriptions as well as the regional and genre differences in usage, for evaluating the likelihood and the extent of prescriptive interference. This way, for each of the investigated features, I determine whether, when, and under which circumstances prescriptivism was able to influence language change (cf. Anderwald, 2012, 2014a, 2016, 2018).

Chapter 5 – Spelling of long /a/ in closed syllables

The first linguistic feature that is investigated in this dissertation is the orthographic representation of the long /a/ in closed syllables.⁵⁰ In this chapter, the spelling of the /a/-sound in words like *maan* ‘moon’, *vandaag* ‘today’, and *baard* ‘beard’ is thus scrutinised. This long /a/ can derive from two etymologically distinct vowels. The first one – and this is where most of the long *a*’s in closed syllables descent from – is the original long vowel, the West-Germanic *â*, which originates from the Germanic *ē* (Van Loon, 2014, p. 92). An example is the modern-Dutch word *maan* (ggm. *mēna* > got. *māno*) (ibid.). For the other possible origin of the long /a/, we move from the period of Germanic languages to Middle Dutch. In the twelfth century, the short *a* – as in *dag* ‘day’ – could be stretched into a semi long vowel in an open syllable, as in *dage* (Van Loon, 2014, p. 208; Van Bree, 2016, p. 510). After the syncope of the unstressed vowel following on the open syllable, this semi long *a* settled in a closed syllable. This development is illustrated by the Middle Dutch word *van dage*, which evolved into the present-day *vandaag* (Van Bree, 2016, p. 366). So, from the Middle Dutch period onwards, the lengthened semi long *a* in *vandaag* is merged with the primal long *â* in *maan*, and as these two originally distinct vowels were now represented by the same phoneme, they were also visualised by the same graphemes in orthography (Van Bree, 2016, p. 510).

As opposed to the modern-day standard language, the sound of the original long *â* and the lengthened *a* does not always overlap in the Dutch dialects. Especially the West-Germanic long *â* tends to differ according to the dialectal region. In the Northwestern area (Zeeland) and (North-)Holland, for example, the long *â* is produced in a strong palatal manner, resulting in an /æ/-like sound, while the dialects of the (Southern) inland provinces have a more velar pronunciation of the vowel (Van Loon, 2014, pp. 93-94; De Wulf et al., 2005, map 109; Van Loey,

⁵⁰ Parts of this case study are also presented in Lismont, Rutten & Vosters (2023).

1976, p. 32).⁵¹ Despite these dialectal differences, highly localisable realisations of the long /a/ are rarely found in historical writings (Rutten & Van der Wal, 2014). Instead, a form like <a> was applied for representing the long /a/ in closed syllables in Middle Dutch, yet this single-grapheme spelling faded in the Early Modern period, where it was replaced by spellings like <ai>, <ae>, and <aa> (Van Loey, 1976, p. 32; Van Bree, 2016, p. 288). The form <ai> was particularly used in the fifteenth century, after which its use decreased (Van Loey, 1976, p. 32), and only the latter two spelling practices, <ae> and <aa>, thus made it as main variants to represent both the original long *â* and the lengthened *ā* in the period under investigation.

Important to mention, however, is that the linguistic context in which the /a/ appears right before an -r, followed by a dental consonant is generally not examined in research investigating the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables (e.g. Vosters, 2011). In this linguistic context, the long *a* can etymologically derive from yet another vowel than the ones discussed above. This is illustrated by words like *paard* 'horse' and *waardig* 'worthy', in which the long /a/ derives from the short vowel *e*. This short vowel was first lengthened to a long *ē* in Middle Dutch before it was pronounced as a long /a/. Remnants of this transfer are found in many dialects of Dutch, where the palatal pronunciation /ɛ:/ from Middle Dutch is maintained. This implies that the pronunciation of the long /a/ deriving from the short *e* does not systematically coincide with the pronunciation of the long *a*'s that descend from the West-Germanic *â* or the lengthened *ā*. Moreover, this difference is not only visible at the level of speech, but also in writing. Before the existence of a standard spelling, *paard* and *waardig* were often written as *peerd* or *peird*, and *weerdig* or *weirdig*, due to the palatal pronunciation of the long vowel (Van Loon, 2014, pp. 225-226). As such, words in which the long *a* derives from the short *e* are not part of the analyses in this case study. This does not mean that all words containing a long /a/ before <-rd>, <-rt>, <-rs>, <-rz>, or <-rn> are automatically excluded from the results, though. Words like *baard* 'beard' and *gaard* 'yard', for example, are still included in the dataset since in these words, the long /a/ does not descend from the short *e* but from the lengthened *ā*.

⁵¹ An extreme velar pronunciation of the West-Germanic *â* could also be found in some dialects in the Eastern regions of the Southern Low Countries, where pronunciations as [jur] instead of [jar] for *jaar* were common (Van Loon, 2014, p. 96).

1 Previous research

The spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables has been investigated extensively in the normative discourse. The feature was scrutinised in the studies of Vosters, Rutten & Van der Wal (2010), Rutten (2011), and Vosters (2011). These scholars uncovered that mainly <ae> and <aa> were propagated by norm givers. Although other codifiers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries selected the variant <ae> in their prescriptions, the modern-day <aa> was already advocated in the sixteenth century, for example by Spiegel in the anonymously written *Twe-spraack* (1584) (Rutten, 2011, p. 187). Furthermore, these studies point to the discrepancy arising between the normative traditions of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands in the eighteenth century, with Southern grammarians prescribing <ae> and Northern codifiers generally favouring <aa> (Vosters, 2011, pp. 238-239; Rutten, 2011, pp. 186-189; Vosters, Rutten & Van der Wal, 2010). Although several authoritative figures in the North, such as Moonen (1706) and Ten Kate (1723), still preferred <ae>, the imposed spelling differences became a matter of identity expression in the Southern normative discourse. More specifically, Southern codifiers increasingly associated the variant <ae> as a marker of a Southern identity (ibid). However, a few decades before <aa> is established as the official spelling variant in the national language policy of the Northern Netherlands (1804) (Rutten, 2011, p. 187), Southern codifiers became more lenient in their prescriptions, by not solely prescribing <ae> anymore and allowing for <aa> in Southern usage as well (Vosters, 2011, p. 239). As Vosters (2011, pp. 238-239) indicates, most of the grammarians in the South subsequently shift their prescriptions from <ae> to <aa> in the early nineteenth century, which resulted in (almost) uniform norms in both parts of the language area (cf. also Rutten, 2011, pp. 186-189). After the Belgian independence of 1830, the spelling <aa> was rejected again in the Southern *commissiespelling* ‘commission spelling’ of 1844 because of the association of the variant with the Northern Netherlands. Yet twenty years later, <aa> was reinstated with the spelling of De Vries-Te Winkel (Couvreur, 1940, pp. 199-314).

Some of the abovementioned studies were not only concerned with normative developments for the spelling of the long /a/, and uncovered patterns of variation and change in actual usage as well. I now discuss these and other

studies in terms of observed trends in language use, first for the Northern Netherlands and then for the Southern part of the language area.

Rutten & Van der Wal (2014) investigated a collection of seventeenth-century private letters from the *Letters as Loot* corpus. They explored whether the phonology of the long /a/ in the North-Hollandic region, where the local dialect is characterised by a strong palatal pronunciation of the vowel, influences the orthography of the long *a* in writing practices. Both for open and closed syllables, the frequency of the localisable spelling <ee>, on the one hand, and of the supralocal <a>, <ae>, and <aa>, on the other hand, were extracted from the corpus. Since the palatal form <ee> was highly uncommon, and especially the variant <ae> prevailed as the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables (89%), Rutten & Van der Wal (2014, pp. 61-62; 65) concluded that these letter writers did not consistently apply a phonological distinction in their spelling, but they rather adhered to a supralocal writing system. In another study, this time of a late eighteenth-century component of the *Letters as Loot* corpus, Vosters, Rutten, Van der Wal & Vandenbussche (2012) mapped out the orthographic representation of the long /a/ (and long /y/) in 100 personal letters and discovered quite consistent spelling practices in closed syllables. Contrary to the usage patterns in the seventeenth century (cf. Rutten & Van der Wal, 2014), the eighteenth-century letter writers in the North now opted for <aa> or <uu> spellings in 93% of the results (Vosters, Rutten, Van der Wal & Vandenbussche, 2012, pp. 152-153; cf. also Vosters, Rutten & Van der Wal, 2010, pp. 103-104).

For Southern usage, a recent study was carried out by Puttaert (2019), who took a language history ‘from below’ perspective by examining a collection of nineteenth-century soldiers’ letters and pauper letters from the Western regions of the Low Countries, i.e. West-Vlaanderen and Zeeland. The findings of Puttaert (2019, pp. 144-145) revealed that the variant <ae> was almost uniformly used in the soldiers’ letters (92.92%), while <aa> represented less than 2% of the results. In the pauper letters, Puttaert (2019, pp. 147-148) observed a slightly different picture. In these documents, <ae> also acts as the majority variant (58.91%), yet <aa> is already more established in this corpus (36.49%). The higher frequency of the present-day <aa> in the pauper letters is largely attributed to a regional difference in the spelling of the long /a/. After all, the spelling <aa> was dominant in the pauper letters from Zeeland (74.01%), while

<ae> prevailed as the majority form in the Flemish documents (70.37%) (Puttaert, 2019, pp. 149-151).

Apart from exploring the normative discourse in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, Vosters (2011) investigated Southern language use at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, and he therefore applied a corpus of judicial and administrative documents. For the case study of the long /a/ in closed syllables, Vosters (2011, pp. 297-298) extracted five different spelling practices, and learnt that the main variants <ae> and <aa> made up for respectively 19.6% and 79.8% of the results, leaving barely any room for minority spelling variants, such as <ai>, <a>, and <áá>. Such findings imply that the variant <ae>, which was iconised as ‘Southern’ in the eighteenth-century normative discourse, was not in the majority (anymore) in the early nineteenth-century documents. A strong decrease of the variant can be observed at the end of the period of reunification, where <ae> drops from 31% in 1823 to only 5% in 1829, indicating that <aa> firmly secured its position as the dominant variant in nineteenth-century usage (Vosters, 2011, p. 312; cf. also Vosters et al., 2014). Although the decline of the Southern <ae> was visible across all text types within the *UKN*-corpus, the most formal documents of indictment generally display the least <ae> spellings in the nineteenth century (Vosters, 2011, pp. 320-321). Moreover, when Vosters et al. (2014) compared the findings of Southern norms to the patterns in usage, an (ongoing) shift to <aa> was identified in the early nineteenth century. Since a growing tolerance towards Northern <aa> forms in norms preceded the increase of <aa> in Southern usage, Vosters et al. (2014, p. 94) argue that the chronology of change allows for an impact of prescriptions on usage in the nineteenth century, although a causal relationship between norms and usage is not unequivocal. In fact, the highly specific socio-historical context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands may have equally facilitated norms and usage evolving in the same direction (Vosters et al., 2014, p. 96).

Previous research thus clearly sees an opposite pattern unfolding in the normative discourse of the eighteenth century, where Southern codifiers employed the two main spelling practices of the long /a/ in closed syllables as markers of a Northern (<aa>) or Southern (<ae>) identity (Vosters, 2011, p. 325). In the nineteenth century, and especially at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, however, these Southern <ae> norms were increasingly suppressed by the dominance of the official language policy that was

being established in the Northern Netherlands (*ibid.*). Furthermore, in language use, a (progressing) shift from <ae> towards the modern-day <aa> is observed in both parts of the language area. Previous studies thereby indicate that this change occurs in the North first, where the <ae> forms of the seventeenth century are exchanged for a majority of <aa> spellings in eighteenth-century usage. Since <aa> is less widespread in the nineteenth-century South, the same change to the modern-day form seems to occur somewhat later in this part of the language area. Although the variant <aa> was already prominent in the formal text types of the early nineteenth century, the lower social classes in Vlaanderen predominantly used <ae>, which points to a change which was still in progress in the Southern Netherlands.

2 Hypotheses

Building on the work of Rutten (2011) and Vosters (2011), I presume <ae> will be the main prescribed variant in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although the first <aa> prescriptions may appear in these early periods as well. Prescriptions for other (minority) variants will probably be neglectable. For Northern language use, I am relying on the study of Rutten & Van der Wal (2014) in expecting that <ae> may also be the main variant in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century usage. This implies that part of the prescriptions as well as usage will adhere to <ae> at the same time, which would make a direct influence of norms on usage unlikely in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the eighteenth century, though, most of the Northern grammarians may shift their prescriptions to the incoming <aa>, and following Vosters, Rutten, Van der Wal & Vandenbussche (2012), I believe Northern usage may switch to <aa> as the dominant variant in the eighteenth century as well. As a result, the use of <ae> may decrease in usage, and although an explanation for this decline may be found in proscriptions for the outgoing <ae>, a prescriptive effect for the rise of the incoming <aa> is more likely (*cf.* hypothesis 2). As such, I do not predict a direct impact of norms on usage for the variant <ae> in the Northern Netherlands. On the contrary, as Vosters (2011) indicated, Southern codifiers will presumably prescribe <ae> until well into the eighteenth century. As the change towards <aa> was still ongoing in Vosters's (2011) study on early nineteenth-century usage in the South, I carefully suppose that <ae> will be applied as a dominant variant in eighteenth-century usage. When compared to the North, the outgoing

form <ae> may still be used in Southern usage in the nineteenth century, as Puttaert (2019) also observed. This prolonged use of <ae> in the South may have been caused by the ongoing prescriptions for the form in the eighteenth century, as well as by grammarians' stigmatisation of <ae> as a characteristic of Southern language use (**hypothesis 1**).

As mentioned above, the incoming form <aa> will possibly be prescribed in the sixteenth century already, but as Rutten (2011) also indicated, the variant may only break through in the eighteenth-century prescriptions, and especially in those of Northern grammarians. In line with Rutten & Van der Wal (2014) and Vosters, Rutten, Van der Wal & Vandenbussche (2012), I expect that <aa> may be present in Northern language use as a minority variant in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although the form may only become a dominant variant in the eighteenth century. If the first <aa> prescriptions show up in the sixteenth century, the chronology of change would allow for an effect of prescriptivism, although the time lag between precept and usage would be quite large (i.e. two centuries) for any prescriptive impact to be likely. Possible <aa> prescriptions in the early eighteenth century, conversely, may have affected usage in speeding up the change to <aa> in Northern language use. Also in the Southern part of the language area, the modern-day variant may have been prescribed in the sixteenth century. However, as these individual prescriptions are presumably sequenced by uniform <ae> norms in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, an impact of a single <aa> prescription in the sixteenth-century South is unlikely. Based on Vosters (2011) and Vosters et al. (2014), I believe Southern grammarians start tolerating and prescribing <aa> in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. As these prescriptions will most likely be followed by an increase of <aa> in Southern usage, which may be pronounced the strongest in the printed and formal genres, an influence of these <aa> prescriptions on Southern usage might be possible (**hypothesis 2**).

3 Methodology

In what follows in this section, I explain how the spelling of the long /a/ is operationalised in this case study. I first elaborate on the annotation of language norms, before I continue with the dataset that is applied for the analysis of language use.

3.1 Language norms

For the investigation of language norms, different types of prescriptions and other metalinguistic comments on the spelling of the long *a* were extracted from the corpus of normative works. As is the case for the other features investigated in this dissertation as well, I made the distinction between three types of norms. First, as **explicit prescriptions**, I selected metalinguistic comments which are entirely devoted to the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables. An important determinant to categorise a norm as explicit is that the grammarian should thematise the topic of the spelling of the long /a/ in the commentary. This means that the context of both 'spelling', and 'long /a/' at least needs to be implied by the grammarian. However, the embedding of these elements can be done either explicitly (cf. Example 1) or implicitly by illustrating the prescription with examples in which the long *a* is used in closed syllables (cf. Example 2).

- (1) *Wat nu aangaat de Lettergreepen, waarinmen de A volko-men moet hooren, alschoon'er Médeklinders naa vólgen, het gebruik heeft wel meest gewild, dat men dan de A verdubbele en AA schryve, als in Gaan, Slaan, Haat, Maagd, enz.*
(Van Belle, 1755, p. 3)

'As for the syllables, in which the *A* must be fully heard, and which are followed by consonants, usage has proven that the *A* should be doubled, so that one writes *AA*, as in *Gaan, Slaan, Haat, Maagd*, etc.'

- (2) *Grooter swarigheyt is'er, of men, volgens de nieuwe Spelling, gaan, slaan, staan, met twee AA. dan of men volgens de oude, gaen, slaen, staen enz. met AE. moet spellen; doch alsoo ons de AE. wat zachter, en de dubbel AA. te hoog-dravende schijnt te luyden, meynen wy dat wy het met de AE. nog al bequamenlijk kon-nen afzien*
(E.C.P., 1713, p. 23)

'More weight is given to the question if one should write *gaan, slaan, staan*, with two *AA*, according to the new spelling, or whether one should spell according to the old, *gaen, slaen, staen*, etc. with *AE*. However, since *AE* sounds somewhat softer, and the double *AA* seems too pompous, we believe that we can still adeptly proceed with *AE*'

Second, language norms were classified as **implicit prescriptions** if the long /a/ is discussed without embedding the feature in the broader domain of orthography. An example of this kind is the discussion of the long /a/ in general, in which the grammarian does not clarify whether the prescription concerns pronunciation or orthography (Example 3), or in which the pronunciation of the long /a/ is contrasted to that of diphthongs, without considering the orthography of both (Example 4). Other prescriptions fitting into this category are words used as examples as part of another prescription (Example 5), and enumerations in glossaries or verbal paradigms. In the latter two cases, I always considered multiple – at least two – entries in which a long /a/ was used in a closed syllable.

- (3) *Een Klinker óft Klink-letter is een Letter die van zich zelf klinkt en ghe-luidt gheeft. De zelve zijn óft enkele; als/ a/e/i/o/u: óft dubbele/ als/ aa/ee/ii/oo/uu*
(Kók, 1649, p. 6)

‘A vowel is a letter which sounds by itself. The same are either single, as *a/e/i/o/u*, or double, as *aa/ee/ii/oo/uu*’

- (4) *De ae maakt geen lange a, gelyk dat by ge-woonte is op genoomen: maar een gemengeld geluid/ dat van beide de letteren iet meededeelt/ dat gehoord wordt in het blaeten der schaapen*
(Leupenius, 1661)

‘The *ae* does not make a long *a*, like is commonly accepted; it rather produces a mixed sound that communicates something from both letters, the sound which is also heard in the bleating of the sheep’

- (5) *De h [...] moet uytgesproken worden met het ophaelen des adems uyt de borst: en diend besonderlyk om het onderscheyd te maeken tusschen veéle woórden, die zonder deéze de zelve uytpraek zouden hebben. Zal hier van eenige voorbeél-den laeten volgen. [...] haes, wilde beest; aes, voedsel*
(Ballieu, 1792, p. 5)

‘The *h* must be pronounced with the breath drawn from the chest and serves to distinguish many words which would have the same pronunciation without it. I will give some examples of this. *haes*, wild animal; *aes*, food’

For **grammarians' usage**, ten randomly selected results of the spelling of a long /a/ in closed syllables were collected in each normative work. I allowed only for unique tokens in this selection. However, when the same token was written with different spellings for the long *a*, e.g. both the spelling *naem* and *naam* 'name' showed up in the codifier's usage, the token was included twice. For each codifier, I annotated the dominant variant based on these ten tokens. If the grammarian used the same variant in eight out of the ten observations, only one form was listed as the majority variant for that grammarian's language use. Since all codifiers in the corpus applied a consistent spelling with no or hardly any variation occurring for this feature, there was no need to annotate more than one dominant variant in grammarians' usage.

In the explicit and implicit prescriptions, grammarians did not always pronounce a clear preference for one form over the other. If codifiers were indifferent about the spelling of the long /a/, or if they simply prescribed multiple forms, all these spelling variants were listed as prescribed variants. Such mixed prescriptions for the spelling of the long /a/ are offered by six grammarians in the corpus of normative works (cf. section 4.1.3). For the analysis of language norms in this case study, the mixed prescriptions were split up as separate entries in the dataset. This way, each form mentioned in the mixed prescriptions counts for one individual prescription.

3.2 Language use

For the results in language use, I am grateful to be allowed working with the annotated dataset of Van de Voorde (2022), which was used in a study on historical pluricentricity in the Dutch language area. This dataset was ready to use, and I added only the corresponding lemmas to the corpus results for the purpose of statistical modelling.

Van de Voorde (2022) initially generated all attestations of the two main variants, i.e. <aa> and <ae>, as well as the medieval <ai> in the *HCD*. The regular expression is therefore limited to the occurrence of these three variants, which means that the form <a>, discussed as a minority variant earlier in this chapter, is not included in the regular expression. This decision has been made because the variant <a> is also the orthographic representation of the short *a* (as in *van*

‘of’). Since the regular expression searching for <a> resulted in many false positives (type I errors) for the long /a/, this would lead to labour-intensive filtering of the yielded data. The variant will therefore not be considered in this case study (cf. Van de Voorde, 2022, pp. 101-102). Other minority spelling practices like <áá>, <ee>, and <aae>, are not retrieved from the corpus either, since the previous studies of Vosters (2011), Rutten & Van der Wal (2014), and Puttaert (2019) uncovered that these forms only rarely showed up in writing. Furthermore, the analyses of Van de Voorde (2022, p. 111-112) indicated that the variant <ai> occurred 182 times out of 25.373 valid hits in the corpus. With only 0.7% of the total number of results in the entire corpus, the form can also be considered a marginal form in the *HCD*, and as such, I decided to not consider the variant <ai> in this case study. I thus focus solely on the orthographic opposition of the main variants <ae> and <aa>.

Note that only the occurrences of <ae> and <aa> are investigated when they appear in closed syllables. Van de Voorde (2022) retrieved these results from the *HCD* by searching for the hits of the long /a/, followed by a word ending, or by two or more consonants. This implies that all hits of a long /a/ in open syllables, as in the verb *slapen* ‘to sleep’, for example, are not examined in this dissertation. Derivations of words with an /a/ in an open syllable, however, are included if the derivation contains a hit in a closed syllable, as in *ik slaap* ‘I sleep’. As was mentioned earlier in this chapter as well, results of the long /a/ followed by a cluster of <-r-> and a dental consonant are only included in the corpus analysis if the long *a* derives from the lengthened short *a*.⁵²

4 Results

4.1 Language norms

The findings in language norms are the focus of this section. I first discuss the metalinguistic salience of the spelling variable, before I summarise the patterns

⁵² For more details about the cleaning and annotation of the results that are retrieved from the *HCD*, see Van de Voorde (2022, pp. 101-105).

in the prescriptions in section 4.1.2, and the treatment of alternative variants in section 4.1.3.

4.1.1 Metalinguistic salience

In determining the metalinguistic salience of this feature, I looked at the number of norm givers making an explicit prescription on spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables. These results are visualised per half century in Figure 5, where the relative frequencies are visualised on the *y*-axis, and the absolute numbers are printed on the bars.

It is immediately clear that the orthographic representation of the long /a/ has preoccupied grammarians since the sixteenth century and has continued to do so during subsequent periods in time. Already in 1550, the Flemish printer and norm giver Joas Lambrecht discussed the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables, and the issue was still a hot topic in the first half of the nineteenth century. Although a temporary decrease of explicit metalinguistic remarks can be observed in the first half of the seventeenth century, it is noteworthy that all norm givers in the sixteenth century already commented explicitly on the feature. Normative publications at the time were mostly spelling guides, of course, which possibly clarifies the prominent metalinguistic salience for a spelling feature in the earliest century. Nonetheless, from the second half of the seventeenth century onwards, metalinguistic commentary about the spelling feature grows again, and with the majority of codifiers formulating normative injunctions until the nineteenth century, grammarians' awareness on the spelling issue remained high. As explicit prescriptions were attested in 50 out of the 73 normative works in the corpus (68.5%), the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables is a feature with a very high frequency of explicit prescriptions, and as such, it holds the highest overall metalinguistic salience across all linguistic features discussed in this dissertation.

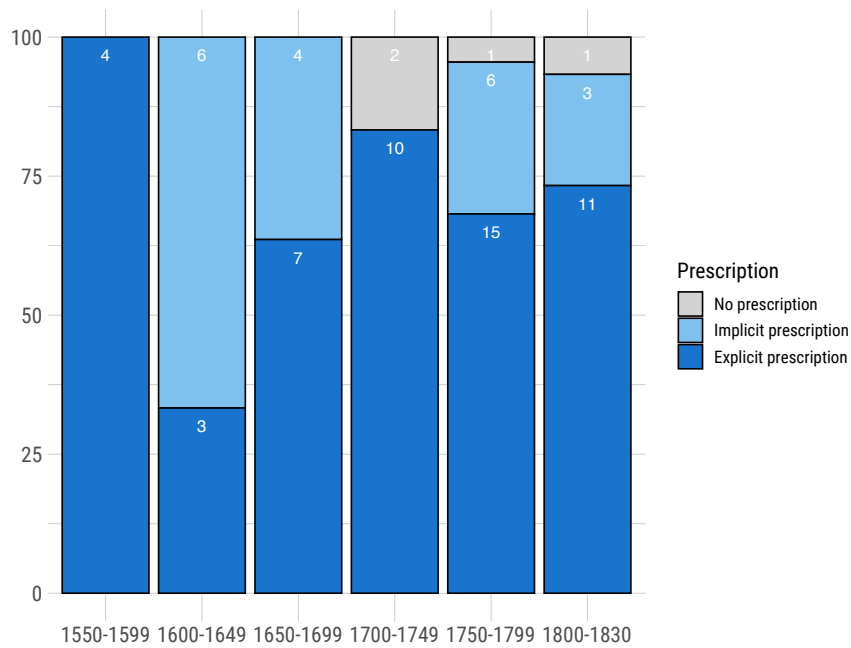


Figure 5: metalinguistic salience long /a/ in closed syllables

4.1.2 Prescriptions

In this section, I shift the focus to the variants that are prescribed by grammarians. The distinction is made between explicit and implicit prescriptions, on the one hand, and on the language practice of codifiers, on the other hand.

Norms per period

As Figure 6 shows, the general development of language norms does not present a convincing diachronic change from <ae> to <aa>. Whereas the explicit and implicit prescriptions are highly progressive in raising <aa> in the sixteenth century already, the uniform preference for the modern-day variant disappears in the following centuries, where also <ae> appears as a prescribed form. This development in language norms, moreover, indicates a slight growth of <ae> in the prescriptions – from 35% in the seventeenth century to 41.9% in the

eighteenth century – before an increase of <aa> is attested in the nineteenth century.

In the language use of grammarians, a similar pattern of variation persists across the four centuries. Alike in the explicit and implicit prescriptions, a modest increase of the older <ae> form can be noted from sixteenth- to eighteenth-century usage. When comparing grammarians' usage to the prescriptions, however, it seems that in the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, codifiers were more prone to prescribe <aa>, while at the same time, they were less eager to respond to these prescriptions in their own language practice, where a higher frequency of <ae> is observed in these two periods.

Note also that one seventeenth-century grammarian from the Southern Netherlands (i.e. Bolognino, 1657) chose not to correspond to the contemporary normative conventions, and for reasons of brevity in writing, he opted for the minority variant <á> in both his prescriptions and in writing practice. As this rare form is not picked up by other codifiers, and did also not gain ground in language use, the variant will not be discussed further in this chapter.

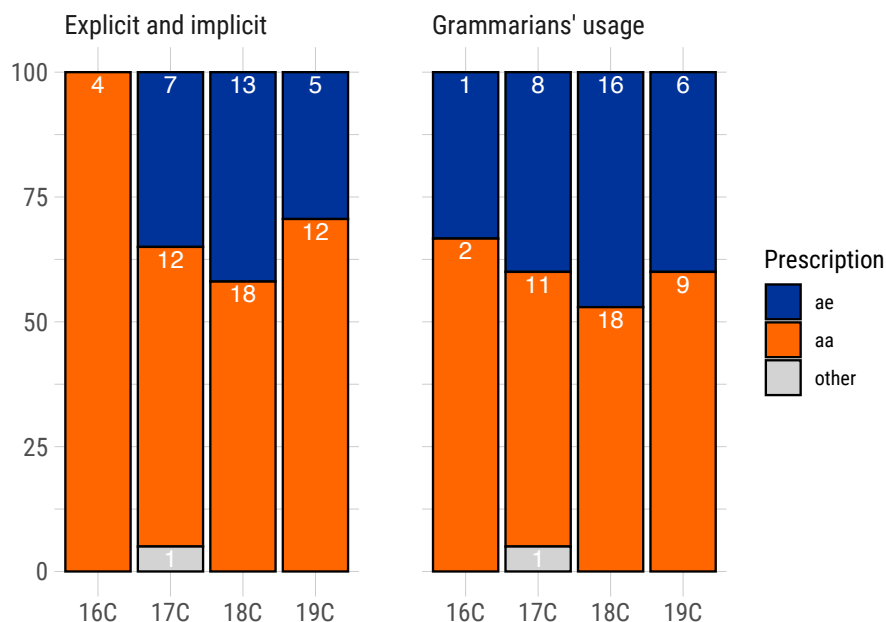


Figure 6: norms long /a/ in closed syllables per period

Norms per period and area

When the results in language norms are analysed for each part of the language area, it is clear that the lack of a compelling diachronic change towards <aa>, which was illustrated by Figure 6, is attributable to the normative evolution in the Southern Netherlands. As Figure 7 indicates, the prescriptions and language use of Northern grammarians display a complete change to <aa>, but only in the nineteenth century. Although the modern-day form is the dominant variant in Northern prescriptions across all periods, the shift to <aa> in nineteenth-century norms is preceded by a gradual increase of the variant.

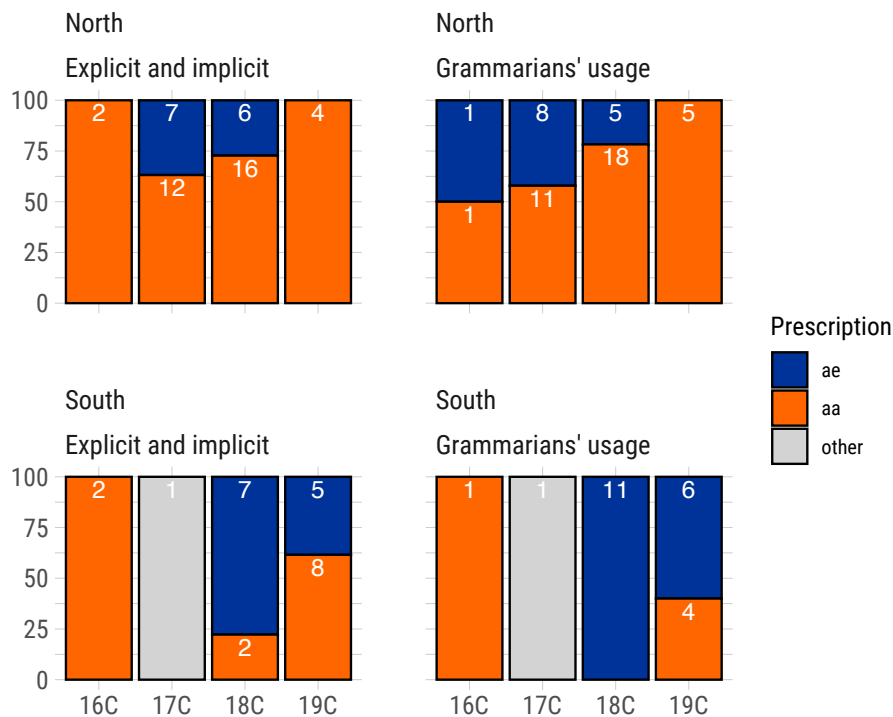


Figure 7: norms long /a/ in closed syllables per period and area

In the Southern prescriptions, on the contrary, the language norms favouring <aa> in the sixteenth century are exchanged for a majority of <ae> prescriptions in the eighteenth century (77.8%). In the nineteenth century, the proportion of <aa> in the prescriptions and in grammarians' usage increases, pointing to a

progressing normative change towards the modern-day variant in this part of the language area (cf. Vosters, 2011; Vosters et al., 2014). When the explicit and implicit prescriptions are compared to grammarians' own usage, however, it is striking that the implementation of <aa> in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century norms occurs slower in the writing practice of codifiers. For example, the proportion of <aa> in the usage of nineteenth-century Southern grammarians is 40%, while their prescriptions are already at 61.5% of <aa> forms. This difference in prescriptions and grammarians' usage can be explained by the intra-writer variation of a few codifiers in the South. After all, norm givers like De Neckere (1815), Behaegel (1817), and Cannaert (1823) prescribed both <ae> and <aa> explicitly, while in their own language use, they still opted uniformly for <ae>. This discrepancy is probably linked to the diverging patterns in the Northern and the Southern norms in the eighteenth century, where Northern grammarians generally preferred <aa> forms and Southerners mainly proposed <ae> spellings. Although Southern grammarians had started to switch to <aa> prescriptions in the nineteenth century, the variant <ae> had been employed as a marker of a Southern identity in the eighteenth-century normative discourse. As such, Southern grammarians may have been more reluctant in switching to the Northern <aa> in their own writing practice (Vosters, 2011, p. 238).

4.1.3 Treatment of alternative variants

In this section, I investigate whether grammarians commented on alternative variants that were applied in usage, and I look at how codifiers dealt with these competing variants. To what extent did norm givers allow for variation in language use, and how did they treat and evaluate the forms that they did not prescribe?

As was explained in section 4.1.1, the orthographic representation of the long /a/ in closed syllables is a feature that enjoyed a tremendous amount of metalinguistic attention from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Table 6 thereby shows that most of the grammarians formulating an explicit or implicit prescription on the spelling issue also discussed other variants that were applied in language use. In as many as 63% (n=46) of the normative works, an alternative variant is mentioned, in addition to a prescribed form. In this respect, it is

apparent that – except for one codifier (cf. Van Geesdalle, 1700) – only the two main variants, <ae> and <aa>, are addressed as alternative variants in these normative discussions, indicating that minority spellings, such as <a> and <ai>, did not make it into the injunctions about the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables.

When it comes to the discussion of variation, grammarians started motivating their choice for the *superius scripta* <aa> over the older <ae> already in the sixteenth century (cf. Goemans, 1899-1900, p. 197). The arguments that were raised for rejecting the spelling <ae> often related to achieving grapheme-phoneme correspondence. In line with the contemporary belief that each sound should be represented by a distinct grapheme in writing, norm givers like Lambrecht (1550) and De Heuiter (1581) associated the variant <ae> with a stronger palatal pronunciation of /a/, as it was produced by speakers of Dutch in Holland and Zeeland. Other grammarians in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries argued that <ae> rather reflected the mixed sound of a diphthong, in which both the sounds of /a/ and /e/ were heard (e.g. Spiegel, 1584; Leupenius, 1653). As such, these early grammarians did not simply reject the spelling <ae> that had been used by their ancestors (e.g. Spiegel, 1584, p. 22), but in the form of permissives (Moschonas, 2020), they reallocated the variant to linguistic contexts where the palatal sound of a diphthong was to be displayed. The most discussed scenario in which grammarians wanted the spelling <ae> to appear is right before the cluster of -r followed by a dental consonant, i.e. the contexts in which *ē* was still used in the period of Middle Dutch, which fall out of the scope of this case study (cf. *supra*). Even though these arguments about the correspondence between pronunciation and orthography were raised already by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century norm givers, the same arguments for the reallocation of <ae> continued to be used by grammarians until well into the eighteenth century. As Northern codifiers generally preferred the variant <aa>, it does not come as a surprise that particularly Northerners assigned the form <ae> to other linguistic contexts. A number of these grammarians, however, chose to dismiss the variant <ae>:

Met de AA. spelt men, Gaan, haat, maagd, waarvoor men ook schryft, Gaen, haet, maegt; maar hoewel dit van etlyken nóg met kracht voorgestaan wordt, evenwel meenen andere, op den voorgang der Tweespraake van de Nederduyt-sche Letterkonst, door de Kamer in Liefde bloeyende te Amsterdam, in den jaare 1584,

uytgegeeven, en op 't voorbeeld van veele andere aanzienlyke Opbouweren onzer taale, dat die woorden veel beter met AA. gespeld worden
(Séwel, 1708, p. 3)

'With AA one spells *gaan, haat, maagd*, for which one also writes *gaen, haet, maegt*; but although this spelling is still strongly advocated by some, others believe, based on the precedent of the *Tweespraake van de Nederduytsche Letterkonst* published by the Chamber of Rhetoric *In Liefde Bloeyende* in Amsterdam in the year 1584, and the example of many other significant works in our language, that these words are much better spelled with AA'

As a comparison, the form <ae> was never reallocated nor rejected by Southern grammarians in the eighteenth century. As section 4.1.2 also indicates, this implies that <ae> is the preferred variant of Southern grammarians, who also rely on pronunciation at first to underpin their arguments. According to early codifiers like Van der Schuere (1612) and Van Geesdalle (1700), Southerners have a less 'open' and a 'softer' pronunciation of the long vowel *a*, which endorses the use of the variant <ae>.

Although there are a few exceptions of Northerners prescribing <ae> (e.g. Moonen, 1706), and Southern grammarians allowing for <aa> (Van Geesdalle, 1700), a clear North-South divide emerges in the eighteenth-century normative discourse, as Vosters (2011, pp. 238-240) has demonstrated. This is also illustrated by a codifier like E.C.P. (1713), who was a Southerner operating in the Northern Netherlands. Because of the Southern target audience of his grammar, his normative work is one of the few Northern publications in which <ae> was prescribed. Consequently, the variant <aa> is increasingly portrayed as a feature of Northern language use by Southern codifiers. Ballieu (1792, p. 9), for example, clarifies:

De Hollanders gebruyken [...] in plaets van de e, nog eene a, en schryven aldus: daar, waar, gaan, klaar, vermaanen, enz.; maer dit is buyten onze tael, en zeg dit alleenlyk tot gemak der geéne, die somwylen hollandsche schriften, of boeken leézen

'The Hollandic use another <a> instead of <e>, and they thus write: *daar, waar, gaan, klaar, vermaanen* etc.; however, this is outside of our language, and I say this only for the ease of those who sometimes read Hollandic transcripts or books'

However, also in line with the findings of Vosters (2011), Table 6 shows a growing tolerance emerging in the norms from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, where Southern grammarians start allowing for <aa> (e.g. Van Boterdael, 1776, 1785; Stéven, 1784). Although Southern codifiers still considered the form ‘Hollandic’, and the variant was therefore opposed by a few conservative grammarians in the nineteenth century (e.g. Willems, 1824), most norm givers in the South now accepted – or even preferred – the spelling <aa>.

GRAMMARIAN	YEAR	AREA	PRESCR. EXPL.	PRESCR. IMPL.	PRESCR. USAGE	OTHER VARIANT	TREAT MENT
Lambrecht	1550	South	aa	--	aa	ae	reallocated
Sexagius	1576	South	aa	aa	--	ae	reallocated
De Heuter	1581	North	aa	aa	ae	ae	reallocated
Spiegel	1584	North	aa	--	aa	ae	reallocated
Van der Schuere	1612	North	ae	--	ae	aa	rejected
De Hubert	1624	North	aa	--	aa	ae	reallocated
Van Heule	1625	North	--	ae	ae	aa	rejected
Dafforne	1627	North	--	aa	ae	ae	reallocated
Ampzing	1628	North	ae	--	ae	aa	rejected
Plemp	1632	North	--	ae	ae		
Van Heule	1633	North	--	ae	ae	aa	reallocated
Montanus	1635	North	--	ae/aa	ae	--	--
Kók	1649	North	--	aa	aa	--	--
Van der Weyden	1651	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	rejected
Leupenius	1653	North	aa	--	aa	ae	reallocated
Bolognino	1657	South	á	á	á	ae/aa	reallocated/ rejected
De Gelliers	1661 [± 1640]	North	aa	--	aa	ae	reallocated
Van Niervaart	1669 [± 1600]	North	--	ae	ae	--	--
Van Atteveld	1682	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	reallocated
Gosens van Helderen	1683	North	aa	--	aa	--	--
Winschooten	1683	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	reallocated
Vollenhove	1686	North	--	aa	aa	--	--
Duykerius	1696	North	--	aa	aa	--	--
Francius	1699	North	--	--	aa	--	--
Van Geesdalle	1700	South	ae/aa	ae	ae	â	tolerated
Nylöe	1703	North	aa	--	aa	ae	reallocated
Hilarides	1705	North	--	--	aa	--	--
Moonen	1706	North	ae	ae	ae	aa	rejected
Nylöe	1707	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	reallocated
Séwel	1708	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	rejected
Séwel	1712	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	rejected
E.C.P.	1713	North	ae	ae	ae	aa	rejected
Ten Kate	1723	North	ae/aa	--	aa	--	--

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Huydecoper	1730	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	reallocated
Hakvoord	1746 [1698]	North	aa	aa	aa	--	--
Van Belle	1748	North	--	--	aa	ae	reallocated
Verpoorten	1752	South	--	--	ae	--	--
Van Belle	1755	North	aa	--	aa	--	--
P.B.	1757	South	ae	ae	ae	aa	rejected
Verpoorten	1759	South	ae	ae	ae	aa	rejected
Des Roches	[1761]	South	ae		ae	--	--
Elzevier	1761	North	ae	ae	ae	aa	rejected
De Haes	1764	North	ae	ae	ae	aa	rejected
Van der Palm	1769	North	ae	ae	ae	aa	tolerated
Zeydelaar	1769	North	aa	--	aa	ae	rejected
Zeydelaar	1772	North	--	aa	aa	ae	reallocated
Van Bellegheem & Waterschoot	[1773]	South	--	--	ae	--	--
Janssens	[1775]	South	--	--	ae	--	--
Van Boterdael	1776 [± 1774]	South	ae	--	ae	aa	tolerated
Cramer	1777 [± 1769]	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	reallocated
Zeydelaar	1781	North	aa	--	aa	ae	reallocated
Stéven	1784 [1714]	South	aa	--	ae	ae	tolerated
Van Boterdael	1785	South	ae	--	ae	aa	tolerated
Ballieu	1792 [1771]	South	ae	ae	ae	aa	rejected
Van Bolhuis	1793	North	aa	--	aa	ae	rejected
Wester	1797	North	--	aa	aa	--	--
Van Varik	1799	North	--	aa	aa	--	--
Weiland	1799	North	aa	--	aa	--	--
Siegenbeek	1804	North	aa	--	aa	ae	rejected
Weiland	1805	North	aa	--	aa	--	--
Schilperoort	1806	North	--	aa	aa	--	--
Anslijn	1814	North	--	--	aa	--	--
Henckel	1815	South	--	aa	ae	ae	tolerated
De Neckere	1815	South	ae/aa	--	ae	--	--
Ter Bruggen	1817-1818 [1815]	South	ae	--	ae	aa	tolerated
Behaegel	1817	South	ae/aa	ae/aa	ae	--	--
Cannaert	1823	South	ae/aa	--	ae	--	--
Moke	1823	South	aa	--	aa	--	--
Willems	1824	South	ae	ae	ae	aa	rejected
Behaegel	[± 1825]	South	aa	aa	aa	--	--
Bilderdijk	1826	North	aa	aa	aa	ae	reallocated
De Simpel	[1827]	South	aa	aa	aa	ae	rejected
Behaegel	[± 1829]	South	--	aa	aa	ae	rejected

Table 6: norms and variants treatment long /a/ in closed syllables

Conclusion

The results in language norms revealed that the orthographic representation of the long /a/ in closed syllables was an extremely salient topic in the normative discourse of the entire Early and Late Modern period, with most grammarians commenting explicitly on the feature across the four centuries under investigation. The two main variants, <ae> and <aa>, take a dominant position in these normative discussions. Although the new <aa> is prescribed in the sixteenth century already by both Northern and Southern codifiers, a striking distinction emerges in the normative discourse of the eighteenth century, where the dominance of <aa> forms in the Northern prescriptions stands in sharp contrast to the preference for <ae> variants in the South. As Vosters (2011, pp. 238-240) clarified, these two spelling variants grew into a shibboleth of Northern (<aa>) or Southern (<ae>) language use in the Southern normative discourse of the eighteenth century.

Although Southern codifiers continued to stress the language-cultural and identity discrepancy that the different spelling practices expressed, in the decades leading up to the nineteenth century, and especially in the early nineteenth century, during the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, most grammarians in the South decided that both <ae> and <aa> could be applied in Southern usage (cf. also Vosters, 2011). Since all Northern grammarians prescribed <aa> at the time, the normative shift towards the modern-day variant was initiated later in the Southern part of the language area, where the mixed prescriptions of Southern grammarians point to a progressing change in language norms.

The observed patterns in language norms and the discussion of alternative variants thus indicate that both Northern and Southern codifiers were generally strict in banning variation for this spelling feature. Up until the second half of the eighteenth century, most codifiers prescribed and used only one of the two spelling variants, while they proscribed the other variant. As such, not only did the United Kingdom of the Netherlands play an important role in the normative shift to the Northern <aa> in the Southern normative discourse (Vosters, 2011, pp. 238-240; Rutten, 2011, pp. 186-189), the period right before and during the reunification also influenced the flexibility in the prescriptions of Southern grammarians. Although Northerners continued to prescribe only the

modern-day variant, in the normative change towards <aa>, most codifiers in the South became more lenient in allowing for variation between <ae> and <aa>. This flexibility of Southern grammarians is only of a temporary nature, since at the end of the period of reunification, codifiers started following the Northerners in strict <aa> prescriptions.⁵³

4.2 Language use

In this section, I investigate whether the developments and differences in Northern and Southern norms are also visible in language use. In interpreting the patterns in usage for this spelling feature, I analysed both the observed data from the *HCD*, as well as the results from a generalised mixed-effects logistic regression model that was generated in *R*.

For the inferential statistics, I started from a maximal logistic regression model using *glmer* (Bates et al., 2015), containing three fixed predictors and two random effects. This means that the independent variables *period*, *region*, and *genre*, as well as all possible three-way interactions of these individual factors were included in the model as fixed predictors, whereas the document (*id*) in which the attestation appeared, and the *lemma* corresponding to the hit in the usage corpus were involved as random predictors in the model. Due to convergence problems of the algorithm, however, I started over from a minimal model with an intercept only, and I carried out a bidirectional model selection process, first by manually adding predictors to check which fixed predictors contribute most to the model. Although significance-based testing with the function *anova* (Girden, 1992) indicated that none of the individual predictors made a significant contribution to the reference model (intercept only), I continued with all important independent variables, i.e. *period*, *region*, and *genre* as fixed predictors. Based on the AIC scores of both the intercept-only model, the one-predictor models, and the models with multiple predictors, the performance of the regression model enhanced best from an AIC of 33.027 in the reference model to an AIC of 12.975 in the model with *period*, *region*, and *genre* as fixed predictors. Correlations between the independent variables were eventually

⁵³ Although there are other works in the Southern Netherlands, which are not included in this corpus of normative works, written by more conservative, particularistic grammarians who were still prescribing <ae> at the time (Vosters, 2011, p. 239).

excluded from the model for different reasons: (1) the algorithm did not converge with three-way interactions; also, and related to the previous argument, (2) not all levels of the response variable were attested in each of the interactions, which led to a problem of complete separation, also when considering two-way interactions only (cf. Gries, 2021, pp. 338-339); and therefore (3) the inclusion of interactions did not result in a significantly better model. The random effects, *id* and *lemma*, on the contrary, improved the model, as both an AIC of 2668.4 and the Conditional R^2 score of 0.989 (as opposed to the Marginal R^2 score of 0.733) illustrate. A backwards significance-based selection process using *drop1* was ultimately applied to this maximal model, and the function made me remove the insignificant predictor *genre* from the model. This implies that the final regression model consists of two important independent variables – *period* and *region* – as fixed predictors, as well as *id* and *lemma* as random effects.

Both the Conditional R^2 score and the C-statistic of 0.99 suggest an excellent model fit, while a 98% model accuracy points to solid predictive performances. When checking the model-diagnostic plots, however, the residual test detected a significant deviation. These residuals were verified manually, to make sure no mistakes were made in the collection or processing of the data. It appeared that some extreme outliers, such as the only two <aa> results in the sixteenth century, strongly influenced the residuals in the model. The model diagnostics did not reveal any serious problems otherwise, allowing me to proceed with the interpretation of the final regression model.

The regression table of this mixed-effects logistic regression analysis is outlined in Figure 8, where the log odds of <aa> as an incoming variant are shown. The model predicts a significant effect for the two fixed predictors: *region* and *period*. These results are analysed in the remaining of this section, where they are interpreted together with the observed patterns in language use.

It is important to stress that the variance components of the random effects indicate that most variability within the random effects is described by the document (*id*), implying that language use differs more between the documents – or between the individual writers for that matter – in the corpus than it does between the different lemmas (*lemma*), where only little variance is attested. Such an outcome for the random effects proves the relevance of investigating

variation for this spelling feature at a sociolinguistic – rather than at a purely linguistic – level. In the next section, I continue with the discussion of the results in language use. Where applicable, I always interpret the effect plots of the regression analysis first before supplementing these statistical findings with the observed data from the usage corpus.

Main effects on the occurrence of <-aa> as incoming form			
<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Log-Odds</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	-12.15	-16.55 – -7.75	<0.001
REGION - Zeeland	-0.95	-3.80 – 1.89	0.511
REGION - Brabant	-13.33	-20.16 – -6.50	<0.001
REGION - Vlaanderen	-22.19	-27.51 – -16.87	<0.001
PERIOD - 17th century	2.09	-2.58 – 6.76	0.380
PERIOD - 18th century	20.46	14.29 – 26.63	<0.001
PERIOD - 19th century	25.14	19.50 – 30.78	<0.001
Random Effects			
σ^2	3.29		
τ_{00} LEMMA	0.66		
τ_{00} ID	73.84		
ICC	0.96		
N_{ID}	209		
N_{LEMMA}	1366		
Observations	25181		
Marginal R^2 / Conditional R^2	0.733 / 0.989		

Figure 8: regression table of the main effects on the occurrence of <aa> as the incoming form in language use

General distribution

In total, 25.181 valid results in which the long /a/ was used in a closed syllable were obtained from the *HCD*. As Figure 9 shows, these results contain observations of the two main variants, <ae> and <aa>. The minority spelling variant <ai>, which only represented 0.7% (n=182) of the data in the study of Van de Voorde (2022), is not considered in this case study. Here, the general

distribution of the results shows that the traditional variant <ae> is clearly the dominant form in the corpus, as it makes up for 63.6% (n=16.010) of the observed data. The modern-day <aa> is used in 36.4% (n=9.171) of the results.

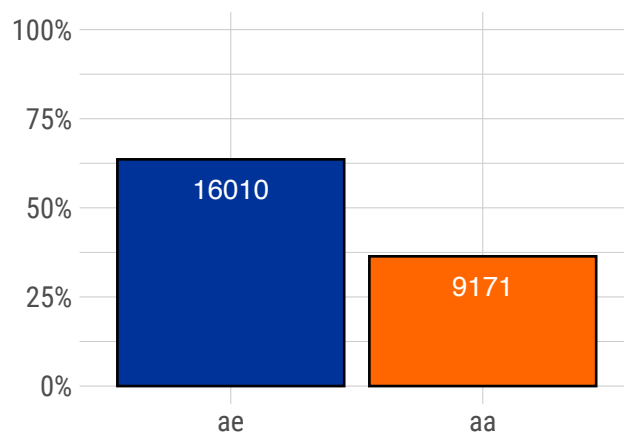
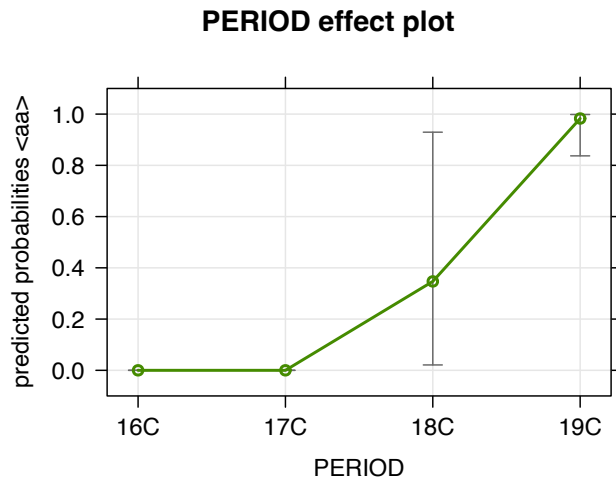


Figure 9: general distribution long /a/ in closed syllables

Per period

As the regression table already revealed, the predictor *period* is significant in the regression model. More specifically, when compared to the sixteenth century as the reference level, a highly significant effect is predicted in the eighteenth century ($p = < 0.001$) and the nineteenth century ($p = < 0.001$). This effect is also visualised in Figure 10, where the statistical model presumes a significant increase of the incoming variant <aa>, but only in the two most recent periods.

Figure 10: effect plot *period* – long /a/ in closed syllables

The same pattern is underpinned by the observed data, shown in Table 7 and Figure 11. Whereas the outgoing variant <ae> is used almost exclusively in the data of the sixteenth century (99.9%, $n=3.889$) and the seventeenth century (92.9%, $n=6.497$), the dominance of the form disappeared in the eighteenth century, where the proportion of <ae> suddenly decreased to 47.1% ($n=3.300$). As such, from the eighteenth century onwards, the modern-day <aa> occupied the dominant position. Although the statistical model envisages large confidence intervals in the eighteenth-century data (cf. Figure 10), which can be explained by underlying regional patterns in the results, both the model's predictions and the observed data suggest that the eighteenth century can be seen as the turning point in the change from <ae> to <aa> in language use.

	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	3.889 (99.9%)	2 (0.1%)
17 th century	6.497 (92.2%)	498 (7.1%)
18 th century	3.300 (47.1%)	3.704 (52.9%)
19 th century	2.324 (31.9%)	4.967 (68.1%)

Table 7: absolute and relative frequencies long /a/ in closed syllables per period

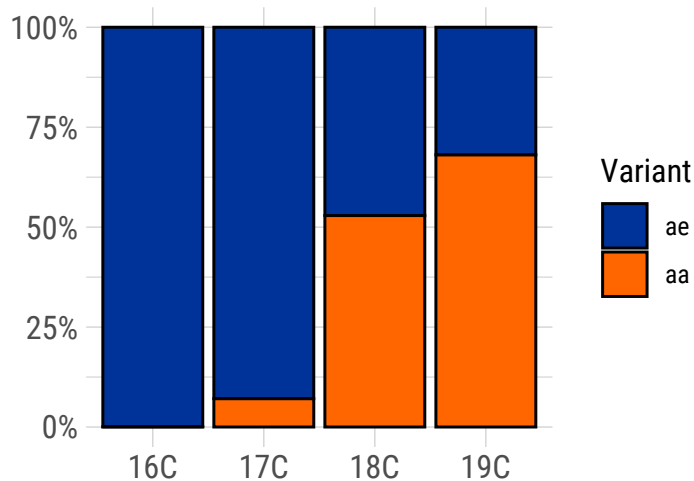


Figure 11: relative frequencies long /a/ in closed syllables per period

This is also evidenced when comparing usage data from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While an administrative text from Holland mainly applies the spelling <ae> in the seventeenth century (Example 6), in a similar text from the same region, the writing practice shifts to <aa> in the eighteenth century (Example 7).

- (6) *doch sullen alle de tarbrieven [...] byde voors[eide] vollers **aen haer** voors[eit] verdient arbeidsloon voor gelt moeten **aengenomen** werden ende **daeraen** cortinge laten strecken*
(ADM-1650-HO-7)

‘yet all the tar letters by the aforementioned fullers must be accepted as payment for their earned wagers in cash, and a deduction must be applied to them’

- (7) *Den meede Directeur [...] Sal direct of indirect eenig Part of Deel mogen hebben in eenige Leverantien, noch **Aannemer** mogen zijn van eenige werken die van Stadts weegen worden **aanbesteed** of **gedaan**, maken, noch eenig Deel **daar** inne hebben*
(ADM-1750-HO-5)

‘The co-director shall not, directly or indirectly, have any share or interest in any supplies, nor may he be a contractor for any works that are commissioned or carried out on behalf of the city, not have any part therein’

Per period and region

The regression model also pointed to a significant effect for the predictor *region*, where language use in two of the regions deviates significantly from the reference level (Holland). As Figure 12 shows, the strong significant effect is situated in Brabant ($p = < 0.001$) and Vlaanderen ($p = < 0.001$), where the model predicts for usage to strongly adhere to the outgoing variant <ae>.

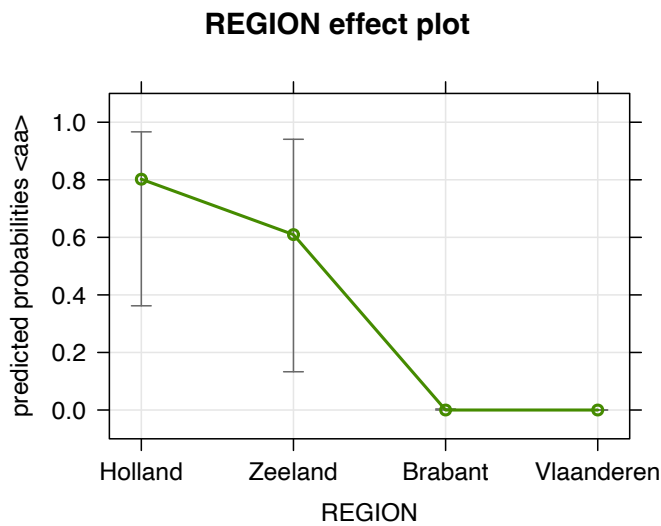


Figure 12: effect plot *region* - long /a/ in closed syllables

The significantly conservative usage in Brabant and Vlaanderen is also supported by the observed data in language use. In Figure 13, the observed results in usage are summarised per period and region (cf. also Table 8).

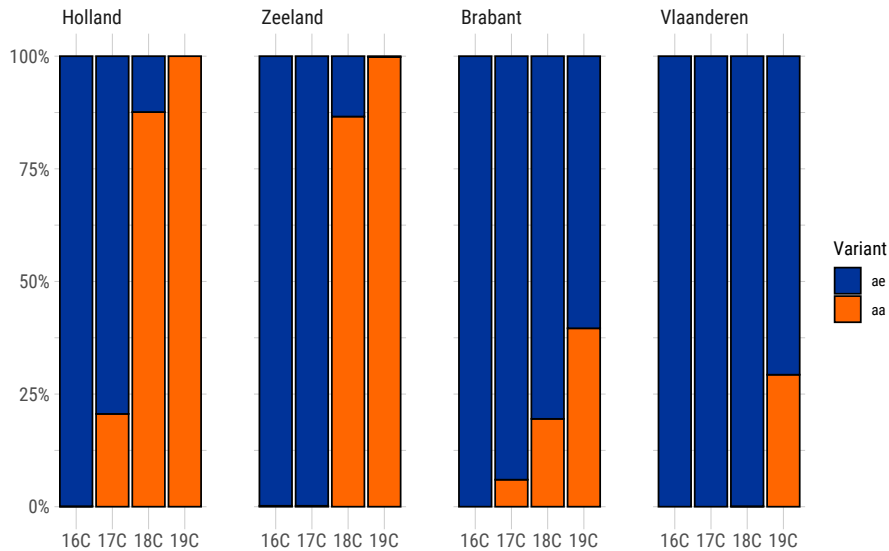


Figure 13: relative frequencies long /a/ in closed syllables per period and region

Although this particular interaction was not included in the regression model, and the significant effect for *region* thus solely applies to overall patterns in usage, the observed data signify that – besides a few individual occurrences in the sixteenth century – the incoming <aa> first showed up in seventeenth-century Holland (20.6%, n=403) and Brabant (6%, n=92), before the form convincingly spread to Zeeland in the eighteenth century (86.6%, n=1.660), and to Vlaanderen in the nineteenth century (29.3%, n=518). As Van de Voorde (2022, pp. 122-123) indicated, this dispersion of <aa>, with the form spreading from central to peripheral regions in the North and the South of the language area, points to a centre-periphery distinction in the early periods. However, from the eighteenth century onwards, the variant <aa> increases immensely in Northern usage, where it compellingly takes a majority position in Holland and Zeeland. In the Southern provinces, Brabant and Vlaanderen, the older <ae> remains the dominant form at the time, which suggests a North-South discrepancy in the two most recent periods, with Northerners using <aa> (cf. Example 8) and Southerners adhering to <ae> (cf. Example 9) (Van de Voorde, 2022, pp. 122-123).

- (8) *en des **anderendaags** redden wij na den Haag met de koets van Neef van de Linde over Delft **daar** de paarden mogten drin-ken*
(EGO-1750-ZE-3)

‘and the next day we traveled to Den Haag with the coach of cousin van de Linde via Delft, where the horses were allowed to drink’

- (9) *Den 29 Januarii 1767 zyn wy van Ipere vertrocken, wy hebben het **noenmael** genomen by den pastor van Hallewijn, **alwaer** wy gedronken hebben een excellent glaezetien rooden champagne, den selven dag zyn wy gearriveert tot Rijssel, **alwaer** wy zeer wel **onthaelt** zyn geweest*
(EGO-1750-VL-4)

‘On the 29th of January 1767, we departed from Ieper; we had lunch with the pastor of Halluin, where we drank an excellent glass of red champagne. That same day, we arrived in Rijsel, where we were received very well’

Although the disparate spelling conventions in the central and the peripheral regions in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, on the one hand, and in the Northern and the Southern part of the language area in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, on the other hand, cannot be measured in terms of statistical significance due to the deletion of interactions in the regression model, a pairwise comparison of the different regions reveals that usage in Brabant and Vlaanderen not only differs significantly from Holland as the reference level, but also from Zeeland as the other Northern region ($p = < 0.001$). When contrasting overall usage in Brabant to usage in Vlaanderen, on the contrary, the occurrence of <aa> does not deviate significantly between the Southern regions ($p = 0.007$).⁵⁴ These findings imply that variation for this spelling feature can generally be viewed from a North-South perspective, in which usage behaves similarly in Holland and Zeeland, but also in Brabant and Vlaanderen. This geographical discrepancy enables a discussion of variation in spelling for each part of the language area (instead of per region) in the remaining of this section. The nuances regarding region, with (1) early <aa> usage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries characterising only the central regions of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, and (2) with Vlaanderen implementing the

⁵⁴ The different levels of the predictor region were statistically compared via the function *emmeans* in R (Lenth, 2022).

present-day form only in the nineteenth century, should not be neglected, though.

Holland

	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	991 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)
17 th century	1.554 (79.4%)	403 (20.6%)
18 th century	244 (12.4%)	1.731 (87.6%)
19 th century	0 (0%)	1.958 (100%)

Zeeland

	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	439 (99.8%)	1 (0.2%)
17 th century	1.800 (99.8%)	3 (0.2%)
18 th century	257 (13.4%)	1.660 (86.6%)
19 th century	4 (0.2%)	1.791 (99.8%)

Brabant

	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	1.237 (100%)	0 (0%)
17 th century	1.446 (94.0%)	92 (6.0%)
18 th century	1.287 (80.5%)	312 (19.5%)
19 th century	1.069 (60.4%)	700 (39.6%)

Vlaanderen

	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	1.222 (100%)	0 (0%)
17 th century	1.697 (100%)	0 (0%)
18 th century	1.512 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)
19 th century	1.251 (70.7%)	518 (29.3%)

Table 8: absolute and relative frequencies long /a/ in closed syllables per period and area

Per period and area

To illustrate the matter, let me transform the data, and visualise the results for each part of the language area now. As Figure 14 shows, this results in a comparable plot, in which the similarities between Northern and Southern usage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and the divergence in Northern and Southern language practices in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is

apparent (cf. also Table 9). Although usage thus behaves similarly in the early periods, with <ae> being the dominant form in both parts of the language area, Northern language users switch abruptly to <aa> in the eighteenth century (from 10.8% <aa> in the seventeenth century to 87.1% <aa> in the eighteenth century), before the form is fully established in the nineteenth century. This pattern in Northern usage is entirely in line with the findings of Rutten & Van der Wal (2014), who also discovered a dominance of <ae> forms in the seventeenth century. Furthermore, the results also correspond to the outcome presented in Vosters, Rutten, Van der Wal & Vandenbussche (2012) and Vosters, Rutten & Van der Wal (2010), who observed a majority of <aa> forms in Northern usage of the eighteenth century.

As opposed to the developments in Northern usage, the older <ae> remains the dominant form across the four centuries in the Southern Netherlands. Although the modern-day <aa> rises considerably from 2.8% (n=92) in the seventeenth century to 34.4% (n=1.218) in the nineteenth century, the variant does not seem to break through like it did in the corpus of Vosters (2011), where <aa> settled as the majority variant in the nineteenth century. In Vosters's (2011) study, the modern-day <aa> even increasingly managed to reduce the use of <ae> to the point where the form was almost no longer applied. Although a decline of the older <ae> can be discerned in the *HCD* as well, with the variant still representing 65.6% (n=2.320) of the results in the nineteenth century, the change to <aa> in the South is clearly not as progressed as it was in the corpus study of Vosters (2011). This discrepancy may be explained by the official status of many of Vosters's administrative and judicial documents. Although the *HCD* also contains highly formal texts, the court clerks in the corpus of Vosters probably adhered to more stipulated (language) guidelines and regulations than the writers in the *HCD*, which might in turn explain the stronger presence of the spelling <aa> in Vosters's (2011) research.

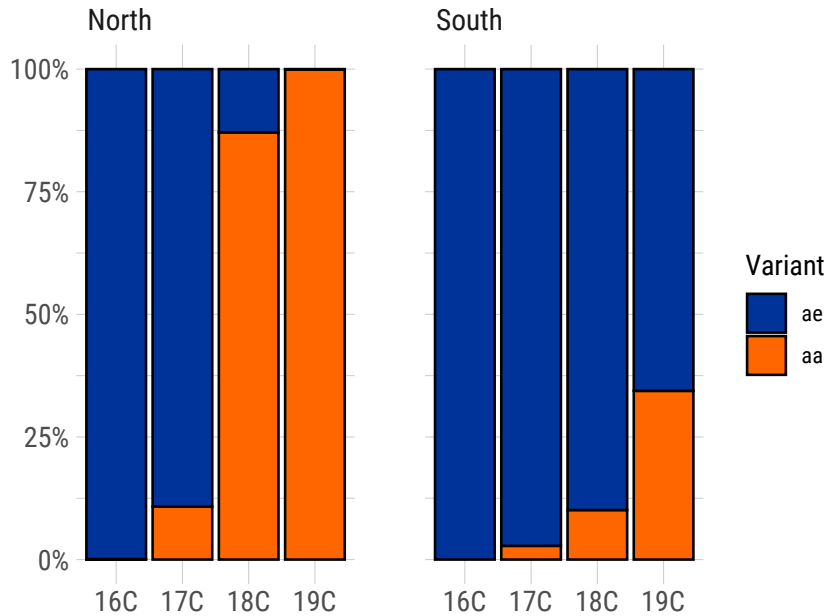


Figure 14: relative frequencies long /a/ in closed syllables per period and area

	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS		SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS	
	<ae>	<aa>	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	1.430 (99.9%)	2 (0.1%)	2.459 (100%)	0 (0.0%)
17 th century	3.354 (89.2%)	406 (10.8%)	3.143 (97.2%)	92 (2.8%)
18 th century	501 (12.9%)	3.391 (87.1%)	2.799 (89.9%)	313 (10.1%)
19 th century	4 (0.1%)	3.749 (99.9%)	2.320 (65.6%)	1.218 (34.4%)

Table 9: absolute and relative frequencies long /a/ in closed syllables per period and area

Per period, area, and genre

Although *genre* turned out to be an insignificant predictor and was therefore omitted from the regression model, I also discuss genre differences in the *HCD*, as they might shed light on discrepancies in usage related to period. After all, even if the predictor in general is not significant, it is relevant to examine whether and when certain genres behave differently in the use of outgoing or incoming variants.

The insignificance of *genre* as a predictor, which was already indicated by the regression model, is now also visible in the observed data summarised in Figure 15 and Table 10. The development of the spelling across the different genres displays a comparable pattern of change over time, in both the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. In the North, where a massive increase of the incoming <aa> is established in the eighteenth century, all genres represent the same rise of the modern-day variant, with relative frequencies ranging between 83% (n=1.132) in the administrative texts, and 89.4% in the ego-documents (n=1.084) and pamphlets (n=1.175). In the latter two genres, the form <aa> appears in respectively 23.8% and 11.2% of the seventeenth-century results already. This may indicate that the Northern ego-documents and pamphlets were progressive genres in implementing <aa> a century earlier. However, when considering that these seventeenth-century results of <aa> mainly derive from two Hollandic ego-documents, and from one Hollandic pamphlet, the early <aa> usage in these genres probably points to progressive individual writers rather than to genre tendencies in general.

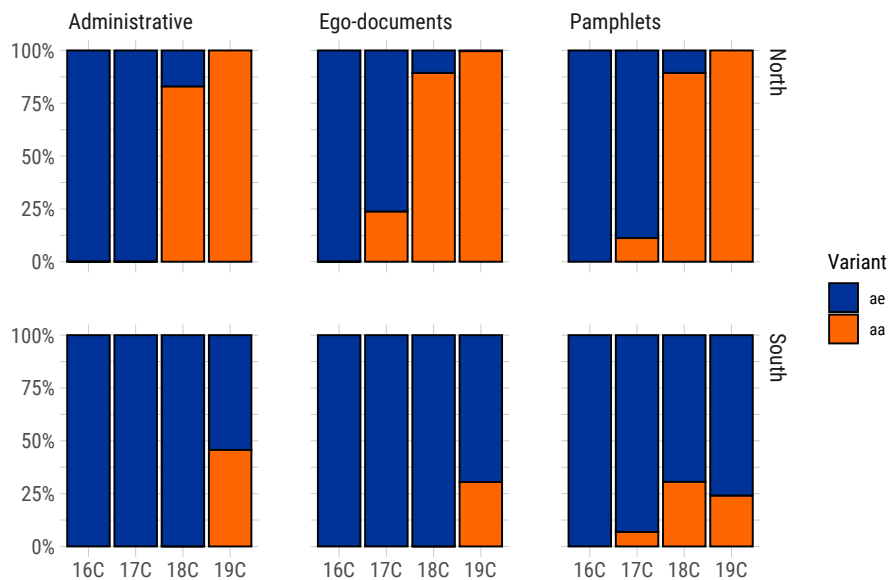


Figure 15: relative frequencies long /a/ in closed syllables per period, area, and genre

Administrative texts

	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS		SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS	
	<ae>	<aa>	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	550 (99.8%)	1 (0.2%)	555 (100%)	0 (0.0%)
17 th century	1.323 (99.8%)	2 (0.2%)	821 (100%)	0 (0.0%)
18 th century	232 (17.0%)	1.132 (83.0%)	951 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	1.236 (100%)	771 (54.3%)	648 (45.7%)

Ego-documents

	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS		SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS	
	<ae>	<aa>	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	638 (99.8%)	1 (0.2%)	1.060 (100%)	0 (0.0%)
17 th century	792 (76.2%)	247 (23.8%)	1.083 (100%)	0 (0.0%)
18 th century	129 (10.6%)	1.084 (89.4%)	1.142 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)
19 th century	4 (0.3%)	1.186 (99.7%)	650 (69.5%)	285 (30.5%)

Pamphlets

	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS		SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS	
	<ae>	<aa>	<ae>	<aa>
16 th century	242 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	844 (100%)	0 (0.0%)
17 th century	1.239 (88.8%)	157 (11.2%)	1.239 (93.1%)	92 (6.9%)
18 th century	140 (10.6%)	1.175 (89.4%)	706 (69.4%)	311 (30.6%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	1.327 (100%)	899 (75.9%)	285 (24.1%)

Table 10: absolute and relative frequencies long /a/ in closed syllables per period, area, and genre

The usage patterns in the South deviate considerably from those in the North, as was already discussed. The disparate development from Northern usage is now also discernible across the different genres in the South. While the shift towards <aa> is complete across all genres in the nineteenth-century North, in none of the genres in the South, <aa> is the dominant variant at the time. The Southern usage data from the *HCD* illustrate only an initiating change towards <aa> in the administrative texts and the ego-documents of the nineteenth century. In the printed pamphlets, on the contrary, the spelling <aa> was attested in the seventeenth (6.9%, n=92) and eighteenth centuries already (30.6%, n=311). Although the majority of the <aa> forms in the seventeenth century can be attributed to one progressive pamphlet from Brabant, multiple pamphlets from the region of Brabant contributed to the <aa> forms in the eighteenth century, which suggests that the eighteenth-century pamphlets from Brabant have taken the lead in the change towards the modern-day variant in Southern usage. The printed genre, however, fails to hold this lead, since the relative proportion of

<aa> was in the nineteenth century lower in the Southern pamphlets than in the other genres of the *HCD*.

The importance of the individual

As was apparent in the previous section, some influential results were attributed to progressive spellings in specific documents. Since also the regression analysis indicated that large proportions of variation in usage are described by the random effect *id*, I briefly discuss variability in the individual documents of the *HCD*.

When it comes to variation in each of the documents in the usage corpus, an overall exploration of the data revealed an interesting finding. Without considering any of the independent variables (period, region, and genre), the proportion of <ae> versus <aa> in the individual documents indicated that writers were generally highly consistent in applying only one of the two spelling variants, with the preferred form being used in at least 90% of the results in each document. Only in 5% (n=11) of the documents more variation was attested. The consistent usage is illustrated by the progressive seventeenth-century writers in Holland and Brabant discussed above, who were all early <aa> spellers adopting the modern-day variant (almost) uniformly in their pamphlets or ego-documents. Yet, still in the nineteenth century, a few consistent writers from Brabant and Vlaanderen were largely responsible for the proportion of <aa> in Southern documents.

While the visualisation of usage in Figure 15 may thus suggest otherwise, the alleged variability that is shown in the graph points to a few individual writers with innovative – but uniform – spelling practices, whereas other writers uniformly employed the spelling <ae>, as is also illustrated in Example 10 and Example 11, which compare the spelling practice in two nineteenth-century pamphlets from Brabant. These results imply that the changes towards the modern-day <aa> were thus hardly initiated by an entire genre, but rather by one (or a few) contributor(s) to that genre.

- (10) *Wat willen wy, weldenkende Vlamingen? Onze regten en onze **tael** handhaven; doch niet in tegen-streving met de fransche **tael**, die even **nationael** in Belgie is en zyn moet als de **vlaemsche***
(PAM-1850-BR-4)

‘What do we, right-minded Flemings, want? To uphold our rights and our language; but not in opposition to the French language, which is just as national in Belgium and must be as the Flemish language’

- (11) *Toen immers wilde de Hollander, even als **vandaag** onze Liberalen, **aan** den **Staat** het monopolium of den alleenhandel van ’t onderwijs toekennen*
(PAM-1850-BR-2)

‘At that time, the Dutch, just like our liberals today, wanted to grant the state the monopoly or exclusive control over education’

Such findings also add the necessary nuance to the genre differences discussed in the results in language use. With only one or two writers applying the variant <aa> at first, any convincing patterns in which specific genres lead changes are lacking. This is particularly apparent in the Southern Netherlands of the nineteenth century. After all, as was discussed above, the pamphlets appeared to take the lead in the change towards <aa> in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century South, yet the proportions of the modern-day variant shifted completely in the nineteenth century. The incoming variant then suddenly arose in disparate genres across Brabant and Vlaanderen, while the spelling <aa> decreased in the pamphlets (cf. Figure 15).⁵⁵ As expected, it is again the progressive usage of only a few writers that largely accounted for the use of <aa> in the nineteenth century. As such, in this case, the overarching independent variable genre appears subordinated to the spelling differences between the individual writers.

⁵⁵ In Brabant, the variant <aa> is used in administrative texts and pamphlets (not in the ego-documents), while in Vlaanderen, the modern-day form shows up in administrative texts and ego-documents only.

Conclusion

Now that the main results in language use are uncovered, let me string together the findings of usage in relation to the different independent variables. In doing so, I relate briefly to the results in language norms discussed in section 4.1.

A first and important pattern that emerged from the results in language use is that the period under scrutiny can be split into two larger time units, with in overall <ae> standing strong in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and <aa> taking over in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Furthermore, the independent variable region also pointed to an important distinction. While the modern-day variant was first used in the central regions only, <aa> is implemented in the peripheral parts of the language area only from the eighteenth century onwards. Consequently, the spelling differences for this variable are, from the eighteenth century onwards, best interpreted from a North-South perspective, in which Northerners prefer <aa> and Southerners generally opt for <ae> (Van de Voorde, 2022, pp. 122-123).

This geographic distinction also signals that the resolute shift towards <aa> in the eighteenth century is particularly visible in the Northern Netherlands. This shift is entirely in line with the Northern norms, which mainly favoured <aa> from the eighteenth century onwards. It is hence no surprise that Southern grammarians in the eighteenth century framed the variant <aa> as a feature of Northern language use (cf. section 4.1.3). In the view of establishing a separate normative tradition and language culture in the South, the same codifiers deemed the variant <aa> unsuitable for usage by not considering it part of the Southern language (cf. erasure, Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 38). That the modern-day variant hardly appeared in Southern usage at the time therefore confirms the success of the association of <aa> and <ae> as shibboleths of respectively Northern and Southern language use from the eighteenth century onwards (cf. iconization, Irvine & Gal, 2000, p. 37; Rutten, 2011; Vosters, 2011).

These results in Southern usage, where <ae> remained in use as the dominant variant, can also be interpreted within the process of nation building that emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century. As was explained above, the results discussed in this chapter indicate that the North-South divide in spelling not only arose in the metalinguistic discourse (cf. section 4.1.2), but also

in actual language use. With the social meaning of <aa> and <ae> also showing in usage, we at least get the impression that writers selected and deployed certain spelling variants deliberately for expressing a respectively Northern or Southern identity in language use (Rutten, 2011; Vosters 2011). However, since individual writers were possibly aware of the widespread social and political meanings ascribed to the spelling variants, it is likely that from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, the (almost) consistent choice for either <ae> or <aa> was often determined by the cultural and political stance of individual Southern writers. Especially the socio-historical context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands may have triggered the linguistic expression of a writer's identity, in which (1) Southerners in favour of linguistic and political unity with the Northern Netherlands changed their spelling to <aa> (i.e. integrationism), and (2) those against adhered to the 'Southern' variant <ae> (i.e. particularism). These individual linguistic choices may eventually be the reason behind the slowly progressing change towards <aa> that is attested in Southern usage.

4.3 Prescriptive influence

After analysing the results in norms and usage separately, the two developments are now compared to investigate whether there is a relationship between both. In exploring whether and how norms and usage relate to each other, I compare the developments of the prescriptions to those in usage by means of scatter plots in which the observed data for the North and the South of the language area are visualised per year. This method enables me to map out the exact options in which the chronology of language change allows for a possible impact of prescriptivism. The options that derive from this comparison are subject to an in-depth assessment of the possibility of prescriptive influence in section 5.

Chronology of language change

In Figure 16, the explicit and implicit prescriptions for the spelling of the long *a* in closed syllables are visualised per year, while Figure 17 summarises the observed patterns in language use. For visualising, the results for the two variants are projected onto an underlying numeric scale (1-2) with equal distance between the variants <ae> and <aa>. The plotted dots represent the observed data, while the trendlines show the general evolution of the change in

norms and language use. Considering what was already discussed in the results of language norms and language use, I now focus primarily on the exact shifts in both patterns within each century to establish the chronology of language change.

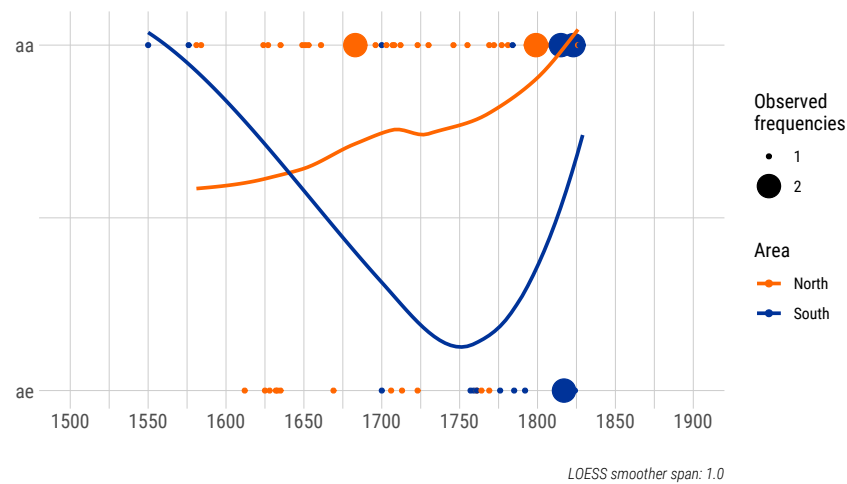


Figure 16: prescriptions long /a/ in closed syllables per year and area

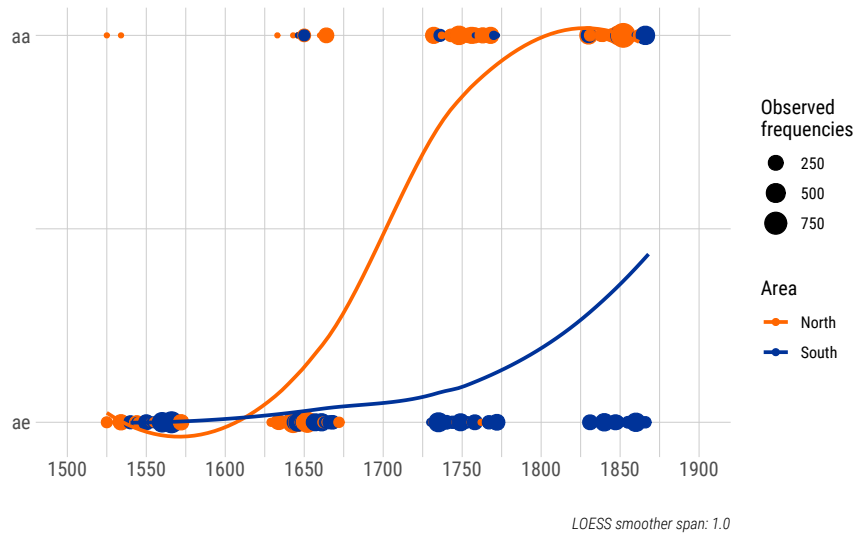


Figure 17: language use long /a/ in closed syllables per year and area

When inspecting the general development of the feature in norms and usage, the trendlines in the plots already indicate diverging patterns in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, whereas the same trendlines suggest a convergence of the developments in norms and usage by the middle of the nineteenth century. Before arriving at this point in the nineteenth century, the standardisation history of the feature commences with opposing developments in norms and usage in the sixteenth century, where both Northern and Southern norms favour <aa>, and – except for two individual <aa> occurrences – usage entirely applies the older variant <ae>. This pattern at least indicates a different starting point in norms and usage in the earliest period. In the seventeenth century, the normative tradition in the North continues with a lack of consistency in the prescriptions, with some grammarians prescribing <aa>, and others now favouring <ae>. As the latter was new in the prescriptions but was already highly frequent in sixteenth-century usage, it is possible that these Northern grammarians in the seventeenth century may have formulated their norms in accordance with what was common in language use. This situation excludes a triggering impact of prescriptivism on Northern usage. The slight increase of <aa> in seventeenth-century Northern usage, on the contrary, may be related to the individual <aa> prescriptions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century grammarians, as I will explain in section 5. In the Southern Netherlands, no prescriptions on the spelling issue appeared in the seventeenth century, and except for the first <aa> forms that showed up in Southern usage, language use in the seventeenth century did not deviate from usage in the sixteenth-century South. The chronology of change thus reveals that, although some potential correlations arise in these earliest periods, the patterns in norms and usage suggest largely independent developments in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The disparate developments of norms and usage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries dissolve in the eighteenth century, where in terms of norms, an increase in the frequency of prescriptions is observed, with (1) Southern codifiers dealing with the feature in their normative works again, but also (2) most of the Northern grammarians commenting on the spelling. Although there still is some variation in the eighteenth-century prescriptions, which mainly derives from a few norm givers prescribing both <ae> and <aa>, the North-South distinction in norms that was discussed earlier in this chapter is particularly apparent in the second half of the eighteenth century. In both the

Northern and the Southern Netherlands, this normative discrepancy results in almost uniform prescriptions in each part of the language area. Strikingly, while Northern codifiers almost uniformly opt for <aa> around and after the middle of the eighteenth century, the major shift to <aa> takes place in Northern usage at the same time (cf. section 4.2). This convergence of the developments towards <aa> in the eighteenth-century North possibly points to a relationship between norms and usage. In the Southern Netherlands, uniformity within the eighteenth-century <ae> prescriptions is preceded by consistent <ae> usage in the previous centuries. Although the trendlines of norms and usage in the South thus evolve in the same direction, the chronology of change, where norms simply follow trends in usage, makes a direct impact of prescriptions unlikely in this part of the language area. Despite the increase of the spelling <aa> in Southern usage in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the consistent <ae> prescriptions of the eighteenth century may still have had a more indirect effect on Southern usage, as I will explain later. Moreover, the change towards <aa> in the South, which is first visible in the norms of the nineteenth century, is another case of interest for prescriptive influence, as I will explain in section 5. In fact, all options in which a direct or indirect impact of prescriptivism is plausible are summed up below.

- (1) Although two Northern <aa> forms are attested in early sixteenth-century usage already, the variant increased in seventeenth-century usage, where it is preceded by the first <aa> prescriptions in the Northern Netherlands.
- (2) Also in the Northern Netherlands, the developments in language use point to a convincing change from <ae> to <aa> taking place in the period between the mid-seventeenth and mid-eighteenth centuries. In the eighteenth century, the modern-day form takes up a majority position in Northern usage. This massive increase of <aa> in eighteenth-century usage post-dates the Northern <aa> prescriptions, which had been proposed since the sixteenth century.
- (3) After the large increase of <aa> in eighteenth-century Northern usage, Northern grammarians in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries continued to prescribe <aa>. It is also in the latter period that the change towards the present-day variant was completed in Northern usage.

- (4) In the Southern part of the language area, the <aa> prescriptions in the sixteenth century were followed by the appearance of the present-day variant in seventeenth-century usage. Moreover, in the eighteenth century, an increase of these <aa> forms is observed in Southern usage as well.
- (5) Following on the (ongoing) change from <ae> to <aa> in the prescriptions of Southern grammarians in the early nineteenth century, an increase of the variant <aa> is established in Southern language use in the decades surrounding the 1850s.
- (6) Despite the ongoing shift in the prescriptions of nineteenth-century grammarians, the variant <ae> remained the dominant form in nineteenth-century Southern usage. Whereas <ae> was the most common form in Southern usage since the sixteenth century, the first prescriptions on the variant appeared only in (the second half of) the eighteenth century, suggesting that these Southern grammarians simply reflected forms that were already widespread in language practice. However, the fact that language use in the Southern provinces compellingly adhered to the variant <ae> in the nineteenth century may still be related to these prescriptions.

In the following discussion in section 5, these options of prescriptive interference are analysed individually in order to evaluate the impact of prescriptivism on changes in usage for the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables.

5 Discussion

For determining whether and to what extent prescriptivism played a role in the changes discussed in section 4.3, both the chronology of language change, the target audience of the grammarians, the type of the prescription (cf. section 4.1), the genre differences, the individual writer (cf. section 4.2), and the accompanying socio-historical context are considered. I first investigate the different options for prescriptive influence in the Northern Netherlands (option 1-3), before I discuss the relationship between norms and usage in the Southern Netherlands (option 4-6).

Option 1 is situated in the Northern Netherlands of the seventeenth century, where an increase of the modern-day <aa> (from 0.1% in the sixteenth century to 10.8% in the seventeenth century) is observed after the first <aa> prescriptions in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. These early prescriptions were not uniform in the first half of the seventeenth century, with some Northern grammarians prescribing the older <ae>. However, most of the latter norms are implicit in nature, whereas multiple explicit <aa> prescriptions are found at the time. This explicitness of the <aa> prescriptions makes an impact of norms on usage more probable. When investigating language use, I already discussed that the earliest <aa> forms in the North can be found in Holland only (cf. section 4.2). Thus, the increase of <aa> that is discussed in option 1 can be traced back to the central region of Holland, and even more specifically, the variant inclines only in one pamphlet that was printed in 1650, and in two ego-documents that were written around 1664. Since the Northern normative works propagating <aa> in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were all published in Holland, it may well be that several individual writers from Holland were influenced by the explicit prescriptions for <aa>. However, these early Northern codifiers did certainly not have a widespread impact on entire genres or other regions with their prescriptions.

The sudden change in mid-eighteenth-century usage, where the variant <ae> was immensely exchanged for <aa> in the North, is the subject of **option 2**. This option of prescriptive interference deals with an immense and abrupt change in usage, which is preceded by prescriptions for the modern-day form in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (cf. option 1), and by the explicit <aa> prescriptions of elitist codifiers in the first half of the eighteenth century. The large increase in usage unfolds in a broader geographical scope than was the case in option 1, with language users in Holland and Zeeland now making a compelling shift to the modern-day <aa> in both printed, formal, and informal texts. Although a comparable increase of <aa> across formal and informal genres at the same time makes an impact of prescriptivism unlikely, it is also important to acknowledge that different types of normative works prescribed these <aa> forms in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In fact, a detailed inspection of the prescriptions in the Northern Netherlands reveals that not only elitist grammarians, but also codifiers with a broader target audience made their preference for the spelling <aa> explicit in their normative works. Seventeenth-century normative works within the tradition of trivium grammars, and popular

schoolbooks of Hakvoord (1746) and De Gelliers (1661), for example, also prescribed <aa> explicitly. Since especially the latter type of work enjoyed many reprints across the entire language area, it is plausible that both the larger sales market of these books, as well as the broader target audience, aided the variant <aa> in being disseminated simultaneously across multiple genres in the Northern Netherlands in the eighteenth century. However, apart from (1) the diversity within the types of normative works, and (2) the geographical distribution of these works, also the coherence of the <aa> prescriptions created continuity in the Northern prescriptions. It may turn out that such a normative tradition, in which <aa> prescriptions were validated by different codifiers, were more influential than prescriptions of individual grammarians.

Option 1 and option 2 thus revealed that the actual change from <ae> to <aa> occurred in Northern language norms first, after which the form was most likely transmitted to individual language users in Holland in the seventeenth century (cf. option 1), before it was applied at a broader scale in the Northern Netherlands of the eighteenth century (cf. option 2). Prescriptivism thus possibly had a considerable role in the implementation and dissemination of the variant in the eighteenth century, where <aa> was established as the majority variant across all genres in Northern usage. Nonetheless, the change towards <aa> is fully accomplished only in the nineteenth century.

In **option 3**, I therefore examine whether the persistent prescriptions of Northern grammarians in the second half of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century caused the completion of the change towards the modern-day variant. From that point of view, a first important result is that the culmination of the shift to <aa> in nineteenth-century usage is highly comparable across the two Northern regions, and the different genres in the *HCD*. The individual documents of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, moreover, shed more light on the possible effect of prescriptivism in this change. Particularly the variability in the documents of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries points to a relevant discrepancy in the two periods. Whereas in the eighteenth century, 62.5% (n=20) of the documents in the corpus showed signs of variation in the spelling of the long /a/, the proportion of writers still using both spelling variants diminished to 8% (n=2) in the nineteenth century. This means that usage of the individual writers was more variable in the eighteenth century than it was in the nineteenth century. The difference between variability

in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century documents thus implies that the completion of the change to <aa> in the North does not involve individual writers still switching entirely from <ae> to <aa> spellings in the nineteenth century. Instead, the finalisation of the change simply includes more intentional use of one variant to achieve uniformity and standardisation in writing practice.

So, although the Northern grammarians who kept on prescribing <aa> from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards co-endorsed the existing tradition of the <aa> spelling (cf. option 2), and they thus kept the awareness of the preferred spelling variant running, the homogenisation of the spelling practices in nineteenth-century usage must also be interpreted within the broader perspective of nation building, and the emerging standard language ideology. In the overall cultural and political strive for a standard language for the Dutch nation, the corresponding idea of uniformity in language was probably disseminated across language users in the North. Due to that predominant standard language ideology, and the fact that <aa> was already strongly embedded in the Northern writing tradition (cf. option 2), both the actual prescriptions laid down in normative works of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the general spread of the standard language ideology as a societal phenomenon, which mode of dissemination extends beyond normative works, probably triggered the final push in the change to <aa> in Northern usage.

In **option 4**, I move to the Southern Netherlands, and I focus on the role of prescriptivism in the initial phase of the change towards <aa>. Here, the modern-day variant arose in seventeenth-century usage, and consequently increased in the eighteenth century. Since explicit prescriptions for <aa> were formulated by Southern grammarians in the sixteenth century already, these early norms may be related to the appearance of the form in Southern usage a century later. When investigating the appearance of <aa> in Southern usage, the form shows up only in the printed pamphlets that were published in Brabant. In the administrative texts and ego-documents, as well as in the pamphlets in Vlaanderen, the older variant <ae> is the only form that is used at the time. Also in the eighteenth century, the increase of <aa> is visible solely in the pamphlets from Brabant. This increase suggests that the spelling <aa> was not established at a larger scale in the Southern Netherlands before the nineteenth century. If Southern norms for <aa> were thus effective, they were able to exert an influence on the pamphlets

in Brabant only. However, considering that these early prescriptions in the sixteenth century derived from Lambrecht (1550) and Sexagius (1576), which are sparsely distributed, and hence not very accessible normative works, an influence of these Southern prescriptions on the pamphlets in Brabant is quite unlikely. Also the time lag of almost a century between the <aa> prescriptions and the change in usage makes an influence of these Southern norms less probable.

This does not mean that any impact from above is immediately ruled out in early Southern usage. As was discussed in option 1-3, Northern prescriptions for <aa> were also being formulated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These codifiers succeeded in establishing a persistent tradition of <aa> prescriptions, with a likely impact on individual language users in the seventeenth century. Given the fact that pamphlets are a printed and edited genre of texts, an influence of these Northern codifications on the Brabantine pamphlets may be a possibility as well. Especially when contemplating that a Northern grammarian like De Heuiter (1581) – who still published his work in the South whilst targeting a Northern readership – prescribed <aa> explicitly, the assumption that Northern prescriptions may have reached some writers or editors in the South is not terribly far-fetched. Also the <aa> prescriptions in other normative works in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century North may have spread to the Southern provinces, of course.⁵⁶

The likelihood of Northern influence on Southern usage is thus anyhow suggested. This forces us to reflect on the reason behind this rather unexpected result of norms impacting usage in the other part of the language area. A possible explanation for Northern influence on Southern usage may be found in the absence of a Southern normative tradition. In fact, the lack of consistent language norms in the South may have prompted a group of writers or publishers of printed genres in Brabant in adopting the Hollandic <aa> norms. Particularly since these Northern prescriptions were part of a progressing normative

⁵⁶ To illustrate that the dispersion of Northern schoolbooks to the South was indeed a possibility at the time: for the famous schoolbook of Van Niervaart (1669), of which the first edition appeared around 1600, eighteenth-century reprints from Antwerpen and Brussel were discovered. Nonetheless, in these Brabantine versions of the book, the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables was adjusted to <ae>.

tradition, and they were therefore considered more legitimised than Southern norms at the time.

The impact of the early Northern <aa> prescriptions on Southern usage was thus restricted to individual writers within one genre, and the effect of these norms does not disseminate to other texts or regions in the South at first. It is only in the nineteenth century that the modern-day <aa> started gaining ground in a wider range of genres. This increase of <aa> in nineteenth-century usage happened right after Southern grammarians became more tolerant towards the Northern variant. Although not all norm givers were equally progressive at the time (e.g. Willems, 1824), most codifiers in the South started changing their prescriptions to <aa>. In **option 5**, I analyse whether this tolerance, and the <aa> prescriptions of Southern grammarians invoked the rise of the modern-day variant in nineteenth-century usage.

With Southern norms evolving from mixed prescriptions to only <aa> prescriptions towards the end of the of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, a development from tolerance for <aa> to a clear preference for the incoming variant is observed in the nineteenth-century prescriptions. This is also illustrated with Southern codifiers who reject the use of <ae> altogether in the form of proscriptions. When investigating the rise of <aa> in nineteenth-century usage, the incline of the modern-day variant is observed in the administrative texts in Brabant, on the one hand, and in the administrative texts and ego-documents in Vlaanderen, on the other hand. As was explained in section 4.2, this <aa> usage can be traced back to the uniform spelling in one or two individual documents, while the other texts were more conservative in applying <ae>. The emergence of the present-day variant in Southern usage can therefore be attributed only to individual writers in the nineteenth century. While it is thus unlikely that Southern prescriptions for <aa> influenced specific regions and genres as a whole, with a few writers applying the variant consistently in the nineteenth century, it is probable that codifiers favouring <aa> convinced these writers in adopting the spelling <aa>. However, also the salience of the social meaning attached to the spelling variants probably played a role in the broader implementation of the modern-day <aa> in Southern usage. As Vosters et al. (2014) argued, the specific socio-political context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the intensified contact between the Northern and the Southern

Netherlands more generally, may have facilitated the increased use of <aa> in the Southern part of the language area.

Despite the compelling implementation of the modern-day <aa> by a few writers in the nineteenth century (cf. option 5), the older <ae> remains the dominant variant in the Southern Netherlands. Here, it should not be neglected that also in Southern norms, a solid tradition of <ae> prescriptions was established in the eighteenth century. In **option 6**, I therefore analyse whether these <ae> prescriptions in the South interfered with the conservation of the older variant in nineteenth-century usage.

When it comes to the steady normative tradition of <ae> prescriptions, Southern grammarians were strict in not allowing for variation in the second half of the eighteenth century, with most codifiers simply prescribing <ae> as only variant, and others even proscribing the Northern <aa> explicitly (e.g. P.B., 1757; Verpoorten, 1759). Furthermore, grammarians who did not make injunctions on the spelling issue, or who tolerated the Northern <aa> in their prescriptions, always used the variant <ae> in their own writing practice (e.g. Henckel, 1815; De Neckere, 1815; Behaegel, 1817). Such adherence to one prescribed variant reminds of the normative tradition that was established some decades earlier in the North and suggests that a similar status of validation was now attached to the Southern <ae> prescriptions. The uniform prescriptions of the tradition of school teachers from Antwerpen (P.B., 1757; Verpoorten, 1759; Des Roches, s.d. [1761]), for example, probably relished visibility of prescriptions among language users, and as such, this normative tradition may have strengthened the influence of Southern prescriptivism in the eighteenth century. While the exposure of the variant <ae> is probably more broadly carried (via other printed texts, for example), the Southern normative tradition thus aided in underpinning the use of the variant <ae> via (1) prescriptions, (2) the social evaluation of the variant, and (3) their own use of the form.

6 Conclusion

Before arriving at an overall conclusion on prescriptive influence for this spelling variable, the findings in norms and usage are compared to the expectations formulated in the beginning of this chapter. In doing so, I refer to the hypotheses set up for each of the spelling variants separately.

The outgoing variant <ae> was the subject of hypothesis 1. For the North, I expected a lacking influence of <ae> norms on usage, which is now also confirmed. As opposed to what I assumed, <ae> was not the main prescribed variant in the sixteenth century, and although the form still appeared in some individual prescriptions in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the modern-day <aa> immediately established as the dominant variant in the prescriptions. Since Northern usage adhered to <ae> in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the patterns in norms and usage diverged in the early periods, which made an influence of prescriptivism impossible for this variant. In the South, on the contrary, I presumed <ae> would be conserved in language use until the nineteenth century, possibly due to the impact of grammarians from the eighteenth century onwards. The exploration of prescriptive influence revealed that prescriptivism indeed may have helped in prolonging the use of the outgoing variant in nineteenth-century usage (cf. option 6), which also affirms hypothesis 1 for the Southern Netherlands.

Whether the emergence and the increase of the modern-day <aa> is related to an impact of codified norms was discussed in hypothesis 2. I expected a rise of the variant in Northern and Southern usage in respectively the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and I assumed that in both parts of the language area, the increase may be related to an impact of prescriptivism. The investigation of the relationship between norms and usage verified this hypothesis for the North and the South. In the North, it is both the continuity of the <aa> prescriptions, and the diversity of normative works prescribing the modern-day variant in the eighteenth century, which probably aided in accelerating the immense switch to <aa> in Northern usage (cf. option 2). For the South, a limited impact of (Northern) prescriptions was observed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, yet another influence of language norms is situated later in time. More specifically in the nineteenth century, where the incline of <aa> is attributed to

individual language users across different genres and regions. When compared to the influence in the North, the prescriptive effect is therefore more restricted here. It appears that not only the tolerance and the prescriptions for <aa> as such, but also the social meaning of the variant, and the socio-historical context in general may have enhanced the ongoing change towards <aa> in Southern usage.

In sum, this case study shows that the orthographic representation of the long /a/ in closed syllables is a feature that was susceptible to prescriptive influence. It suggests that Northern codifiers possibly succeeded in initiating the actual change towards <aa> in the seventeenth century, and in facilitating a further spread of the prescribed form in eighteenth-century usage. Also Southern grammarians seemingly managed to exert an impact on usage. Although Southern norm givers simply prescribed variants that were already common in usage, in doing so, these codifiers actually endorsed the Southern writing practice to establish a Southern normative tradition, which eventually helped impeding the change towards the Northern <aa> in the nineteenth century.

However, this case study also indicates that at least three conditions evidently needed to be fulfilled to enable such effects of prescriptivism. A first aspect to consider is that we are dealing with a spelling feature which enjoyed ample attention from norm givers, who frequently commented explicitly on the issue in the period under investigation. Such a high degree of metalinguistic salience possibly implies that the spelling feature was also prominent in the language community. Particularly from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, language users may have been well aware of the spelling variable and (the social meaning of) its variants. As such, the visibility of the spelling feature, both in normative works and in other documents that circulated in the language community, may have created an easy scenario for prescriptive interference. Apart from the high (metalinguistic) salience of the variable, the continuity of prescriptions for the same variant turned out to be a prerequisite for prescriptive influence as well. It is suggested that, only when a prescribed form got validated by multiple codifiers, and the prescriptions acquired a more institutionalised status, so to speak, an effect of prescriptions on usage was discernible. Yet, a large-scale effect of prescriptivism across different genres was only achieved when a wider variety of normative works with a broader readership was disseminated into society.

Chapter 6 – Spelling of final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs

In this case study, I investigate the changes in the orthographic representation of the final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs.⁵⁷ This /t/ ending characterises the second- and third-person singular, and the second-person plural verb forms of the present indicative tense, where different spelling practices are distinguished during the standardisation history of Dutch, and particularly in verbs of which the stem ends in *d*, such as *worden* ‘to become’ (stem: *word*) or *leiden* ‘to lead’ (stem: *leid*).

2. Sg.	jij/gij		‘you lead’
3. Sg.	hij/zij/het	<i>leit</i> – <i>leid</i> – <i>leidt</i>	‘he/she/it leads’
2. Pl.	u/gijlieden		‘you lead’

In medieval times, these conjugations generally had an ending in *-det*, but from the Middle Dutch period onwards, forms as *(hij) leidet* were considered archaic, and the phonetic variant <t> was commonly used instead (e.g. *leit*) (Gledhill, 1973, p. 255). This variant arose since the final consonant is pronounced as /t/ because of final devoicing. The spelling therefore conforms to the principle of grapheme-phoneme correspondence (Vosters et al., 2014, p. 84). In the course of the seventeenth century, the variants <d> and <dt> gained ground. The former spelling was based on a principle of uniformity in morphology (*gelijkvormigheid*), where all singular and the second-person plural *d*-stem verbal endings were spelled in the same way, viz. as the stem of the verb (e.g. *leid*). The variant <dt>, conversely, is the modern-day spelling, which is motivated on etymological (abbreviation of *-det* due to the syncope of *e*) and analogical grounds (stem + *t* principle) (Daems, 2002). The latter principle encompasses the idea that forms like *(hij) leidt* are in analogy with non-*d*-stem verb conjugations, as in *(hij) werkt* ‘(he) works’.

⁵⁷ Parts of this case study are also presented in Lismont, Rutten & Vosters (2023).

From the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, three diverging spelling practices were thus applied to represent the verb-final /t/ in the second- and third-person singular and the second-person plural of *d*-stem verbs: the phonetic <t>, the morphological <d>, and the etymological and analogical <dt>. While the spelling practices differed in the Early and Late Modern period, the *d*-stem verbal endings are all pronounced as /t/ due to final devoicing (Vosters et al., 2014, p. 80).

1 Previous research

This spelling issue has been investigated from various perspectives. From a historical and linguistic point of view, Daems (2002), for example, frames and describes the principles and motivations for the different ways of spelling from Middle Dutch until the twentieth century (cf. the principles mentioned in the previous section). Other researchers, such as Van de Velde (1956) and Gledhill (1973), primarily focus on the developments of the feature in the normative discourse. Whereas Van de Velde (1956) concentrates on metalinguistic comments of Northern grammarians in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Gledhill (1973, pp. 255-276) discusses the changes in the normative perspectives of Northern and Southern codifiers from Middle Dutch until (and beyond) 1850. He explains that both the variants <t>, <d>, and <dt> were in use in (and probably before) the beginning of the sixteenth century, although <t> was most common at the time (Gledhill, 1973, p. 255). Adherents of the spelling <d> arise in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, while also the supporters of the ending <dt> claim their place in the normative tradition. By the middle of the eighteenth century, Southern grammarians adopt the <d> spelling, whereas Northerners generally prefer <dt>. After the spelling <dt> is officially codified in the nineteenth-century Northern Netherlands, the form also spreads more widely to norm givers in the Southern Netherlands (Gledhill, 1973, pp. 268-269).

Although earlier studies primarily research trends in the normative discourse, recent scholars in historical sociolinguistics are concerned with patterns of variation and change in actual language use. One of these studies is conducted by Puttaert (2019), who investigates the orthographic representation of the verb-final /t/ in a language history ‘from below’ perspective. She explores variation in the language use of the lower social classes in Western regions of the Low

Countries, and particularly in West-Vlaanderen and Zeeland. In a corpus of nineteenth-century pauper letters (1810-1899) and soldiers' letters (1799-1813), the three variants of the feature are extracted for the most frequent lemmas. Although only a low number of results is obtained, all possible variants for the verbal /t/ ending are represented in the corpus.⁵⁸ In both the pauper letters and the soldiers' letters, <d> is established as the majority variant. A discrepancy arises with the variant <t>, which is still used considerably in the soldiers' letters (23.68%), yet the form is outgoing in the pauper letters (13.89%), which largely originate from a later period. The present-day variant <dt> is an incoming form in both corpora: it makes up for 23.61% of the tokens in the pauper letters, and it is used only once in the soldiers' letters (2.63%). This at least indicates that variability prevailed in the nineteenth century. The modern-day variant was not established yet as a main form in the manuscripts from the lower social classes (Puttaert, 2019, pp. 133; 142).

From a norms-and-usage perspective, Vosters (2011) investigates patterns of variation and change in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Southern Netherlands. He explores variability between <d> and <dt>, and alike Gledhill (1973), he observes that Southern grammarians adhere to <d> in the eighteenth century, while they often explicitly reject <dt>. During the time span of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (1815-1830), and especially after 1820, Southern prescriptions abruptly change from <d> to <dt> (Vosters, 2011, p. 273). When these findings in language norms are compared to a corpus of Southern administrative and judicial texts, a parallel development appears, with the dominant form <d> strongly dropping at the end of the period of reunification (from 88% <d> in 1823 to 35% <d> in 1829), where it is replaced by <dt> (Vosters, 2011, p. 312). The increase of the modern-day variant is then most visible in the formal documents of indictment, but also in the more informal reports of interrogation (Vosters, 2011, p. 321).

In a subsequent study, Vosters et al. (2014) explicitly approach the results from Vosters (2011) from the perspective of determining prescriptive influence, and they investigate whether Southern norms might have influenced language change in the early nineteenth century. As shown in Vosters (2011, p. 273; p. 312), the same development – with the Northern norm <dt> increasingly being

⁵⁸ n=72 in the pauper letters, n=38 in the soldiers' letters (Puttaert, 2019, p. 133; p. 142).

implemented in the Southern Netherlands – is reflected in Southern norms and usage. This change towards <dt> in Southern language use is, according to Vosters et al. (2014, p. 96), not directly related to an impact of prescriptivism. Although the chronology of language change allows for a possible influence of prescriptions on language use, the highly specific context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands suggests that language norms and usage develop in the same direction. However, norms and usage change independently, due to the changed socio-historical and language-political situation, which is characterised by the intensified contact between the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. As the usage data in this study derive from very distinctive texts (i.e. administrative and judicial documents), the authors anyhow recommend investigating the relationship between language norms and usage in a broader scope of text types and genres (Vosters et al., 2014, p. 95).

A similar approach is taken by Vosters et al. (2010), who contrast the Southern data presented in Vosters (2011) to Northern prescriptions and language use. For Northern usage, the authors work with late eighteenth-century personal correspondence of the lower and middle classes in the *Letters as Loot* corpus (Rutten & Van der Wal, 2014). In the normative component, it is apparent that <d> is characteristic for Southern prescriptions, whereas <dt> is clearly the favoured variant of Northern grammarians. Surprisingly, despite the low number of observations in Northern usage (N = 19), the authors observe that the eighteenth-century writers in the *Letters as Loot* corpus largely adhere to the Southern variant <d> (84%) instead of the Northern <dt> (Vosters et al., 2010, pp. 104–105).

Building on these results of Vosters et al. (2010), Krogull (2018) researches the relationship between language norms and usage in the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Northern Netherlands. He specifically determines the effect of the official language policy (1804-1805) in the *Going Dutch Corpus*, a multi-genre corpus comprising texts from two periods in time, i.e. the late eighteenth century (1770-1790) and the first half of the nineteenth century (1820-1840), as well as three genres: (1) private letters, (2) diaries and travelogues, and (3) newspapers (Krogull, 2018, p. 37).⁵⁹ In his case study on the verb-final /t/,

⁵⁹ The corpus is built with Northern texts from the regions Friesland, Groningen, North-Brabant, North-Holland, South-Holland, Utrecht, and Zeeland (Krogull, 2018, p. 37).

Krogull (2018, pp. 92; 99-101) includes the fifteen most frequent lemmas in the corpus analysis, and discovers that <d> was most common variant in all genres in the late eighteenth century (71.1%). These findings are in contrast with the language norms, where <dt> was already being prescribed by Northern grammarians in the first half of the eighteenth century. At this time, the modern-day <dt> plays only a role as a minority variant in language use (17.1%), next to the phonetic <t>, which mainly shows up in the corpus of private letters (21.5%). In the eighteenth century, Northern language norms thus diverge from language use, since codifiers favour <dt> while language users still adhere to <d> (cf. also Vosters et al., 2010). In the nineteenth-century data, conversely, a considerable increase of the spelling <dt> is observed in language use (from 17.1% in the eighteenth century to 66.3% in the nineteenth century), with <dt> becoming the majority variant in all genres. The radical shift to the modern-day variant is most striking in the newspapers, where the results show an almost complete change, with <dt> representing 96.7% of the results (previously 16.3%). This change is accompanied by the enormous decrease of <d> in all genres (31.2%), although the variant did not entirely disappear from usage yet. In the corpus of ego-documents, viz. private letters vs. diaries and travelogues, <d> remains in use as an alternative variant, respectively in 38.9% and 37.6% of the instances. The phonetic form <t> only makes up for 2.5% of the data and can no longer be considered a variant of importance in the nineteenth century (Krogull, 2018, p. 99). With these results in usage, where <dt> is abruptly and massively implemented across all genres in the nineteenth century, Krogull (2018, p. 107) assumes that the official language policy has been effective, at least for this spelling variable. However, since the change from <d> to <dt> occurs only in nineteenth-century usage, while grammarians had been prescribing the newer variant already in the eighteenth century, Krogull (2018, p. 107) reasonably argues that the imposed norms only reached language users when they were disseminated at a nation-wide scale.

In sum, previous research shows that a change towards the modern-day variant <dt> has been attested from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries in both norms and language use. The studies discussed above indicate that the morphological <d> is characteristic for the Southern Netherlands, while <dt> is favoured in the North, and then primarily in language norms. Although little research has been conducted from the perspective of determining prescriptive influence, and particularly the developments from the sixteenth to the middle of the eighteenth

century remain understudied for this orthographic feature, a possibility for prescriptive influence was detected in the nineteenth-century North. In the Southern Netherlands, no such effect was identified.

2 Hypotheses

In line with the results of Gledhill (1973), I expect the phonetic <t> to be prescribed by grammarians in the early periods (i.e. in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries). Also in language use, the variant will most likely appear as a main variant in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. However, as the research of Krogull (2018) and Puttaert (2019) suggests, the frequency of the form might decrease over time. As such, I assume <t> may first disappear from the normative discourse, probably in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century, and later on, I expect the variant to die out in usage as well; first in printed and formal text genres, i.e. pamphlets and the administrative documents. It is probable that the variant persists the longest in the ego-documents, where the form might still occur as a minority variant in the nineteenth century. This particular chronology of change, where a shift in norms precedes the same change in usage, allows for an impact of prescriptivism (**hypothesis 1**).

As for the variant <d>, the findings of Vosters et al. (2010) and Krogull (2018) point to diverging patterns in norms and usage in the eighteenth-century North. When contemplating that grammarians in the eighteenth century probably prescribed <dt>, while usage largely adhered to <d>, an influence of language codifications is rather unlikely in the Northern part of the language area. Based on the work of Vosters (2011) in the Southern Netherlands, I expect <d> to be the majority variant in both language norms and usage in the eighteenth century. In this context, the chronology of change needs to shed light on the possibility of prescriptive influence in the Southern Netherlands (**hypothesis 2**).

As the work of Vosters et al. (2010) and Krogull (2018) on the Northern Netherlands indicates, it can be assumed that <dt> is the main form in the nineteenth-century North, in both language norms and usage. Similar to the findings of Krogull (2018), I expect an increase of <dt> in nineteenth-century usage, which may be explained by an effect of the national language policy. If an

impact ‘from above’ is discerned, the effect will most likely be pronounced in the pamphlets as a printed and edited genre. Nevertheless, an increase of <dt> related to prescriptive influence could also be visible in the handwritten administrative texts and ego-documents, but these genres might still show variation with <d>, and possibly <t> as well. Since the Northern prescriptions favouring <dt> in the eighteenth century were ineffective in Krogull’s study (2018), I also do not predict an influence of <dt> prescriptions before the nineteenth century in my study. Furthermore, in line with Vosters (2011), I suppose Southern codifiers eventually follow the prescriptions of Northern grammarians, and as such, they will probably shift their prescriptions from <d> to <dt> in the nineteenth century. Also in Southern language use, it is likely that <dt> gains importance in the nineteenth century, although <d> may still be a main variant in this part of the language area. By relying on Vosters et al. (2014), I expect that the incline of <dt> is related to the changed socio-political context in the nineteenth century (**hypothesis 3**).

3 Methodology

3.1 Language norms

In the normative discourse, different language norms concerning the orthographic representation of the final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs are mapped out for the corpus analysis. All comments in the normative discourse deal with (or refer to) the second- and/or third-person singular, or the second-person plural verb conjugations in the present indicative tense. The metalinguistic comments and prescriptions were first collected for the different persons separately, viz. second person singular vs. third person singular vs. second person plural. However, since the prescriptions for the different verb conjugations remained the same, I was able to work with one person of the conjugation paradigm. I therefore included the prescriptions on the third person singular of the present indicative tense in the analysis of language norms.

The choice for taking the third person singular as a starting point is made because this conjugation was often discussed explicitly and used by grammarians, while the second person singular and the second person plural

verb forms rarely occur in the normative works. When a prescription on the third person singular was lacking, and the grammarian made a comment on (one of) the other two verb conjugations, the results for the second person singular and/or the second person plural are considered in the analysis. As such, the data for the different verb conjugations are merged to obtain one prescribed variant for the second- and third-person singular, and the second-person plural verbal endings.

As **explicit prescriptions**, I selected metalinguistic comments which are entirely devoted to the spelling of the final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs. In this type, grammarians embed the endings of *d*-stem verbs in the broader domain of orthography, and they thus explicitly discuss the spelling of the second and/or third person singular, and/or the second person plural in the present indicative tense, with or without examples (cf. Example 1-2).

- (1) *Dóch om weder tót de T te keeren, zy behoort ook gebruykt te worden in de tweede en derde persoon der Werkwoorden, als Gy, hy, zy wordt, bidt, houdt, bindt, vindt, biedt, enz. tot onder-scheydinge van Ik word, bid, houd, bind, vind, bied*
(Séwel, 1708, p. 27).

‘To say something more about *T*, it also needs to be used in the second and third person of the verbs, as in *Gy, hy, zy wordt, bidt, houdt, bindt, vindt, biedt*, and so on. These spellings need to be distinguished from *Ik word, bid, houd, bind, vind, bied*’

- (2) *Mén moet mèt dt eindigen, de twéde én dérde pèrsoon dés ènkèlvouwds én de twéde pèrsoon dés meêrvouwds dér wèrk-woorden, wier eerste pèrsoonen mèt een d eindigen*
(Zeydelaar, 1769, p. 114)

‘One must end with *dt*, the second and third person singular and the second person plural of verbs of which the first person ends in *d*’

Implicit prescriptions comprise different kinds of comments. In this category, I included comments on the spelling of non-*d*-stem verbs, and of verbal conjugations where the type of verb or the person is not specified. Also (verbal) paradigms in which a *d*-stem verb is conjugated are part of these prescriptions, so are example sentences (without an explicit comment on the spelling of the

verb-final /t/), and general reflections on the spelling of words that lengthen in /d/ or end in <d> (cf. Example 3-4).

- (3) *Binden heéft eene D; daerom schryft men, ik bind; gy bind, en alles wat van binden komt, met eene d*
(Van Boterdael, 1776, p. 44)

'*Binden* possesses a D; one therefore writes, *ik bind; gy bind*, and everything deriving from *binden*, with a *d*'

- (4) *schryft men leest men eene t, dan moet men, in hetzelfde geval, ook bidt met t sluiten*
(Wester, 1797, p. 37)

'If one writes *leest* with a *t*, one should also end *bidt* with a *t*'

For **grammarians' usage**, I processed ten randomly selected observations of *d*-stem verbs in the language practice of the grammarians in their normative work. These observations needed to be conjugated in the third person singular of the present indicative tense. The majority variant in grammarians' language use was considered for the analyses. Verb conjugations for which it was unclear whether the codifier intended to use a present indicative were excluded. For two codifiers, I considered fewer than ten results of the third person singular verb forms, since no ten observations of the feature were attested in the work. The verb with the highest frequency is *worden* 'to become', which is always used as an auxiliary verb in the present indicative, e.g. *zoals het geschreeven wordt* 'as it is written'. All grammarians in the normative corpus had at least one token with this auxiliary verb, although for most of them, lexical variation in the *d*-stem verbs was attested. Besides *worden*, common conjugations in the third person singular were made with the verbs *vinde* 'to find', *geschiede* 'to happen', *behoude* 'to keep', and *luidde* 'to call'. In seven normative works, only attestations with the auxiliary verb *worden* occur.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ These works are: Van Heule (1633), De Gelliers (1661), Elzevier (1761), Van Boterdael (1776), Van Boterdael (1785), Weiland (1805), and De Simpel (s.d. [1827]).

3.2 Language use

For the results in language use, I was allowed to work with the annotated dataset of Van de Voorde (2022), who investigated the orthographic representation of the verb-final /t/ in her study on historical pluricentricity in the Dutch language area. The regular expression for this variable has been searched broadly. Unlike previous studies, where the results for the most frequent lemmas of *d*-stem verbs were retrieved in the corpus analysis (e.g. Krogull, 2018; Puttaert, 2019), all tokens ending in <t>, <d>, or <dt> were collected via the regular expression. This way, more than 50.000 tokens were obtained. Van de Voorde (2022, p. 119) verified these results manually, in order to solely maintain the *d*-stem verb conjugations in the second- and third-person singular, and the second-person plural of the present indicative. Alike in the language use of the grammarians, many of the results for the variants <t>, <d>, and <dt> were conjugations of the verb *worden*. Since different variants of the conjugation were used (e.g. *wort*, *wert*, *wart*), viz. forms that could be applied in both the present and the past tense, it was not always clear whether the writer intended to conjugate the verb in the present tense. When the context in the sentence did not bring clarification, the token was excluded from the results (Van de Voorde, 2022, p. 119).

4 Results

4.1 Language norms

In this section, I discuss the results in language norms. The first part deals with the metalinguistic salience of the variable, while the second section presents the developments in the prescriptions. The last section discusses the treatment of alternative variants.

4.1.1 Metalinguistic salience

The frequency of grammarians formulating a prescription on the spelling of the verb-final /t/ is visualised in Figure 18, where the relative proportions are shown on the y-axis, and the absolute frequency is printed on the bar plots. The

results are shown per period of 50 years to shed light on abrupt shifts in metalinguistic salience.

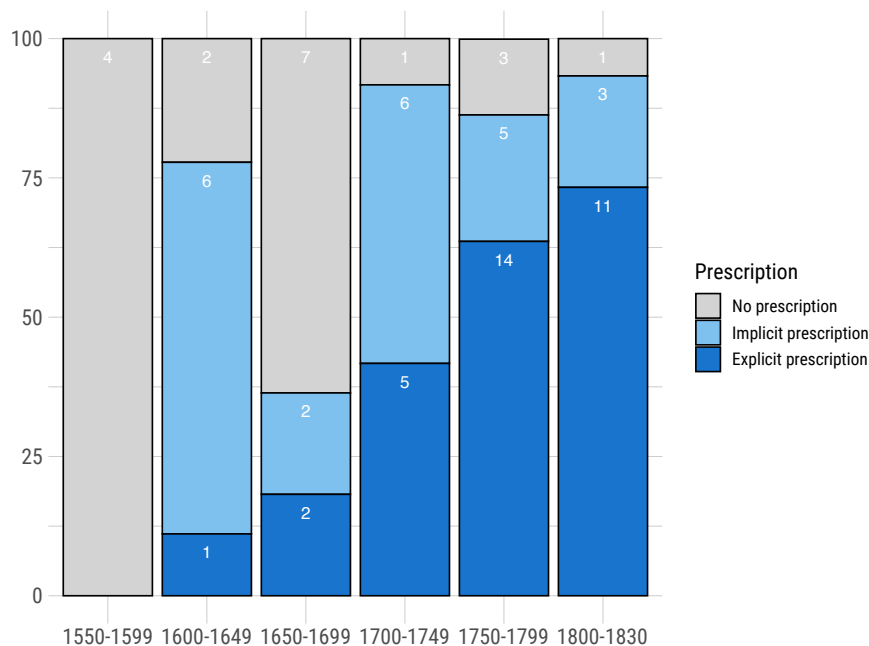


Figure 18: metalinguistic salience final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs

In the sixteenth century, no normative comments on the *d*-stem verbal endings occur yet. It is only in the early seventeenth century that Ampzing (1628) formulates the first explicit prescription on the issue (11.1%) by prescribing <d> and proscribing <dt> in the third-person singular:

So schrijf ik ook inde werk-woorden den derden persoon in't een-voudig getal [...] met eene d, om 'tgevolg van den eersten persoon in den onvolmaekten tijd, in die woorden die dat gevolg hebben [...]. ja hoe nodig op dit gevolg diend gelet te worden betonen veele die sulke woorden met dt schrijven, de d om't gevolg, ende de t om den soeten ende lichten klank gebruykende: maer (lieve!) als wy door eenen gemeynen vasten regel, de d dan klank van de t in't eynde der zilben verlenen, [...], wat behoe-ven wy hier dan met die onnodige t noch om te slepen, ende het gesicht te belemmeren, ende den druck te beswaren?

(Ampzing, 1628)

'I also write verbs in the third person singular with a *d* to reflect the ending of the first person in the imperfect tense for those verbs that require it. It is important to emphasise this ending since many people write these words with *dt*, using the *d* for the ending and the *t* for a soft sound. But, dear reader, if we can simply follow a consistent rule where the *d* takes on the sound of the *t* at the end of syllables, why should we unnecessarily complicate things by adding the *t*, which only clutters the texts and makes printing more cumbersome?'

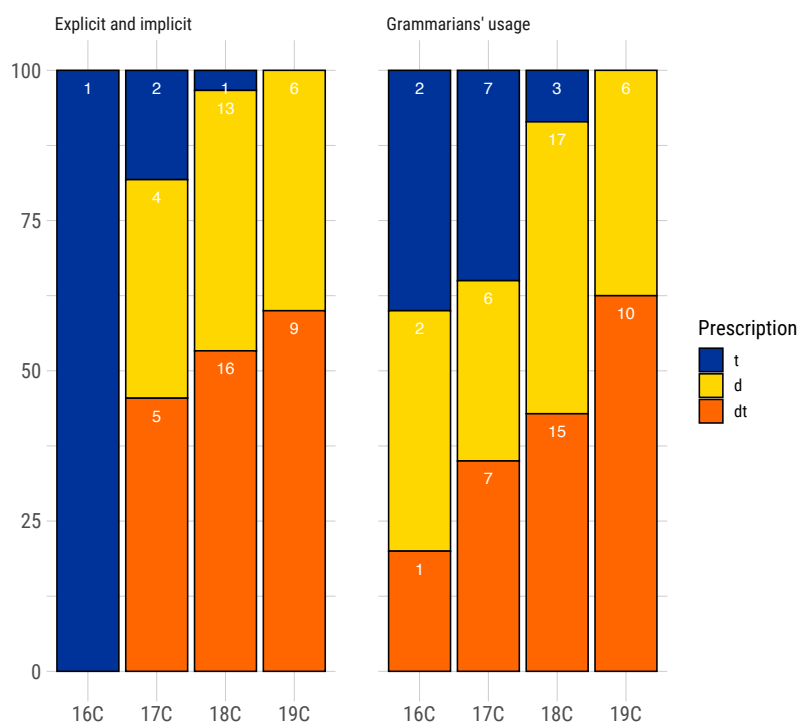
The number of metalinguistic comments on the topic increases in the eighteenth century, and especially in the second half of the period, where 63.6% of the orthography guides and grammars make an explicit remark on the spelling of the verb-final /t/. The metalinguistic salience of the variable still rises in the early nineteenth century, since 73.3% of the normative works in the corpus establish a prescription on the verbal spelling. With 33 out of 73 normative works making an explicit comment, the feature can be considered a spelling variable with medium salience. This variable is less prominent in the normative discourse compared to the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables, for example (cf. Chapter 5). In the early centuries, grammarians only rarely express concerns or thoughts about the representation of the verb-final /t/, while in the second half of the eighteenth and in the nineteenth century, the orthographic issue compellingly rises above the level of codifiers' awareness.

4.1.2 Prescriptions

Norms per period

In this section, I focus on the prescribed variants for the spelling of the verb-final /t/. In Figure 19, the explicit and implicit prescriptions are visualised, together with the writing practice of the grammarians.

When comparing the plot of the prescriptions to the one of grammarians' usage, a similar pattern of language variation and change emerges. It is striking that a great deal of variability is attested across the four centuries. Apart from the one prescription in favour of <t> in the sixteenth century, variation between three forms persists in the language norms from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, which subsequently changes to variability between two variants, <d> and <dt>, in the nineteenth century.

Figure 19: norms final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per period

In addition, the decline of the variant <t> is depicted from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, in both prescriptions (from 100.0% to 3.33%) and in grammarians' usage (from 40% to 8.57%). The form even completely disappears from the language norms in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, the proportion of the variant <d> remains more or less stable, with small fluctuations occurring across the four periods. In grammarians' usage, the variant is used by two codifiers in the sixteenth century (40%), although the form is only prescribed for the first time in the seventeenth century (36.4%). Particularly in the eighteenth century, the variant gains popularity, as it appears more frequently in the prescriptions (43.3%) and is used more often by grammarians (48.6%). In the nineteenth century, the form slightly decreases again in both prescriptions (40%) and in usage (37.5%). Simultaneously with the fall of <t>, the increase of the variant <dt> emerges. This variant is first applied in usage by one grammarian in the sixteenth century, before the form is established as one of the main variants in the seventeenth century. From that moment onwards, the

variant <dt> steadily increases until the nineteenth century, in both prescriptions (from 45.5% to 60%) and in the language practice of grammarians (from 20% to 62.5%).

As such, the general visualisation of the development of norms points to two important observations. First it seems that <dt> increasingly suppresses the <t> and <d> prescriptions over time, although no uniformity is reached in language norms. And second, when comparing the explicit and implicit prescriptions to grammarians' usage, codifiers are generally slower in implementing newer variants in their own writing practice. This is particularly visible in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, where the proportions of <d> or <dt> are higher in the prescriptions than in grammarians' language use.

Explicit and implicit prescriptions per period and area

When splitting up the data of the norms per part of the language area, a different picture unfolds, as Figure 20 shows. While variability in language norms persists in the diachronic development of the feature, a gradual process towards uniformity in <dt> prescriptions is observed in the Northern Netherlands. Here, the new variant <dt> rises from 45.4% in the seventeenth century to 72.7% in the eighteenth century, until it becomes the only prescribed variant in the nineteenth century (100%). The form <d>, on the contrary, appears in the seventeenth century (36.4%) and already decreases in the eighteenth-century language norms (22.7%). Then, in the nineteenth century, the variant disappears entirely from the prescriptions in the Northern Netherlands. This is in line with the findings of Vosters et al. (2010), who also argued that <dt> was the favoured form of Northern grammarians in the eighteenth century. Apart from that, the fall of <t> in the language norms shows up in the Northern Netherlands only. Since <t> is never prescribed by Southern codifiers, variation in the prescriptions in the South solely exists between two forms: <d> and <dt>. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Southern grammarians do not formulate explicit or implicit prescriptions on the feature. In the eighteenth century, the first prescriptions by Southern codifiers emerge, and these are all in favour of <d> (100%). The incoming variant <dt> is first witnessed in the nineteenth century, where it is convincingly introduced in 45.4% of the prescriptions. The variant <d> is then prescribed only by more conservative grammarians in the Southern

Netherlands, such as Behaegel (1817; s.d. [± 1825]; s.d. [± 1829]) (cf. also Vosters, 2011, p. 286).

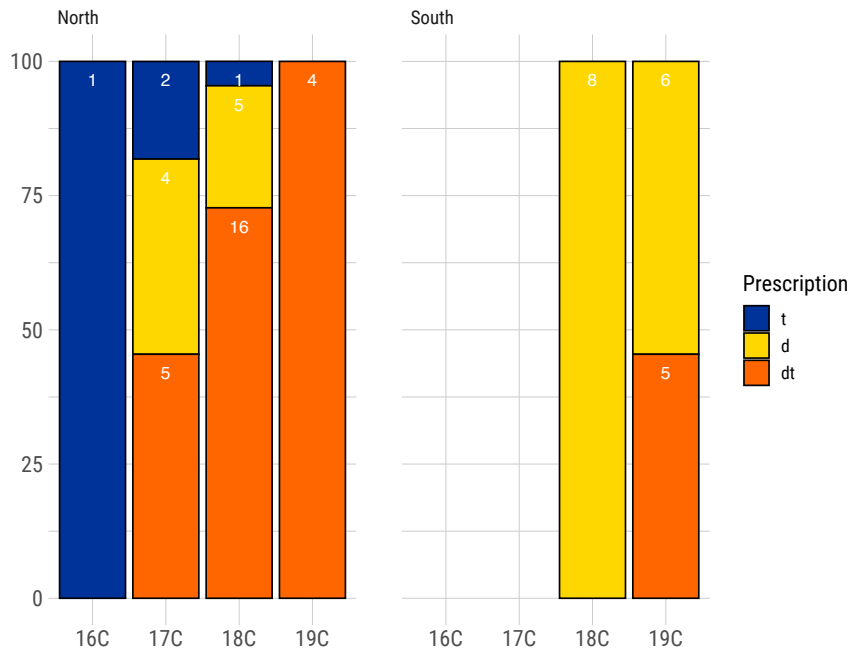


Figure 20: norms final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per period and area

Types of language norms per period and area

For this variable, it is also interesting to make the threefold distinction between explicit prescriptions, implicit prescriptions, and the language use of grammarians. Whereas the pattern of change is similar across the different types of language norms in overall, one considerable discrepancy needs to be signalled when comparing the different types of prescriptions in Northern norms. More specifically, in the previous section, I already mentioned that <t> was prescribed only by Northern grammarians from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. When distinguishing between the different types of language norms in Figure 21, however, it is apparent that the variant <t> was never explicitly prescribed. Thus, up until the eighteenth century, <t> was only used in implicit prescriptions, and in grammarians' own usage. Although explicit prescriptions are lacking

altogether in the sixteenth century, the variant <t> was also relegated to the implicit prescriptions in the seventeenth century, when explicit precepts were formulated for the alternative variants. As such, the fact that the older <t> solely persisted in the implicit norms and in grammarians' own language use suggests that the variant was already considered an archaic way of spelling in the seventeenth-century language norms. Norm givers were probably more conservative in their writing practice for this variable compared to their explicit injunctions.

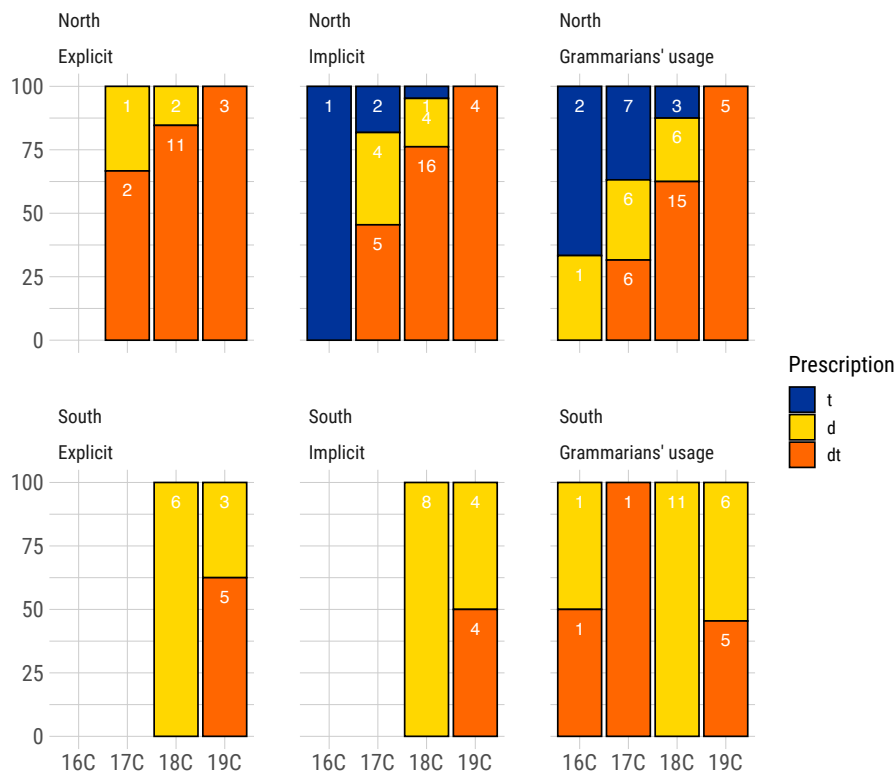


Figure 21: types of norms final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per period and area

4.1.3 Treatment of alternative variants

Apart from the prescribed forms, codifiers sometimes also review variation in usage. Variability in language use is then discarded as proscribed usage, or it is employed to explain in which contexts variation is allowed (cf. Moschonas, 2020). When considering the alternative variants that are mentioned in the prescriptions on the verb-final /t/, Table 11 shows that norm givers rarely discuss other variants in the sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Only three Northern codifiers explicitly proscribe a variant whilst prescribing another form, yet there is no consistency in the variants that are rejected. Van Atteveld (1682), for example, disapproves of the use of <t>, whereas another Northern codifier, Ampzing (1628, p. 35), is the first one to explicitly formulate a proscription on <dt>.

From the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, when the metalinguistic salience of the feature increases, grammarians comment more often on alternative variants. Especially in the period from 1759 to 1781, multiple codifiers reject variation in the form of correctives proper, and they thus allow only for one correct variant (Moschonas, 2020). Yet again, there is no consistency in the proscriptions, as the three possible variants are in turns being criticised. This high degree of variability was also apparent in section 4.1.2, where both <t>, <d>, and <dt> were still being prescribed and used by grammarians in the eighteenth-century Northern Netherlands. At the end of the eighteenth century, the discussion of proscribed variants temporarily declines, despite the large number of codifiers explicitly formulating a prescription on the spelling issue. This decrease of rejecting alternative variants co-occurs with the stability of <dt> prescriptions in the Northern Netherlands, and with the equally consistent precepts in favour of <d> in the Southern Netherlands.

Shortly thereafter, during the time span of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, an increase of grammarians mentioning variation is observed again. In this period, most of the norm givers in this corpus operate in the Southern Netherlands, so it is all Southerners who reflect on variation in language use. One grammarian tolerates variation in the nineteenth century, while four others still reject the use of alternative variants and proscribe either <d> or <dt>. The refusals of the variant <dt> are by some nineteenth-century norm givers motivated on geographical grounds. Two codifiers from the

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Southern Netherlands, for example, associate the form with the Hollandic region (Ter Bruggen, 1817-1818; De Simpel, s.d. [1827]), and they believe the spelling is certainly not applied by language users in Brabant. In the words of Ter Bruggen:

zelfs stellen de hedendaegsche taelkundigen in Holland, eene t na de d, in die twee personen der werk-woorden uytgaende in den: schryvende gy schendt, hy verblindt enz.; [...] doch dit gebruyk word in Braband doór niemand gevolgd.
(Ter Bruggen, 1817-1818, pp. 11-12)

‘Even the contemporary grammarians in Holland, who prescribe *t* after *d* in two persons of the verbs ending in *-den*, writing *gy schendt*, *hy verbindt* etc.; however, this usage is not followed in Brabant.’

A few years later, the Flemish grammarian Cannaert (1823) claims the spelling <dt> is just as well used by Flemish writers. No explicit geographic meaning is ascribed to the variant <d>. Thus, although a number of codifiers make regional associations during the period of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, i.e. by ascribing the meaning ‘Hollandic’ to the variant <dt>, an explicit North-South distinction is not identified as such by codifiers in the nineteenth century (cf. Vosters, 2011, p. 273).

GRAMMARIAN	YEAR	AREA	PRESCR. EXPL.	PRESCR. IMPL.	PRESCR. USAGE	OTHER VARIANT	TREAT MENT
Lambrecht	1550	South	--	--	-d/-dt	--	--
Sexagius	1576	South	--	--	--	--	--
De Heuiter	1581	North	--	-t	-t	--	--
Spiegel	1584	North	--	--	-t/-d	--	--
Van der Schuere	1612	North	--	-d	-d	--	--
De Hubert	1624	North	--	--	-d	--	--
Van Heule	1625	North	--	-d	-t	--	--
Dafforne	1627	North	--	-dt	-t	--	--
Ampzing	1628	North	-d/-det	-d/-det	-d	-dt	rejected
Plemp	1632	North	--	--	-d (1)	--	--
Van Heule	1633	North	--	-t	-t	--	--
Montanus	1635	North	--	-t	-t	--	--
Kók	1649	North	--	-dt	-dt	--	--
Van der Weyden	1651	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Leupenius	1653	North	--	-dt	-dt	--	--
Bolognino	1657	South	--	--	-dt	--	--
De Gelliers	1661 [± 1640]	North	--	--	-dt	--	--
Van Niervaart	1669 [± 1600]	North	--	--	-t	--	--
Van Atteveld	1682	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	-t	rejected
Gosens van Helderer	1683	North	--	--	-t	--	--
Winschooten	1683	North	--	-d	-d	--	--

Vollenhove	1686	North	--	--	-t	--	--
Duykerius	1696	North	--	--	-d	--	--
Francius	1699	North	--	--	-dt	--	--
Van Geesdalle	1700	South	-d	-d	-d	--	--
Nyløe	1703	North	--	-dt	-t	--	--
Hilarides	1705	North	--	-t	-t	--	--
Moonen	1706	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	-d	rejected
Nyløe	1707	North	--	-dt	-t/-dt	--	--
Séwel	1708	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Séwel	1712	North	--	-dt	-dt	--	--
E.C.P.	1713	North	--	-dt	-dt	--	--
Ten Kate	1723	North	--	-d	-d	--	--
Huydecoper	1730	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Hakvoord	1746 [1698]	North	--	--	-d	--	--
Van Belle	1748	North	-d	-d	-d	--	--
Verpoorten	1752	South	--	--	-d (5)	--	--
Van Belle	1755	North	--	-d	-d	--	--
P.B.	1757	South	--	-d	-d	--	--
Verpoorten	1759	South	-d	-d	-d	-dt	tolerated
Des Roches	[1761]	South	-d	-d	-d	-t/-dt	rejected
Elzevier	1761	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
De Haes	1764	North	-d	--	-d	-t/-dt	rejected
Van der Palm	1769	North	--	-dt	-dt	--	--
Zeydelaar	1769	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Zeydelaar	1772	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	-d	rejected
Van Bellegheem & Waterschoot	[1773]	South	--	--	-d	--	--
Janssens	[1775]	South	--	-d	-d	-t	rejected
Van Boterdael	1776 [± 1774]	South	-d	-d	-d	--	--
Cramer	1777 [± 1769]	North	--	-d	-d	--	--
Zeydelaar	1781	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	-d	rejected
Stéven	1784 [1714]	South	--	--	-d	--	--
Van Boterdael	1785	South	-d	-d	-d	--	--
Ballieu	1792 [1771]	South	-d	-d	-d	--	--
Van Bolhuis	1793	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Wester	1797	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Van Varik	1799	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	-d	rejected
Weiland	1799	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Siegenbeek	1804	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Weiland	1805	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Schilperoort	1806	North	--	--	-dt	--	--
Anslijn	1814	North	--	-dt	-dt	--	--
Henckel	1815	South	--	-d	-d	--	--
De Neckere	1815	South	-d	-d	-dt	-dt	rejected
Ter Bruggen	1817-1818 [1815]	South	-d	--	-d	-dt	tolerated
Behaegel	1817	South	-d/-dt	--	-d	--	--
Cannaert	1823	South	-dt	-dt	-dt	-d	rejected
Moke	1823	South	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Willems	1824	South	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
Behaegel	[± 1825]	South	-d	-d	-d	-dt	rejected
Bilderdijk	1826	North	-dt	-dt	-dt	--	--
De Simpel	[1827]	South	-dt	-dt	-dt	-d	rejected
Behaegel	[± 1829]	South	--	-d	-d	--	--

Table 11: norms and variant treatment final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs

Conclusion

The findings in language norms indicate that the spelling of the verb-final /t/ became a salient topic in the metalinguistic discussions from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, with most of the norm givers explicitly commenting on the feature in their prescriptions. Despite the lack of consistency in norms, the results in section 4.1.2 clearly demonstrate the (ongoing) change towards the modern-day <dt> in the prescriptions, in both the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. In the Northern Netherlands, a gradual development emerges, in which variation between three variants is exchanged for uniform <dt> prescriptions in the nineteenth century. In the Southern Netherlands, an entirely different pattern is uncovered. In this part of the language area, the uniformity in favour of <d> is replaced by variability in the nineteenth century, where <dt> is first prescribed, next to <d> (cf. also Vosters, 2011; Vosters et al., 2014). Surprisingly, though, the older variant <t>, which appears solely in the Northern norms, never shows up in explicit injunctions. This pattern of change suggests that grammarians considered <t> an outdated variant already in the seventeenth century.

Furthermore, the discussion in section 4.1.3 revealed that codifiers made comments about the spelling of the verb-final /t/ in a highly prescriptive manner. By formulating strict language norms, most grammarians did not allow for variation in usage and prescribed only one variant in the form of correctives proper (Moschonas, 2020). The same norm givers did not reach mutual agreement on which variants to prescribe and proscribe, especially when considering the earlier periods from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Although the social evaluations of the spelling of the verb-final /t/ are limited to the nineteenth century, a few grammarians consider the form <dt> exogenous from the Southern Netherlands, and they emphasise its Hollandic origins instead. However, these arguments are raised only within the context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. The boost in the discussion of alternative variants, the increased variability in Southern language norms, and the sudden emergence of social-geographic meanings ascribed to variants, may therefore be embedded within the changed socio-historical and language-political situation in the nineteenth century (cf. Vosters, 2011, p. 273).

4.2 Language use

In what follows in this section, I investigate patterns of variation and change in actual language use. These results are analysed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. For the descriptive analysis, the observed data from the usage corpus are discussed for each of the three variants, <t>, <d>, and <dt>, whereas in the statistical analysis, the variants are recoded into a binary response variable, in which <t> and <d> are both classified as ‘outgoing variant’, and <dt> is categorised as ‘incoming variant’.

As for the statistical part, I employed a mixed-effects logistic regression model, which was built from a minimal model that included only an intercept. Predictors and interactions were added manually, but only if they improved the model’s goodness of fit. The AIC of the individual models indicated that the predictors *period* and *region* contributed the most to the model, although the predictor *genre* also provided model improvement. In terms of interactions, three-way interactions always led to convergence issues. Only the two-way interaction between *period* and *region* was initially included, but it was eventually removed following a backward stepwise selection based on significance using the function *drop1*. Moreover, while the inclusion of *lemma* as a random intercept did not improve the model, the random intercept *id* significantly enhanced the regression model ($p = < 0.001$). The mixed-effects logistic regression model that is employed for investigating language use thus includes three fixed predictors – *period*, *region*, and *genre* – and the individual text in the corpus as a random effect to account for text-level variability.

Diagnostic checks revealed several influential observations when including *id* as a random effect. These observations were identified using Cook’s distance and leverage, suggesting that certain texts have a significant influence on the model’s parameter estimates. After manual investigation, these observations were retained, as they were legitimate representations of the underlying data and not data anomalies. The importance of individual texts in explaining variation is also suggested by the variance components of the random effect *id* (cf. Figure 22). Furthermore, residual diagnostics signalled deviations from normality. Despite these deviations, the overall model fit was deemed appropriate due to the improved Conditional R^2 and predictive performance, supported by a C-statistic

of 0.98, and a classification accuracy of 91%. To exclude the possibility of overfitting, the model's performance was also assessed on stratified testing data. With comparable scores for classification accuracy, no overfitting was attested. As such, the predictions of the described regression model are summarised in Figure 22, where the coefficients show the log odds of <dt> as the incoming form.

Main effects on the occurrence of <dt> as incoming form			
<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Log-Odds</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	0.91	-1.64 – 3.47	0.483
PERIOD - 17th century	-2.70	-5.42 – 0.02	0.052
PERIOD - 18th century	-2.87	-5.63 – -0.12	0.041
PERIOD - 19th century	3.38	0.62 – 6.15	0.016
REGION - Zeeland	-0.71	-3.11 – 1.69	0.562
REGION - Brabant	2.20	-0.27 – 4.67	0.081
REGION - Vlaanderen	-1.42	-3.62 – 0.77	0.203
GENRE - Ego-documents	-2.57	-4.96 – -0.18	0.035
GENRE - Pamphlets	0.75	-1.23 – 2.73	0.460
Random Effects			
σ^2	3.29		
τ_{00} ID	15.00		
ICC	0.82		
N_{ID}	146		
Observations	718		
Marginal R^2 / Conditional R^2	0.403 / 0.893		

Figure 22: regression table of the main effects on the occurrence of <dt> as incoming form in language use

Turning to the actual discussion of the results in language use, I start by presenting the general distribution of the three variants as they are observed in the usage corpus. The sociolinguistic variables period, region (and area), and genre are subsequently involved in the discussion. Where applicable, I interpret the plots with significant effects from the statistical model, before I supplement these results with the descriptive statistics of the observed data.

General distribution

For this feature, 718 valid results were obtained in the *HCD*. The general distribution of the variants in language use shows that the same three variants as in language norms are represented in usage: <t>, <d>, and <dt>. This is illustrated by the examples from the corpus in Examples 5, 6 and 7.

- (5) *snamiddags sagen wy de Wagt op trekken 600 Man verdeelt in 3 Compagnie wierden ge Exerceert dat **geschiet** alle maande wanneer hun betaling krygen*
(EGO-1750-HO-2)

‘In the afternoon, we watched the guard march out. Six hundred men, organised into three companies, were being drilled. This drill takes place every month when they receive their payment’

- (6) *Het geen ik u hier vertaal, **geschied** als alles wel gaat*
(EGO-1850-VL-4)

‘What I am telling you here happens when everything goes well’

- (7) *zoo wy hier boven gezegd hebben geheel hare professie **geschiedt** volgens den nieuwen ceremonie-boek.*
(EGO-1850-VL-3)

‘As we stated earlier, their entire practice is carried out in accordance with the new ceremonial book’

Figure 23 indicates that the modern-day variant is clearly the majority form in the entire corpus (n=399; 55.6%), while the variants <t> and <d> are almost equally distributed. The phonetic <t> makes up for 21.3% of the data (n=153), and with 23.1%, <d> is used slightly more (n=166).

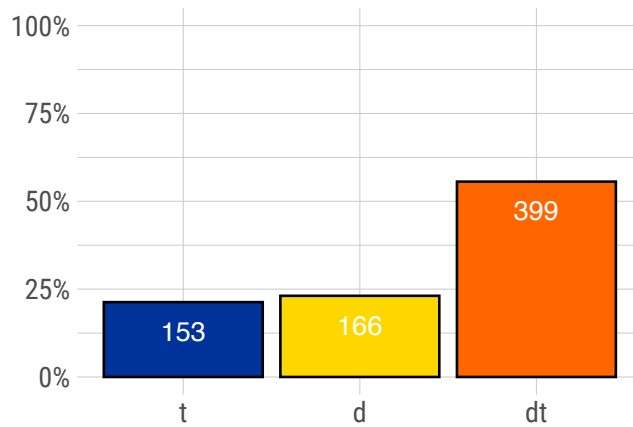
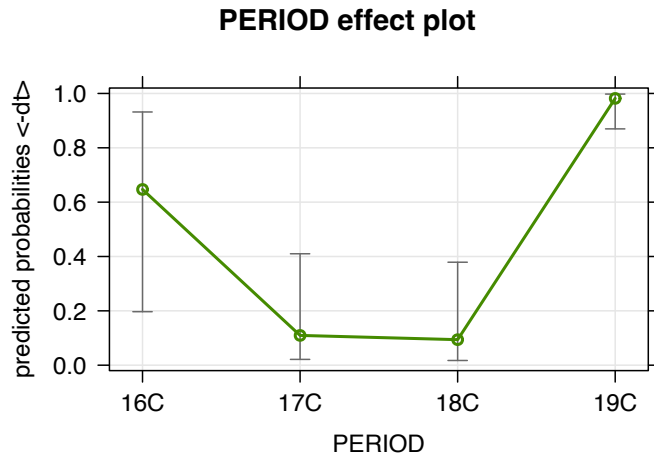


Figure 23: general distribution final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs

Per period

In terms of *period*, the regression model predicts a significant effect in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the eighteenth century, the model estimates a negative effect ($p = 0.04$), suggesting a lower likelihood of finding <dt> in the eighteenth century when compared to the sixteenth century as the reference level. In the nineteenth century, conversely, a strong positive effect is predicted ($p = 0.016$), indicating a higher likelihood of observing <dt> in the nineteenth century. This significant effect is also visualised in Figure 24. Furthermore, a pairwise comparison demonstrates that the use of <dt> in the nineteenth century not only differs from the sixteenth century. Also when comparing the most recent period to the seventeenth century, on the one hand, and to the eighteenth century, on the other hand, the use of <dt> differs significantly ($p = < 0.001$ for both periods). The regression model thus signifies that <dt> is convincingly implemented in nineteenth-century usage.

Figure 24: effect plot *period* - final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs

Turning to the observed data in the usage corpus, shown in Table 12 and Figure 25, we observe an almost binary opposition between <t> and <dt> in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century usage. While the phonetic variant <t> makes up for 42.9% of the data (n=33), <dt> is with 54.5% the majority variant in the earliest period (n=42). The proportions of the modern-day variant soon decrease in the seventeenth century (37.5%; n=48), where the phonetic <t>, in turn, is the dominant variant (58.6%; n=75). The form <d> is, with respectively 2 and 5 occurrences, only a marginal form at the time. This changes in the eighteenth century, when <d> strongly increases to 40.4% (n=69). As a result, the oldest variant <t> declines to 26.3% (n=45) in the eighteenth century. The phonetic <t> eventually disappears from usage in the nineteenth century. This again results in a binary opposition, this time with <d> and <dt> as the opposed variants. The present-day <dt> is with 73.7% (n=252) clearly the dominant variant in the nineteenth century, as was also indicated by the regression model.

	<t>	<d>	<dt>
16 th century	33 (42.9%)	2 (2.6%)	42 (54.5%)
17 th century	75 (58.6%)	5 (3.9%)	48 (37.5%)
18 th century	45 (26.3%)	69 (40.4%)	57 (33.3%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	90 (26.3%)	252 (73.7%)

Table 12: absolute and relative frequencies final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per period

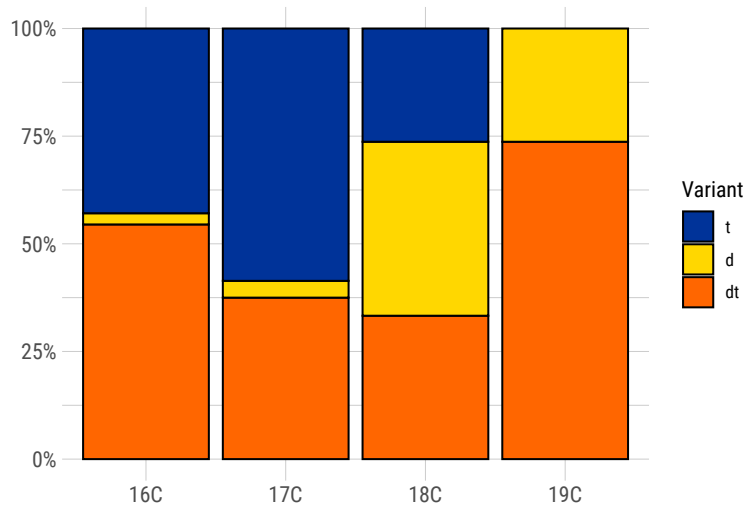
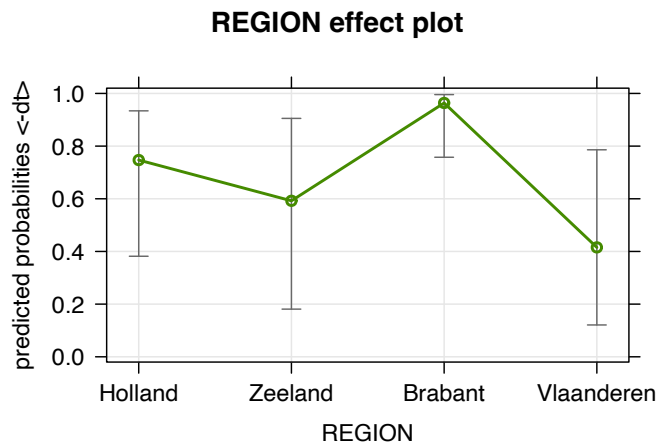


Figure 25: relative frequencies final /t/ in d-stem verbs per period

Per period and region

Figure 26: effect plot *region* - final /t/ in d-stem verbs

The regression model does not show significant differences in terms of *region*. This is also illustrated in the effect plot in Figure 26. Although none of the regions thus deviates significantly when compared to Holland as the reference level, a pairwise comparison indicates that usage in Brabant differs significantly from

the peripheral regions, Zeeland ($p = 0.037$) and Vlaanderen ($p = 0.005$). More specifically, the regression model predicts a higher overall frequency of <dt> in Brabant when compared to Zeeland and Vlaanderen.

In addition to general regional differences, Figure 27 presents regional variation from a diachronic point of view (cf. also Table 13). In line with the expectations of the regression model, the plot in Figure 27 exposes the robust distribution of <dt> in Brabant. While the incoming variant is dominant in Brabant across the four centuries, with relative proportions ranging from 52.4% to 72.1%, the use of <dt> fluctuates in the other regions. In Holland, for instance, <dt> is the main variant in the sixteenth century (64.7%, $n=11$), yet the form declines to 23.5% ($n=8$) in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, the variant rises again until <dt> is almost uniformly used in the nineteenth century (97.9%; $n=91$). A similar pattern is observed in Zeeland, where a massive increase of <dt> is observed in the nineteenth century (92.7%; $n=76$). While the modern-day <dt> thus breaks through in these regions, the share of the variant is more modest in Vlaanderen. Here, the form <dt> fails to achieve a compelling majority, and it does also not become dominant in the nineteenth century. In this region, the variant <d> fulfils the role as main variant in the nineteenth century (63.6%; $n=63$).

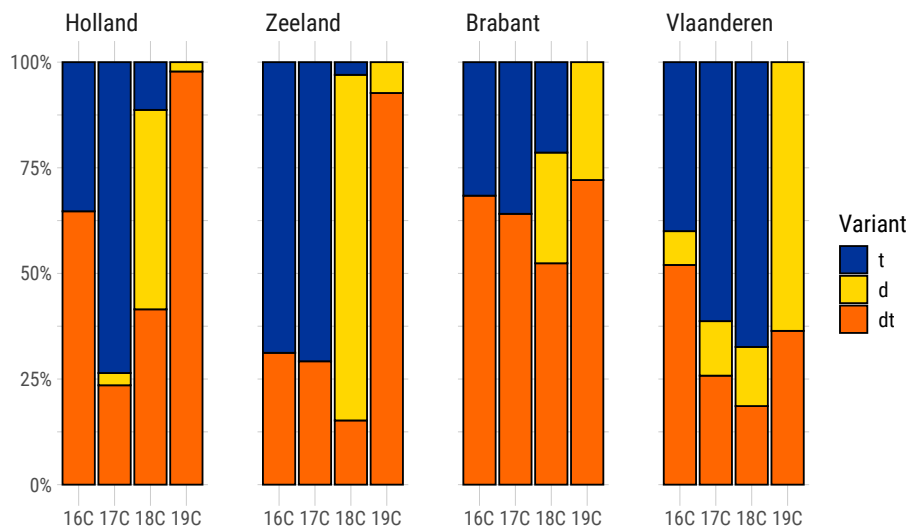


Figure 27: relative frequencies final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per period and region

While the variant <d> is dominant in nineteenth-century Vlaanderen, the form loses importance in the other regions. In Brabant, the variant is still a minority spelling in the nineteenth century (27.9%; n=19). In the Northern regions, the variant <d> was a main variant in the eighteenth century, before the form considerably decreased to a minority variant in the nineteenth century.

The phonetic <t> also loses ground over time. In Holland and Zeeland, the variant was considerably used in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, yet the form strongly declined in the eighteenth century, in favour of the variant <d>. In Brabant, the phonetic variant was used less frequently, but also here, a decrease of <t> is observed in the eighteenth century. In Vlaanderen, conversely, the variant <t> increased from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. When the form thus slowly disappeared from usage in the other regions, the spelling <t> was still used in 67.4% (n=29) of the instances in Vlaanderen. In the nineteenth century, the oldest spelling vanished entirely from usage in all investigated regions.

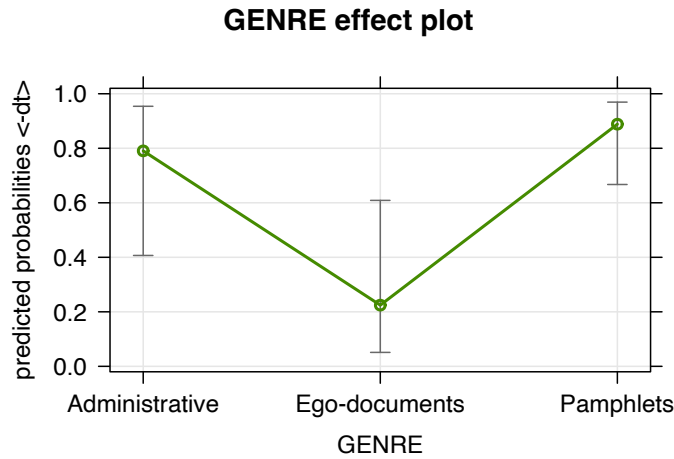
The observed data thus illustrate the relevance of considering regional differences. After all, no clear North-South distinction was detected in language use. It is therefore important to recollect that the usage patterns in Holland and Zeeland are more or less similar, with the exception that Holland adopts the spelling <dt> more strongly in the eighteenth century. Larger differences are observed between the Southern regions. Language users from Brabant employ more <dt> forms in overall, whereas language users from Vlaanderen are more conservative and reluctant in implementing the modern-day variant.

<i>Holland</i>			
	<t>	<d>	<dt>
16 th century	6 (35.3%)	0 (0.0%)	11 (64.7%)
17 th century	25 (73.5%)	1 (2.9%)	8 (23.5%)
18 th century	6 (11.3%)	25 (47.2%)	22 (41.5%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.2%)	91 (97.8%)
<i>Zeeland</i>			
	<t>	<d>	<dt>
16 th century	11 (68.8%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (31.2%)
17 th century	17 (70.8%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (29.2%)
18 th century	1 (3.0%)	27 (81.8%)	5 (15.2%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	6 (7.3%)	76 (92.7%)
<i>Brabant</i>			
	<t>	<d>	<dt>
16 th century	6 (31.6%)	0 (0.0%)	13 (68.4%)
17 th century	14 (35.9%)	0 (0.0%)	25 (64.1%)
18 th century	9 (21.4%)	11 (26.2%)	22 (52.4%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	19 (27.9%)	49 (72.1%)
<i>Vlaanderen</i>			
	<t>	<d>	<dt>
16 th century	10 (40.0%)	2 (8.0%)	13 (52.0%)
17 th century	19 (61.3%)	4 (12.9%)	8 (25.8%)
18 th century	29 (67.4%)	6 (14.0%)	8 (18.6%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	63 (63.6%)	36 (36.4%)

Table 13: absolute and relative frequencies final /t/ in d-stem verbs per period and region

Per period, area, and genre

As the effect plot in Figure 28 shows, the regression model also foresees a significant effect for *genre*. More specifically, a negative effect is expected in the ego-documents, suggesting a significantly lower likelihood of attesting <dt> forms in this genre, when compared to the administrative texts as the reference level ($p = 0.035$). Additionally, a pairwise comparison indicates that the spelling practice in the ego-documents also deviates significantly from the pamphlets ($p = 0.003$). The statistical analysis thus shows that <dt> spelling practices are generally less prevalent in ego-documents.

Figure 28: effect plot *genre* - final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs

Due to the low number of observations when analysing the diachronic evolution of genres per region, the differences between the genres are not discussed for each individual region but for the two parts of the language area. Where relevant, the regional nuances that were signalled before are still considered.

The observed results presented in Figure 29 illustrate that ego-documents are indeed the most conservative genre (cf. also Table 14). These texts not only have the lowest frequency of <dt> forms in general. In the nineteenth century, when <dt> is clearly the favoured variant in the other genres, the change to <dt> is also not as far progressed in this informal handwritten genre. In both Northern and Southern ego-documents, the proportions of the modern-day variant fluctuate around 55% in the nineteenth century. Only the Southern administrative texts are with 38.2% <dt> (n=85) more conservative at the time. The administrative texts and pamphlets from the North, on the contrary, show an almost complete change to <dt> in the nineteenth century.

Although the change to <dt> is thus reflected in all genres, the variant <d> is still considerably used in the nineteenth-century South. The form is used in Brabant and Vlaanderen, but the spelling clearly occurs more frequently in the peripheral Vlaanderen. Brabantine language users particularly employ the form in ego-documents (78.9% <dt>; n=15), while <d> is attested across all genres in Vlaanderen. Here, the variant is dominant in the administrative texts (81.0%, n=51), and it still occurs in printed genres like the pamphlets as well (11.1%,

n=7). In Northern usage, the variant <d> has clearly lost ground. It only remains a variant of importance in the ego-documents (41.7%, n=5).

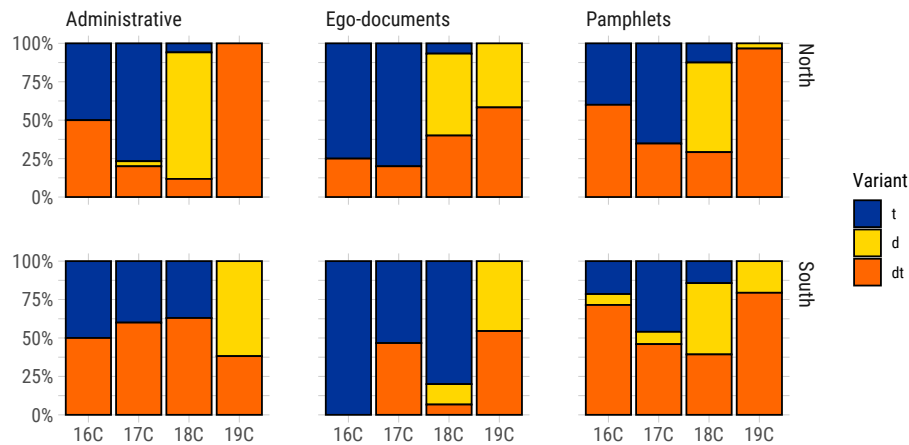


Figure 29: relative frequencies final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per period, area, and genre

In line with the statistical analysis, the observed results indicate that the modern-day <dt> was implemented most radically in the pamphlets and administrative texts. Although pamphlets indeed display an almost complete shift to <dt> in both the North and the South, the observed data also nuance that Southern administrative texts may have been less progressive in adopting <dt> compared to those in the North. Together with the entire genre of ego-documents, these administrative documents adhered most strongly to <d> in the nineteenth century.

Administrative texts

	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS			SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS		
	<t>	<d>	<dt>	<t>	<d>	<dt>
16 th century	12 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (50.0%)	6 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (50.0%)
17 th century	23 (76.7%)	1 (3.3%)	6 (20.0%)	2 (40.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (60.0%)
18 th century	1 (5.9%)	14 (82.4%)	2 (11.8%)	10 (37.0%)	0 (0.0%)	17 (63.0%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	74 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	55 (61.8%)	85 (38.2%)

Ego-documents

	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS			SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS		
	<t>	<d>	<dt>	<t>	<d>	<dt>
16 th century	3 (75.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (25.0%)	4 (100%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
17 th century	4 (80.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (20.0%)	8 (53.3%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (46.7%)
18 th century	3 (6.7%)	24 (53.3%)	18 (40.0%)	24 (80.0%)	4 (13.3%)	2 (6.7%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	5 (41.7%)	7 (58.3%)	0 (0.0%)	20 (45.5%)	24 (54.5%)

Pamphlets

	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS			SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS		
	<t>	<d>	<dt>	<t>	<d>	<dt>
16 th century	2 (40.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (60.0%)	6 (21.4%)	2 (7.1%)	20 (71.4%)
17 th century	15 (65.2%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (34.8%)	23 (46.0%)	4 (8.0%)	23 (46.0%)
18 th century	3 (12.5%)	14 (58.3%)	7 (29.2%)	4 (14.3%)	13 (46.4%)	11 (39.3%)
19 th century	0 (0.0%)	3 (3.4%)	86 (96.6%)	0 (0.0%)	7 (20.6%)	27 (79.4%)

Table 14: absolute and relative frequencies final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per period, area, and genre

Conclusion

The overall pattern in language use indicates that usage is highly variable from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Alike in the prescriptions, three variants show up in usage until the eighteenth century. The phonetic <t>, however, entirely disappears from usage in the nineteenth century. This variant probably became archaic when the newer <d> and <dt> emerged. In the most recent period, tension thus remains between the latter two variants, although <dt> convincingly establishes as the dominant spelling in nineteenth-century usage.

Although the change to <dt> is attested in the Northern and Southern Netherlands, regional differences were identified. In the two Northern regions, we see the variant <d> increasing in the eighteenth century until it is suppressed by the modern-day <dt> in the nineteenth century. This results in a largely finalised change to <dt> in both Holland and Zeeland. Greater regional discrepancies arise in Southern usage. In this part of the language area, Brabant emerges as a progressive region, whereas Vlaanderen remains conservative regarding this spelling feature. In fact, Brabant shows high proportions of <dt> over time, while Vlaanderen strongly adheres to older variants <t> and <d>. As a result, the peripheral region in the South is the only region where <dt> is not a dominant variant in the nineteenth century.

In terms of genre differences, the transition to <dt> is most pronounced in the pamphlets and in the Northern administrative texts. These genres thus fulfil the most progressive role in implementing the incoming variant in the nineteenth century. The rather informal ego-documents are, together with the Southern administrative texts, the most conservative genre, as they are more reluctant in adopting <dt> in the nineteenth century.

4.3 Prescriptive influence

In this section, the influence of prescriptivism on usage is investigated. I explore patterns of change in language norms and usage to determine the relationship between both actors. The chronology of language change is mapped out to establish which changes are possibly caused by prescriptive interventions. These

options of prescriptive influence are subsequently discussed and interpreted in section 5.

Chronology of change

In Figure 30 and Figure 31, the observed chronology of change is visualised for norms and usage respectively. All datapoints are therefore projected onto an underlying numeric scale with equal distance between each variant (1-2-3). The trendlines in the plots give a general indication of the pattern of change, whereas the plotted dots represent the observed data points. In ascertaining the chronology of language change, I distinguish between the three observed variants in norms and usage: <t>, <d>, and <dt>.

The prescriptions for the spelling of the verb-final /t/ commence with one Northern codifier favouring the spelling <t> in the sixteenth century, before variability arises, with three variants appearing in seventeenth-century norms. Although variable prescriptions continue in the eighteenth century, <t> disappears from the prescriptions, and a preference for <dt> emerges in the North. This preference culminates in uniformity towards the end of the eighteenth century. A diachronic change from variability to uniform <dt> prescriptions is thus observed in the Northern part of the language area.

When these changes are compared to Northern usage, Figure 31 illustrates that usage is also characterised by variability. The early variability between <t> and <dt> even increases in the first half of the seventeenth century, when also <d> shows up in language use. Interesting in this respect is the sudden appearance of the analogical <d> in seventeenth-century usage, which occurs a few decades after the first <d> prescription in 1612. In fact, as I will discuss later, this is an option in which prescriptive influence is possible. In any case, this potential effect of prescriptivism for the variant <d> is only temporary, since Northern usage almost uniformly adopts <dt> in the nineteenth century. This adherence to <dt> is the result of a massive increase of the present-day variant, following on the highly consistent <dt> prescriptions at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. Also this change in usage suggests a possible relationship between language norms and usage.

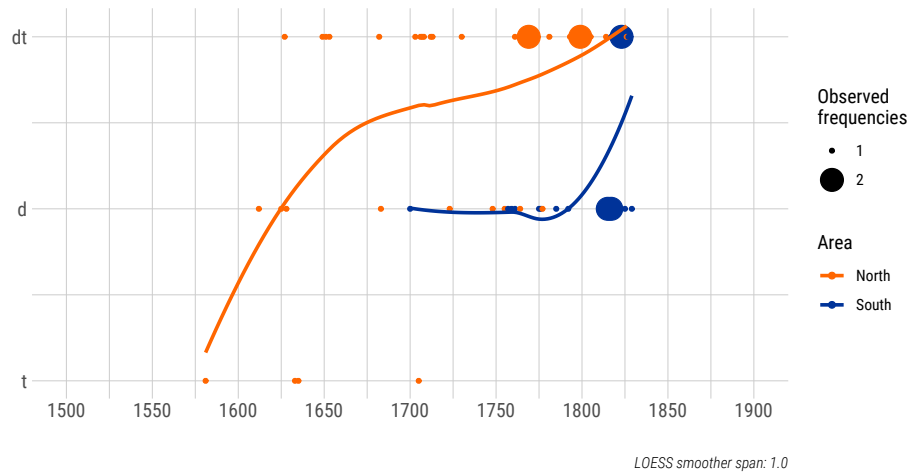


Figure 30: prescriptions final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per year and area

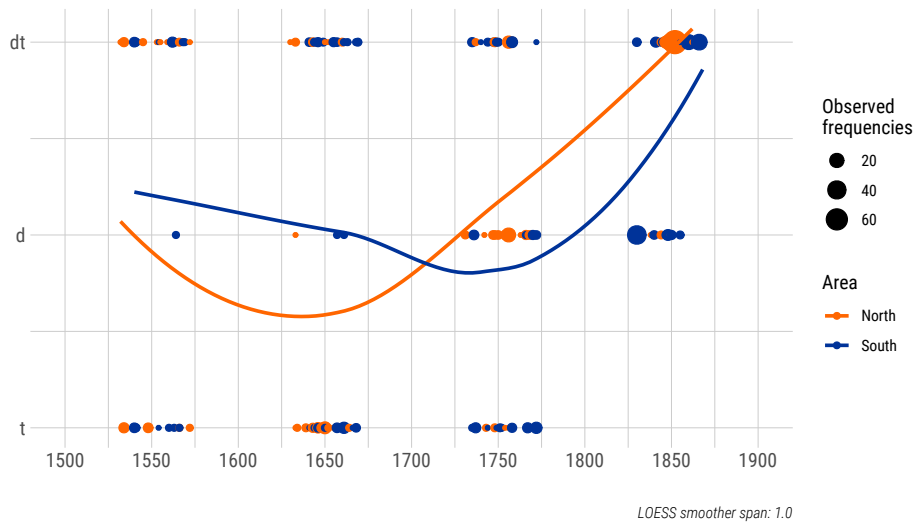


Figure 31: language use final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs per year and area

In the Southern Netherlands, the very first prescription on the topic is introduced in the beginning of the eighteenth century. A few decades after this prescription, multiple <d> prescriptions show up in Southern norms. This uniform tradition of <d> prescriptions lasts until the early nineteenth century, when Southern codifiers start prescribing <dt>. This shift in the prescriptions is particularly pronounced towards the end of the period of political reunification with the Northern Netherlands (viz. United Kingdom of the Netherlands). However, not all grammarians in the South make this change. A couple of grammarians still adhere to the variant <d> at the time.

The initial uniformity in Southern language norms is certainly lacking in Southern usage, where variability between <t>, <d>, and <dt> persists from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Also here, <t> disappears from usage in the nineteenth century, when <d> and <dt> are both considerably used. After the first prescriptions for <dt> appeared in the South, the modern-day variant increases strongly in Southern usage. Although this again suggests possible prescriptive interference, a considerable number of writers still uses the variant <d> at the time. This at least implies that the real breakthrough of <dt> in the South did not occur before 1850 and is probably situated later in the nineteenth century.

As such, the comparison of patterns in norms and usage indicates variable norms and usage from the sixteenth to the early eighteenth centuries. Although prevailing variability makes prescriptive influence less likely, an impact of prescriptivism may also take place when prescriptions and usage are not uniform, of course. However, when considering the chronology of change, prescriptive influence appears most probable in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. All options in which prescriptivism possibly interfered in usage are summed up below.

- (1) Although Northern grammarians in the seventeenth century did not reach consistency in their prescriptions, the language norms favouring <d> precede the increase of the variant in eighteenth-century usage in the Northern Netherlands.

- (2) Also in the Northern Netherlands, the variant <t> disappeared from eighteenth-century language norms, which prescribed alternative variants at the time. A century later, <t> also vanished from Northern usage.
- (3) By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Northern codifiers were all prescribing <dt>. Although this variant was already in use, the consistency in norms is followed by a massive increase of <dt> variants in Northern usage around 1850.
- (4) Even though <d> was applied in Southern usage before the first prescriptions for the variant appeared, an increase of the form is observed in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Southern usage.
- (5) The phonetic <t> disappeared from Southern usage in the nineteenth century. This happens right after a century of consistent <d> prescriptions by Southern codifiers.
- (6) Southern language practices show an increased use of <dt> around the middle of the nineteenth century. Although norms and usage remain variable, the increase occurs around 1825 in the prescriptions, while language use changes a few decades later.

In the following section, I will evaluate whether these changes in language use are caused by prescriptivists' attempts of regulating the spelling of the verb-final /t/.

5 Discussion

As is the case for all case studies investigated in this dissertation, extralinguistic factors like the target audience of normative works, the type of the prescription, and genre differences are considered to evaluate whether and to what extent prescriptivism exerted an impact on language change.

For **option 1**, we start in the Northern Netherlands, where an increase of the variant <d> in usage is preceded by individual prescriptions for the same form. Although this chronology of change in principle allows for prescriptive influence, an impact of Northern prescriptions is unlikely. An influence of prescriptivism is not expected due to the type of prescriptions that favour <d> in the seventeenth century. Only one grammarian explicitly prescribes <d> (cf. Ampzing, 1628),

while all other prescriptions are implicit in nature. Apart from the fact that explicit injunctions on the topic were not prominent, Northern prescriptions were highly variable at the time. Also the genre tendencies suggest that prescriptive influence is unlikely. It is improbable that individual norm givers in the seventeenth century reached both pamphlets, administrative texts, and ego-documents. It is therefore more likely that <d> arose as an innovation in Northern usage between 1670 and 1730.

Following the prescriptions for <d> and <dt> in the Northern Netherlands, the phonetic <t> disappears from usage in the nineteenth century. In **option 2**, I evaluate whether the prescriptions for alternative variants, and the proscriptions for <t>, resulted in the vanishing of the variant in Northern usage. In this context, it is important to consider that a strong decline of <t> is observed already in the eighteenth century, a century before the actual disappearance of the form in usage. This decrease of <t> took place across all genres. While the prescriptions for alternative variants also precede the decline of the form in usage, prescriptive influence is rather unlikely in this case. It would be odd, after all, if the diverging <d> and <dt> prescriptions of elitist grammarians, such as Moonen (1706) and Ten Kate (1723), who had a restricted target audience, were able to influence both formal (pamphlets and administrative texts) and informal (ego-documents) genres in eighteenth-century usage.

From a different perspective, however, the way in which the phonetic <t> is implicitly treated by norm givers is also important to acknowledge. Already before the eighteenth century, codifiers did not devote an explicit prescription to the form. Although <t> was thus still in use in the earlier periods, the variant was considered too obsolete to be explicitly prescribed. By not prescribing <t>, but the newer variants <d> and <dt> instead, norm givers possibly created awareness among language users of not using the phonetic <t> anymore.

The effect of prescriptions for 'newer' variants like <d> and <dt> is perhaps also visible in the nineteenth century. In **option 3**, I determine whether the consistent <dt> prescriptions in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are related to the massive increase of the form in Northern usage. In this context, it is important to stress that <dt> had been applied since the sixteenth century, so prescriptivism could not have initiated this change in usage. Nonetheless, prescriptivism may have succeeded in accelerating the ongoing change to <dt>

in usage. The discussed increase of <dt> in usage is visible in all genres in the nineteenth century. Yet, the form rises the strongest in administrative texts and pamphlets. As the incline of <dt> is most pronounced in the printed and formal genres, an influence of prescriptivism indeed is a plausible scenario. Furthermore, since language norms in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were disseminated across all layers of society (cf. period of national grammar), it is no surprise that ego-documents immediately partitioned in the increase of <dt>. The most influential and widespread prescriptions probably derived from the Hollandic grammarian, Siegenbeek (1804), who formulated a prescription for <dt> in his national orthography of Dutch. As Krogull (2018) also concluded for this spelling feature, with the official spelling regulations, Siegenbeek (1804) probably succeeded in establishing the spelling <dt> in Northern usage.

Turning to the Southern Netherlands now, **option 4** explores whether the consistent prescriptions for <d> caused an increase of the form in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century usage. To determine whether Southern prescriptivism played a role in the incline of <d>, both regional and genre differences are considered. When looking at genre differences in the eighteenth century, the growth of <d> is most pronounced in the pamphlets. In this genre, the increase of <d> emerges simultaneously with the tradition of <d> prescriptions of Southern grammarians. In this case, prescriptions do thus not convincingly precede the incline of <d> in pamphlets, which makes an influence of prescriptivism unlikely.

When the consistent <d> prescriptions continued, however, the variant suddenly pops up in the administrative texts as well. This strong increase of <d> in the administrative texts is entirely situated in the region of Vlaanderen, where <d> is the main variant in the nineteenth century. It is therefore probable that the codified norms that were published in the period of civil grammars, particularly influenced writers from Vlaanderen in the nineteenth century. Since <d> was frequently used in pamphlets a century earlier, the printed genre may have helped in spreading this change to Vlaanderen. While this change can thus be considered an influence ‘from above’, the credit does not accrue only to norm givers but also to the dissemination of printed documents.

In the nineteenth century, the phonetic <t> disappears from Southern usage. **Option 5** evaluates whether the fading of the form is correlated with the prescriptions for alternative variants like <d> and <dt>. Like in Northern usage, the vanishing of <t> from Southern usage is preceded by a strong decrease of the variant in the eighteenth century. This large decline of <t> is not visible in all genres, but only in the pamphlets. Furthermore, this decrease of <t> co-occurs with the tradition of <d> prescriptions that was set up in the South. Within this normative tradition, a few grammarians, like Des Roches (s.d. [1761]), not only prescribed <d>, but also explicitly formulated a proscription on <t>. Given the fact that prescriptions and proscriptions emerge simultaneously with the decline of <t> in pamphlets, an impact of prescriptivism is not very plausible. While the vanishing of the form in the nineteenth century could be reinforced by such normative injunctions, the fact that <t> was considered outdated for several centuries may also have contributed to its demise.

Also in the nineteenth century, the modern-day variant <dt> increases in Southern usage. In **option 6**, I analyse whether this increase of <dt> is related to an influence of prescriptivism, as was the case in the Northern Netherlands (cf. option 3). It is around the advent of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands that Southern grammarians start prescribing <dt>, a form that has been in use since the sixteenth century. The sudden increase of the variant in usage takes place around 1850, thus a few decades after the first <dt> prescriptions appeared in the South. Compared to the North, the growth of the form is less extreme in the South, since variation with <d> still exists (cf. option 4). More specifically, in the region of Vlaanderen, the variant <d> is still the majority spelling variant. In the region of Brabant, conversely, <dt> is the dominant variant in the nineteenth century. Since the increase of <dt> in usage is preceded by prescriptions for the same variant, a restricted impact – similar to the influence of Siegenbeek in the North – with codifiers accelerating an ongoing change is possible.

However, due to the specific context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands at the time, it is also important to acknowledge that the increase of <dt> in the South may be related to the specific language-political situation in the nineteenth century. In fact, when also investigating the spelling of the verb-final /t/, Vosters et al. (2014) argued that the changed socio-historical context, and consequently the increased contact between the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, also

facilitated and strengthened the implementation of the 'Northern' <dt> in the Southern part of the language area. As such, both the success of the official spelling regulations and the socio-historical context may have caused the increase of <dt> in Southern usage in the nineteenth century.

6 Conclusion

In the last part of this chapter, a conclusion is formulated on the success of prescriptive interventions for the spelling of the verb-final /t/. But first, the patterns of variation and change are linked to the hypotheses set up in section 2 of this chapter.

Let us consider the developments of the phonetic <t> first. In both the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, the pattern of change allows for an impact 'from above'. As was expected in hypothesis 1, the disappearance of <t> in Northern and Southern usage is inevitably related to the implicit stigmatisation of the variant as 'obsolete' and 'outdated'. With norm givers (implicitly) affirming this stigma in their proscriptions, and with codifiers prescribing more modern variants, grammarians may have facilitated the vanishing of the variant in usage in an indirect way.

As for the morphological <d> in hypothesis 2, I formulated different presumptions for the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, which are now partly confirmed. In the North, the premise that <d> would be the majority form in eighteenth-century usage is verified. As opposed to what I expected, the morphological <d> was also prescribed by a number of codifiers in the eighteenth-century North. However, prescriptive influence was unlikely for this variant, which affirms hypothesis 2 for the Northern Netherlands. Contrary to what I expected for the Southern Netherlands, <d> was not the majority form in the entire eighteenth-century South. Here, the chronology of change and the genre discrepancies revealed that forces 'from above' most likely triggered an increase to <d> in Vlaanderen and in the nineteenth-century ego-documents.

Lastly, the presumption for the variant <dt> in hypothesis 3 is confirmed. As expected, <dt> prescriptions of Northern grammarians did not have any effect on usage in the eighteenth century, whereas the increase of the present-day form

in the nineteenth-century North is most likely related to an impact of prescriptivism. Also Southern norms and usage provide evidence for prescriptive interference. Yet, in this context, also the socio-historical context probably strengthened the change to <dt> in Southern norms and usage (cf. Vosters et al., 2014).

In two of the six options in which the chronology of change allowed for an impact of prescriptivism, it is likely that codified norms influenced language use in some way. These instances are both situated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, at the time that the standard language ideology emerged, and the target audience of normative works extended to a broader readership (cf. Rutten, 2019). What is more, exactly in these contexts, the metalinguistic salience of the feature had just taken a sharp rise, with the majority of norm givers formulating explicit prescriptions (and proscriptions) on the spelling of the verb-final /t/. Furthermore, these spelling prescriptions are implemented in periods in which the prescriptions were highly uniform, with all codifiers prescribing <d> in the eighteenth-century South, and with grammarians agreeing on <dt> prescriptions in the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century North.

Although prescriptivism thus achieved some successes for this spelling variable, these are by no means major influences with norm givers actuating new changes in usage, or turning around entire language practices. Codifiers merely reinforced the use of a variant, and expanded its application to a wider range of genres. In that sense, not only prescriptivism but also printed genres like pamphlets, but perhaps also newspapers and other printed texts that enjoyed a broad social reach, aided in disseminating spelling variants to other (handwritten) genres in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Although this diffusion of spelling variants is thus a collective achievement ‘from above’, its impact is not necessarily widespread or long-lasting. In fact, in this case study, prescriptive success aligns with major socio-historical changes. The fact that Southern prescriptions were only temporarily successful is probably due to the changing socio-historical context in the nineteenth century, where the official norms from the North took the upper hand. While the official language policy from the Northern Netherlands was thus certainly influential in both parts of the language area, this textbook case also depends on a context of changing language policies and nation-building processes, in which language users are more prone to influences ‘from above’.

Chapter 7 – Comparative marker

In one of his songs in the 1970s, the Belgian singer Louis Neefs sung: *nooit had ik een beter vriend **als** Benjamin* ‘I never had a better friend as Benjamin’. In this comparative construction, the singer used the comparative marker *als* while, if he wanted to express himself in Standard Dutch, he should have sung: *nooit had ik een beter vriend **dan** Benjamin*. In fact, this is a frequently quoted example for illustrating how the comparative is commonly formed in spoken varieties of Dutch. In almost all local speech today, the complementiser *als* shows up when formulating a comparative in which unequal parts are compared (cf. Barbiers et al., 2005, map 15b; cf. Figure 32). In Standard Dutch, however, the codified norm is to use the marker *als* ‘as’ only in a comparative of equality, whereas the particle *dan* ‘than’ must be applied in a comparison of inequality, as Examples 1-2 show.

Comparative of equality

- (1) *Ze is even slim **als** hij (is)*
‘She is as smart as he (is)’

Comparative of inequality

- (2) *Ze is slimmer **dan** hij (is)* **Ze is slimmer **als** hij (is)* ⁶¹
‘She is smarter than he (is)’ ‘She is smarter as he (is)’

Apart from the discussed variation between the complementisers *als* and *dan* in comparatives of inequality, the complementisers in comparatives of equality are also prone to variability. An example is the hypercorrect use of the participle *dan*, as in *ze is even slim **dan** hij* ‘she is as smart than he’. Although such utterances are

⁶¹ Although the contemporary norm, codified in the *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst* (ANS) ‘General Dutch Grammar’, argues that there is no objection in using *als* in comparatives of inequality, it also signals that the variant is not accepted by all language users. The work therefore advises to refrain from the use of *als* in these comparative constructions. Original citation: *Het voegwoord als is in deze functie niet voor alle taalgebruikers aanvaardbaar. Voor velen is dan zelfs een sjibbolet voor correct Nederlands. Wie moeilijkheden op dit gebied wil vermijden, kan zich daarom beter van het gebruik van ongelijkheid-aanduidend als – waar op zichzelf beschouwd geen enkel bezwaar tegen bestaat – onthouden* (e-ANS, section 10.3.14.5)

also found in Early and Late Modern writings (Van der Horst, 2008, II, p. 1543), the focus of this case study is solely on the participle use in comparative constructions of inequality.

The prescriptions for the complementiser, in which *dan* is considered the only correct marker in comparatives of inequality, are not bound to modern-day Standard Dutch. With Huydecoper (1730) as one of the first codifiers commenting on the incorrect use of the marker *als* in comparatives of inequality, the normative tradition in the eighteenth century already considered *dan* the preferred variant for these comparative constructions (Van der Horst, 2008, II, pp. 1542-1543). However, Huydecoper also suggests that variability had emerged in written language use, with *als* showing up in linguistic contexts where it did not belong. This is also indicated by Van der Horst (1997, p. 428) and Van der Horst (2008, II, p. 1272), who illustrate that some authors in the seventeenth century, such as Bredero and Vondel, wrote *dan* and *als* interchangeably, or even preferred *als* as a marker in these comparatives of inequality (cf. also Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 469). Such findings of course confirm that the marker *als* was applied as an alternative variant in comparative constructions of inequality well before it became common in modern-day Dutch. Moreover, while the marker *als* mainly characterises the spoken varieties today, in Early and Late Modern times, the form was (also) used in writing, which makes it an interesting feature to investigate in the context of language standardisation and prescriptive influence.

1 Previous research

The use of the complementiser in comparatives of inequality is a prominent topic in normative discussions of Dutch today, and in fact, the feature is the favourite pet peeve of many language enthusiasts. It is therefore not surprising that multiple studies on the grammatical issue have been carried out on contemporary usage data, in which mainly the spoken variety is scrutinised. However, little is known about the historical development of *als* and *dan* as markers in comparatives of inequality in the written code, and especially the sociolinguistic angle remains understudied. For the literature review of this variable, I therefore rely on what is discussed in reference works of Dutch, as well as in language-historical and dialectal studies, some of which date back to

the middle of the twentieth century (cf. Paardekooper, 1950; Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, 1963; De Rooij, 1972). I also refer to a synchronic study on the influential factors in the use of the comparative markers in modern-day spoken Dutch (cf. Hubers & De Hoop, 2013).

Multiple reference works and studies that raise the topic of variation in the comparative markers assert that *als* arose as an alternative form in comparatives of inequality in the sixteenth century, while the complementiser *dan* was the common form in written usage (Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 468; cf. also Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, 1963, p. 265; De Rooij, 1972, p. 199; Postma, 2006, pp. 2-3). From a comparative perspective, it is explained that the emergence of the form *als* as a marker in comparatives of inequality is not restricted to Dutch. The rise of the variant is also observed in written German, where a medieval comparative like *dümmer denn* changed into *dümmer als* ‘dumber than’ in the period of Renaissance (Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 469). According to Schenkeveld-van der Dussen (1963, pp. 261-262), who approached the matter from a structuralist perspective, the appearance of *als* in these German comparatives may be explained by the syntactic overuse of the variant *denn*. Since the Dutch equivalent *dan* was also employed for various functions in the sixteenth century, it is argued that the argument of syntactic overuse may also be at the root of the rise of the marker *als* in Dutch (ibid.). Schenkeveld-van der Dussen’s (1963) explanation also faces opposition (e.g. Stroop, 2014, p. 456), yet the investigated change at least suggests that the emergence of *als* as a comparative marker took place in German and in Dutch at the same time (Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 469). Since *als* eventually became the codified form in High German, it is assumed that the further dissemination of the variant in sixteenth-century writings of Dutch was possibly influenced by these processes of standardisation in the German language (Paardekooper, 1950, pp. 163-164; Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, 1963, p. 262; Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 469).

Paardekooper (1950, pp. 161-163), however, also turns to dialectology to find an explanation for the historical rise of the marker *als*. Since the difference between *als* and *dan* as markers in comparatives of equality and inequality is hardly ever made in the spoken language of the twentieth century, he argues that the distinction was also never part of the spoken repertoire of many language users in the past. According to Paardekooper (1950), historical language users often knew only one comparative marker in their dialect, and they thus used *als*

or the typically southwestern *of* for both comparative constructions of equality and inequality. Due to the general lack of *dan* in multiple dialects, he assumes the form eventually disappeared from written Middle Dutch. Although Paardekooper (1950) is right in believing that *als* and the highly local *of* characterise the comparative constructions of inequality in the spoken language today (cf. Figure 32), De Rooij (1972, p. 201) affirms that the dialect system which Paardekooper (1950) refers to probably emerged only after the Middle Ages. As De Rooij (1972, p. 203) asserts, in earlier stages of Dutch, the variant *dan* was not only a feature of the written language, but it was also used in different spoken varieties, which in turn refutes Paardekooper's (1950) hypothesis.

More recently, Van der Horst (2008, II, p. 1272) discussed the historical dissemination of *als* in comparatives of inequality, and he indicates that the use of *als* became frequent in religious (i.e. the official Bible translation) and literary writings in the seventeenth century. The norm-giving author Vondel, for example, applied *als* as a majority variant in his poetry in the beginning of the seventeenth century, although in reworked versions of the same work a few decades later, almost all these *als* forms in comparatives of inequality were exchanged for the marker *dan*. This alone is an interesting finding, since Vondel's switch from *als* to *dan* at least points to an awareness about the competing variant emerging in the course of the seventeenth century. Van der Horst (2008, II, pp. 1542-1543) also mentions that *als* still shows up in the eighteenth century as a marker in comparatives of inequality, with even a grammarian like Huydecoper (1730, p. 129) admitting he used the variant in his writings until 1720 (cf. section 4.1). The discussion of Van der Horst (2008, II) thus suggests that norm givers' awareness about variation, and the normative preference for *dan* must have arisen somewhere between the second half of the seventeenth century and the middle of the eighteenth century, with some authoritative language users at the time also shifting to *dan* in their language practice.⁶² However, based on these data, it is not clear whether this change to *dan* in writing practice was already happening at a larger scale, comprising different social classes, genres, regions, etc.

⁶² For research into the further development of prescriptions on the comparative marker, particularly in the twentieth century, see Van der Meulen (2018).

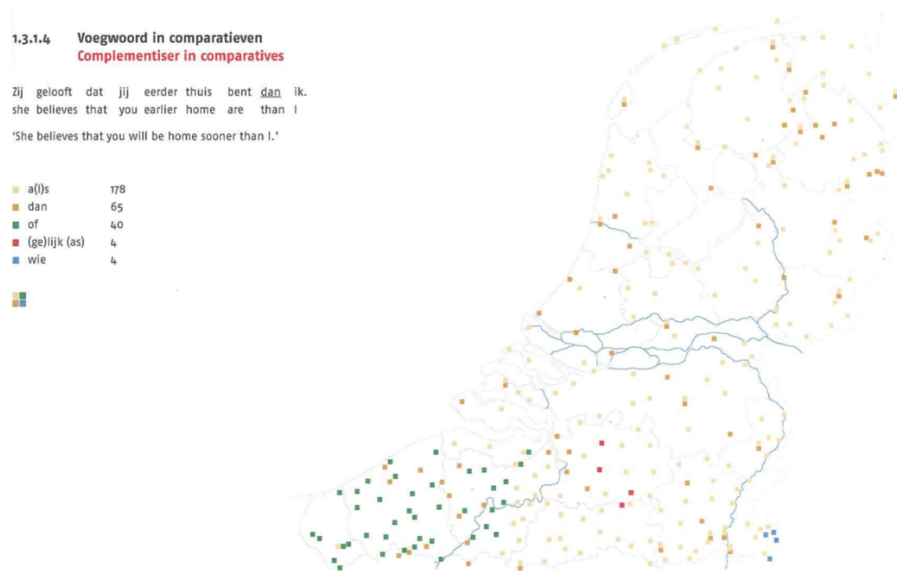


Figure 32: dialect map on the use of the marker in comparatives in modern-day spoken Dutch. Map retrieved from Barbiers et al. (2005)

As mentioned earlier, other scholars analysed the markers in comparatives of inequality in present-day Dutch (e.g. Postma, 2006; Stroop, 2011; 2014). From a sociolinguistic perspective, Hubers & De Hoop (2013) investigate the influence of language-internal and language-external factors on the use of the comparative marker in spoken Dutch. Transcribed spoken data from different regions in the Netherlands and the Dutch-speaking parts of Belgium, as part of the *Corpus Gesproken Nederlands (CGN)* 'Corpus of Spoken Dutch', were analysed in this study. The data revealed that the involved intra-linguistic factors, i.e. (1) the type of comparative, (2) the distance between the comparative and the comparative marker, and (3) the grammatical context in which the comparative was used, were not influential in the choice for *dan* or *als*, nor were the language-external factors (1) genre, (2) the age of the speaker, and (3) the speaker's region of birth. Two other sociolinguistic factors – the level of education and region – on the contrary, did explain patterns of variation in usage (ibid., pp. 98-99). More specifically, it turned out that highly educated speakers were more likely to use the marker *dan*, which leads the authors to the conclusion that the present-day prescribed form *dan* is part of the grammatical repertoire of these speakers, whereas this is less the case for lower-educated speakers of Dutch (Hubers & De Hoop, 2013, pp. 98-100). For the impact of region, the authors argue that,

although the comparative marker *dan* is still the majority variant in all provinces, speakers from the Southern provinces of what are the Netherlands today (i.e. Limburg, Noord-Brabant, and Zeeland) use more *als* compared to the more Northern parts of the country (e.g. Holland) and the entire Dutch-speaking area in Belgium (ibid.).

Despite the limited amount of diachronic and (historical-)sociolinguistic corpus studies, some relevant conclusions can be drawn from previous research on the marker in comparatives of inequality. Research has shown that the comparative marker *dan* was the common complementiser in sixteenth-century writings, although variation with *als* also emerged at the time. The use of this new complementiser increased in the seventeenth century and disappeared again in the writings of some authoritative figures in the eighteenth century. Since *dan* is the most common form in modern-day written Dutch, the form *als* must have undergone a widespread decline in writing at a later stage. How long the variant remained in use, whether regional differences can also be discerned in the past, and whether the upcoming prescriptions for *dan* in the eighteenth century, and general processes of language standardisation, are related to these developments in written usage is not known yet and will be investigated in the present study.

2 Hypotheses

Although the historical-sociolinguistic development of the comparative markers *als* and *dan* remains largely uncharted territory, some general expectations for the change from *dan* to *als*, and back to *dan*, can be formulated based on previous research.

First, multiple reference works established that the variant *als* initially showed up as a comparative marker in sixteenth-century writings, from where its use increased in the seventeenth century (Van der Horst, 2008; Van der Sijs, 2021). Although previous research was carried out on literary and religious documents, a similar development can probably be expected in the *HCD*. As such, based on the work of Van der Horst (2008), I presume *als* will stand the strongest in the seventeenth century, whereas the variant may already be on decline in the eighteenth century. Since it is unclear whether *als* was ever prescribed in the

sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, it cannot be defined yet whether the expected increase of the variant could have been caused by an effect of prescriptivism. However, with Van der Horst (2008) summarising that authoritative writers had switched to *dan* in their late seventeenth-century usage, and grammarians started prescribing *dan* – and proscribing *als* – in the beginning of the eighteenth century, it may well be that these top-down attempts to regularise the use of the comparative markers caused a decline of *als* in eighteenth-century language use (**hypothesis 1**).

Hypothesis 1, comprising the rise and the fall of the variant *als*, also has implications for *dan* as a comparative marker, of course. In line with Van der Sijs (2021), I expect *dan* will be the majority variant in sixteenth-century usage, although the marker will probably decrease in the seventeenth century, in favour of the variant *als* (cf. hypothesis 1). Following Van der Horst (2008), who discusses a revival of *dan* in the language practice of literary writers and grammarians in the second half of the seventeenth century and in the beginning of the eighteenth century, I also hypothesise to observe an increase of *dan* taking place in eighteenth-century usage, although variation with *als* will probably remain. Since Van der Horst (2008) indicates that explicit prescriptions for *dan* arise in the early eighteenth century, the expected revival of *dan* in eighteenth-century usage may be related to these prescriptions. Due to the upcoming standard language ideology, and the institutionalisation of prescriptivism in the course of the eighteenth century (Rutten, 2019), I moreover suppose the prescribed marker *dan* will see a further increase in nineteenth-century usage.

As explained before, given the lack of historical-sociolinguistic studies, it is difficult to formulate highly detailed hypotheses in terms of genre and regional differences in the development of this feature. When it comes to region, however, modern-day dialect data indicate that the use of the comparative marker differs depending on the region where the speaker is from (cf. Barbiers et al., 2005; Hubers & De Hoop, 2013). As such, it is important to acknowledge that regional differences in the spoken variety may have influenced written usage in the past (Paardekooper, 1950; Barbiers et al., 2005). Since especially the most spoken-like genres are susceptible to that kind of dialectal influence (e.g. Rutten & Van der Wal, 2011; Elspaß, 2012, p. 156), I particularly expect to observe regional variation in the least formal genre of the *HCD*, i.e. ego-documents. Compared to the other genres in the corpus, these ego-documents may also be less influenced

by prescriptive injunctions, which is why I anticipate for the printed pamphlets and the formal administrative texts to show a stronger adherence to the codified norms; that means that these genres will probably display a higher proportion of *dan* markers from the eighteenth century onwards (**hypothesis 2**).

3 Methodology

The method for analysing the comparative markers, that is the classification of language norms, and the search expression and data annotation for language use, are explained in this section.

3.1 Language norms

As is the case for all case studies in this dissertation, different types of language norms are uncovered for the normative component of the analysis. The classification of these prescriptions into a category of explicit prescriptions and implicit prescriptions is on a par with the other case studies, of course. In this section, I explain what kind of metalinguistic commentaries are considered as explicit and implicit prescriptions for this feature. This is illustrated with a few examples from the normative data.

Explicit prescriptions discuss the matter in an explicit way, obviously. This means the metalinguistic comment should be devoted to the use of the marker in comparative constructions of inequality. The codifier should contextualise the topic of the comparative marker, either directly as Huydecoper (1730, pp. 128-131) does when commenting on Vondel's language use in Example 1, or more concealed as is shown by De Haes (1764, p. 122) when he discusses different kinds of adverbs in Example 2.

- (1) *.560. *Die meer bemint was van Diane als deze alleen*) Merk hier aan meer als – voor meer dan. Het verwondert my zeer dat Vondel deezen misslag niet ontdekt heeft. [...] want, gelyk Als eene gelykheid stelt tusschen persoonen en zaaken, zo moet Dan altyd gebruikt worden wanneer 'er enig onderscheid en ongelykheid tusschen beide betekend wordt. als vooreerst achter den vergrootenden trap, *Gradus Comparativus*
(Huydecoper, 1730, pp. 128-131)

*.560. '*Die meer bemint was van Diane als deze alleen*' 'He who was loved more by Diane as this one alone'. Note here *meer als* 'more as' – for *meer dan* 'more than'. It surprises me that Vondel did not discover this mistake. While *als* states similarity between persons and things, *dan* should always be used when there is distinction and difference between the two, first and foremost after the comparative, *Gradus Comparativus*'

- (2) *De Bywoorden van verkiezinge zyn, eer, veel eer, veel liever, meer, veel meer, enz., op welke men doorgaens laet volgen dan, in 't Latyn quam; mogende in dezen zin het bywoord als, in de bywoorden van gelykenisse alleen te pas komende, geenszins gebruikt worden. Dus mag men in den eersten trap der vergelykinge wel schryven: zoo groot als, doch in den tweeden moet men dan schryven*
(De Haes, 1764, p. 122)

'The adverbs of preference are, *eer* 'sooner', *veel eer* 'much sooner', *veel liever* 'much rather', *meer* 'more', *veel meer* 'much more', etc., after which usually *dan* follows, in Latin *quam*; in this sentence the adverb *als*, which is applied only in adverbs of equality, should not be used. So one may write *zoo groot als* in the positive, in the comparative, one should write *dan*'

Unlike the explicit prescriptions, **implicit prescriptions** do not need to be embedded in the broader context of markers in comparative constructions. A normative comment about adverbs in which a grammarian gives an example of a comparative of inequality (e.g. Leupenius, 1653, p. 72; Séwel, 1708, p. 183), as Example 3, or a discussion on the different degrees of comparison (i.e. positive, comparative, superlative) in which the focus is not on the comparative marker, both count as implicit prescriptions. A codifier who simply sums up examples of (each type of) a comparison (e.g. E.C.P., 1713, p. 42; cf. Example 4), or a grammarian who focuses on the declination of the adjectives in his discussion on

comparative constructions (e.g. Des Roches, s.d. [1761], p. 25) are also examples of implicit prescriptions.

- (3) *Verkiezende, welke toonen dat het voorgaande beter te achten is, als, Dan, als, gelyk men zegt, Beter is een gerust gemoed dan rykdom. Ik had die liever als 't ander*
(Séwel, 1708, p. 183)

‘[adverbs of] preference, which indicate that the preceding is better, like *dan, als*, as one says, *Beter is een gerust gemoed dan rykdom. Ik had die liever als 't ander*’

- (4) *Dewijl'er niet gemeynder is als de eene zaeke by de andere te vergelijken; zoo hebben de byvoegelijke woorden dry trappen van vergelykking [...]. Volgens den leegsten trap zegt men: Jan is zoo geleerd als Pieter. Volgens den middelsten: Jan is geleerder als Pieter. Volgens den hoogsten: Jan is den geleersten, ofte den aldergeleersten, onder alle sijne mede-gezellen*
(E.C.P., 1713, p. 42)

‘Although there is nothing more common than comparing things to one another, the adjectives have three degrees of comparison. In the lowest [i.e. positive] level one says: *Jan is zoo geleerd als Pieter* ‘Jan is as learned as Pieter’. In the middle [i.e. comparative] level: *Jan is geleerder als Pieter* ‘Jan is more learned as Pieter’. In the highest [i.e. superlative] level: *Jan is den geleersten, ofte den aldergeleersten, onder alle sijne mede-gezellen* ‘Jan is the most learned or the very most learned, among all his companions’

As opposed to other case studies in this dissertation, in which I determined grammarians’ usage by annotating the dominant form out of ten tokens of the feature, analysing the language practice of the codifiers is subjected to limitations in this case study. As can be expected, comparative constructions of inequality are not very common in usage. This is also the case in **grammarians’ usage**. Many norm givers did not even use the feature ten times in their entire normative work. This forced me to analyse fewer than ten tokens of comparative markers in grammarians’ usage in 27 out of the 73 normative works in the corpus. These limitations in the normative material led to a few variations on which grammarians’ usage was determined. Apart from the general rule, in which only the majority variant is annotated when the form is used in eight out of the ten tokens, I also annotated only one variant when fewer than ten tokens

were found in the grammarian's language practice. The form then needed to be used consistently with no variation occurring in the comparative markers (e.g. Vollenhove, 1686). If fewer than ten tokens could be extracted from the normative work, and variation was thereby attested as well, both *als* and *dan* were annotated for that grammarian's usage (e.g. Van der Weyden, 1651). As a norm giver like De Hubert (1624) illustrates, this implies that the variant(s) annotated for grammarians' usage are sometimes only based on two tokens. In the 27 instances in which fewer than ten tokens are considered, the actual number of tokens that could be included is mentioned in between brackets in Table 15 in section 4.1.3.

3.2 Language use

For the results in language use, a regular expression searched the *HCD* for comparative constructions of inequality. I particularly extracted hits in which words ending in *-er* (e.g. *meer* 'more' or *beter* 'better'), *-ere* (e.g. *andere* 'other'), *-eren* (e.g. *hoogere* 'higher'), or *-ers* (e.g. *elders* 'elsewhere') were followed by a comparative marker. This regular expression led to results as *langer als [twee ellen]* 'longer than [two ells]' (ADM-1650-HO-10) or *elders dan [bij de abten]* 'elsewhere than [with the abbots]' (EGO-1550-BR-1). Apart from observations in which the comparative was immediately followed by the comparative marker, I also allowed for constructions where one to four words could be positioned in between the comparative and the comparative marker. The latter search expression yielded results like *beter geexerceert werdende als [op een andere plaats]* 'better exercised than [in another place]' (ADM-1750-HO-3), and *andere dingen dan* 'other things than' (PAM-1650-HO-6).

In addition to searching for constructions in which the main comparative markers *als* and *dan* were used, the usage corpus was also checked for constructions in which the oral *as* (for *als*), and the contemporary dialectal variants *of* and *wie* were used as comparative markers (cf. Figure 32). The search expressions for all these variants resulted in 1.178 data entries, which were filtered for false positives. No valid results were eventually obtained for the spoken and the dialectal variants – *as*, *of*, and *wie* – which implies that only *als* and *dan* were applied as markers in comparatives of inequality in the *HCD*. The

retrieved results were subsequently annotated for the lemma of the comparative.

As is clear from the search expression above, the corpus was explored for all adjectives and adverbs in which the declination possibly pointed to a comparative element. It is important to note, however, that also sentences with the adverbs *anders* or *ander(e)* ‘other’ followed by a comparative marker were captured in this search expression. As Example 5 illustrates, these specific adverbs do not express a clear comparative relationship but indicate the exemptive meaning of *behalve* ‘except for’ (cf. also Stroop, 2011, p. 140). Since such comparatives are grammatically constructed like the other comparatives of inequality in the dataset, the data entries with *anders* and *ander(e)* are also considered in the results of this case study. In the discussion of the results in language use, I will reflect on possible differences between these, and true comparatives formed with other adjectives and adverbs.

- (5) *het schynt dat alle onze dichters trachten te bewyzen, dat de vlaamsche taal voor niets anders deugt dan om de Franschen uitteschelden*
(EGO-1850-VL-4)

‘It appears that all our poets aim to prove that the Flemish language virtues for nothing but scolding the French’

4 Results

4.1 Language norms

The findings in language norms are presented in this part of the chapter. In section 4.1.1, I discuss the metalinguistic salience of the feature, and in the following sections, the focus shifts to the prescriptions (section 4.1.2), and to the codifiers’ discussion of alternative variants (section 4.1.3).

4.1.1 Metalinguistic salience

In Figure 33, the frequency of explicit normative injunctions on the comparative marker are visualised per half centuries. The absolute numbers on the graph indicate the frequency of normative works in which an explicit prescription on the feature occurred.

Figure 33 shows that the comparative markers of inequality contained very low metalinguistic salience in the period under investigation, with the feature being prescribed implicitly by only two grammarians in the seventeenth century, before the comparative markers captured the attention of norm givers from the first half of the eighteenth century onwards. At that time, Huydecoper (1730) was the first codifier to formulate an elaborate prescription on the use of the comparative markers *als* and *dan*, after he noticed the mistake made by the literary author Vondel. In fact, it is only after the prescription of Huydecoper that other grammarians felt the need of commenting on the comparative markers. However, even in the feature's high-profile periods, the metalinguistic salience never soared above a minority of grammarians making an explicit prescription on the issue, with only 6 normative works in the second half of the eighteenth century (27%), and another 6 in the first half of the nineteenth century (40%) discussing the comparative markers explicitly.

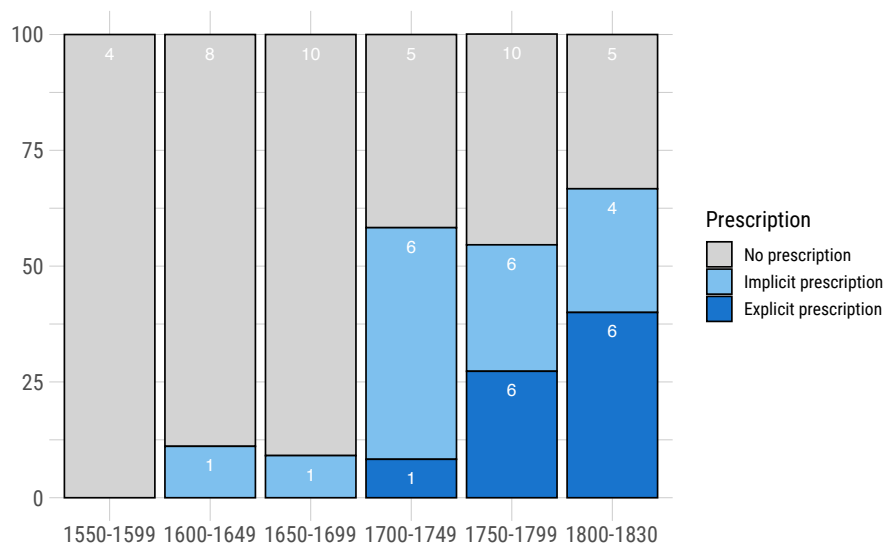


Figure 33: metalinguistic salience comparative marker

4.1.2 Prescriptions

Norms per period and area

In Figure 34, the language norms on the comparative marker are visualised per period, and for each part of the language area, which gives a general impression of the diachronic development of language norms.

In both the Northern and the Southern Netherlands, an evolution from variation between *als* and *dan* to a clear preference for the marker *dan* is observed in the normative discourse. This development happens slightly different in the North and the South. Northern norms display variability in the sixteenth century, which continues in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, most grammarians in the North put the marker *dan* forward as the preferred form, with variation largely disappearing from Northern norms. A similar pattern of change is discerned in the Southern Netherlands, although Southern norms seem to lag a century behind on their Northern pedants. Variable norms in the South start in the seventeenth century, and persist in the eighteenth century, whereas the strong decline of *als* in the norms is visible only in the nineteenth century.

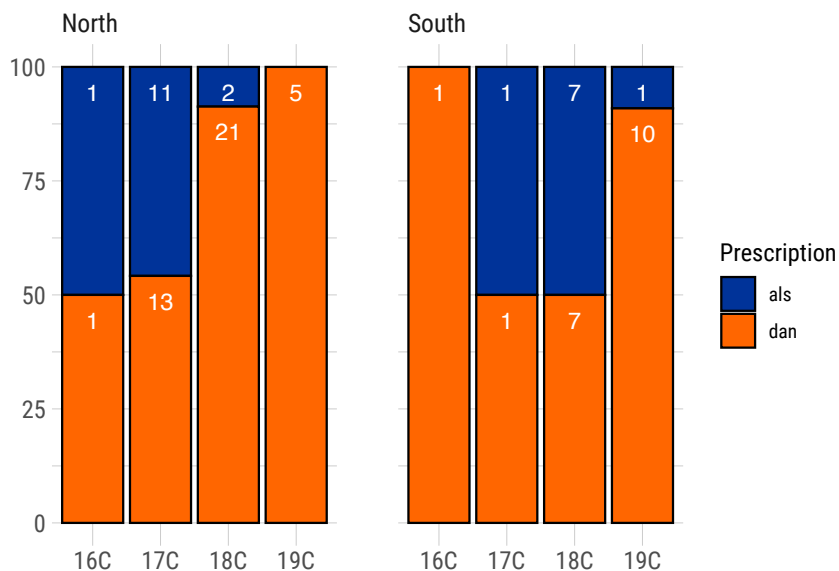


Figure 34: norms comparative marker per period and area

Norms per period, area, and type of prescription

In order to discern any underlying patterns related to the type of the prescription, the same results in language norms are now visualised in Figure 35, in which the distinction is made between explicit prescriptions, implicit prescriptions, and grammarians' usage.

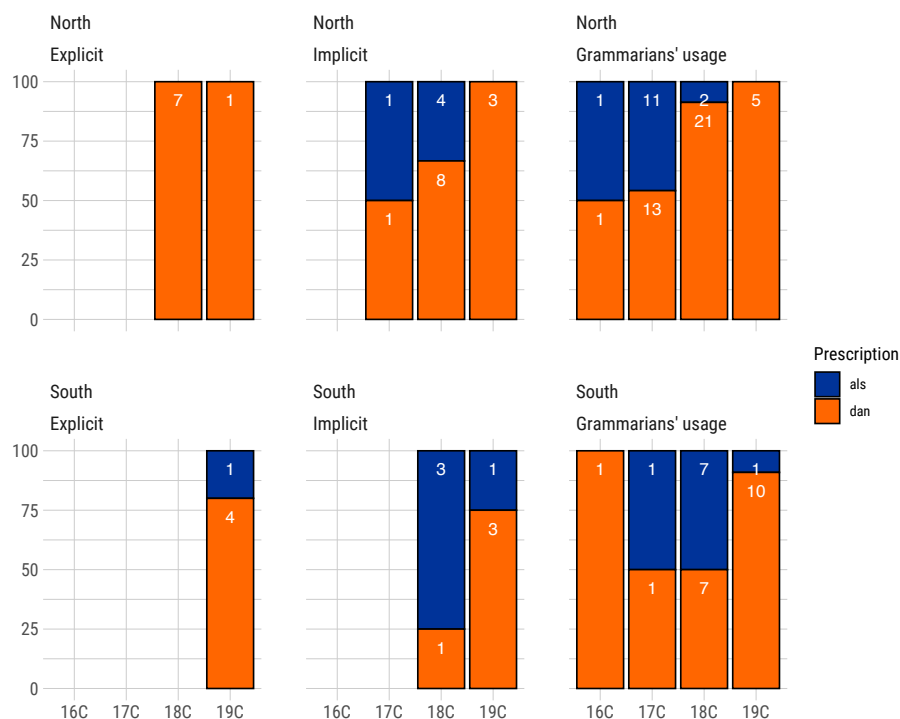


Figure 35: norms comparative marker per period, area, and type of prescription

A first difference between the types of language norms is unveiled when considering the emergence of prescriptions. As was also mentioned in section 4.1.1, Figure 35 illustrates that explicit prescriptions are found from the eighteenth century onwards. The results also show that these explicit prescriptions were formulated only by Northern grammarians. Almost all the explicit prescriptions in the nineteenth century, on the contrary, derive from Southern codifiers. Furthermore, while grammarians only started commenting explicitly on the matter from the eighteenth century onwards, implicit prescriptions appear somewhat sooner in the North and the South. To be precise,

these implicit prescriptions emerge a century earlier than the explicit prescriptions, i.e. respectively in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Interestingly, also the degree of variation differs between the types of prescriptions. This is particularly pronounced in Northern norms, where variability is completely lacking in the explicit prescriptions, while both *als* and *dan* arise as implicitly prescribed variants in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A similar degree of variation is observed in the language use of Northern grammarians, where variation characterises grammarians' usage in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and to a lesser extent also the eighteenth centuries. The period of actual consolidation in Northern norms takes place in the nineteenth century, with grammarians uniformly choosing for the marker *dan* in the different types of prescriptions and in their own language practice.

Although explicit and implicit prescriptions on the comparative markers emerge a century later in the Southern Netherlands, a similar pattern of variation and change is observed in this part of the language area. The comparative marker *dan* is clearly the preferred – but not the only prescribed – form in the explicit prescriptions. Variability in norms characterises the implicit prescriptions and grammarians' usage in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Although an increase of *dan* is visible in the nineteenth century, language norms do not become entirely uniform in the South yet. Nonetheless, also in this part of the language area, the comparative marker *dan* succeeds in securing its position as the preferred variant in nineteenth-century norms.

4.1.3 Treatment of alternative variants

Earlier in this chapter, it was mentioned that the Hollandic grammarian Huydecoper (1730) was one of the first norm givers formulating an explicit prescription on the use of the marker in comparatives. The summary of the prescriptions and proscriptions in Table 15 now also shows that, at least in this corpus of normative works, Huydecoper was indeed the first codifier to claim that the use of *als* in comparatives of inequality is a mistake that is frequently made since the Spanish rule in the sixteenth century. He explains:

dat de Spaansche geessel der Nederlanden, de Hertog van Alva, niet alleen de land-en Kerk-, maar ook ('t welk een noodzaakelyk gevolg was) de taal-wetten 't onderste boven smeed en verwarde, en met geen voorbeeld klarer aangetoond worden, dan met dit woord dan, in tegenstelling van als. Voor dien tyd, is nie-mand in staat my eene enkele plaats aan te toonen, daar als voor dan gezeid wordt, daar het integendeel onmiddelyk na dien tyd in een algemeen gebruik kwam (Huydecoper, 1730, p. 130)

‘the Spanish scourge of the Netherlands, the Duke of Alba, not only overturned and confused the civil and church laws, but also (which was a necessary consequence) the language laws. Nothing demonstrates this more clearly than the confusion between the words *dan* and *als*. Before that time, no one can show me a single instance where *als* was used in place of *dan*. On the contrary, immediately after that time, it became common practice’

In his argument, Huydecoper continues asserting that this specific mistake was also made by Vondel and other literary writers, and especially by the older ones of the seventeenth century. The codifier even confesses to using the marker *als* wrongly in comparatives himself up until the 1720s. Huydecoper’s strong proscription to the use of *als* as a marker in comparatives of inequality precept most likely triggered later codifiers in following Huydecoper’s example. This is illustrated by the rise of explicit prescriptions for *dan* and proscriptions for *als* in the 1760s, on the one hand, and by the sudden uniform use of *dan* in the language practice of Northern codifiers, on the other hand. Furthermore, after 1769, a remarkable development took place in Northern norms. While Northern grammarians still prescribed *dan* explicitly, and their own language use also remained consistent in applying *dan*, the proscriptions for *als* as a marker in comparatives of inequality disappeared from the Northern injunctions. Only Weiland (1805) still made a proscription for *als* in his national grammar. This development in the second half of the eighteenth century possibly indicates that *dan* had settled as the codified norm in the North, and normative discussions on the erroneous character of *als* as a marker in comparatives of inequality were perhaps no longer necessary in the Northern part of the language area.

This is certainly not the case for Southern norms. As was explained in section 4.1.2, the topic of the comparative markers only appeared on the radar of Southern grammarians in the nineteenth century. Table 15 also illustrates that the feature is particularly involved in normative discussions from 1815 onwards,

where some important changes in norms are discerned. In fact, most of the Southern grammarians, who first prescribed the alternative *als* in an implicit way, and who used *als* and *dan* interchangeably in their own language use, started commenting explicitly on the feature at the advent of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1815. These codifiers suddenly prescribed *dan* and proscribed *als*, while also changing to *dan* in their own usage. Only the West-Flemish particularist Henckel (1815) still prescribed *als*, and proscribed the dialectal variant *of*, as he elaborates:

Men gebruikt ook altijd als in de vergelijking (niet of, gelijk 'er nu bij duizende spreken, zeggende: hij is wijzer of ik)
(Henckel, 1815, p. 91)

'One always uses *als* in comparisons (not *of*, as is now said by thousands, saying: *hij is wijzer of ik*)'

The development towards *dan* in Southern language norms, taking place exactly at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, at least gives the impression that (the period leading up to the) the political reunification of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands influenced this abrupt shift in the normative practices of Southern codifiers. The fact that a grammarian like the Flemish De Neckere (1815) literally referred to the injunction of the Northern Weiland (1805) in his own grammar is telling, to say the least, and this reinforces the idea that the political context of the early nineteenth century, and the accompanying increase in contact between Northern and Southern grammarians, caused such an accelerated change to *dan* as the only prescribed and used variant.

Voorts merk hy [Weiland] aen dat de misstelling van Als in plaets van Dan agter een vergrootenden trap der byvoeglyke naemwoorden, gelyk ook agter Niet, Niets, Niemand, Geen, Nergens, Noyt, Andere, te véel ens : maer nae 1568 in gebruyk is gekomen. Vinde dese aenmerking van groot belang voor ons (Vlaemingen).
(De Neckere, 1815, p. 145)

'Furthermore, Weiland notes that the incorrect use of *als* instead of *dan* after a comparative adjective, as well as after words like *niet* 'not', *niets* 'nothing', *niemand* 'nobody', *geen* 'no', *nergens* 'nowhere', *nooit* 'never', *andere* 'other',

te veel ‘too much’, etc., only came into use after 1568. I find this comment of great importance for us Flemings.’

Apart from the possible influence of Huydecoper (1730) on fellow codifiers in the eighteenth-century North, and of the Northern normative tradition on Southern grammarians in the nineteenth century, this section mainly deals with the treatment of alternative variants. When explicit prescriptions started to appear in the eighteenth century, almost every prescription for *dan* had a corresponding proscription for *als*. In all these cases, the alternative marker *als* was simply rejected for usage. This means that, from the moment that explicit prescriptions for *dan* were formulated in each part of the language area, variability disappeared entirely from these grammarians’ metalinguistic discussions. With these codifiers also explicitly proscribing *als*, they were strict in stating that only *dan* could be used as a marker in a comparative of inequality, and as such, from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries onwards, these grammarians did not allow for variation in the use of comparative markers anymore.

GRAMMARIAN	YEAR	AREA	PRESCR. EXPL.	PRESCR. IMPL.	PRESCR. USAGE	OTHER VARIANT	TREAT MENT
Lambrecht	1550	South	--	--	dan (6)	--	--
Sexagius	1576	South	--	--	--	--	--
De Heuter	1581	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Spiegel	1584	North	--	--	als	--	--
Van der Schuere	1612	North	--	--	dan	--	--
De Hubert	1624	North	--	--	als (1)/ dan (1)	--	--
Van Heule	1625	North	--	--	als (1)/ dan (1)	--	--
Dafforne	1627	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Ampzing	1628	North	--	--	als (7)/ dan (8)	--	--
Plemp	1632	North	--	--	dan (7)	--	--
Van Heule	1633	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Montanus	1635	North	--	--	als	--	--
Kók	1649	North	--	als	als (1)	--	--
Van der Weyden	1651	North	--	--	als (3)/dan (3)	--	--
Leupenius	1653	North	--	dan	dan	--	--
Bolognino	1657	South	--	--	als (3)/dan (2)	--	--
De Gelliers	1661 [± 1640]	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Van Niervaart	1669 [± 1600]	North	--	--	als (1)	--	--
Van Atteveld	1682	North	--	--	als (2)	--	--
Gosens van Helderen	1683	North	--	--	als (7)/ dan (3)	--	--
Winschooten	1683	North	--	--	als	--	--
Vollenhove	1686	North	--	--	dan (5)	--	--
Duykerius	1696	North	--	--	als	--	--
Francius	1699	North	--	--	dan	--	--

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Van Geesdalle	1700	South	--	--	als	--	--
Nyløe	1703	North	--	dan	dan	--	--
Hilarides	1705	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Moonen	1706	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Nyløe	1707	North	--	dan	dan	--	--
Séwel	1708	North	--	als/dan	dan	--	--
Séwel	1712	North	--	als/dan	dan	--	--
E.C.P.	1713	North	--	als	als	--	--
Ten Kate	1723	North	--	als/dan	dan	--	--
Huydecoper	1730	North	dan	--	dan	als	rejected
Hakvoord	1746 [1698]	North	--	--	als (5)	--	--
Van Belle	1748	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Verpoorten	1752	South	--	--	dan (1)	--	--
Van Belle	1755	North	--	--	dan (7)	--	--
P.B.	1757	South	--	--	dan	--	--
Verpoorten	1759	South	--	--	als	--	--
Des Roches	[1761]	South	--	als	als (1)	--	--
Elzevier	1761	North	dan	--	dan (8)	als	rejected
De Haes	1764	North	dan	dan	dan	als	rejected
Van der Palm	1769	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Zeydelaar	1769	North	dan	--	dan	als	rejected
Zeydelaar	1772	North	--	dan	dan	--	--
Van Belleghem & Waterschoot	[1773]	South	--	--	dan	--	--
Janssens	[1775]	South	--	--	als	--	--
Van Boterdael	1776 [± 1774]	South	--	--	als (9)/ dan (5)	--	--
Cramer	1777 [± 1769]	North	--	--	dan (6)	--	--
Zeydelaar	1781	North	dan	--	dan	--	--
Stéven	1784 [1714]	South	--	--	als (1)/ dan (2)	--	--
Van Boterdael	1785	South	--	--	als (7)/ dan (3)	--	--
Ballieu	1792 [1771]	South	--	dan	dan	--	--
Van Bolhuis	1793	North	dan	--	dan (5)	--	--
Wester	1797	North	--	--	dan (2)	--	--
Van Varik	1799	North	dan	--	dan (2)	--	--
Weiland	1799	North	--	dan	dan	--	--
Siegenbeek	1804	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Weiland	1805	North	dan	dan	dan	als	rejected
Schilperoort	1806	North	--	--	dan	--	--
Anslijn	1814	North	--	dan	dan	--	--
Henckel	1815	South	als	als	als (4)/ dan (4)	of	rejected
De Neckere	1815	South	dan	--	dan	als	rejected
Ter Bruggen	1817-1818 [1815]	South	dan	--	dan	--	--
Behaegel	1817	South	--	dan	dan	--	--
Cannaert	1823	South	--	--	dan (6)	--	--
Moke	1823	South	dan	dan	dan (9)	als	rejected
Willems	1824	South	--	--	dan	--	--
Behaegel	[± 1825]	South	--	--	dan	--	--
Bilderdijk	1826	North	--	dan	dan	--	--
De Simpel	[1827]	South	--	dan	dan	--	--
Behaegel	[± 1829]	South	dan	--	dan	als	rejected

Table 15: norms and variant treatment comparative marker

Conclusion

The analysis of language norms revealed that the comparative markers were below the radar of norm givers for a long time, with grammarians only capturing and commenting on variation in usage from the first half of the eighteenth century onwards. Before codifiers were concerned about the increase of *als* as a comparative marker in usage, variability between *als* and *dan* was attested in the implicit prescriptions and in the language use of grammarians. After the appearance of the first explicit prescriptions, both prescriptions and grammarians' usage uniformly changed to *dan*. Such patterns in norms suggest that the rise in the normative awareness of the feature immediately resulted in consistency, with *dan* becoming the only prescribed and used variant in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century language norms.

Since Northern grammarians formulated explicit prescriptions on the comparative markers in the eighteenth century, while Southern norm givers still had variable (implicit) prescriptions and usage, the results in language norms indicate that the choice for *dan* as the prescribed marker was made by Northern grammarians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, who probably succeeded in spreading the norm to other codifiers in the North. Consequently, Southern norms were lagging on Northern prescriptions, and by the time Southern codifiers started discussing the comparative markers in the nineteenth century, Northern norm givers had practically settled on the matter. Moreover, with explicit prescriptions in the South emerging exactly at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, it is highly probable that this specific socio-historical context made Southern norm givers draw closer to the Northern norms, which had just acquired an official status in the early nineteenth century, and which may therefore have influenced Southern grammarians in commenting on the feature, and in adopting the comparative marker *dan* in their language norms.

4.2 Language use

Apart from interpreting patterns in the observed data in the *HCD*, a generalised mixed-effects logistic regression analysis was used to shed light on the results in language use. To build this logistic regression model, I started from an intercept-only model, and I compared its AIC to those of multiple one-predictor logistic regression models, each including one of the main sociolinguistic variables in this study, i.e. *period*, *region*, and *genre*. Based on the AIC of the intercept-only model (AIC: 427.72), and of the one-predictor regression models, the regression model with *period* as a fixed effect turned out to be the best fit for the investigated data (AIC: 332.43).⁶³ Although the difference between the intercept-only model and the one-predictor model with *period* was not statistically significant, an exploratory conditional inference tree pointed to the importance of *period* as a predictor in this dataset. As such, I continued building the model based on the regression model with *period* as a fixed predictor. As adding the predictors *region* and *genre* as other sociolinguistic variables did not further improve the regression model significantly, these predictors – as well as possible interaction effects – were excluded from the final model. I did, however, consider two random effects for inclusion in the model. While *lemma* alone made the model's goodness-of-fit worse (AIC: 334.4), the random predictor individual writer (*id*) yielded a regression model with an AIC of 283.4, which was the best model obtained in the building procedure.⁶⁴ The mixed-effects logistic regression model with *period* as a fixed predictor, and the individual writer (*id*) as a random intercept, thus represents the final model applied in this case study. The final model is summarised in Figure 36, where the log-odds show the estimates of the marker *dan* as incoming form.

The applied logistic regression model has a C-statistic of 0.98 and a 92% classification accuracy, which shows that the regression model discriminates well and makes solid predictions. Nonetheless, when I consider the R^2 -scores which are summarised in Figure 36, a comparison of the Marginal R^2 and the

⁶³ The AIC of the other one-predictor regression models were 428.3 for the model with *region* as a fixed predictor, and 429.17 for the model with *genre* as a fixed predictor.

⁶⁴ Including both *lemma* and *id* as random intercepts in the regression model made the model needlessly complex and did not lead to a significantly better model. The model with two random effects had an AIC of 285.4, which is even slightly higher compared the AIC of the final model with only *id* as a random effect.

Conditional R^2 indicates that the random predictor *id* explains large proportions of variability in the dataset. Together with the standard deviation and the variance components of the random effect, the discrepancy between the R^2 -scores could suggest that the use of either *als* or *dan* as comparative markers should primarily be explained at the level of the individual rather than trying to encapsulate variation within overarching factors. In what follows in this section, the patterns in the observed usage data, and where applicable, also the effect plots from the regression analysis are discussed.

Main effects on the occurrence of 'dan' as incoming form			
Predictors	Log-Odds	CI	p
(Intercept)	5.29	2.21 – 8.37	0.001
PERIOD - 17th century	-7.29	-11.94 – -2.64	0.002
PERIOD - 18th century	-7.50	-12.49 – -2.51	0.003
PERIOD - 19th century	-0.87	-3.44 – 1.71	0.508
Random Effects			
σ^2	3.29		
$\tau_{00 \text{ ID}}$	13.20		
ICC	0.80		
N_{ID}	126		
Observations	311		
Marginal R^2 / Conditional R^2	0.420 / 0.884		

Figure 36: regression table of the main effects on the occurrence of *dan* as the incoming form in language use

General distribution

As was mentioned before, comparatives of inequality do not occur frequently in language use. Also in the *HCD*, only 311 valid results of comparative markers were retrieved from the corpus. As Figure 37 indicates, two main variants were applied in this usage corpus, i.e. *als* and *dan*. Both forms take up a strong position in the *HCD*, with *als* being used in 43.4% of the results ($n=135$), and *dan* settling as the dominant variant in this corpus. The modern-day *dan* makes up for 56.6% of the investigated usage data ($n=176$).

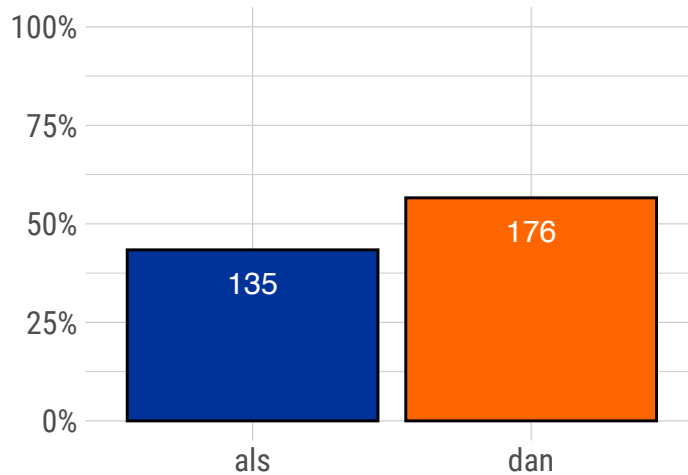


Figure 37: general distribution comparative marker

Furthermore, as was mentioned in section 3.2, not all the comparative markers included in the results of the current case study express a clear comparative relationship. This is the case with constructions in which the adverbs *ander(e)* and *anders* ‘other’ are used. These adverbs are also applied in combination with a comparative marker, and the sentences are grammatically constructed as a true comparative, as an expression like *het volk [...] Zongen niet anders dan lieden* ‘the people sang nothing but folks’ (EGO-1850-HO-1) illustrates.⁶⁵ For modern-day written Dutch, Stroop (2011, p. 140) discovered that constructions lacking a true comparative meaning have a stronger preference for the marker *als*. For the results in the *HCD*, I therefore distinguish between contexts in which the comparative markers are used in an actual comparative, and the constructions with *ander(e)* and *anders*, in which the marker does not denote a clear comparative aspect between given elements.

Figure 38 shows that, when compared to the true comparative constructions (i.e. the category *other*) where the marker *als* is used in 41.8% of the results (n=104), the proportion of the variant is indeed slightly higher in constructions of the category *ander(e)/anders* (n=31; 50%). Although this finding underpins the

⁶⁵ In these constructions, the adverb *anders* is often preceded by an indefinite pronoun, such as *iemand* ‘anybody’, *niemand* ‘nobody’, *iets* ‘something’, *niets* ‘nothing’ (cf. Stroop, 2011).

suggestion of Stroop (2011), the difference in the use of the marker between the types of constructions is neglectable in the *HCD*. Since no clear distinction can be discerned between the two categories, in the further analyses in this chapter, I decided not to split up the results in language use according to the presence of a clear comparative aspect.

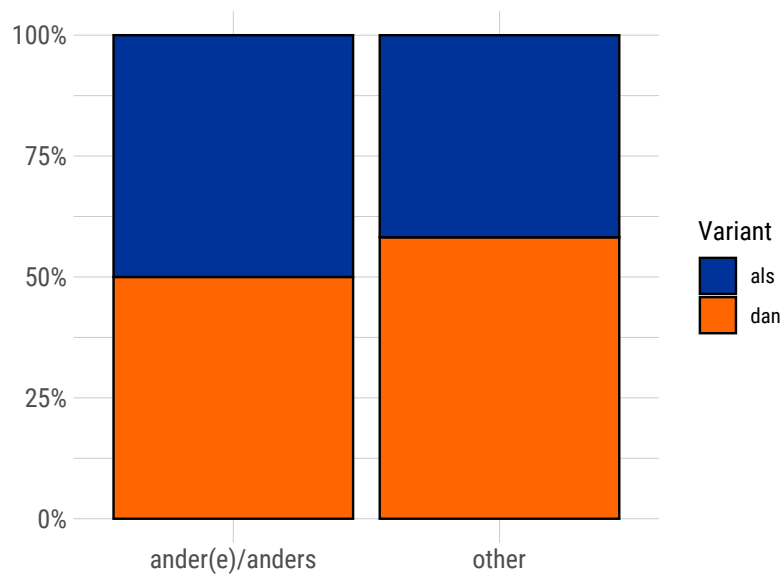
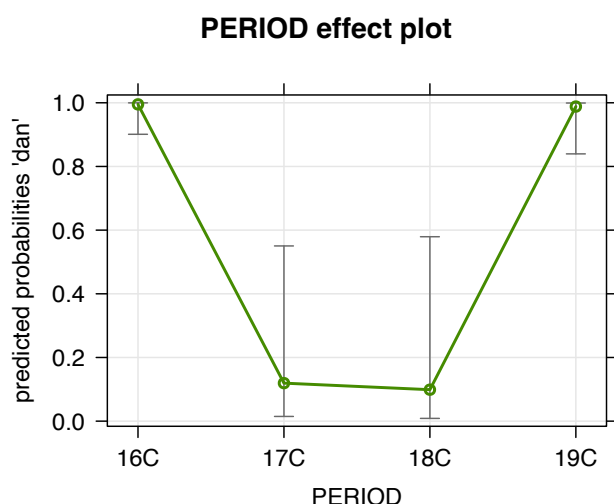


Figure 38: general distribution comparative marker by comparative relationship

Per period

Turning to the sociolinguistic predictors now, the regression table indicates that *period* was significant in explaining variation in language use. Together with the regression table, the effect plot for *period* in Figure 39 shows that the regression model predicts a significant difference when comparing the comparative markers in the seventeenth ($p = 0.002$) and eighteenth centuries ($p = 0.003$) to the sixteenth century as the reference level. More specifically, the regression model foresees a significant decline of the variant *dan* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which implies that the alternative variant *als* was prevalent in these two periods.

Figure 39: effect plot *period* - comparative marker

The strong rise of the variant *als* is also visible in the observed data, visualised in Figure 40 (cf. also Table 16), where the proportions of *als* increase enormously from 8.6% (n=6) in the sixteenth century to 70.3% (n=71) in the seventeenth century. Written utterances as Example 6 are thus rarely found in sixteenth-century usage but become significantly more common in the seventeenth century:

- (6) *Alle redelijke verstanden weten ook wel dat vrede in de groote beter is als oorlog*
(PAM-1650-HO-5)

'All reasonable minds also know well that peace, in the larger sense, is better as war'

In the eighteenth century, the form *als* was still dominant but gradually started losing ground (59.8%; n=49), and a further decline of the form to 15.5% (n=9) is observed in the nineteenth century. This decrease of *als* occurred in favour of the variant *dan*, which convincingly became the majority variant in the nineteenth century again, where it nearly reached the same proportion as in the sixteenth century. In overall, these findings indicate that the comparative marker *als* was a temporary innovation in written language use, which particularly characterises usage in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

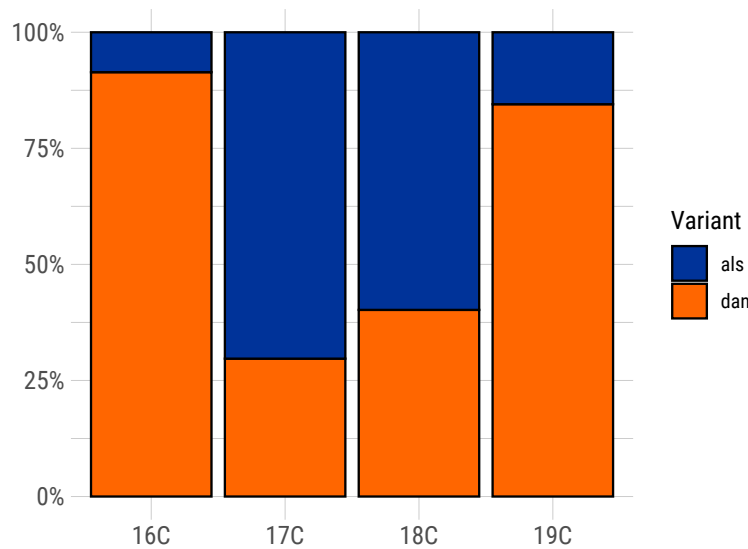


Figure 40: relative frequencies comparative marker per period

	<i>als</i>	<i>dan</i>
<i>16th century</i>	6 (8.6%)	64 (91.4%)
<i>17th century</i>	71 (70.3%)	30 (29.7%)
<i>18th century</i>	49 (59.8%)	33 (40.2%)
<i>19th century</i>	9 (15.5%)	49 (84.5%)

Table 16: absolute and relative frequencies comparative marker per period

Per period and region

In Figure 41, the results for the comparative markers are summarised per period and region. Since the predictor *region* was not included in the regression model, and the interaction between period and region can thus not be discussed in terms of statistical significance, it is important to interpret the results with the necessary precaution, especially since the relative proportions in Figure 41 are often represented only by a low number of absolute frequencies.

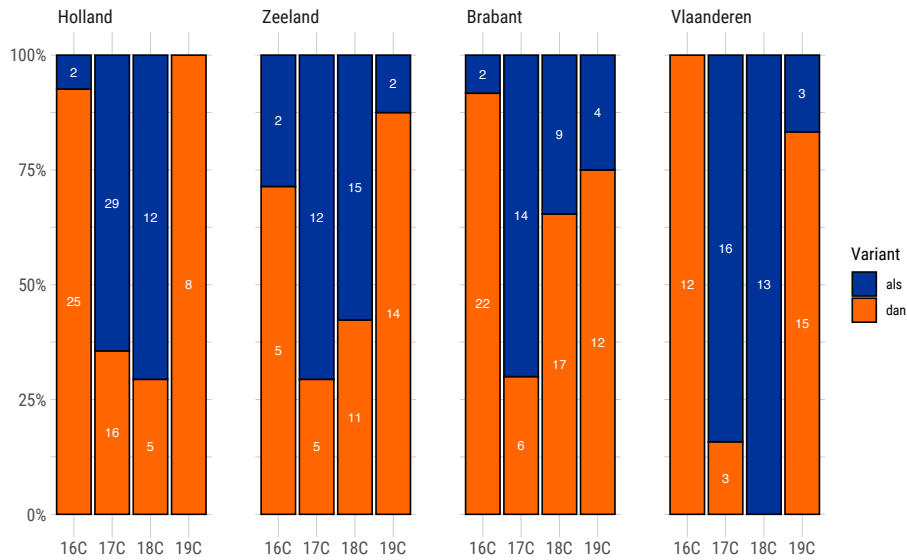


Figure 41: relative frequencies comparative marker per period and region

The diachronic development of the comparative markers in usage, in which *als* strongly represents usage in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is manifested in all regions of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. In three of the regions, i.e. Holland, Zeeland, and Brabant, the variant *als* is used by an individual writer in the sixteenth century before the actual rise of the form takes place in the seventeenth century.

Figure 41 also shows that *als* increases to the same extent in every region at the same time, which suggests that none of the investigated regions took the lead in the change to *als*. However, a regional discrepancy can be discerned in the eighteenth century. While *als* still rises in Holland (from 64.4% to 70.6%), and in Vlaanderen, where the form is the only applied marker at the time, in Zeeland and Brabant, the variant *als* declined again, and in doing so, it started giving way to the resurrection of the marker *dan*. Brabant as the central region in the Southern Netherlands even seems to be pulling this change to *dan*. Here, the observed proportions of the marker more than doubled, since the form inclined from 30.0% (n=6) in the seventeenth century to 65.4% (n=17) in the eighteenth century.

The actual revival of the variant is situated in the nineteenth century, where *dan* convincingly becomes the dominant variant across all regions. As a result, the alternative *als* strongly diminishes in the nineteenth century, and shows up only sporadically in the language practice of a few individual writers. This is also shown in the language practice of a writer of a Flemish pamphlet, for example (cf. Example 7).

- (7) *ik zeyd hun ronduyt [...] dat ik wel wist dat het meestedeel der kiezers hun voor die reden alleen, hunne stem zouden geweygerd hebben, want dat inderdaed niets verachtelyker is als een mensch zonder Godsdiens en voor al een afgevalen Christen.*
(PAM-1850-VL-1)

'I told them plainly that I knew well that the majority of voters would have refused to give them their vote for that reason alone, because indeed nothing is more contemptible as a person without religion, and especially an apostate Christian.'

Splitting up the results per period and per region thus reveals that the same development of the comparative markers, with *als* strongly increasing in seventeenth-century usage, and *dan* reviving in the nineteenth century, characterises all investigated regions.

Per period and area

As is clear by now, the development of the comparative markers occurs similarly in each of the regions, which suggests that the feature's diachronic evolution can also be considered from a North-South perspective (and possibly even for the entire language area together) without losing important nuances in the results. As such, in Figure 42, the same results are now visualised per period and for each part of the language area (cf. also Table 17). Given the low number of absolute data points, and the lack of statistical predictions for the genre differences, the four regions are merged into two language areas in the further course of this chapter in order to rely on slightly larger absolute frequencies when interpreting the usage data.

As could be expected, almost identical patterns emerge when comparing Northern and Southern usage diachronically, with the strong increase of *als* in

the seventeenth century, and a return to *dan* in the nineteenth century, unfolding in the North and the South of the language area. The Southern lead to the incoming variant in the eighteenth century is also pronounced in Figure 42, although we already know that this increase of *dan* can be attributed only to language users from Brabant. Writers from Vlaanderen strongly adhered to *als* at the time.

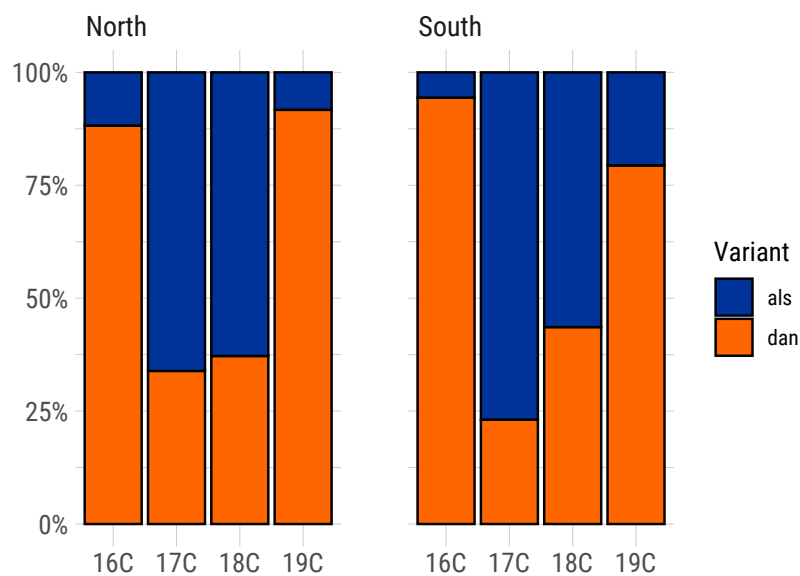


Figure 42: relative frequencies comparative marker per period and area

	NORTHERN NETHERLANDS		SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS	
	<i>als</i>	<i>dan</i>	<i>als</i>	<i>dan</i>
16 th century	4 (11.8%)	30 (88.2%)	2 (5.6%)	34 (94.4%)
17 th century	41 (66.1%)	21 (33.9%)	30 (76.9%)	9 (23.1%)
18 th century	27 (62.8%)	16 (37.2%)	22 (56.4%)	17 (43.6%)
19 th century	2 (8.3%)	22 (91.7%)	7 (20.6%)	27 (79.4%)

Table 17: absolute and relative frequencies comparative marker per period and area

Per period, area, and genre

Although the predictor *genre* was not included in the logistic regression model, and the findings for genre can therefore not be interpreted in terms of statistical significance, a careful interpretation of the observed data summarised in Figure 43 illustrates that almost no distinctive genre differences are discerned in the development of the comparative markers in language use.

When investigating the emergence of *als*, the form appeared first in the sixteenth-century ego-documents in the North (33.3%; n=2) and the South (10.0%; n=2), as well as in the Northern administrative texts of the same period (14.3%; n=2), before the variant showed up in the pamphlets of the seventeenth century. Although this observed rise of *als* in the sixteenth century is only backed by two ego-documents with variable use, and by one administrative document using *als* uniformly, such findings may indicate that the alternative variant *als* entered language use as a change ‘from below’. Although this idea needs further investigation, this possibility is strengthened by the greater share of the variant *als* in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ego-documents in the Southern Netherlands.

Another genre difference of interest is the previously discussed revival of *dan*. As was mentioned before, a strong increase of the variant was first observed in eighteenth-century Brabant. In addition, Figure 43 now indicates that this rise of *dan* occurs solely in the genre of pamphlets, suggesting that Brabantine pamphlets initiated the return to *dan* as a comparative marker, whereas the same printed genre in the North, as well as the other handwritten texts in the corpus only follow this change in the nineteenth century. Apart from these Brabantine pamphlets, one could claim that also the administrative texts played a (smaller) role in the change towards *dan* in the eighteenth century. This seems a less probable scenario, though, since the observed use of *dan* in this handwritten genre stems entirely from one Southern and one Northern document. The pamphlets from Brabant, on the contrary, had a more widespread use of the marker *dan* in the eighteenth century, with every document, uniformly or not, applying the marker *dan*. This may suggest that printed genres, such as the pamphlets, have taken charge in the change to *dan*, which suggests that the return to *dan* was initiated ‘from above’ (cf. section 4.3).

Despite the compelling shift to *dan* across all genres in the nineteenth century, uniformity in language use is achieved only in the ego-documents and the pamphlets in the Northern Netherlands. All genres in the South, and the Northern administrative texts, thus still showed variation between *als* and *dan* in the nineteenth century. However, since it is again only one or two documents which are held responsible for the continued use of *als* in these genres, it would be worthwhile to investigate the use of the comparative markers at the level of the individual rather than trying to explain variation for entire genres.

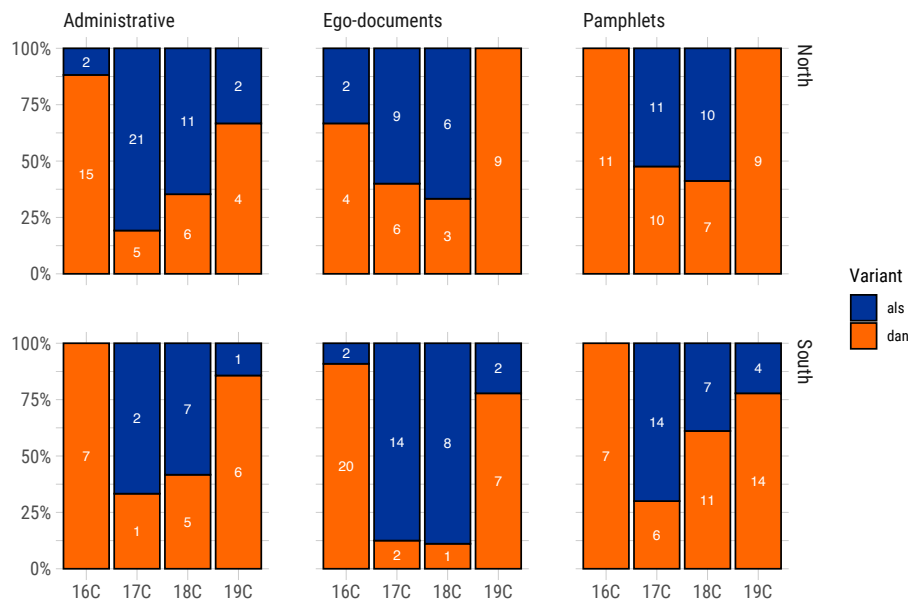


Figure 43: relative frequencies comparative marker per period, area, and genre

Conclusion

The exploration of the comparative markers in the *HCD* showed that the sociolinguistic variables *region* and *genre* barely account for variationist patterns in written usage. This is an interesting finding in different respects. Most importantly, the similarities in terms of region suggest that the diverging geographical backgrounds of the writers in the corpus, and thus the diversity of comparative markers in spoken dialects (cf. Barbiers et al., 2005), did not seep through the written language. And secondly, the lack of significant discrepancies

in the genres of the *HCD* indicates that different degrees of text formality only had a restricted impact on the use of *als* and *dan* as comparative markers in these historical writings.

Apart from the preferences of individual writers (i.e. the random effect *id*), only the period in which a text was written turned out to be a significant factor in determining whether *als* or *dan* were used as comparative markers. The variant *als* occupied a position as the majority variant in all regions and genres in the seventeenth century, and to a lesser extent in the eighteenth century. A strong decrease of *als* is subsequently observed in the entire nineteenth-century component of the *HCD*.

While the marker *dan* can be seen as the incoming variant in language norms, in language use, it is important to apply some nuance when categorising *dan* as the incoming variant, as is done in this case study. After all, in language use, we observe a shift from *dan* to *als*, followed by a return to *dan*. The usage patterns thus indicate that *dan* was the outgoing variant in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and can be considered the incoming variant only in nineteenth-century usage. In retrospect, it would therefore be more accurate to categorise *dan* as the outgoing variant and *als* as the incoming variant in language use. Nevertheless, the current classification of the two variants does not interfere with the question of prescriptive influence explored in this chapter and is therefore retained for the purpose of comparing patterns in norms and language use in section 4.3.

4.3 Prescriptive influence

In this section, the influence of prescriptivism on variation and change in usage is investigated. The observed data in norms and usage are visualised per year and for each part of the language area, which enables a comparison of the chronology of language change in norms and language use. All contexts in which the chronology of change allows for an impact of prescriptivism are analysed and discussed in the remaining of this chapter.

Chronology of language change

Figure 44 shows the development of the explicit and implicit prescriptions per year, while Figure 45 visualises the observed patterns in language use per year. For each of these graphs, the observed datapoints, which were also discussed in section 4.1.2 and section 4.2, are now projected onto an underlying numeric scale (1-2) with equal distance between the outgoing variant *als* and the incoming marker *dan*.

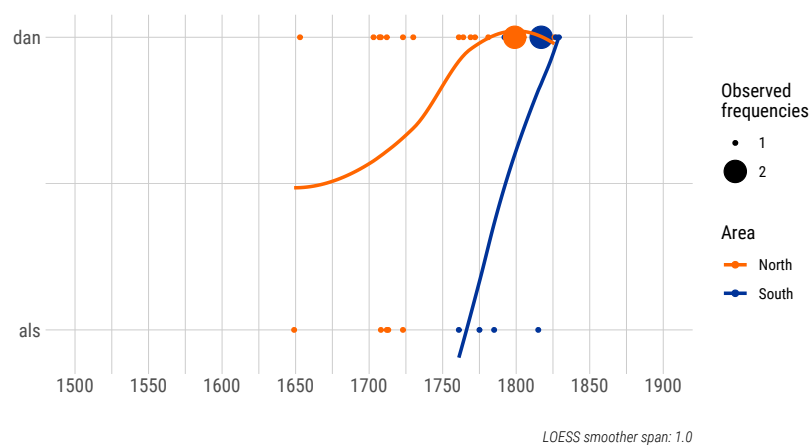


Figure 44: prescriptions comparative marker per year and area

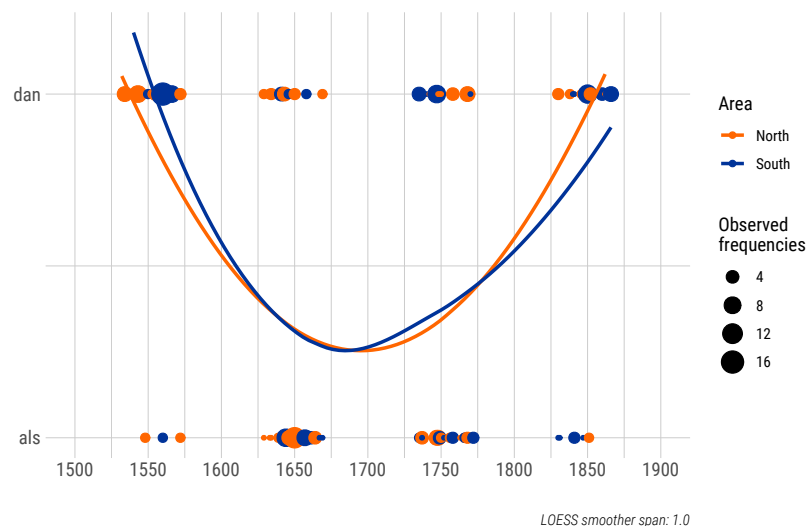


Figure 45: language use comparative marker per year and area

At first glance, the general comparison of the plotted data and the trendlines indicates diverging patterns in the prescriptions and in language use. Especially for the early periods, i.e. the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a relationship between language norms and usage is impossible due to the lack of prescriptions. The first (implicit) prescriptions appear only in the middle of the seventeenth century, at the time that language use is highly variable, and a major shift from *dan* to *als* has just taken place in Northern and Southern usage. With *als* first emerging as a comparative marker in ego-documents and in handwritten administrative texts in the sixteenth century, the massive increase of the form across all regions and genres in the seventeenth century rather points to an innovation that arose in language use, or perhaps, the marker *als* may have been broadly implemented in usage due to an indirect effect of standardisation practices and prescriptive efforts in the German language at the time. What is clear, however, is that the change to *als* in usage was not preceded by prescriptions for the variant in the Dutch normative tradition, which implies that Dutch prescriptivism did certainly not cause the shift to *als* as a comparative marker in historical language use.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, prescriptions and usage become more aligned as both apply the markers *als* and *dan* variably. The variability in norms is mainly related to the implicit prescriptions in the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century North, yet also in the language practice of grammarians, *als* and *dan* were often used interchangeably. In fact, these observed patterns indicate that Northern norms in the seventeenth- and early eighteenth century simply reflected ongoing developments in contemporary usage. From Huydecoper's (1730) authoritative prescription onwards, uniformity in favour of *dan* is achieved in Northern norms. Actual usage in the *HCD*, on the contrary, remained variable in the eighteenth century, although a change back to *dan* was initiated in usage. This return to *dan* as a comparative marker was almost completed in nineteenth-century usage in the Northern Netherlands, which was possibly a result of the uniform Northern prescriptions.

Southern language use also initiated a shift to *dan* in the eighteenth century. The start of this change took place at the same time as in Northern usage, so in the eighteenth century, when Southern norm givers were still prescribing *als*. This discrepancy in Southern norms and usage suggests that the *als* prescriptions of Southern grammarians were not successful, and did thus not influence usage,

probably due to (1) the implicit nature of these prescriptions, and (2) the prescriptions for a form that was already on its way back in usage. With Southern prescriptions for *dan* appearing only in the nineteenth century, an influence of these grammarians in causing the shift to *dan* in eighteenth-century usage is ruled out. Nonetheless, with Southern codifiers finding consolidation in prescriptions for *dan* at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, a strong increase of the variant is observed in Southern usage. Such a chronology, in which Southern prescriptions precede the increase of the form in usage, may eventually point to another option of prescriptive influence.

Based on the comparison of the developments in prescriptions and in language use, I discussed different contexts in language history where prescriptivism failed to impact usage for the comparative markers. However, two specific instances in which the chronology of change allowed for prescriptive interference were also uncovered. The latter options, which are summed up below, are subjected to an in-depth investigation in section 5 to evaluate whether and to what extent prescriptivism influenced changes in language use.

- (1) In both parts of the language area, the comparative marker *dan* was the dominant variant in sixteenth-century usage. With the strong emergence of the marker *als* in the seventeenth century, *dan* decreased and became a minority variant, but the form never disappeared entirely from usage. In the course of the seventeenth century, Northern grammarians started prescribing the older variant *dan*. Although these prescriptions were variable at first, consistency in Northern norms was achieved in the eighteenth century, right before an increase of *dan* took place in Northern *and* in Southern usage.
- (2) In the Southern Netherlands, an initial incline of *dan* was attested in eighteenth-century usage, as was discussed in option 1. Southern grammarians were still prescribing *als* at the time. In the early nineteenth century, Southern codifiers shifted to uniform *dan* prescriptions. This switch is followed by a strong rise of the form in Southern usage.

5 Discussion

The two options of prescriptive interference discussed above are related to the revival of the marker *dan* in usage. When investigating whether prescriptivism induced this change, not only the chronology of change, but also the target audience of grammarians, the type of the prescription (cf. section 4.1), the regional and genre differences (cf. section 4.2), and the socio-historical context in which the change occurred are considered.

In **option 1**, the possibility of Northern grammarians initiating the resurgence of *dan* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is analysed. Before discussing the period in which usage changed to *dan*, let us first look at seventeenth-century norms. In this early period of top-down standardisation, only a few individual implicit prescriptions on the comparative markers appeared. In these prescriptions, Northern grammarians prescribed either *als* or *dan*, with little inter-grammarian agreement. Most of the norm givers also had variable usage at the time, as they applied *als* and *dan* interchangeably. Some other codifiers in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, as well as a few authoritative writers, however, used the comparative marker *dan* consistently in their own language practice. This latter group of norm givers includes codifiers and ministers from the elitist normative tradition, such as Leupenius (1653), Vollenhove (1686), Francius (1699), and Nyløe (1703, 1707), who formed a closely connected network of codifiers who aligned strongly with the poet Vondel for establishing the standard language. With the famous literary author Vondel switching to the marker *dan* in the course of the seventeenth century (Van der Horst, 2008, II, p. 1272), a number of elitist grammarians in the corpus followed this change. It is therefore highly probable that the choice for the marker *dan* was successfully disseminated within this prestigious and norm-giving community of literary and religious authors in the seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century North, before language users were even made aware of the existence of a norm for the comparative marker.

With the emergence of Huydecoper's (1730) explicit prescription of *dan*, the comparative marker is officially established as the prescribed form. Huydecoper was also part of the discussed group of elitist norm givers, so he presumably influenced later codifiers in adhering to his prescription on the comparative

markers. In formulating a prescription for *dan* in the early eighteenth century, Huydecoper thus probably aided in further disseminating the marker *dan* as the prescribed comparative marker. Nonetheless, the influence of this specific prescription also turns out to be rather limited at a social level. Fellow grammarians only formulated an explicit prescription a few decades after Huydecoper, when Northern usage was already showing a slight increase of the variant. While prescriptive influence could still be an explanation for the increase of *dan* in usage, an impact of these elitist grammarians is unlikely when we consider the regions and genres in which the incline of *dan* occurred. A slight increase of the form is observed only in Zeeland. What is more, the use of the marker *dan* even declined in the region where the elitist grammarians were most active (viz. Holland). This makes an influence of prescriptivism that stretches beyond high-class individuals, such as literary authors and grammarians, less probable.

As option 1 suggested so far, a broader impact of elitist grammarians on general usage in the North is thus unlikely. However, also in the Southern part of the language area, an increase of *dan* is attested in eighteenth-century usage. An effect of these exact prescriptions should thus also be investigated for the South. In Southern usage, we observe an incline of *dan* in the pamphlets of Brabant. And, since authors of these printed documents were often schooled writers, it is indeed possible that some contributors to the genre were influenced by prescriptivism. Furthermore, if we contemplate that a fixed norm on the comparative markers was lacking in the South in the eighteenth century, and consider that the marker *dan* was uniformly applied in the language practice of a few Brabantine norm givers at the time (i.e. Verpoorten, 1752; P.B., 1757), it is indeed likely that the prescriptions of elitist grammarians from the North also spread to the South. Yet, also in this context, the Northern prescriptions influenced solely some norm givers and individual writers of printed texts from Brabant, and not genres or social groups in general.

So far, I have only discussed the role of Northern prescriptivism in the initial stages of the resurgence to *dan*. The largest increase of the variant, however, is observed in the nineteenth century. The prescribed marker is then applied as a majority variant in the entire language area, which leads to the question whether this strong increase of *dan* in usage is triggered by prescriptivism.

When considering the socio-historical and language-political context in the Northern Netherlands at the time, the answer to that question is probably ‘yes’. An official language policy meant for the entire nation in the Northern Netherlands appeared in the early nineteenth century. More specifically, the grammar of Weiland (1805) was published within these national language regulations. In this work, the marker *dan* was explicitly prescribed, while the grammarian also proscribed *als*. Given the official status of the grammar, and the utilisation of the book in schools, Weiland’s (1805) grammar experienced a wide dissemination across different social layers. Northern language users from different regions and social classes were thus probably reached with these prescriptions. As a result, these language users may have implemented the marker *dan* in a more deliberate manner in their language practice.

Still, the success of national language policy in the Northern Netherlands does not necessarily explain why the marker *dan* increased strongly in Southern usage in the nineteenth century. For understanding this development, let us turn to **option 2**, which shows that also this change towards *dan* is partly related to an influence of prescriptivism.

As was already discussed before, Southern grammarians changed their implicit prescriptions for *als* in the eighteenth century to explicit prescriptions for *dan* in the nineteenth century. This shift in norms takes place exactly at the advent of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. The fact that Southern grammarians adjusted their prescriptions to what was being prescribed in the Northern normative tradition at the time, and that this shift took place in the period in which the North and the South were politically reunited, suggests that the cultural dominance of the North was probably imposed on the South. This in turn led to the implementation of the marker *dan* in the Southern prescriptions and, later, in Southern usage (cf. Vosters et al., 2014).

6 Conclusion

In the hypotheses set up in the beginning of this chapter, I formulated expectations for each of the two comparative markers, *als* and *dan*. Relying on the findings in this case study, I now reflect on these two hypotheses before arriving at an overall conclusion on prescriptive influence for the comparative markers.

Hypothesis 1, concerning the increase of *als* in the seventeenth century and the subsequent decline of the form, is largely confirmed. As expected, the variant showed up in handwritten genres in the sixteenth century before a general rise of *als* was attested in all genres and regions in the seventeenth century. No prescriptions for the variant were formulated in these early periods, which implies that the emergence of *als* in usage was certainly no effect of Dutch prescriptivism. For the rise of *als* in usage, it would be interesting for future research to investigate whether the form indeed came into use as an effect of standardisation processes in German at the time. Furthermore, as a result of prescriptive influence, I had foreseen a decrease of *als* in usage a few decades after the explicit prescriptions for *dan* and proscriptions for *als* appeared in the early eighteenth century. This was only partly true. Apart from a few high-class writers, only some contributors to pamphlets from Brabant turned out to be influenced by prescriptivism in the eighteenth century, as they showed a considerable decline of *als* at the time. The marker remained dominant in other genres and regions until the nineteenth century.

The large-scale revival of *dan* thus took place in nineteenth-century usage, and not in the eighteenth century, as I had expected in hypothesis 2. The results in language use moreover pointed to a comparable increase of the marker *dan* across different genres, indicating that, when compared to the formal genres of the *HCD*, the handwritten ego-documents did not lag on the change to *dan*. As was assumed in hypothesis 2, in all genres and regions, the cogent implementation of *dan* was at least partly provoked by nineteenth-century prescriptivism. However, also the socio-historical context is most likely a determinant in the return to *dan* as a comparative marker in the Southern Netherlands.

In establishing whether norm givers influenced changes in the comparative markers, I demonstrated that only the resurgence of the marker *dan*, and hence also the fading of *als*, was actuated ‘from above’. The normative preference for the marker *dan* was clearly set by norm givers from the elitist normative tradition in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century North, who probably influenced each other in applying the comparative marker *dan*. The impact of these grammarians was limited to other writers and grammarians who were part of the circle of elitist norm givers, or who at least had tighter connections with these prestigious writers. Although the elitist grammarians did thus not influence the wider language community, they set the standard for the comparative marker, and in doing so, they triggered other codifiers in the Northern Netherlands in spreading their proposed norm. The actual and large-scale success of these prescriptive attempts, however, is visible in the nineteenth century. With the increase of *dan* taking place at a larger scale in usage, affecting different regions and genres at the same time, it is most likely that the national language policy in the Northern Netherlands is responsible for the broader implementation of *dan* in nineteenth-century usage. In the Southern part of the language area, on the contrary, the increase of the comparative marker *dan* is probably not caused by prescriptivism alone. The general rapprochement of Northern and Southern norms and language practices at the time of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands presumably had a great share in the increase of *dan* in Southern usage as well (cf. Vosters et al., 2014).

As such, in this case study, the influence of prescriptivism needs to be evaluated at two distinct levels. First, there is the socially restricted impact in which norm-giving figures successfully disseminate preferred variants to fellow high-class writers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Apart from the impact in these elite circles, it is important to determine the influence of prescriptivism on general usage as a second level. For this grammatical feature, the latter scenario takes place only in a specific socio-historical context in the nineteenth century in which (1) language norms were publicly made available for the entire language community in the context of nation-building processes, and (2) the Northern and Southern Netherlands had just been politically reunited into the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. Nonetheless, even in this restricted and concrete socio-historical context in language history, the success of prescriptivism is limited to reviving an older variant which had never disappeared entirely from usage.

Chapter 8 – Diminutive suffix

In modern-day Standard Dutch, diminutives are generally formed by adding the suffix *-je* to the root form of a word. This is illustrated by nouns like *boek* ‘book’ and *brief* ‘letter’, which diminuate in *boekje* ‘book-DIM’ and *briefje* ‘letter-DIM’. Although the suffix *-je* is considered the base form, the diminutive suffix knows many variations.⁶⁶ This is also the case in Standard Dutch, where different allomorphs are distinguished depending on the phonological context of the root word. More specifically, it is the auslaut of the root word, together with the quality of the preceding (combination of) vowel(s), that determines whether a speaker or writer of Standard Dutch uses the base suffix *-je*, or one of its allomorphs *-kje* (e.g. *kettinkje* ‘necklace-DIM’), *-pje* (e.g. *boompje* ‘tree-DIM’), *-etje* (e.g. *mannetje* ‘man-DIM’), or *-tje* (e.g. *zoentje* ‘kiss-DIM’).

Before the diminutive suffix *-je* (pronounced as [jə]) and its allomorphs were established as the codified norm in spoken and written Dutch, other suffixes were applied for constructing a diminutive. Allomorphs deriving from *-ikîn*, with *-kijn* (probably pronounced as [kin]) as the main suffix, were most common in Middle Dutch (Van Loey, 1970, § 185; Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 408). At some point in the history of Dutch, the velar diminutive suffix *-kijn* thus developed into the newer suffix *-je*, due to the palatalisation of /k/ and /i/, and the reduction of the end *-n* (Van Loey, 1970, pp. 225-231).

Previous research has shown that this transition from velar to palatal diminutive suffixes took place gradually, with the palatalisation process affecting specific phonological contexts first (Kloeke, 1923; De Vries, 1925; Van Loey, 1970; Marynissen, 1998). This is illustrated by a diminutive like *maantkijn*, or the later form *maantke(n)* ‘month-DIM’, where a velar occlusive /k/ as the first sound of the suffix follows on /t/ of the root word. The combination of these two obstruents caused a phonological clash, which in turn triggered the palatalisation process. Diminutives with a root word ending in *-d* or *-t* were therefore most prone to

⁶⁶ I am aware that scholars have also argued that *-tje* is the base form of the diminutive suffix in Standard Dutch (e.g. Van Loey, 1970, p. 229). The issue whether *-je* or *-tje* should be seen as the base form, however, is less relevant for the current study.

shift to a palatal diminutive like *maantge(n)*, which later developed into *maantje(n)* (Van Loey, 1970, p. 230; Marynissen, 1998, p. 256). Other phonological contexts were also subject to such changes in a subsequent wave of palatalisation (Marynissen, 1998).

Not all speakers of Dutch in the Low Countries were immediately impacted by the palatalisation of the diminutive suffixes, though. The initial shift to palatal suffixes, which occurred in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, took place in some – mainly Hollandic and north-eastern – dialects, while other dialects of Dutch maintained the velar suffixes (Kloeker, 1923, p. 229; De Vries, 1925, pp. 24–32, p. 41; Pée, 1936–1938, pp. 58–60; p. 107). The latter is the case for dialects in Brabant, for example, where the palatalisation of the suffix was sometimes avoided by maintaining or inserting a /ə/ or /s/ in between the clashing consonants, as is illustrated by a diminutive like *veldeken* ‘field-DIM’ and *boekskén* ‘book-DIM’. This epenthetic strategy facilitated the pronunciation of the consonant cluster, and it consequently ensured that the suffix *-ke(n)* was maintained for a longer time in the Southern Netherlands (Marynissen, 1998, p. 266). While some dialects thus retained the velar suffix *-ke(n)*, a fully vocalised form of the palatal suffix *-je(n)* was found in other dialects of Dutch. More specifically, in dialects from Holland and the north-eastern regions of the Netherlands, the suffix *-ie(n)* – pronounced as [i(n)] – was attested in the seventeenth century as well (Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 412).

In this case study, I investigate the written representation of the diminutive suffix, and I particularly analyse whether codified norms impacted the change to the modern-day suffix *-je*. Four main suffix types can be distinguished for constructing a diminutive from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. These are: (1) *-kijn/-kin/-ke(n)*, which make up the oldest category of velar suffixes, (2) the transition suffix *-ge(n)*, which is considered a first attempt of visualising a palatal pronunciation (Marynissen, 1998, p. 256), (3) the palatal *-je(n)* as the standard suffix in modern-day Dutch, and (4) the fully vocalised palatal suffix *-ie(n)*. Each of these suffix types comprises different allomorphs, as well as variants with and without deletion of the final *-n*. From a diachronic point of view, however, it is important to note that each of the four suffix types defines a separate stage in the palatalisation process of the diminutive suffix.

1 Previous research

When investigating the diachronic change from velar to palatal diminutive suffixes in language use, Kloeke (1923) and De Vries (1925) as pioneers in exploring the phenomenon, were mainly concerned with the emergence and the distribution of palatal diminutive suffixes at a geographical level. Kloeke (1923, p. 229) believed that the dialect in the North-Hollandic region initiated the discussed change to the standard suffix *-je(n)* in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, from whence the palatal suffix spread to other regions. De Vries (1925, pp. 24-32; p. 41) as his opponent showed that the palatalisation of the suffix was also attested in north-eastern regions of the Northern Netherlands at the same time, and as such, he refuted the idea of the ‘Hollandic expansion’ that Kloeke (1923) described. Instead, De Vries claimed there is more evidence for a polygenetic rise of the palatal suffix in the fourteenth century, with the palatalisation emerging in different regions at the same time (cf. also Van Loey, 1970, p. 230). Although the palatalisation process started a century later in the Southern Netherlands, Marynissen (1998) also confirms the suggestion of De Vries (1925) for the Southern part of the language area, as she illustrates that the palatalisation followed the same polygenetic process in the South.

Marynissen (1998) thus delved into the origin and the spread of the palatal diminutive suffix in the Southern Netherlands. Building on the work of Kloeke (1923), De Vries (1925), the dialect maps of Pée (1936-1938), a collection of linguistic data deriving from thirteenth- and fourteenth-century official texts and charters, and a corpus containing toponyms from the Southern Netherlands, she investigated the diachronic evolution of the diminutive suffix of two common toponyms i.e. *straatje* ‘street-DIM’ and *veldje* ‘field-DIM’. In her study, Marynissen (1998, pp. 258-260) illustrates that the palatal suffix *-je(n)* knew its breakthrough in Southern writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This does not mean that solely written representations of the velar suffix were found before the seventeenth century, though. The first palatal representations with the suffix *-gen* were attested in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries (Marynissen, 1998, p. 264). After its early rise, the transition suffix *-gen* strongly declined in the seventeenth century before it entirely disappeared from usage in the second half of the eighteenth century, where it was replaced by the suffix *-je(n)* (Marynissen, 1998, pp. 258-259). Since the change to the

suffix *-je(n)* was initiated in *straatje* first and took place only a century later in *veldje*, Marynissen (1998, p. 267) argues that timing the change to the palatal suffix also depends on the lexical context.

These lexical patterns do not emerge only in historical writings. In the dialect maps on modern-day Dutch, De Schutter et al. (2005) not only show diverging patterns for the diminutive suffix from one root word to another, but they also illustrate that the velar suffix *-ke(n)* is still omnipresent in dialects of Dutch today. The continued existence of velar suffixes in modern-day dialects indicates that the change to the standard suffix *-je* was completed in written and spoken Standard Dutch, but not in all spoken dialects (Marynissen, 1998, pp. 260; 267). This difference between the contemporary (written) standard language and the dialects suggests that a similar discrepancy may have been present in the past, with genres closer to the language of proximity possibly adhering to the velar suffixes for a longer time (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1985).

As opposed to linguistic and dialectal studies on the subject, research approaching the change in the diminutive suffixes from a historical-sociolinguistic angle is scarce, and so far, only one sociolinguistic study on the feature has been carried out on historical data of Dutch. This research is conducted by Nobels (2013a, 2013b), who investigated the use of the diminutive suffix in the Letters as Loot corpus. She focused on seventeenth-century usage, and particularly on ego-documents of middle- and lower-class writers from the Northern Netherlands. In exploring the distribution of the different diminutive suffixes in private letters, Nobels (2013a, pp. 223-224) demonstrates that region, writing experience, and age were influential determinants in the choice for the diminutive suffix in the seventeenth century. She illustrates that the modern-day variant *-je* was already applied in all Northern regions, but its proportion was the highest in North-Holland. Interestingly, the dialectal suffix *-ie*, which was strongly criticised at the time (Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 412), also showed up in the private letters that Nobels (2013a, pp. 203-206) investigated. Although Van Loey (1970, p. 230) believed the variant *-ie* did not occur in seventeenth-century writings, these findings thus suggest that more oral diminutive suffixes were also applied in personal written communication at the time.

In terms of social variation, Nobels (2013a, p. 207) investigated private letters deriving from North-Holland only, and uncovered that the suffix *-ie* was applied

as a majority variant by letters writers from the lower(-middle) classes, while this suffix was never used by upper-class writers. Nobels (2013a, p. 207) argues that the latter group of writers was more experienced and clearly knew the writing conventions in the seventeenth century, which also clarifies why the upper classes mostly applied the suffix *-je*. However, together with the older writers in the corpus, the upper-class writers also continued to use the velar suffix *-ke*, while this variant was already considered archaic in the seventeenth century. Nobels (2013a, p. 212) explains this rather atypical usage pattern by the ‘distinguished’ status that the velar suffix *-ke* had acquired over time. The distinguished status of the suffix can be related to the strong position of the velar suffix in the normative tradition of Dutch. After all, Van der Sijs (2021, pp. 411-412) mentions that Northern grammarians still favoured the velar suffix in the early seventeenth century.

Previous research has thus shown that the palatalisation process of the diminutive suffix was initiated in dialects of the Northern part of the language area, where written representations of a palatal suffix were first found in the fourteenth century. In the Southern Netherlands, on the contrary, the palatalisation process started somewhat later than in the North, with the palatal suffixes showing up for the first time in writings of the fifteenth century, and a convincing change to *-je(n)* showing up in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, also in these later periods, there was no uniformity in the use of the diminutive suffixes. Apart from *-je(n)*, the transition suffix *-ge(n)*, the velar *-ke(n)*, and *-ie(n)* appeared in written usage, indicating that the change towards *-je(n)* was ongoing in both parts of the language area. The use of diminutive suffixes remained variable in writings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, where different sociolinguistic factors – such as region and writing experience – as well as the lexical context of the root word influenced the use of the diminutive suffix. Whether and when the standard suffix *-je* was fully implemented in written usage, and whether this change was initiated or reinforced by Dutch prescriptivism is investigated in the present case study.

2 Hypotheses

For the velar suffix type *-kijn/kin/ke(n)*, I rely on Marynissen (1998) in expecting that the Middle Dutch form *-kijn* will probably not occur anymore in norms and usage in the period under investigation. Since the suffix *-kin* is the older variant of *-ke(n)*, the form might still occur as a minority variant in sixteenth-century usage, but *-ke(n)* will most likely be the dominant form in this early period. Also in norms, I build on Van der Sijs (2021) in assuming that the velar suffix will be prescribed up until the seventeenth century. From the eighteenth century onwards, *-ke(n)* will probably be treated as an archaic but not incorrect suffix in the normative discourse. Despite the lack of hard rejection in language norms, following Marynissen (1998) and Nobels (2013a, 2013b), I presume the share of the velar suffixes will gradually decrease in usage, and the suffix *-ke(n)* may eventually disappear in the eighteenth century, in favour of the palatal suffix. The velar *-ke(n)* might also be retained in genres which are closer to the oral language, such as ego-documents, and especially in those of the Southern Netherlands, where multiple dialects still use the velar suffix today. I do not expect large differences in terms of genre otherwise, except for an effect of the distinguished status that is attached to *-ke(n)*. As Nobels (2013a) observed, the praising of *-ke(n)* in the metalanguage may lead to the prolonged use of the velar form by experienced writers. Such an effect may therefore be most pronounced in the formal administrative texts and in the printed pamphlets of the *HCD* (**hypothesis 1**).

As Marynissen (1998) indicated, the palatalisation of the diminutive suffix was first present in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century usage. As such, I expect for the variant *-ge(n)* to show up in the written language in the earliest periods under investigation, although the form may soon decline again, and given its function as a transition suffix, it will probably disappear in the eighteenth century in favour of the suffix *-je(n)* (**hypothesis 2**).

The palatal suffix *-je(n)* will probably show up in Northern usage first. Here, the form may have grounds in the sixteenth century already, while in Southern usage, *-je(n)* might become a main variant in the seventeenth century, as Marynissen (1998) also attested. This geographical difference implies that the proportions of the palatal variant will most likely be higher in Northern usage in

the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. If prescriptive interference can be assumed in this case, the suffix *-je(n)* will have the strongest rise in printed and highly formal genres, such as the pamphlets and the administrative texts (**hypothesis 3**).

Since the suffix *-ie(n)* particularly characterises the dialects in the region of Holland, the form will most likely secure a position in the most informal ego-documents from the Northern Netherlands. As opposed to the seventeenth-century letter writers in the corpus of Nobels (2013a), the writers included in the *HCD* are all members of the (upper-)middle classes, who were perhaps familiar with writing conventions at the time. The proportion of the suffix *-ie(n)* will thus probably be lower in this corpus than in the study of Nobels (2013a). I suppose this dialectal variant will have the strongest position in the seventeenth century, yet with the increase of prescriptions for the suffix *-je(n)* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the suffix *-ie(n)* might disappear from usage in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries (**hypothesis 4**).

3 Methodology

In this section, I explain how the analysis of diminutive suffixes is operationalised in this case study. The annotation of the metalinguistic comments is discussed in section 3.1, while the regular expression for searching the *HCD*, together with the cleaning and annotation process of the usage data is explained in section 3.2.

3.1 Language norms

Different types of language norms are retrieved from the corpus of normative works and are thus also distinguished in the normative component of the analysis. In this section, I clarify and illustrate what kind of prescriptive injunctions are included in the analysis of language norms.

The most apparent type of language norms are **explicit prescriptions**, which thematise the grammatical issue of diminutive suffixes, and contextualise the type of suffix that must be applied to construct a diminutive in Dutch. Example 1

illustrates that such explicit prescriptions can be brief in simply mentioning the prescribed suffix (and its allomorphs) together with some examples, yet other explicit injunctions include a more complex account of the matter, in which mixed prescriptions are involved, with a direct (Example 2) or a concealed argumentation (Example 3) for the different suffix types that are prescribed (cf. section 4.1.2).

- (1) *Indien veële Verkleywoórdten te hebben, de tael een cieraed aenbrengt, mogen wy ons beroe-men in dat stuk een voórrecht voór veële ander-re te hebben. [...] De regel om dit te doen, is de syllabe ken agter het nomen te voegen; als hofken, boomken, vuerken; maer zoo het woord met eene d eyndigt of met eene l, rekt het zich gemeenelyk eene gantsche syllabe uyt; als woórdeken, hondeken, beéldeken, stalleken, velleken, walleken. Die met eene k eyndigen, neémen sken tot zich; als boeksken, stoksken, zaksken, enz. alle welke uytzonderingen veél beter doór het gebruyk als doór regels kunnen worden geleert*
(Des Roches, s.d. [1761], p. 27)

'If having many diminutives makes the language graceful, we may boast of having a privilege over many other languages. The rule is to add the syllable *ken* after the noun; as *hofken* 'yard-DIM', *boomken* 'tree-DIM', *vuerken* 'fire-DIM', but if the root word ends in a *d* or an *l*, the word generally extends an entire syllable, as *woórdeken* 'word-DIM', *hondeken* 'dog-DIM', *beéldeken* 'statue-DIM', *stalleken* 'stable-DIM', *velleken* 'skin-DIM', *walleken* 'embankment-DIM'. The words ending in *k* take *sken*; as *boeksken* 'book-DIM', *stoksken* 'stick-DIM', *zaksken* 'bag-DIM', etc. all these exceptions are much better learnt through usage than through rules'

- (2) *Volgens den algemeynen regel, zet men de letter-greép ken by de zelfstandige naemwoórdten ? B.V. van hof, maekt men hofken; van deur, deurken; enz. [...] Meest alle de woórdten die met l of n eyndigen, neémen tje aen; volgens de wyze der Hollanders; B.V. van stoel, maekt men stoeltje; hier by kan men voegen die, de welke met t eyndigen, by de welke men voegt je; B.V. straet, straetje, enz. dus ook sommige woórdten die met d eyndigen: B.V. van hand, maekt men handje en handeken, van oórd, oórdje, enz.*
(Ter Bruggen, 1817-1818, p. 7)

‘As a general rule, the syllable *ken* is added to nouns, for example, one makes *hofken* from *hof* ‘yard’; *deurken* from *deur* ‘door’; etc. Most of the words ending in *l* or *n*, take *tje* as a suffix; in the manner of the Hollandic, for example, one makes *stoeltje* from *stoel* ‘chair’; the words ending in *t* can also be added to this rule, where one adds the suffix *je*, for example, to *straet* ‘street’, *straetje*, etc. and thus also some words ending in *d*, for example, one makes *handje* and *handeken* from *hand* ‘hand’, *oórdje* from *oórd* ‘place’, etc.’

- (3) *De Verkleennaemwoorden verminderen de beteken-nis der Oorsprongkelyke Naemwoorden door aennee-ming van je met of zonder eene voorgaende t, en van ken met of zonder voorgaende s; als in, Knaepje, Schaepje, Straetje, Steegje, hoekje, huisje, Steentje, boomtje, beddetje, manneken, mandeken, hondeken, doeksken, boeksken, broeksken, jongsken*
(Moonen, 1706, p. 119)

‘The diminutives diminish the meaning of the original noun by adopting *je* with or without a preceding *t*, and by *ken* with or without a preceding *s*; as in *Knaepje* ‘boy-DIM’, *Schaepje* ‘sheep-DIM’, *Straetje* ‘street-DIM’, *Steegje* ‘alley-DIM’, *hoekje* ‘corner-DIM’, *huisje* ‘house-DIM’, *Steentje* ‘stone-DIM’, *boomtje* ‘tree-DIM’, *beddetje* ‘bed-DIM’, *manneken* ‘man-DIM’, *mandeken* ‘basket-DIM’, *hondeken* ‘dog-DIM’, *doeksken* ‘cloth-DIM’, *boeksken* ‘book-DIM’, *broeksken* ‘pants-DIM’, *jongsken* ‘boy-DIM’

For this grammatical feature, **implicit prescriptions** are mainly found in wordlists and glossaries, and in prescriptions about other linguistic topics, in which multiple examples of diminutives are summed up (e.g. Example 4).

- (4) *De X wert by veelen ghebruikt in paxken, stoxken, end’ meer: daermen anders paksken, stoksken, stel-len moste*
(Dafforne, 1627, p. 131)

‘The *X* is used by many in *paxken* ‘parcel-DIM’, *stoxken* ‘stick-DIM’, and more, since they should otherwise write *paksken*, *stoksken*’

For **grammarians’ usage**, I annotated the dominant variant out of ten randomly selected tokens of diminutive suffixes. However, as was also the case for the comparative marker in Chapter 7, diminutives do not occur frequently in language use. Even when sufficient diminutives were found in a codifier’s language practice, observations were often diminutives of the same lemma

(e.g. *woord* ‘word’ and *lid* ‘article’). With grammarians mainly constructing diminutives with specific root words, it was impossible to annotate the dominantly used variant based on tokens from individual lemmas. I therefore allowed for multiple tokens of the same lemma for annotating the dominant suffix in grammarians’ usage. Of course, due to the low frequency of diminutive suffixes in language use, for 20 out of the 73 normative works I was not able to extract ten diminutive suffixes. For these works, the dominant form of suffix is thus based on fewer than ten tokens. The actual number on which the dominant variant is determined is mentioned in between brackets in Table 18. Furthermore, in the case that codifiers were not consistent in their writing practice, and no dominant suffix could be established, all variants used by that grammarian were annotated as the dominantly used suffix. The latter is the case for six normative works, yet two of these works show only variation between the same suffix type, as Table 18 in section 4.1.3 also summarises.

3.2 Language use

The results in language use are retrieved from the *HCD* by means of multiple regular expressions that searched the usage corpus for the medieval suffixes *-kijn* and *-lijn*, together with their spelling variants, on the one hand, and for the suffix types from the Early and Late Modern period, i.e. *-kin/ke(n)*, *-ge(n)*, *-je(n)*, and *-ie(n)*, also considering their historical spelling variants, on the other hand.

Apart from the false positive results that were manually removed from the results, diminutives attached to a proper name, e.g. Dutch female names such as *Leentje* and *Hanneke*, were automatically removed from the corpus data. Most instances in which a proper name is formed with a diminutive do not express a diminutive meaning (anymore), and the diminutive suffix is therefore considered a fixed element of the proper name (cf. Nobels, 2013a, pp. 220-223).

After filtering the usage data that were obtained via the regular expressions, 523 results for the diminutive suffixes remained for the corpus analysis. Attestations of the medieval suffixes *-kijn* and *-lijn* were not found in the usage data, and also the suffixes *-gi(n)*, *-ye(n)*, *-chi(n)*, and *-che(n)* as spelling variants of the palatal suffix did not yield valid datapoints. All other diminutive suffixes appearing in the Early and Late Modern period, so the variants *-kin*, *-ken*, *-ke*, *-gen*, *-ge*, *-jen*,

-je, *-ien*, and *-ie*, were attested as diminutive suffixes in the *HCD*. These results were manually annotated for the lemma of the root word.

Furthermore, the annotation of the diminutive suffixes needed an additional verification for the results of the suffix type *-ie(n)*. This was necessary since the grapheme <j> was still a recent phenomenon in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century language use. This implies that it was still common to use the grapheme <i> for representing both the vowel /i/ and the semi-vowel /j/ (Nobels, 2013a, pp. 83-84). The possibility of this orthographic overlap has implications for this study. More specifically since it might lead to misinterpretations of the diminutive suffixes *-je(n)* and *-ie(n)*. In order to ascertain whether these written representations denoted the palatal suffix *-je(n)* or the fully vocalised palatal *-ie(n)*, all documents in the usage corpus containing the spelling practices <ie> and <ien> as diminutive suffixes were examined, applying the method that Nobels (2013a, pp. 83-84) developed for establishing the spelling practices in seventeenth-century ego-documents.

As such, I checked whether a clear distinction was made between the two graphemes and the corresponding phonemes in the individual documents. For example, if a writer used the grapheme <j> in a context where we would expect to find [j], as in *jacht* 'hunt', and they also spelled <ie> for [i], it is likely that the writer already made a distinction between the two graphemes, and as such, the diminutive suffixes represented as <ie> or <ien> most likely denote the suffix *-ie(n)*. From the 18 documents in the *HCD* containing these ambiguous spelling practices, a distinction between the two graphemes was made in most texts. Only in two documents, the grapheme <i> was still used for representing [j].⁶⁷ Since it cannot be determined with sufficient certainty whether these writers wanted to denote the suffix *-je(n)* or *-ie(n)*, the 12 occurrences of <ie> and <ien> in these documents are considered observations of the suffix *-ie(n)*.

⁶⁷ These documents are EGO-1650-HO-1 and EGO-1650-HO-3.

4 Results

4.1 Language norms

In this section, I present the developments in of the diminutive suffix in language norms. I first interpret the metalinguistic salience of the diminutive suffix in section 4.1.1, before the prescriptions and the treatment of alternative variants are discussed in section 4.1.2 and section 4.1.3 respectively.

4.1.1 Metalinguistic salience

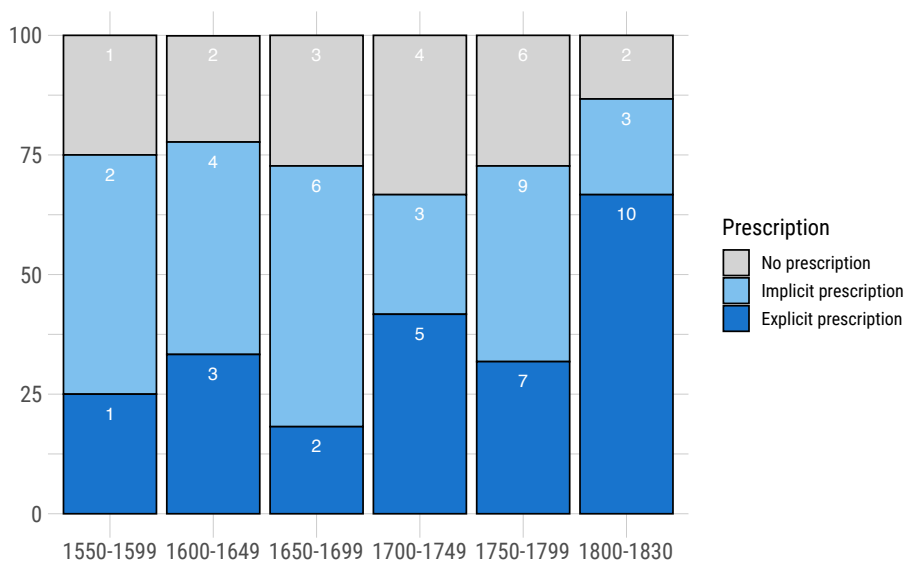


Figure 46: metalinguistic salience diminutive suffix

The diminutive suffix was part of normative discussions early on, as Figure 46 illustrates. The feature appeared in explicit prescriptions already in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. However, the saliency of the diminutive suffix does not increase gradually in these normative discussions. In fact, the explicit prescriptions on the diminutive suffix fluctuate slightly up until the second half of the eighteenth century, with always a minority of the norm givers contributing

to the normative discussions on the matter. It is only in the nineteenth century that the grammatical feature convincingly rises above the level of awareness of norm givers, with 67% of the normative works including an explicit prescription on the diminutive suffix. In overall, with 38% (n=28) of the normative works in the corpus containing an explicit prescription on the diminutive suffix, the feature shows medium metalinguistic salience. The diminutive suffix is thus definitely more prominent in the normative discourse compared to some other grammatical variables, but it never becomes as salient as certain spelling features that were fiercely discussed by grammarians for the entire period under investigation (e.g. spelling of long /a/ in closed syllables, Chapter 5).

4.1.2 Prescriptions

The language norms on the diminutive suffix, i.e. the explicit and implicit prescriptions, and grammarians' language use, are presented in this section.

Norms per period and type of norm – visualised per suffix

Figure 47 shows a diachronic overview of the explicit and implicit prescriptions, on the one hand, and of the suffixes that were applied in grammarians' usage, on the other hand. The graph offers a detailed overview of the development in language norms, in which the main suffix types of the diminutives, i.e. *-kin/ke(n)*, *-ge(n)*, *-je(n)*, and *-ie(n)*, are split up per individual suffix.⁶⁸

When comparing the explicit and implicit prescriptions to the language use of codifiers, a great variety of diminutive suffixes is attested, with at least seven suffixes emerging in the prescriptions over the course of four centuries.⁶⁹ Although many of these suffixes are prescribed only once, the prescribed variants *-ke*, *-gen*, and *-ien* are not used in the language practice of grammarians, where solely four different suffixes can be distinguished over time. The language practice of grammarians was thus less variable than their prescriptions on the diminutive suffix.

⁶⁸ Since the medieval suffix *-kijn* is not in use in the norms or usage investigated in this study, I will henceforth refer to the velar suffix type *-kin/ke(n)*.

⁶⁹ Note that the suffixes *-ge* and *-ie*, which occur in the usage corpus (cf. section 3.2), do not appear in language norms.

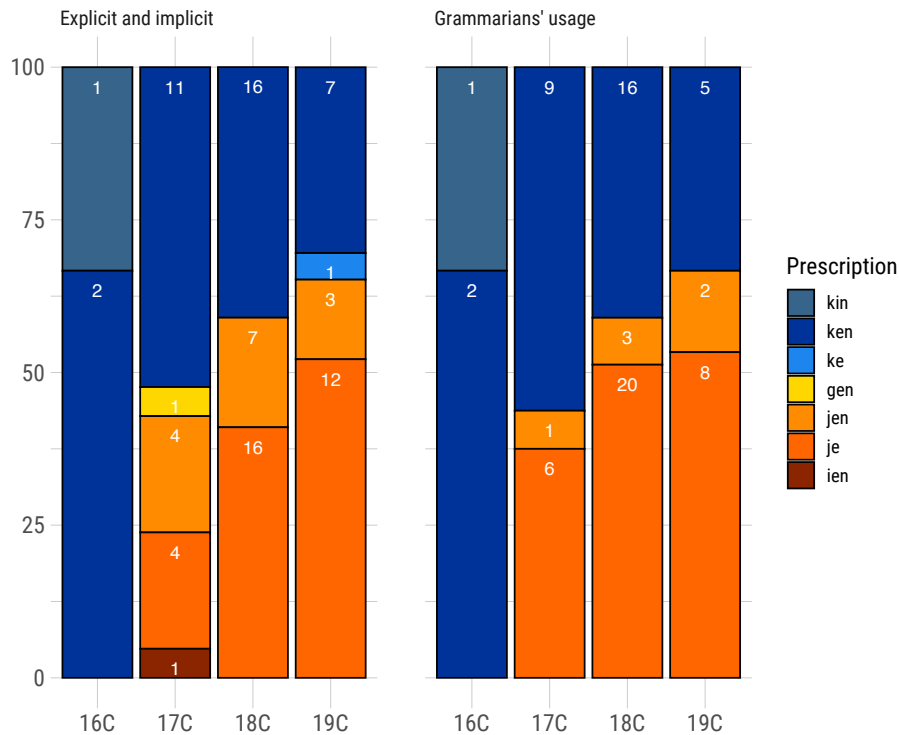


Figure 47: norms diminutive suffix per period and type of norm

As was also demonstrated in previous research, the distribution of the different suffixes within the velar suffix type shows that *-kin* was indeed the older variant of the velar suffixes *-ken* and *-ke*. Since *-kin* was prescribed and used by only one grammarian in the sixteenth century, while others already prescribed *-ken*, the suffix is clearly outgoing in sixteenth-century norms. Furthermore, when considering the deletion of the final *n* in the norms for the velar suffix type, only one codifier in the nineteenth century prescribes *-ke* alongside a variety of other diminutive suffixes, while almost all grammarians prescribing the velar suffix opt for the variant without deletion of the final *-n* (i.e. *-ken*). Language norms for the palatal diminutive suffix, on the contrary, are clearly oriented towards the modern-day variant with deletion of the final *-n* (i.e. *-je*). The preference for the suffix with deletion of *-n* is most pronounced in the language practice of grammarians, where most norm givers apply the suffix *-je*. Also in the explicit and implicit prescriptions, the variant with deletion of *-n* gradually gains more

ground. As such, the detailed overview of language norms per diminutive suffix revealed that (1) the suffix type *-kin/ke(n)* largely consists of norms for the suffix *-ken*, and (2) both *-jen* and *-je* appear as prescribed and used variants in norms, with the modern-day suffix *-je* strengthening its position over time.

Norms per period and type of norm – visualised per suffix type

While Figure 47 offered a detailed overview of the development of language norms per suffix, Figure 48 paints a general picture of the development in language norms, in which the focus shifts to the different stages in the palatalisation process. To that end, the language norms summarised above are now clustered per suffix type.

The same development in language norms is observed, with language norms changing from prescriptions for the velar *-kin/ke(n)* forms to palatal *-je(n)* suffixes, a process occurring simultaneously in the prescriptions and in grammarians' usage. Even though large amounts of variability are factored out by clustering the different suffixes, the observation that was made about the greater variability in the prescriptions still applies here. The transition suffix *-ge(n)* and the vocalised palatal suffix *-ie(n)* show up in the seventeenth century prescriptions, while they are not present in grammarians' usage.

The development of language norms, moreover, indicates that the initial shift from velar to palatal diminutive suffixes took place in the seventeenth century, since both the transition variant *-ge(n)* and the palatal forms then started appearing in the prescriptions and in the language practice of codifiers. Although prescriptions for the palatal suffix *-je(n)* increased in the following centuries, the change towards the modern-day standard suffix was not yet completed in nineteenth-century norms. It is possible that a discrepancy between the normative tradition in the Northern and the Southern Netherlands lies at the root of this unfinished change in language norms.

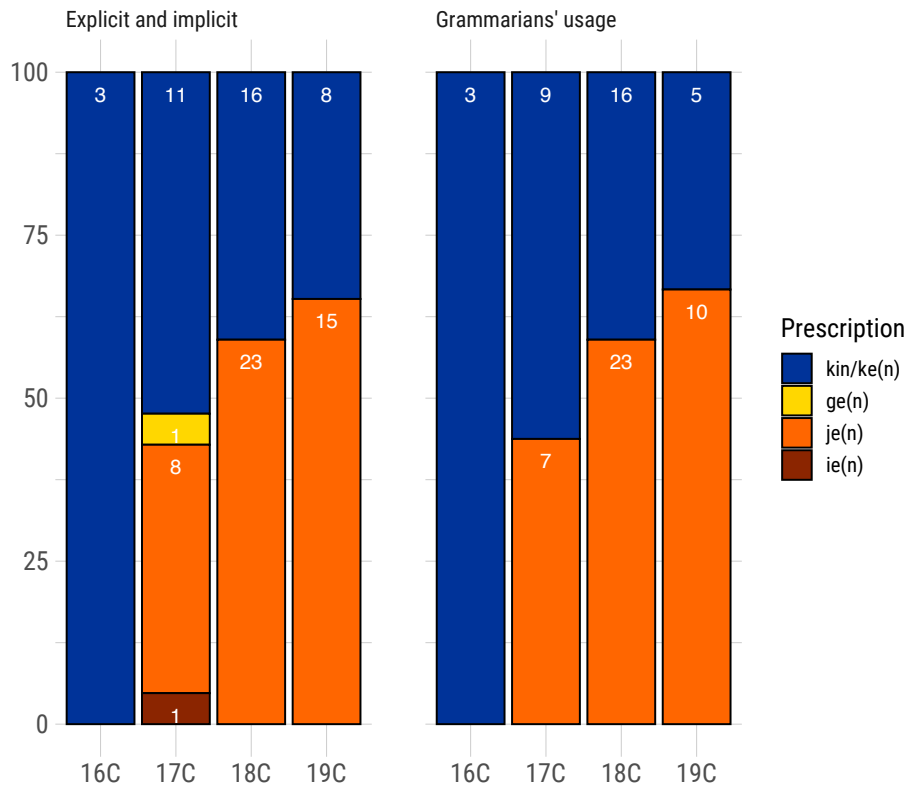


Figure 48: norms diminutive suffix per period and type of norm

Norms per period, area, and type of norm

Indeed, when splitting up the results in language norms per period, area, and type of prescription in Figure 49, a distinction between Northern and Southern norms is discerned. In Northern norms, the sixteenth-century prescriptions favouring *-kin/ke(n)* in an implicit way make room for explicit injunctions for the palatal suffix *-je(n)*. This change towards *-je(n)* is completed in prescriptions and in grammarians' usage in the nineteenth century, after a gradual increase of the variant. Interestingly, the suffix *-ge(n)* is solely prescribed once in an implicit manner, which indicates that the transition variant does not really secure a place in the normative discussions. In the Northern normative discourse, the two competing suffix types are thus clearly *-kin/-ke(n)* and *-je(n)*.

Alike in the North, Southern norm givers start off with prescriptions for the velar suffixes in the sixteenth century, but these early prescriptions are more explicit than they were in the North at the time. Injunctions for a palatal suffix also appear in the seventeenth century, yet it is only one codifier who prescribed the palatal suffix *-ie(n)* instead of *-je(n)*. The Brabantine Bolognino probably did not aim to prescribe the fully vocalised palatal suffix *-ie(n)* which corresponds to the [i] pronunciation. He presumably wanted to represent a pronunciation close to [jə] or [tʃə]. Despite this first Southern prescription for a palatal suffix in the seventeenth century, language norms for the velar *-ke(n)* remain dominant in Southern norms until the nineteenth century. While the suffix *-je(n)* also breaks through in the explicit prescriptions at the time, Southern norms remain variable with both *-ke(n)* and *-je(n)* appearing in the prescriptions and in the language practice of grammarians. When compared to Northern norms, the observed patterns in the South thus suggest that Southern norms adhered to *-kin/ke(n)* for a longer time, and as such, they experienced a delay of one century in the switch to the diminutive suffix *-je(n)*.

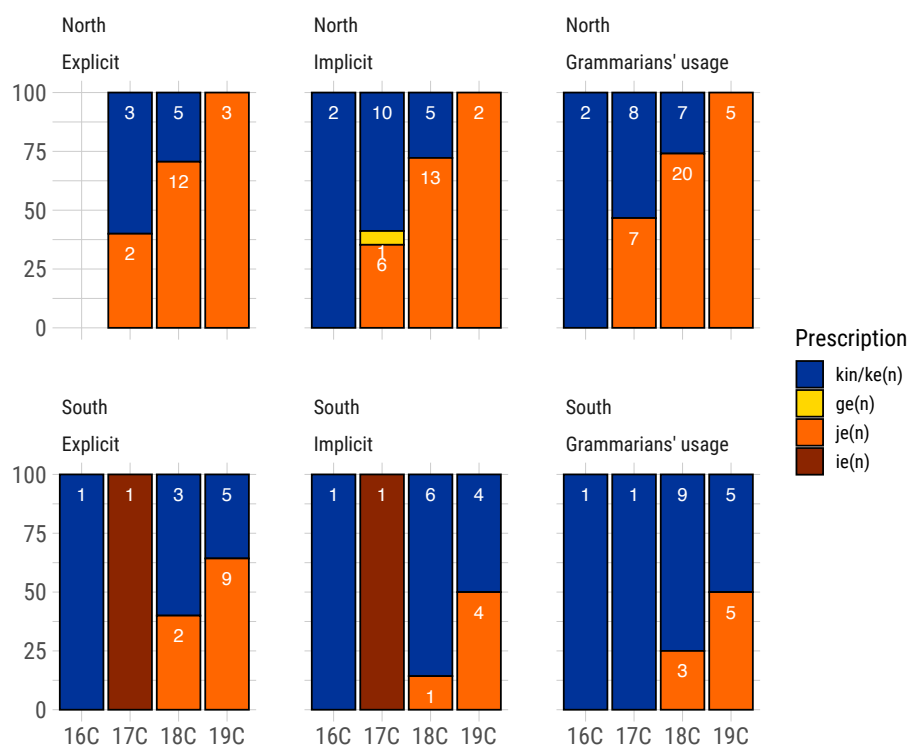


Figure 49: norms diminutive suffix per period, area, and type of norm

4.1.3 Treatment of alternative variants

The discussion of language norms revealed that variability was attested in the prescriptions on the diminutive suffix, with both prescriptions for the velar *-kin/ke(n)* suffixes and for the incoming suffix *-je(n)* appearing until the eighteenth century. In the Southern part of the language area, these variable prescriptions were formulated until the nineteenth century.

So far, the discussion of language norms revealed little inter-grammarians consistency, yet it seemed that individual norm givers were at least consistent in their prescriptions. In this section, I illustrate that this was not always the case. In 20 out of the 56 normative works that include a prescription on the diminutive suffix, both velar and palatal suffixes were prescribed. What is more, many of these codifiers did not consider the suffix types *-kin/ke(n)* and *-je(n)* as readily interchangeable under the pretext of free variation in language use. Apart from discussing the treatment of alternative variants based on the non-prescribed forms (cf. Table 18), I therefore analyse whether any linguistic or social principles govern these mixed prescriptions.

Already with the appearance of the first explicit prescriptions for *-je(n)*, the Hollandic Leupenius (1653, pp. 32-33) formulated a mixed prescription, in which he discussed the velar suffix most extensively. He also welcomes the new variant *-je(n)*, since it is in use more often, he says. Leupenius considers the palatal suffix most useful in root words ending in a velar consonant, such as /k/ or /ɣ/.

om de soetvloeijsheid is meer in gebruik jen of tjen, dat ook soo veel uit-neeminge niet is onderworpen als ken: want daar men in berg, dwerg, balk, valk, kalk, een s tuschen ken moet invoegen/seg-gende: bergsken, dwergsken, [...], daar kan men de selve voor jen naalaa-ten/ en seggen: bergjen, dwergjen.

‘for reasons of fluency, it is more common to use *-jen* or *-tjen*, which is also not subject to as many exceptions as *-ken*: because in *berg* ‘mountain’, *dwerg* ‘dwarf’, *valk* ‘falcon’, *kalk* ‘lime’, one must insert an *s*, saying *bergsken*, *dwergsken*, while one can omit the *s* before *-jen*, saying *bergjen*, *dwergjen*’

More descriptive comments follow in the eighteenth century, when Moonen (1706, p. 119) allows for free variation in usage. A few years later, Séwel (1708, p. 28) is the first to insinuate that *-kin/ke(n)* is an older suffix, and he expresses a preference for the new palatal variant *-je(n)*. Despite the swift acceptance and adoption of *-je(n)* as the prescribed form, however, in Séwel's examples that accompany the prescription, he still deems it necessary to include the *-kin/ke(n)* forms. From these enumerations which combine the palatal and velar suffixes, it appears that the grammarian believes the velar suffix should not be used in specific words like *kam* 'comb', *mol* 'mole', and *pen* 'pen'. Although that exception suggests that a possible phonological principle underlies the prescription, this assumption is debunked when noticing that Séwel allows for the suffix *-ken* in words like *man* 'man' and *bel* 'bel', which follow the same phonological principle as *kam*, *mol* and *pen*.

Later in the eighteenth century, codifiers continue to value the velar suffix *-ken* alongside the newly established *-je(n)*. This is clearly illustrated by the prescription of Huydecoper (1730, pp. 12-13):

De uitgang der Verkleinde Naamwoorden is by de Ouden doorgaands kij(n) of kin. [...] Eindelyk verzachtte men kin tot ken. [...] dees laatste uitgang heeft een bevalligheid, en zelfs een soort van deftigheid in vergelyking van tje en tjen, die van laater tyd zyn.

'Among the old, the suffix of a diminutive is usually *-kijn* or *-kin*. The ending *-kin* was eventually palatalised into *-ken*. The latter suffix has a charm, and even a kind of decency when compared to *-tje* and *-tjen*, which are from later times.'

Without rejecting the palatal suffix, the grammarian argues that *-ken* is the traditional form, which contains a status of decency (cf. also Nobels, 2013a, pp. 212-213). This argument lingers on in the eighteenth-century prescriptions (e.g. Elzevier, 1761). Also the exceptions raised by Séwel (1708) were recycled by other codifiers who continued prescribing the archaic *-ken* next to *-je(n)*. Zeydelaar (1781, p. 143), for example, explained: *Sommige van deeze woorden schijnen den uitgang in KEN niet te willen dulden, als daar zijn Molletje, Kammetje, Pennetje, stemmetje, Straatje*. 'Some of these words do not seem to tolerate the suffix *-ken*, like *molletje* 'mole-DIM', *kammetje* 'comb-DIM', *pennetje* 'pen-DIM',

stemmetje ‘voice-DIM’, *straatje* ‘street-DIM’. Even in the national language policy, Weiland (1805) still lists *-ken* as an alternative variant for *-je(n)*.

In the Southern Netherlands, the associations of *-ken* as an archaic suffix emerge somewhat later, since the velar forms had been the only prescribed variant by codifiers like Verpoorten (1752; 1759) and Des Roches (s.d. [1761]). The palatal *-je(n)* did not show up in the prescriptions in the eighteenth century, and the Flemish-conservative duo Van Belleghem & Waterschoot (s.d. [1773], p. 63) even rejected the suffixes *-jen* and *-je* for usage. They believed these palatal forms were *oneygenlyk aen onze Taele* ‘inappropriate in our [Flemish] language’. It is only in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that Southern codifiers started prescribing the palatal suffix, next to *-ken*. Also here, not all codifiers allowed for both suffixes in every linguistic context. The Flemish Cannaert (1823, p. 27), for example, clarified:

Wy vlamingen in tegendeel, (ten minste wy Gentenaren) gebruyken de uytgangen je, tje, alleenlyk by substantieven die van zelfs in d of t eyndigen

‘We Flemings, on the contrary, (at least we Ghentians) apply the suffixes *-je*, *-tje* solely with nouns ending in *d* or *t*.’

Cannaert continues his prescription by raising some examples in which he uses the palatal suffix. He indeed adds the suffix *-je(n)* to root words ending in a dental consonant, such as *liedje* ‘song-DIM’, *broodje* ‘sandwich-DIM’, *praetje* ‘talk-DIM’, *straatje* ‘street-DIM’, but he also includes *baentje* ‘road-DIM’, *vaentje* ‘flag-DIM’, *kraentje* ‘tap-DIM’ as examples. The root word of these words does not end in *-d* or *-t*, which implies that Cannaert did not offer a comprehensive account of when to use the palatal suffix. Perhaps the grammarian was not fully aware of the contexts in which the suffix was actually used?

As such, when the suffix *-je(n)* became common in usage, Northern codifiers were quick to adapt their prescriptions to that form. Yet, grammarians also continued prescribing the older suffix *-ke(n)*. While some of these grammarians allowed for free variation in usage, other norm givers summed up specific diminutives in which the suffix *-ke(n)* could not – or no longer – be used. The latter group of grammarians did not give a comprehensive account of the phonological contexts in which they believed only the suffix *-je(n)* was appropriate. This suggests that

norm givers did not intend to describe phonological restrictions in the use of the diminutive suffix.

Although it is certainly possible that these norm givers rely on a system that is based on lexical(-thematic) grounds, where specific words maintain the velar suffix, as is suggested by the adherence to *-ken* in grammatical terminology (e.g. *woordeken* ‘word-DIM’ and *ledeken* ‘article-DIM’), there is another possible explanation for the mixed prescriptions. Particularly when it comes to the continued prescriptions for *-ke(n)*, which remained an alternative prescribed variant for more than two hundred years.

A detailed investigation of Table 18 indicates that, after Leupenius’ descriptive comment (cf. *supra*), a few grammarians in the seventeenth century prescribed only the palatal suffix *-je(n)*. These Northern prescriptions for a single variant did not last. Especially Séwel (1708) and Huydecoper (1730) seem to have triggered the mixed prescriptions of later grammarians. Given the status of decency that Huydecoper ascribed to the older suffix *-ken*, and the general authority that both grammarians enjoyed, it is presumable that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century codifiers from the North copied the prescriptions and forms of these grammarians to establish their own place in the normative tradition.

It is also possible that grammarians like Séwel, who introduced a lexical difference in the use of the diminutive suffix, were guided by spoken usage at the time. The interference with the spoken language is perhaps also the reason behind the prolonged prescriptions for *-ken* in the Southern Netherlands. After all, as the Brabantine Ballieu (1792, p. 85) illustrates:

Hert heeft ook herteken, maet, gezet, maeteken, lief, lieveken: misschien zyn’er nog eenige uytneemingen, die men doór ’t gebruyk voorder leeren zal

‘Hert also has herteken, maet, companion, maeteken, lief, lieveken; perhaps there are other exceptions, which one will learn by usage’

In any case, with many codifiers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries prescribing both suffixes, or at least tolerating the use of *-ken* as an archaic variant, norm givers were more lenient for variation in the diminutive suffix than they were for other features that were investigated in this dissertation.

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GRAMMARIAN	YEAR	AREA	PRESCR. EXPL.	PRESCR. IMPL.	PRESCR. USAGE	OTHER VARIANT	TREAT MENT
Lambrecht	1550	South	-kin	-kin	-kin	--	--
Sexagius	1576	South	--	--	--	--	--
De Heuiter	1581	North	--	-ken	-ken	--	--
Spiegel	1584	North	--	-ken	-ken	--	--
Van der Schuere	1612	North	--	-ken	-ken	--	--
De Hubert	1624	North	--	--	-ken	--	--
Van Heule	1625	North	-ken	-ken	-ken	-je -kje	reallocated reallocated
Dafforne	1627	North	--	-ken/ -jen	-ken	--	--
Ampzing	1628	North	--	--	-ken	--	--
Plemp	1632	North	-jen	--	-je/jen (2)	--	--
Van Heule	1633	North	-ken	-ken	-ken	--	--
Montanus	1635	North	--	-ken/-je	-je	--	--
Kók	1649	North	--	-ken	-ken	--	--
Van der Weyden	1651	North	--	-ken	--	--	--
Leupenius	1653	North	-ken/ -jen	-jen	-ken (6)	--	--
Bolognino	1657	South	-tien	-tien	-ken	-jen	rejected
De Gelliers	1661 [± 1640]	North	--	-ken/ -gen	-je (1)	--	--
Van Niervaart	1669 [± 1600]	North	--	-ken	--	--	--
Van Atteveld	1682	North	--	--	--	--	--
Gosens van Helderen	1683	North	--	-je	--	--	--
Winschooten	1683	North	--	-je	-je	--	--
Vollenhove	1686	North	--	--	-je (1)	--	--
Duykerius	1696	North	--	-ken/ -jen/-je	--	--	--
Francius	1699	North	--	--	-je (8)	--	--
Van Geesdalle	1700	South	--	-ken	-ken (5)	--	--
Nyløe	1703	North	--	--	-jen/-je (6)	--	--
Hilarides	1705	North	--	-je	-je	--	--
Moonen	1706	North	-ken/ -je	--	-ken	--	--
Nyløe	1707	North	--	--	-je (3)	--	--
Séwel	1708	North	-je	-ken/-je	-je	-ken	archaic
Séwel	1712	North	-je	-ken/-je	-je	-gen -ken -ke	archaic archaic rejected
E.C.P.	1713	North	--	--	-ken	--	--
Ten Kate	1723	North	-ken/ -je	-ken/ -je	-je	--	--
Huydecoper	1730	North	-ken/ -jen/-je	--	-ken (9)	-kijn -kin -ke	archaic archaic rejected
Hakvoord	1746 [1698]	North	--	-jen/-je	-je	--	--
Van Belle	1748	North	--	--	-je	--	--
Verpoorten	1752	South	--	-ken	-ken (2)	--	--
Van Belle	1755	North	--	-ken/-je	-ken	--	--
P.B.	1757	South	--	--	-ken (3)	--	--
Verpoorten	1759	South	--	-ken	-ken (3)	--	--
Des Roches	[1761]	South	-ken	--	-ken	--	--
Elzevier	1761	North	-ken/ -jen/-je	-je	-je (3)	-kyn	tolerated
De Haes	1764	North	--	--	-ken/-je	--	--

Van der Palm	1769	North	--	-je	-je	--	--
Zeydelaar	1769	North	-je	--	-je	-ken	tolerated
Zeydelaar	1772	North	--	--	-ken/-je	--	--
Van Belleghem & Waterschoot	[1773]	South	-ken	--	-ken/-jen	-jen -je	rejected rejected
Janssens	[1775]	South	--	-ken/ -jen	-ken	--	--
Van Boterdael	1776 [± 1774]	South	--	--	-je	--	--
Cramer	1777 [± 1769]	North	--	-je	-je (7)	--	--
Zeydelaar	1781	North	-ken/ -je	-ken/ -je	-ken/-je	--	--
Stéven	1784 [1714]	South	--	-ken	-ken (8)	--	--
Van Boterdael	1785	South	--	--	-je	--	--
Ballieu	1792 [1771]	South	-ken/ -jen/-je	-ken	-ken	--	--
Van Bolhuis	1793	North	--	-je	-je	-kijn -ken -ke -jen	tolerated tolerated tolerated tolerated
Wester	1797	North	--	--	-je	--	--
Van Varik	1799	North	--	-jen	-jen	--	--
Weiland	1799	North	-jen/-je	--	-je (6)	-ken -gen	archaic archaic
Siegenbeek	1804	North	--	-je	-je (6)	--	--
Weiland	1805	North	-je	--	-je	-gen -ken -jen	archaic tolerated tolerated
Schilperoort	1806	North	--	--	-je (3)	--	--
Anslijn	1814	North	-je	--	-je	--	--
Henckel	1815	South	--	-ken/-je	-ken	--	--
De Neckere	1815	South	-ken/ -jen/-je	--	-ken	--	--
Ter Bruggen	1817-1818 [1815]	South	-ken/ -je	-ken	-ken	--	--
Behaegel	1817	South	--	--	-je	--	--
Cannaert	1823	South	-ken/ -ke/ -jen/-je	--	-ken (1)	--	--
Moke	1823	South	-je	-ken/-je	-ken	-ken	archaic
Willems	1824	South	-ken/ -je	--	-jen (2)	--	--
Behaegel	[± 1825]	South	-je	-ken/-je	-je	-gen -ken	archaic tolerated
Bilderdijk	1826	North	-jen	-jen	-jen	-kijn -ken -je	archaic archaic rejected
De Simpel	[1827]	South	-je	--	-je	-ken -jen	tolerated tolerated
Behaegel	[± 1829]	South	--	-je	-je	--	--

Table 18: norms and variant treatment diminutive suffix

Conclusion

Whereas four different suffix types, each including different variants, are distinguished for forming a diminutive in the Early and Late Modern period, the metalinguistic discussions are mostly limited to the two largest suffix types, viz. the velar *-kin/ke(n)*, with *-ken* as the most frequent variant, and the palatal suffix *-je(n)*, with the modern-day standard *-je* as the main form. The transition variant *-gen* and the dialectal *-ie(n)* rarely show up in the normative discussions.

From a diachronic point of view, a preference for the palatal suffix type emerges in both parts of the language area. First in the Northern norms, where norm givers already prescribed *-je(n)* in the seventeenth century. Although some codifiers solely prescribed the palatal form, many grammarians formulated a mixed prescription with *-ke(n)*. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, these Northern grammarians settled on *-je* or *-jen* as the standard form, which eventually relegated the velar *-ke(n)* to the category of archaic suffixes. None of the codifiers ever rejected the variant for usage. The prolonged adherence to the suffix *-ken* by Northern norm givers is probably related to the distinguished status that was ascribed to the variant in the first half of the eighteenth century (cf. also Nobels, 2013a, pp. 212-213).

In the Southern Netherlands, the velar suffix *-ke(n)* was prescribed until the nineteenth century. Although the palatal *-je(n)* also showed up in the late eighteenth-century norms, the new suffix was then part of a mixed prescription with *-ke(n)*, pointing to the gradual acceptance of the palatal variant. It is only at the end of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands that Southern codifiers changed to single prescriptions for *-je(n)*. It is highly likely that this shift to the palatal suffix has been reinforced by contact with Northern norms at the time (cf. Vosters, 2011). The fact that Southern norm givers adhered to the velar suffix *-ke(n)* for a longer time is possibly related to the prevalence of the form in Southern dialects (Marynissen, 1998, p. 260; p. 267; De Schutter et al., 2005).

4.2 Language use

Like in the other empirical chapters, I supplement the interpretation of the observed data in language use with a generalised mixed-effects logistic regression analysis. As I will explain later, only a low frequency of data is obtained for the sixteenth century and the genres of administrative texts. Since the scarcity of data in these two subsets led to convergence issues of the regression model, they are not included in the statistical analysis, yet these results are still included in the discussion of the observed results, of course.

I started building the regression model from an intercept-only model, and by significance testing and comparing the AIC of the one-predictor and multiple-predictor regression models, the model with *period*, *region*, and *genre* as fixed predictors had the lowest AIC. Adding interactions to the model led to complete separation of the data in specific interactions, which again resulted in convergence problems. I therefore did not include interactions in the model building process. The fit of the fixed-effect model was compared to different mixed-effect logistic regression models. The most comprehensive model, with both *lemma* and *id* as random predictors, was significantly better than the mixed-effects regression models with only *id* as a random effect ($p = 0.001$). As such, the mixed-effects logistic regression analysis is carried out on a model with three fixed predictors and two random effects. The results of this analysis are summarised in the regression table in Figure 50, where the log odds show the estimates of the suffix *-je(n)* as incoming form.

The applied mixed-effects logistic regression model has a C-statistic of 0.99, and a 98% classification accuracy. Given these high scores for model diagnostics, the model's performance was also tested on a set of stratified training data. With similar model diagnostics, no issues with overfitting were attested.

Although the model diagnostics suggest that the model discriminates well, the difference between the values reported for the Marginal R^2 and the Conditional R^2 in Figure 50 indicates that large proportions of variation are explained by the random predictors. Together with the variance components of the random effects, the R^2 -values could imply that the use of the diminutive suffix should primarily be interpreted at the level of the individual lemma and writer.

Considering the aim of this study, it is not feasible to delve into such micro-level patterns in usage. While the results are discussed in terms of overarching sociolinguistic variables, it is important to acknowledge that these results may thus cover underlying linguistic or individual patterns in usage.

In the remainder of this section, I present the observed result in usage, and when the statistical analysis pointed to a significant effect, I also discuss the relevant effect plots.

Main effects on the occurrence of '-je(n)' as incoming form			
<i>Predictors</i>	<i>Log-Odds</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	6.67	0.26 – 13.07	0.042
PERIOD - 18th century	5.74	-1.74 – 13.22	0.132
PERIOD - 19th century	10.07	2.68 – 17.45	0.008
REGION - Zeeland	-1.69	-7.02 – 3.65	0.535
REGION - Brabant	-8.12	-16.03 – -0.22	0.044
REGION - Vlaanderen	-9.98	-18.03 – -1.94	0.015
GENRE - Ego-documents	-7.94	-14.73 – -1.15	0.022
Random Effects			
σ^2	3.29		
τ_{00} LEMMA	11.64		
τ_{00} ID	45.58		
ICC	0.95		
N LEMMA	195		
N ID	69		
Observations	425		
Marginal R^2 / Conditional R^2	0.382 / 0.966		

Figure 50: regression table of the main effects on the occurrence of *-je(n)* as incoming form in language use

General distribution

When considering all datapoints, so also including the results from the sixteenth century and the administrative texts, 523 valid results were obtained in the usage corpus. The general distribution of the different suffixes that were found in these results is visualised in Figure 51, which shows that nine different suffixes appeared in the *HCD*. Four of these variants – i.e. *-ke* (0.4%, n=2), *gen* (2.3%, n=12), *-ge* (0.2%, n=1), and *-ien* (3.1%, n=16) – are practically negligible in the corpus. Taken together, these forms only make up for 6% of the results. Three other suffixes are clearly minority variants. The suffixes *-kin* (7.3%, n=38), *-jen* (8.6%, n=45), and *-ie* (8.4%, n=44) are more frequent than the discussed marginal forms, yet each of these suffixes occurs in less than 10% of the usage data. This implies that the two main variants from language norms are also the competing variants in language use. Comprising 43% of all data (n=225), the standard suffix *-je*, is the dominant variant (cf. Example 5), while the velar *-ken* represents 26.8% (n=140) of the results (cf. Example 6)

- (5) *Mama ging na de suikerbakker en kocht daar frambooijsje **koekjes** [...] en zij kwa voorbij een blekslager, en jeije wou daar hebben een koffij **kannetje** en Mama kocht een **blekkendoosje***
(EGO-1750-ZE-3)

‘Mother went to the confectioner and bought raspberry biscuits_[-dim] and she passed by a tinsmith, and Jeije wanted to have a coffee pot_[-dim], and mama bought a tin box_[-dim]’

- (6) *Wij hebben ook gesien de kerke van onse **nonnekens**; de welk is gelijk een **hemelken***
(EGO-1750-VL-4)

‘We also saw the church of our nuns_[-dim], which is like a heaven_[-dim]’

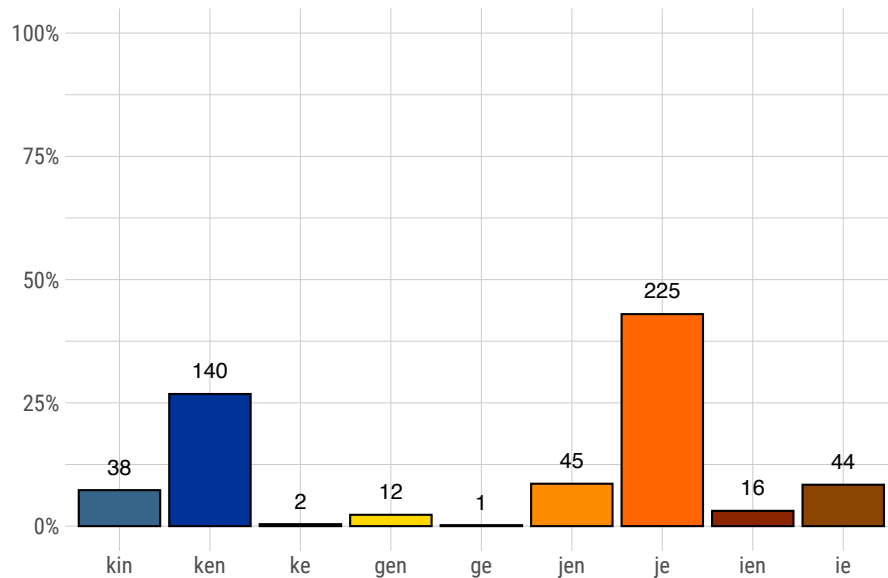


Figure 51: general distribution diminutive suffix – per suffix

Although it would be interesting to investigate the development of each of these suffixes, the low observed frequencies force me to cluster the individual suffixes into suffix types. Since the focus of this case study is on the written representation of the change from velar to palatal diminutive suffixes, I decided to cluster the suffixes – also in accordance with the development in language norms – into four categories representing the different stages of the palatalisation process. In the further course of this case study, the distinction is therefore made between the suffix types *-kin/ke(n)*, *-ge(n)*, *-je(n)*, and *-ie(n)*.

The general distribution of the clustered suffixes into four suffix types is shown in Figure 52. Here, the suffix types *-kin/ke(n)* and *-je(n)* make up the dominant groups. This is largely due to the high frequency of the variants *-ken* and *-je*. While the transition suffix type *-ge(n)* rarely occurs in language use (2.5%, $n=13$), the fully vocalised palatal *-ie(n)* is represented by 11.5% ($n=60$) of the data.

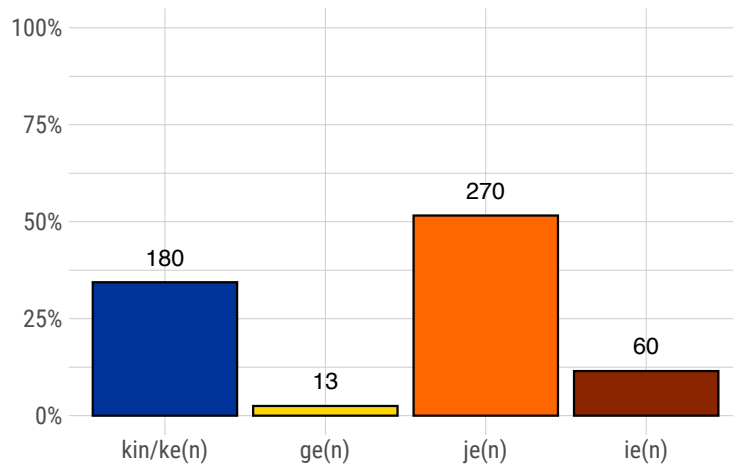
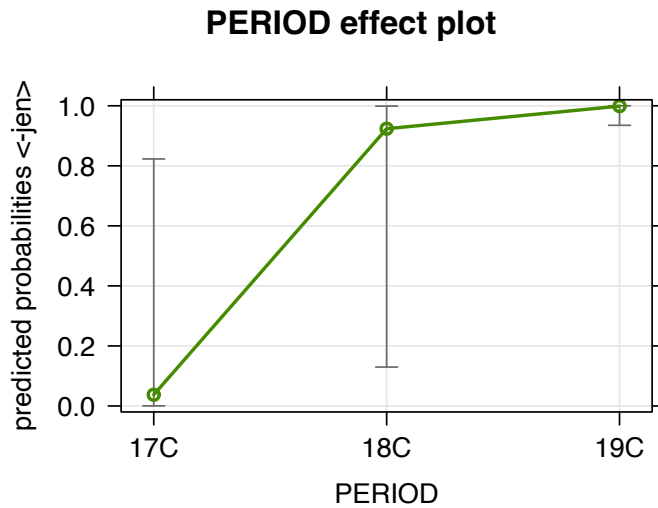


Figure 52: general distribution diminutive suffix – per suffix type

Per period

The regression table indicated that *period* was an important predictor in explaining variation in usage. It predicts a strong significant effect in the nineteenth century ($p = 0.008$) when compared to the seventeenth century as the reference level. Despite the large confidence intervals in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the regression model foresees a strong incline of the suffix type *-je(n)* in the nineteenth century, as the effect plot in Figure 53 illustrates.

Figure 53: effect plot *period* - diminutive suffix

The observed frequencies per period are summarised in Figure 54. In this graph, all 523 results (i.e. with the inclusion of the sixteenth century and the administrative texts) are visualised. Note that the sixteenth century is represented only by 55 datapoints.

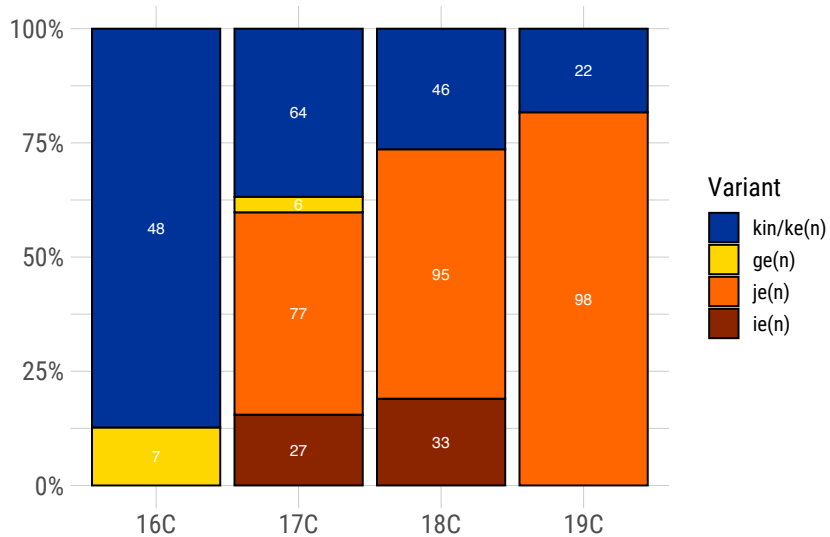


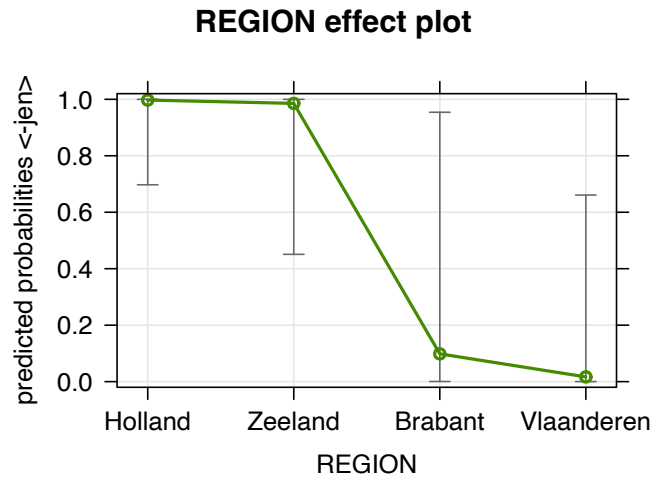
Figure 54: absolute and relative frequencies diminutive suffix per period

Despite the limited frequency of data, these results indicate that the velar forms are dominant in the sixteenth century (87.3%, $n=48$), while also the first observations of the palatal suffix type *-ge(n)* show up at the time (12.7%, $n=7$). This transition suffix enjoys only a limited life span in the *HCD*, since it is replaced by the suffix type *-je(n)* already in the seventeenth century. This suffix type also immediately seizes the dominant position of *-kin/ke(n)* at the time, which brings the velar suffix type into a further decline.

This decrease in turn leads to an incremental incline of the palatal *-je(n)*, which eventually covers 81.7% ($n=98$) of the diminutive suffixes in the nineteenth century. These large proportions of *-je(n)* are entirely in line with the expectations of the regression model and with the findings of previous research (e.g. Marynissen, 1998). While the innovative suffix *-je(n)* shows up in the seventeenth century for the first time, also the suffix *-ie(n)* appears. Although the latter form never reaches the proportions of the palatal *-je(n)*, the variant *-ie(n)* still grows to 19% ($n=33$) in the eighteenth century, before the suffix vanishes from usage in the nineteenth century.

Per region

Apart from the significant effect of *period*, the regression model suggested the importance of *region*. A significant effect is predicted for Brabant ($p = 0.01$) and Vlaanderen ($p = 0.005$) when each region is compared to Holland as the reference level. A pairwise comparison additionally reveals that the differences in suffix use are not statistically significant when comparing the two Northern regions ($p = 0.53$) or the two Southern regions ($p = 0.55$). Only the suffix use in Vlaanderen also deviates significantly from Zeeland ($p = 0.08$), with language users from Zeeland using more *-je(n)*. Although the suffix use in Brabant is not significantly different from Zeeland, such regional patterns suggest that the Southern Netherlands generally employ less *-je(n)* suffixes when compared to the Northern Netherlands. Despite the large confidence intervals in the statistical predictions, with some caution, we can therefore view the development of the diminutive suffix from a North-South perspective, as is also indicated in the effect plot in Figure 55.

Figure 55: effect plot *region* - diminutive suffix

Per period and area

When cross-tabulating the diachronic development of the suffix types per area (instead of region), it is possible to rely on a larger number of observations, which provides a more reliable record of the change. However, it is important to observe that the cross-tabulation sometimes represents only a limited number of data points, as presented in the overview in Figure 56. This is particularly the case for the sixteenth-century North, where only 8 observations account for usage. A careful interpretation of these results is therefore necessary.

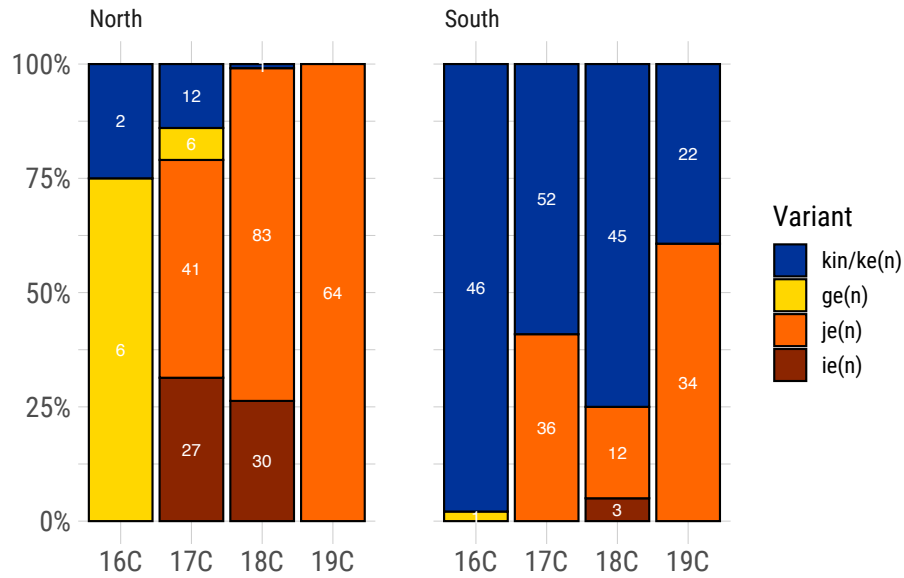


Figure 56: absolute and relative frequencies diminutive suffix per period and area

Figure 56 indicates large discrepancies between the usage patterns in the Northern and the Southern regions, both in terms of variants applied and in the development of the feature. In the North, the velar suffix type fulfils only a minority position in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which indicates that the velar variants were already outgoing at the time. The suffix *-ge(n)*, as it is used in Example 7, initially replaces the velar form, yet the proportions of *-ge(n)* also decline in the seventeenth century, where it is supplanted by the modern-day suffix type *-je(n)*. The temporary appearance of *-ge(n)* thus illustrates its status as a transition suffix in between velar and palatal forms.

- (7) *ick horde eersdaeghs noch een ander vogeltgen queelen*
(PAM-1650-ZE-5)

'I recently heard another bird_[-dim] singing'

As Example 8 illustrates, the dialectal suffix *-ie(n)* also emerges in the seventeenth century (31.4%; n=27). This variant slightly decreases in the eighteenth century (26.3%; n=30), before it disappears in the nineteenth century.

- (8) *wy [...] gingen tot de schouts wat Rusten ende ondert Rusten wat eeten
droncken eens een **glasien** wyn*
(EGO-1650-HO-5)

‘we went to the magistrate’s to rest a bit, and during the rest, we ate and
drank a glass_[-dim] of wine’

The proportions of the incoming suffix *-je(n)*, conversely, incline to 72.8% in the eighteenth century. This increase of the palatal suffix led to the disappearance of the velar suffix in the eighteenth-century North. The increase of the palatal suffix type continued, which resulted in the uniform usage of *-je(n)* in the nineteenth century.

While the four suffix types thus convincingly showed up in Northern usage, the development from velar to palatal suffixes occurs less gradually in the South. The transition suffix *-gen* and the fully vocalised palatal suffix *-ie(n)* are minimally applied in the Southern linguistic landscape. This implies that only the two main suffix types are in competition here. The velar suffix type *-kin/ke(n)* remains the dominant variant from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, and even increases in the latter period (from 59.1% to 75.0%). The palatal *-je(n)* that was introduced in the seventeenth century (40.9%), only breaks through in the nineteenth century (60.7%). The velar *-kin/ke(n)*, which had vanished from Northern usage at the time, is still considerably used in the nineteenth-century South (39.3%; n=22).

Although the same change from velar to palatal forms thus occurs in the North and the South, the palatal suffix *-je(n)* does not reach ground easily in the Southern Netherlands. Perhaps the genre differences will shed more light on these discrepancies in the two parts of the language area.

Per genre and period – per genre and area

In terms of *genre*, the regression model indicates a significant effect of ego-documents when the genre is compared to the pamphlets as a reference level ($p = 0.02$). The effect plot in Figure 57 also shows larger confidence intervals for the ego-documents, which possibly indicates higher variability in suffix use, and in overall, a lower likelihood of *-je(n)* suffixes in the ego-documents.

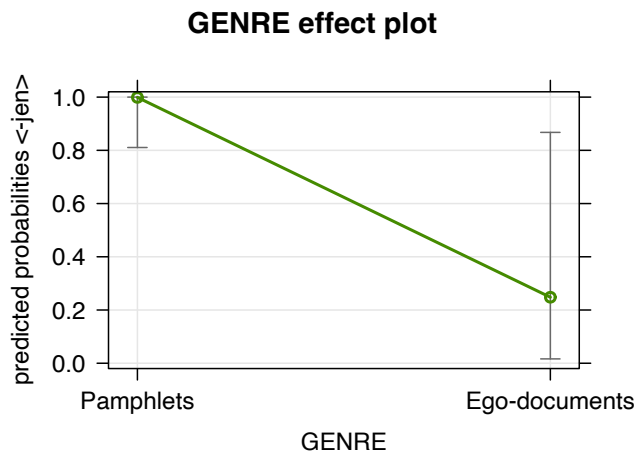


Figure 57: effect plot *genre* - diminutive suffix

For the cross-tabulation of genre with other sociolinguistic factors (viz. period and area), the observed data from the sixteenth century and the administrative texts are also included. A cross-tabulation of genre with both period and area is not discussed here due the scarcity of data points.

Figure 58 shows that the incoming suffix type *-je(n)* emerges across all genres in the seventeenth century. The strongest appearance of the palatal suffix is attested in the pamphlets, where the form immediately seizes a majority position. Also in the eighteenth century, when the proportion of the incoming variant increases across all genres, the suffix type *-je(n)* reaches up to 91.7% ($n=33$) in the pamphlets, suggesting that these printed texts were most progressive in adopting the palatal suffix. In the nineteenth century, when *-je(n)* gains even more ground in the administrative texts (100%, $n=19$) and the ego-documents (87.7%, $n=57$), a decline of the form is observed in the pamphlets

(61.1%, n=22). This sudden downturn of the form is related to differences in Northern and Southern usage, as I will explain later.

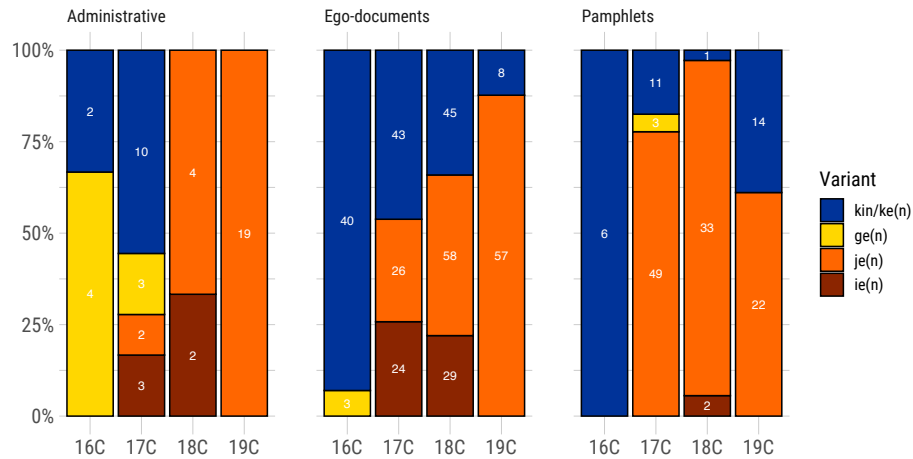


Figure 58: absolute and relative frequencies diminutive suffix per period and genre

The rise of the palatal *-jen* is also accompanied by the decrease of the velar *-kin/ke(n)*. The ego-documents, for example, show a gradual decline of the velar suffix from the seventeenth century onwards. In the other genres, the decline is more abrupt, with the form suddenly disappearing from the eighteenth-century administrative texts and taking up only a minority position in the pamphlets. It is therefore clear that *-kin/ke(n)* hardly mattered anymore in the printed and formal genres in the eighteenth century. However, it is only in the administrative texts that the incoming variant *-je(n)* achieves uniformity. The ego-documents and pamphlets remain variable in their use of the diminutive suffix. Nonetheless, this observation can also be explained by differences in the North and the South of the language area.

The fully vocalised palatal suffix *-ie(n)* is particularly represented in the handwritten genres from the Northern Netherlands (cf. also Figure 59). Its strong presence in the ego-documents is not surprising, given its status as a dialectal variant. The two occurrences of the form in the pamphlets are odd, though. These instances appear in one Northern pamphlet (i.e. PAM-1750-ZE-2). A closer inspection of the document revealed that the suffix was used in a spoken

dialogue taking place in a North-Hollandic variety, which emphasises the local and oral character of the suffix even more.

I already hinted at a difference in suffix use in the North and the South of the language area. Figure 59 now illustrates that this diverging suffix use is apparent across all genres. While the palatal variant is the dominant form in the North, the velar suffix type *-kin/ke(n)* is strongly adhered to in Southern usage. Only the Southern pamphlets appear more progressive, where the palatal suffix type *-je(n)* reaches similar proportions as in Northern usage (67.4%, n=58).

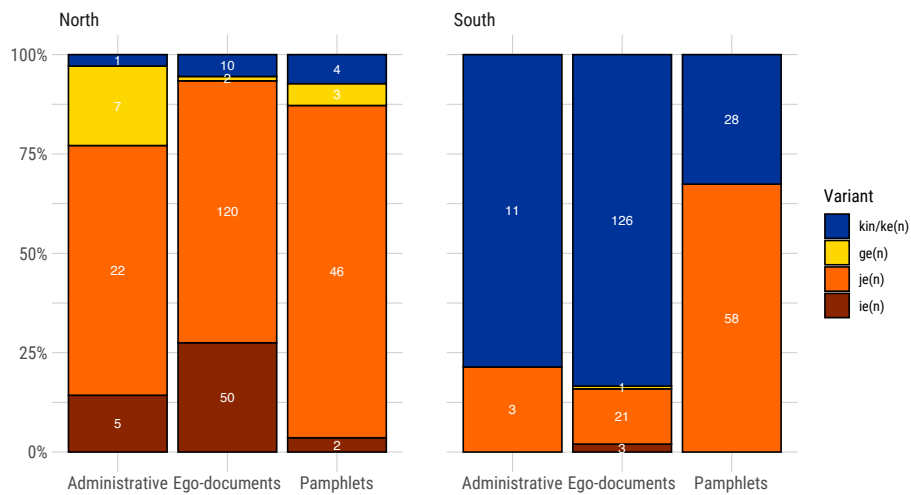


Figure 59: absolute and relative frequencies per area and genre

Conclusion

In this part of the chapter, I investigated the change from velar to palatal diminutive suffixes in language use. Unlike in language norms, where two suffix types prevailed in the prescriptions, the four different stages in the palatalisation process were attested in usage. While *-kin/ke(n)* and *-je(n)* were the main suffix types in Northern and Southern usage, other forms were also observed. The variant *-ge(n)* played only a small role in this corpus and can be seen as the transition variant in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (cf. Marynissen, 1998). Since different variants of the diminutive suffix were in use at the time, these findings align with Nobels (2013a, 2013b) in that the change to *-je(n)* was

still ongoing in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century usage. The process of change is completed in the nineteenth century, and only in Northern usage, where the suffix *-je(n)* eradicates the use of both *-kin/ke(n)* and *-ie(n)*.

In the Southern part of the language area, the change to the palatal suffix is more challenging, and takes place at a slower pace. The palatal *-je(n)* becomes dominant only in nineteenth-century usage, where it still exists next to the velar *-kin/ke(n)*. The adherence to the velar suffix in the Southern Netherlands contrasts with the results of Marynissen (1998), who observed a breakthrough of the suffix *-je(n)* in two specific toponyms in the eighteenth century. This study, however, offers a broader view on the development of the diminutive suffix, and does not consider the palatalisation process of individual lemmas. As such, it is likely that specific lemmas were more prone to palatalisation in writing (cf. *ranef lemma*), whereas in overall, Southern usage still adhered to the velar suffix in the eighteenth century. After all, as Marynissen (1998, p. 260) also remarked, the variant *-ke(n)* was preserved in the Southern dialects at the time (cf. also De Schutter et al., 2005). The prevalence of the form in the spoken language may thus also play a role in the adherence to the velar suffix in written usage. Since Southern norm gives continued prescribing *-ke(n)* until nineteenth century (cf. section 4.1.2), it is important to also consider the possibility of prescriptivism intervening in the change.

4.3 Prescriptive influence

In the last section of this chapter, I turn to the relationship between language norms and usage in the development of the diminutive suffix. I determine the chronology of language change by comparing developments in norms and usage. For the visualisation of the change per year in Figure 60 and Figure 61, the observed datapoints are projected onto an underlying numerical scale (1-4) with equal distance between the different variants of the diminutive suffix.

Chronology of language change

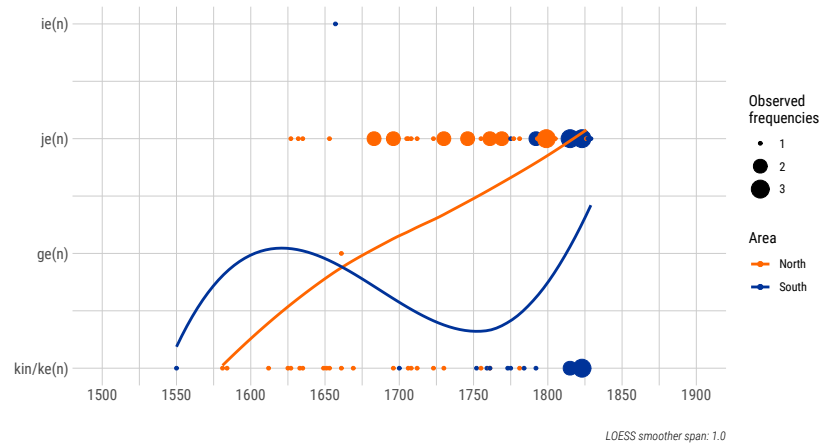


Figure 60: prescriptions diminutive suffix per year and area

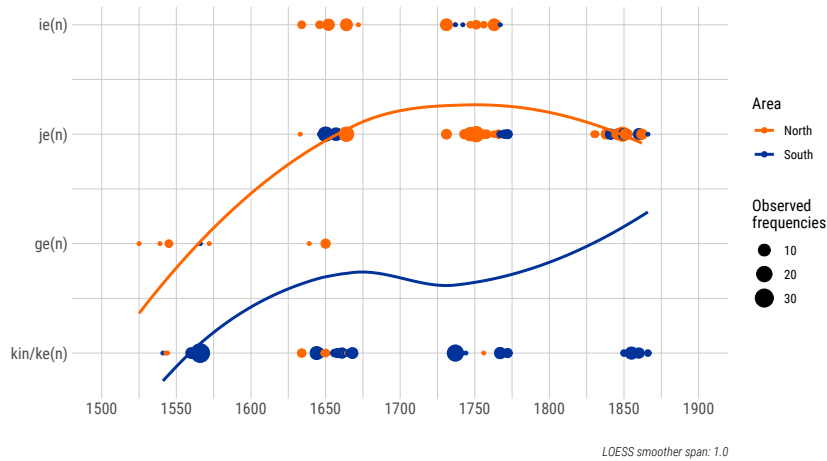


Figure 61: language use diminutive suffix per year and area

As could be expected from the discussion of norms and usage, the comparison of the changes indicates that norms and usage were evolving in the same direction. Northern norms show ample variability, but also a change that progresses towards *-je(n)*. Northern usage certainly illustrates a gradual shift from *-kin/ke(n)* to *-je(n)*, via *-ge(n)*. In the South, the same development is attested, yet as was already explained before, the change occurs slower in this part of the

language area since language norms and usage only show a convincing change to *-je(n)* in the nineteenth century.

A closer look at the earliest prescriptions, which are all centred around *-kin/ke(n)*, reveals that language norms were more conservative than usage. Especially Northern language use is already changing to *-ge(n)* and *-je(n)*, while Northern grammarians were prescribing the velar forms. In the seventeenth century, these codifiers formulate mixed prescriptions, which suggests that norm givers at least partly conceded to the change that was initiated in usage. With norms remaining variable until the nineteenth century, and Northern usage increasingly changing to *-je(n)*, the chronology of change underpins that those grammarians responded to the change that was taking place in usage.

Although a Southern codifier was the first to formulate a prescription on the diminutive suffix, the normative discussions are a lot less prevalent here than in the North of the language area. Based on the available prescriptions, it appears that most codifiers were conservative in prescribing the velar *-kin/ke(n)* until the nineteenth century. Different from the North, however, language use also adheres to the velar suffix. The beginning of a change towards *-je(n)* is attested in the seventeenth century. Since this change occurred in usage when Southern codifiers still prescribed *-kin/ke(n)*, an influence of prescriptions triggering this change is ruled out. A slight change back to the velar suffix is observed in usage in the middle of the eighteenth century. This sudden return to *-kin/ke(n)* is possibly provoked 'from above', yet it is certainly not the solid tradition of eighteenth-century prescriptions that pushed the change. When multiple grammarians established a tradition of *-kin/ke(n)* prescriptions in the eighteenth century, Southern usage already changed back to the palatal forms. This indicates that the resurgence of the velar suffix only had a short lifespan. Nonetheless, norms and usage align in the nineteenth century, which presents other possibilities for an influence of prescriptivism, both in the North and in the South of the language area.

For this grammatical feature, the interventions of prescriptivism mostly post-dated the changes in usage. This does not need to surprise, since the change from velar to palatal diminutive suffixes is a process that was initiated in spoken usage, and as such, the change was not imposed 'from above'. Although prescriptivism did thus not initiate the change towards *-je(n)*, other possibilities

of prescriptive interference are discerned when evaluating the chronology of language change. These instances are summed up below and are then discussed in more detail in the remainder of this chapter.

- (1) Although Northern norms appear to lag on the change in usage, the first attestations of *-je(n)* in the second half of the seventeenth century are preceded by prescriptions for the variant.
- (2) An increase of the suffix *-je(n)* is observed in Northern usage in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Since multiple prescriptions for the incoming variant emerged in the North at the time, an influence of prescriptivism is possible.
- (3) In the nineteenth-century North, the final velar forms and the suffix *-ie(n)* disappear from usage, which results in the completion of the change to *-je(n)*. The uniformity in usage is preceded by uniform prescriptions for the palatal suffix.
- (4) Southern usage shows a temporary return to *-kin/ke(n)* in the eighteenth century. This increase of the velar suffix follows on Southern prescriptions for the variant.
- (5) Prescriptions for the palatal *-je(n)* precede a strong increase of the suffix in nineteenth-century Southern usage.

5 Discussion

To evaluate whether prescriptivism interfered in the change from velar to palatal diminutive suffixes, I commence with **option 1** in the seventeenth century. It is in this period that language use in the Northern and the Southern Netherlands started changing to the variant *-je(n)*. This change towards the palatal suffix also took place in Northern norms, where the incoming suffix was attested slightly sooner than in language use. Although this chronology of change allows for an impact of prescriptivism, it is not likely that codifiers interfered in the change in usage. After all, the palatal representations with *-ge(n)* were already applied by language users at the time that norms were still adhering to the velar suffix *-kin/ke(n)*. As can be expected with a change that originates in the spoken language, it is most likely that the representation of the suffix *-je(n)* was first attested in usage before it was established as a codified norm. The fact that a grammarian like Leupenius (1653) admitted that the suffix *-je(n)* was gaining

ground in seventeenth-century usage (cf. section 4.1.3) indicates that norm givers captured this change soon after it emerged in usage.

The same reasoning probably stands for the South, where written usage also showed indications of palatalisation before (Northern) codifiers prescribed the suffix *-je(n)*. An influence of Northern prescriptions for *-je(n)* would be unlikely in the South, anyway. Especially since famous grammarians of the seventeenth century claimed that Brabant had the best use in terms of diminutive suffixes. Van Heule (1625, p. 117) argues:

In het verkleynen der woorden valt ook groote verscheydenheyt / als tot Exempel / men zegt in Hollant / Het mannetje, Het wijffe, Het diertje, in Vlaender zouden zeggen Het mannekjen, Het wijfkjen, Het dierkjen, de Brabanders hebben het beste gebruyk in het verkleynen der woorden / zeggende Het manneken, Het wijfken, Het dierken

‘In the diminution of words, there is also great variation. For example, in Holland, one says *het mannetje, het wijffe, het diertje*, while in Vlaanderen one would say *het mannekjen, het wijfkjen, het dierkjen*. The Brabantians have the best usage in the diminution of words, saying *het manneken, het wijfken, het dierken*’

While codified norms thus appear to lag on usage in the beginning of the change, at a later stage of the change, another possibility of prescriptive interference arises. This is investigated in **option 2**, where I aim to ascertain whether the increase of *-je(n)* in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century usage is related to interventions ‘from above’. After the initial change towards the palatal suffix, Northern usage increasingly uses the suffix *-je(n)* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This rise in the use of the variant is preceded by prescriptions for the form, which may indicate that grammarians accelerated the change in usage. However, I will argue that norm givers were probably not successful in influencing this ongoing shift. Not in the least because the codifiers were not uniformly propagating the variant *-je(n)* at the time. They rather formulated mixed prescriptions with an inconsistent argumentation as to when the palatal and velar suffixes should be used (cf. section 4.1.3). With such varying injunctions, an impact of prescriptivism on usage is less likely. Moreover, with the increase of the suffix *-je(n)* showing across all genres, ranging from printed pamphlets to handwritten ego-documents, we are probably observing the general process of change, with the palatal suffixes gradually being adopted by

language users. With an increasing number of language users applying the suffix *-je(n)* in the early stages of the change, the form also spreads more easily within the language community without interference ‘from above’.

Furthermore, the fact that codifiers propagated mixed prescriptions, while the velar form was strongly declining in Northern usage, indicates that the prescriptions for the velar suffix were not successful either. Even though velar suffixes practically disappeared from Northern usage in the eighteenth century, codifiers continued prescribing *-ken*, either as an alternative variant or as the ‘distinguished’ suffix, like Huydecoper (1730) called the velar form. Based on the corpus data in this dissertation, these prescriptive attempts of keeping the velar variant alive had little or no success. As opposed to the strong decline of *-kin/ke(n)* in this corpus of (upper-)middle-class writers, Nobels (2013a, p. 207) uncovered that the velar suffix was still applied as a main variant by upper-class writers in the seventeenth century. This discrepancy in social stratification suggests that the broader public possibly considered the velar suffix already too archaic, while the distinguished status that was ascribed to *-ken* particularly affected high-class writers. Such an effect of the social significance of the variant would also explain why eighteenth-century norm givers continued prescribing and using *-ken* as an alternative variant, even when the form had disappeared from other, non-elite genres in the North.

In the nineteenth century, eventually, the last *-kin/ke(n)* suffixes and the dialectal *-ie(n)* forms disappeared from usage, which resulted in a complete change to *-je(n)* in the North. In **option 3**, I evaluate whether the uniform prescriptions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries succeeded in creating uniformity. In this case, it is important to note that the change towards the suffix *-je(n)* was already far progressed in the eighteenth century, with the palatal suffix representing 72.8% of the diminutive suffixes in Northern usage. If prescriptivism was successful in accelerating this change, norm givers did thus no more than giving the final push towards the incoming variant. Considering the socio-historical context in which uniformity was achieved, prescriptivism may have aided in speeding up this change in usage. With the standard language ideology emerging in the second half of the eighteenth century, the idea of homogeneity in language was increasingly spread to the public. It is thus possible that the awareness of a standard language and the broadening of the target audience of normative works convinced the laggards to change to the prescribed

form. The national language policy in the early nineteenth century presumably played the most important role in creating uniformity in Northern language use.

In contrast to the gradual change to the palatal suffix in the North, the Southern Netherlands show a somewhat different development. Although Southern usage also started to shift to the palatal *-je(n)* in the seventeenth century (cf. option 1), language users in the South adhered to the velar *-kin/ke(n)* for a longer time. In the eighteenth century, a slight increase of the older *-kin/ke(n)* is even observed in usage. As **option 4**, I therefore determine whether the *-kin/ke(n)* prescriptions caused this increase of the variant in usage. The investigation of the prescriptions indicates that Southern norms prior to the eighteenth century were limited to one explicit comment in favour of the older suffix *-kin*. Also in the first half of the eighteenth century, only one implicit prescription appeared in the South. It is thus not very likely that these prescriptions caused an increase of the suffix *-ke(n)* in the middle of the eighteenth century. It is also possible that the mixed prescriptions that appeared in the eighteenth-century North affected language use in the South, of course. With a prominent eighteenth-century codifier ascribing a distinguished status to the velar suffix, we should acknowledge that these Northern norms possibly reinforced the use of *-ke(n)* in the South.

Nonetheless, it is perhaps more likely that the metalinguistic association of *-ke(n)* as a suffix from Brabant resulted in a stronger awareness of the form among Southern language users. The fact that the velar suffix flared up exactly in the eighteenth century – in the period of nation building and identity construction – strengthens the assumption that the socio-historical context provoked the stronger adoption of forms that were prevalent in Southern dialects, and thus underpinned the Southern identity that was being established. After all, also in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Southern codifiers increasingly associated the palatal suffix *-je* with Hollandic usage (e.g. Van Belleghem & Waterschoot, s.d. [1773]; Ter Bruggen, 1817-1818; Cannaert, 1823). Since these stigmatising injunctions post-date the increase of the velar suffix, they certainly did not cause the return to *-ke(n)* in usage. Yet, the existence of these metalinguistic comments indicates that variation within this grammatical feature was possibly applied to express one's identity in the period of nation building, which may in turn explain the temporary return of the velar suffix in the eighteenth century.

The final possibility of prescriptive interference discusses the sudden increase of *-je(n)* in the nineteenth century, where the palatal form becomes dominant in Southern usage. In **option 5**, I aim to find out whether the prescriptions of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries invoked this change towards the palatal *-je(n)*. It is therefore important to recall that the suffix *-je(n)* was already applied in Southern usage before the nineteenth century. The variant only experienced a temporary relapse in the eighteenth century in favour of *-kin/ke(n)*. Nineteenth-century prescriptivism may thus solely have enabled the resumption of the change to *-je(n)* in the South. The strong incline of the suffix *-je(n)* in nineteenth-century usage indeed suggests that the increase may have been facilitated by forces ‘from above’. In fact, the palatal suffix takes up a dominant position only in the pamphlets, while the velar suffix is the majority variant in the handwritten genres in the South. When looking at the development of the prescriptions, Southern codifiers in the nineteenth century increasingly allowed for the palatal *-je(n)* next to the velar *-ke(n)*. Towards the end of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, the palatal suffix is even the only prescribed variant by Southern codifiers. With Northern norms and language practices prevailing in the Southern territories at the time, it is most likely that contact with Northerners who employed the suffix *-je(n)* made Southern codifiers adopt the palatal suffix. Later in the nineteenth century, this influence probably reached Southern language users. It is thus presumably the political reunification of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands that caused a shift in Southern norms, and consequently had a linguistic impact on Southern language use (cf. Vosters et al., 2014).

6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I investigated the influence of prescriptivism on the use of the diminutive suffixes. Before arriving at a general conclusion on the success of these prescriptive interventions, I refer to the hypotheses that were formulated for each of the suffix types that represent the different stages of the palatalisation process.

As was expected in hypothesis 1, the velar suffix type *-kijn/kin/ke(n)* made up the oldest category of suffixes and was omnipresent in norms and usage in the early periods. This suffix type also disappeared from Northern usage in the

eighteenth century and was maintained for a longer time in the South. In fact, the variant was still a main variant here in nineteenth-century usage. Although I anticipated a possible linguistic effect of the distinguished social meaning that some codifiers ascribed to the form, this was not the case. No linguistic influence of prescriptivism for the velar suffix was uncovered in this case study.

The suffix *-ge(n)* was barely attested in the norms or in the *HCD*, yet the variant clearly showed itself as a transition suffix, which disappeared in favour of *-je(n)* in the eighteenth century. As such, hypothesis 2 is confirmed.

Hypothesis 3 comprised the development of the suffix type *-je(n)*. Although I presumed the variant would emerge in Northern writings before it appeared in Southern usage, the results indicated that the suffix *-je(n)* showed up in both areas in the seventeenth century. The gradual increase of the form indeed led to higher frequencies of *-je(n)* in the eighteenth-century North. However, this change towards the modern-day variant was not related to an influence 'from above'. Prescriptivism appeared successful only in the nineteenth century, where codified norms possibly succeeded in speeding up a change in Southern usage, and in creating uniformity in Northern usage.

The final suffix type *-ie(n)* was the subject of hypothesis 4. As expected, this fully vocalised palatal suffix particularly characterised Northern ego-documents, although it also appeared in other genres, and a few instances were even attested in Southern usage. The variant was most present in the seventeenth century, as I presumed. This dialectal suffix disappeared from usage in the nineteenth century, probably because of prescriptive interventions.

This case study showed that the change to palatal diminutive suffixes in writing is not a process that was initiated 'from above'. The fact that early norm givers like Leupenius (1653) described the change that they observed in usage indicates that codifiers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries noticed that usage was changing, yet their injunctions were formulated only after the fact. With Northern usage gradually shifting to the suffix *-je(n)*, norm givers acted more conservatively. Codifiers propagated mixed prescriptions, sometimes with complex reasoning as to which suffix to use when. Besides prescribing the palatal suffix, grammarians thus also adhered to the velar suffix that did not stand its ground in Northern usage. Northern norms and usage therefore appear entirely

detached from each other in the eighteenth century, and prescriptive attempts were thus not successful in influencing usage. However, the persistence of the archaic suffix *-ke(n)* in the prescriptions of Northern codifiers may also point to the incorporation of the form in a discourse tradition, with the velar diminutive suffix recurring in the prescriptions of Northern codifiers, while the form is not in use (anymore) outside of that specific discourse (cf. Kabatek et al, 2010; Kabatek, 2015, 2018).

It is only in the nineteenth century that prescriptivism potentially achieved linguistic success. While historical codifiers first lagged on the grammatical change that was occurring in usage, or simply reflected the ongoing change without exerting an impact on usage, the emergence of the standard language ideology raised new opportunities for prescriptive influence. The awareness of one correct form of language in the standard language ideology led to more consistent prescriptions which were distributed into the entire language community. This implies that prescriptivism was possibly influential only in one highly specific socio-historical context. That is in the period of nation building, when codified norms were strongly institutionalised by forces 'from above', with the national language policy in the early nineteenth century as the culmination of this process. However, even in this specific context, the linguistic success of prescriptivism remains ambiguous. If prescriptivism did influence language use, its effect was limited to accelerating a change that was already well underway.

Chapter 9 – Direct and indirect object of the plural personal pronoun

A grammatical feature that is frequently discussed in language advice publications of Dutch is the alternation between the personal pronouns *hen* and *hun* ‘them’. Although both pronouns are employed for referring to an animate plural referent as a grammatical object, according to prescriptive sources, *hen* and *hun* should not be used interchangeably. When to use *hen* or *hun* depends on the syntactic function of the object. More specifically, as is shown in the examples below, *hen* should be applied when referring to the plural referent as a direct object (Example 1), a causative object (Example 2) or after a preposition (Example 3), whereas *hun* should be used when the plural pronoun acts as an indirect object (Example 4). These diverging prescriptions for *hen* and *hun* correspond to the distinction that was made in the old case system in Dutch, where *hen* was prescribed in the accusative case, and *hun* was expected in the dative case.

- (1) *Ik heb **hen** gisteren gezien.*
‘I saw them yesterday.’
- (2) *Wij zijn **hen** beu.*
‘We are tired of them.’
- (3) *Ik heb de boeken **aan hen** gegeven.*
‘I gave the books to them.’
- (4) *Ik heb **hun** de boeken gegeven.*
‘I gave them the books.’

Although the accusative-dative distinction between *hen* and *hun* is clear-cut in normative grammars, this certainly is not the case in usage. In fact, in modern-day Dutch, *hen* and *hun* are often used interchangeably (Haeseryn et al., 1997, p. 248).⁷⁰ This was also the case in Middle Dutch, where generally no case

⁷⁰ Cf. also e-ANS, section 5.2.5.2.3.

distinction was made for these pronouns (De Rooij, 1991, p. 4). In the seventeenth century, however, the Hollandic codifier Christiaen Van Heule (1625) aligned the pronouns with the case system, and thus allocated distinct syntactic functions to the pronouns. Although similar case distinctions existed in Dutch (e.g. the case inflection of the definite article), the case alternation between *hen* and *hun* is an invented distinction that was not made in actual language use (De Rooij, 1991, p. 5). Apart from the use of *hen* and *hun* as personal pronouns, the variant *hun* serves also as a possessive pronoun in Dutch, as is demonstrated in Example 5. This possessive use of *hun* is not part of the present case study.

- (5) *Ik heb hun **hun** boeken gegeven.*
'I gave them their books.'

In addition to *hen* and *hun* as personal pronouns, a variety of forms could be used to refer to a plural entity in object position. In Middle Dutch, for example, the plural character of a pronoun was stressed by elongating the pronoun with *-lieden* or *-luiden* (Van Loon, 2014, p. 136). These elongated pronouns were applied both in subject position, as in *gijlieden* 'you', and in object position, as in *ulieden* 'you', but thus also in *henlieden* and *hunlieden*. While these elongated forms disappeared from modern-day Dutch, remnants of the extension are still found in the plural pronoun *jullie* 'you' (< *jelui* in eighteenth-century Dutch) (ibid.). Similar processes of assimilation probably explain the existence of plural object forms like *hullie* and *hulder* as alternatives for *hun(lieden)* and *hen(lieden)*. These forms were especially in use in dialects from Vlaanderen, the eastern parts of Brabant, Holland, and Utrecht (De Rooij, 1990, p. 126; De Rooij, 1991, pp. 4-5). Pronouns like *haer* and *heur* were also in use as plural object forms, and lastly, the pronoun *ze* was employed as well (De Rooij, 1991, pp. 4-5). In fact, the variant *ze* is today also frequently used for denoting plural entities in a non-subject position. This variant is stylistically valued lower compared to *hen* and *hun*, which may explain why *ze* typically shows up in informal and spoken registers (Weverinck, 2012, p. 52).⁷¹ Moreover, as opposed to *hen* and *hun*, which can refer only to persons in modern-day Dutch, *ze* is also applied for denoting inanimate or 'inhuman' plural referents, as in *de stoelen, ik heb ze aan de tafel gezet*

⁷¹ Cf. e-ANS, 2024, section 5.2.5.2.3

‘the chairs, I have put them at the table’ (Van Bergen et al., 2011, p. 19; Bennis & Hinskens, 2014, p. 140).

This case study is thus centred around changes in the object forms of the third-person plural personal pronoun. I specifically focus on the case distinction that was introduced in seventeenth-century norms. More specifically, I investigate how consistently the accusative-dative distinction was made in language norms, and I explore whether this syntactic alternation was also implemented in written usage.

1 Previous research

So far, it is not clear to what extent the accusative-dative distinction between *hen* and *hun* in language norms was also made in historical usage. Although a few studies analyse which personal pronouns were applied in historical language use, most research investigates the grammatical opposition between *hen* and *hun* in modern-day Dutch. This literature review therefore commences with a discussion on the different variants that were attested in historical usage. The investigations of the normative developments are subsequently summarised, before I reflect on the syntactic pronoun distinction in contemporary language use.

As a first study on historical data, De Vogelaer & Coussé (2008) analyse which personal pronouns were employed in the history of Dutch via a corpus of official texts (viz. Corpus Coussé), and another corpus of prosaic texts (viz. Corpus of Earlier Modern Dutch). For the plural personal pronouns, they (ibid., p. 34) attest forms with *-lieden* and *-luiden* already in the thirteenth century. These elongated forms appeared most prominently in Vlaanderen, from whence they spread to other regions (De Vogelaer & Coussé, 2008, p. 24). The forms with *-lieden*, however, lost importance from the sixteenth century onwards, as they were being replaced by their shortened forms *hen* and *hun* (ibid., pp. 25-26). Although the first occurrences of *hen* and *hun* were attested in Brabant in the fourteenth century, the variants appeared in all investigated regions in the sixteenth century (viz. Vlaanderen, Brabant, and Holland). The variants *hen* and *hun* then steadily increased in the eighteenth century, where they accounted for the majority of the plural object forms in usage (ibid.).

In addition to *hen* and *hun*, and their elongated counterparts, the pronoun *haer* was applied as an alternative variant to refer to both masculine and feminine referents, and especially from the fifteenth century onwards (Van der Sijs, 2004, p. 479; Van der Horst, 2008, II, p. 1097). Yet, De Vogelaer & Coussé (2008, p. 24) note that pronouns like *hem* and *haar* declined again in the seventeenth and eighteenth century, in favour of *hen* and *hun*. According to De Rooij (1991, p. 5) also *heur* was in use as a plural object form since Middle Dutch, although this pronoun also did not last in usage. This is also evidenced by Van Megen (2002), who does not attest the form anymore in private letters of the seventeenth century. The pronoun *ze*, conversely, is rarely included in corpus studies investigating plural object forms in historical writings (e.g. De Rooij, 1990; 1991, De Vogelaer & Coussé, 2008). Little is therefore known about the occurrence of this form in earlier stages of Dutch. De Vos (2022), however, shows that *ze* was discussed in the Dutch normative discourse of the seventeenth century, where the form was even prescribed as an alternative variant for referring to plural objects. The fact that codifiers mentioned the variant *ze* as an alternative form suggests that the variant may also have been in use in certain writings in the seventeenth century.

Previous research investigating personal pronouns in historical Dutch thus indicates that variation in the plural object forms was found in usage, although *hen* and *hun* convincingly gained ground from the sixteenth century onwards. These two variants even appear to suppress alternative variants from usage in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This finding is also corroborated by De Rooij (1991, p. 4), who confirms that the pronouns *hen* and *hun* prevailed already in sixteenth-century usage, yet he also asserts that particularly *hen* was commonly used, both in the accusative and the dative case. As such, these studies suggest that the syntactic distinction between *hen* and *hun* was not consistently operationalised in historical writings.

I now continue with a discussion of research on the normative developments in plural personal pronouns. When discussing Northern norms on the topic, Van der Sijs (2004, p. 479; 2021, p. 427) illustrates that multiple grammarians adhered to Van Heule's case distinction between *hen* and *hun*. While norm givers like Ampzing, Vollenhove, Moonen, and Huydecoper, and literary authors like Vondel and Hooft, thus prescribed the syntactic distinction, Van der Horst (2008, II, p. 1096) indicates that other authoritative normative sources like the

Statenbijbel, i.e. the first official Dutch translation of the Bible, did not adopt Van Heule's prescription. The fact that not all norm givers adopted the syntactic split between *hen* and *hun* suggests that the distinction may not have been uniformly implemented among grammarians, and that prescriptions on the topic were possibly more variable than expected.

The assumed diversity in language norms is also indicated by De Vos (2022). When investigating developments in Northern language norms from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, De Vos shows that grammarians often allow for variation to a certain extent. Although some codifiers prescribe different variants in the form of free variation, most norm givers employ different approaches to eradicate variability (De Vos, 2022, pp. 129-130). Seventeenth-century grammarians either ascribe multiple meanings or grammatical functions to one form, or they restrict the use of a pronoun to a specific linguistic context, often according to the gender of the referent and the syntactic case (*ibid.*).⁷² This is shown, for example, in the paradigm of the previously discussed grammarian Van Heule (1625, pp. 38-39), who prescribes the pronouns *hen* for masculine referents in the accusative case, and *hun* for masculine referents in the dative case, yet he also argues that feminine antecedents should be referred to by *heur* or *heurlieden* in both cases (cf. De Vos, 2022, p. 117). Although these distinct prescriptions differ between codifiers at the time, De Vos (2022, pp. 136-137) suggests that there was more inter-grammarian agreement on the prescribed pronouns towards the end of the seventeenth century. Also De Rooij (1990, pp. 120-121) asserts that the case distinction between *hen* and *hun* became an established topic in grammars of the eighteenth century.

As was already mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the distinct syntactic functions are still assigned to *hen* and *hun* in modern-day Dutch. Normative reference works like the *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst (ANS)* 'General grammar of Dutch', for example, thus still mention the syntactic distinction that was introduced in the seventeenth century. However, these reference works also acknowledge that many language users do not adhere to the distinction between *hen* and *hun* (Haeseryn et al., 1997, p. 248). In fact,

⁷² Note that De Vos (2022) investigated the prescribed pronouns for the third-person singular and plural, and focused on masculine and feminine referents. The pronouns for neuter referents, which are also included in this case study, were not part of her analysis.

mother-tongue language users tend to use the pronoun *hen* in the written language, regardless of the function of the pronoun, whereas the pronoun *hun* is often overgeneralised in spoken usage. De Rooij (1991, p. 5) therefore states that *[v]oor veel sprekers [...] hen een 'papieren' woord [is], dat ze wel uit [hun] pen, maar niet over [hun] lippen krijgen* 'for many speakers, *hen* is a word that they can write down, but not say out loud'. Rather than applying a syntactic distinction, contemporary language users thus make a medium distinction between *hen* and *hun*. This is also confirmed in the experiment conducted by Hubers et al. (2020), who observed that pupils in secondary schools did not apply the grammatical distinction between *hen* and *hun* correctly in writing. The pupils mostly did not consider the syntactic difference between the two pronouns, and rather opted for the more prestigious variant *hen* in all cases (cf. also Stroop, 2011, p. 142). Although the study of Van der Meulen (2023, pp. 157-158) suggests that there is awareness of the codified norm – at least among editors of parliamentary proceedings –, Stroop (2011, p. 142) concludes that there is no grammatical issue in Dutch that is violated as often as the syntactic distinction between the personal pronouns *hen* and *hun*.

Previous research on the personal pronouns thus indicates that many pronouns were in use as plural object forms in earlier stages of Dutch. Scholars already indicated that the variants *hen* and *hun* clearly emerged as main object variants in sixteenth-century usage. Grammarians, conversely, promoted different variants until the eighteenth century. These codifiers not only prescribed a case distinction but also distinguished different pronouns for the grammatical genders. Not only *hen* and *hun* thus prevailed in the normative discussions, but also *haar*, *heur* and *ze* were prescribed. However, this case study will show that solely *hen* and *hun* can be considered main variants of the plural personal pronoun in historical language use. I therefore approach this feature as a variable that consists of a binary opposition, i.e. *hen* vs. *hun*. While the focus is on the pronoun alternation based on case, alternative personal pronouns – like *ze*, *haar* and *heur* – are also discussed to give a complete overview of variability in norms and usage.

2 Hypotheses

As for the variants *hun* and *hunlieden*, I underpin the expectations in language norms by the work of Van der Sijs (2021) and De Vos (2022). I assume that the normative classification of *hun* as the dative variant is adopted by the majority of (Northern) grammarians from the seventeenth century onwards. Although there is presumably variation between the individual prescriptions based on grammatical gender, I suppose that the prescriptions show consistency in advocating *hun* as the dative variant for masculine and neuter referents, especially from the eighteenth century onwards. For language use, I rely on De Vogelaer & Coussé (2008) in hypothesising that both *hunlieden* and *hun* will be applied in the sixteenth century. The variant *hun* will probably incline in all investigated regions and will become a majority variant by the eighteenth century. It is still unclear whether this variant will increase in general, or only in the dative or accusative case. In the scenario where *hun* inclines in the dative, this rise may be related to prescriptive efforts. This assumption would be strengthened by the stronger presence of *hun* in a printed or formal genre, like the pamphlets and administrative texts. In the case of a general increase of *hun*, prescriptivism could still have impacted usage, yet the form would then be overgeneralised to other contexts. However, a general incline of the form could also be influenced by patterns in the spoken language (cf. De Rooij, 1991). So, in sum, I expect an increase of the pronoun *hun* in eighteenth-century usage. Depending on the syntactic context in which the pronoun increases, an impact of the prescribed case distinction is possible but not necessary (**hypothesis 1**).

Following De Rooij (1991), Van der Sijs (2004), and Van der Horst (2008), the variants *haar* and *heur*, and their elongated forms with *-lieden*, were already in use since the fifteenth century, so they may certainly show up in usage, and most prominently in the sixteenth century. Although I retrieved from De Vos (2022) that these variants were also prescribed by seventeenth-century grammarians to refer to masculine referents, I assume that these prescriptions did not influence usage. Due to the rise of *hen* and *hun* in usage, I presume that the variants *haar* and *heur* will decline in (or even disappear from) seventeenth- and eighteenth-century usage. This assumption is based on Van Megen (2002) and De Vogelaer & Coussé (2008), who also noticed a decrease of *haar* and *heur* in

usage, and even a complete vanishing of the form in seventeenth-century ego-documents (**hypothesis 2**).

As was also the case for *hun(lieden)*, the research of De Rooij (1990, 1991) indicates that the variants *hen* and *henlieden* are probably main variants in sixteenth-century usage. De Vogelaer & Coussé (2008) thereby suggest that the elongated form will decrease in favour of *hen*, so that *hen* becomes the dominant pronoun by the eighteenth century. Since many (Northern) grammarians will adhere to Van Heule's case distinction, the increase of the form in eighteenth-century usage may be correlated with the prescriptions. Prescriptivism successfully influences usage only if *hen* increases in the context of a direct object, though. The results in the *HCD* will reveal whether the expected prevalence of *hen* aligns more closely with the prescribed case distinction or with an organic evolution towards this form in written Dutch (cf. Stroop, 2011; Hubers et al., 2020). As for the results from the Southern Netherlands, it is important to note that previous research does not give us any insight into the stance of Southern codifiers towards the accusative-dative distinction, nor on historical developments of this exact distinction in usage. Although previous research (Vosters, 2011; Vosters et al., 2014) shows that Southern codifiers generally orient their prescriptions towards the Northern norm from the nineteenth century onwards, this case study will shed light on possible geographic differences for this specific feature (**hypothesis 3**).

As Haeseryn et al. (1997) showed, the variant *ze* is frequently applied as an object form in modern-day usage for referring to both animate and inanimate referents, where the form appears most often in spoken and informal registers. Although little is known about the occurrence and the embedding of the form in historical usage, based on De Vos (2022), I assume that the variant will also appear in the seventeenth century. The pronoun *ze* may be prescribed as an alternative variant in language norms, although the form may also show up in usage. It is possible that the object form *ze* could refer to both inanimate and animate referents in historical contexts as well. Since the variant is frequently in use today, it is reasonable to expect an increase of *ze* after the seventeenth century. This increase may be related to prescriptive interference, although the wider linguistic applicability of the form may also have invoked the rise of the variant. After all, in line with the findings in contemporary usage, the variant *ze*

is most frequently used in informal contexts and in spoken usage (**hypothesis 4**).

3 Methodology

The delineation of the feature and the operationalisation thereof in this case study is described in the current section. In section 3.1, I discuss the method in language norms, whereas the search expression and annotation procedure in the usage corpus are explained in section 3.2.

3.1 Language norms

For the analysis of language norms, I extracted all the explicit comments and implicit references on the object forms of the plural personal pronouns from the corpus of normative works. Just like in the other case studies, these metalinguistic commentaries are categorised into explicit and implicit prescriptions.

Grammarians typically discuss the case inclination of pronouns in a case paradigm. This means that many codifiers do not write lengthy passages on which plural pronoun to use in the accusative or dative case, but they simply include a paradigm that clarifies the case differences between pronouns. As the case paradigm of Séwel (1712, p. 233; cf. Example 6) also illustrates, norm givers distinguish the following cases: nominative (i.e. the subject), genitive (i.e. the possessor), dative (i.e. indirect object), accusative (i.e. direct object), and ablative (i.e. origin). While prescriptions in paradigms are generally included as implicit prescriptions, these case paradigms explicitly present the plural pronouns that should be used in the accusative and dative case. In this case study, the presentation of plural pronouns in a case paradigm is therefore considered an **explicit prescription**.

(6)

	<i>Meerv.</i>	'plural'
<i>Nom</i> [inative]	<i>Zy</i>	'they'
<i>Gen</i> [itive]	<i>Hunner</i>	'their'
<i>Dat</i> [ive]	<i>Hen, Hun, Zich, of Aan Hen</i>	'them'
<i>Acc</i> [usative]	<i>Hen, Zich, Ze</i>	'them'
<i>Abl</i> [ative]	<i>Van Hen</i>	'of them'

Other elaborations on the accusative-dative distinction or the use of plural personal pronouns as a direct or indirect object more broadly, as in the comment of Vollenhove (1685, p. 567) in Example 7, are also included as explicit prescriptions.

- (7) *En dus most men in dativo en ablativo casu van mannen, en dingen, die masculyn zyn zeggen, dat hun iet toegebracht, of benomen wort, of iet van hun komt, of wort bedreven. De accusativus pluralis wort aldaar door hen betekent, met eos in 't Latyn overeenkomende*

'and thus one must say in the dative and ablative case for men and things that are masculine, that something is brought to them [*hun*], or taken from them [*hun*], or something comes from them [*hun*], or is performed by them [*hun*]. The accusative plural is there signified by *hen*, corresponding to *eos* in Latin'

Metalinguistic commentaries are categorised as **implicit prescriptions** if plural personal pronouns are not discussed in the context of the case system. Common implicit prescriptions include brief paradigms of pronouns, like in Example 8, or example sentences in which a plural personal pronoun is used, for instance to illustrate the semantic difference between homonyms, as Example 9 shows. In the latter case, we can imply that the grammarian prescribes the pronoun *hen* for the indirect object.

- (8) *Hy wordt op deese wyse geboogen:*
Eenvoud. Meervoud.
Hy, sijns, hem. Sy, hunner, hun
 (Leupenius, 1653, p. 49)

'Hy is declined in the following way:

Singular	Plural
<i>Hy, sijns, hem</i>	<i>Sy, hunner, hun</i>

- (9) *Gaet eens by de gebueren hooren; en vraegt hen na die hen (kieken), die ik gisteren verloóren heb*

(Ter Bruggen, 1817-1818, p. 54)

‘Go visit the neighbours and ask them [*hen*] about that hen [*hen*] that I lost yesterday’

If norm givers made a distinction between grammatical genders in their prescriptions, these differences are also considered in the analysis by distinguishing between the masculine, feminine, and neuter gender of the referent. If a codifier formulated a general prescription, thus without discussing gender differences in the use of plural pronouns, the prescription is not included in the correlation of norms and grammatical gender, but only in the general discussion of language norms. The prescriptions are not encoded for the animacy of the referent.

Different from the other case studies, **grammarians’ usage** is not analysed. The reason for this is that the current case study discusses exactly the difference between plural personal pronouns as a direct and indirect object, and particularly focuses on the distinction between the pronouns *hen* and *hun*. As the distinction between these pronouns mainly takes place in contexts in which is referred to a group of people as a plural animate referent, few results of this feature are found in the language practice of the codifiers. Due to the extremely low frequency of observations, it was impossible to ascertain whether a case distinction was made for the plural personal pronouns.

3.2 Language use

For the analysis of language use, multiple regular expressions were compiled to search the *HCD* for the personal pronouns that could refer to a plural referent in object position. The usage corpus was therefore searched for the following variants: *hullie*, *hulder*, *hunlieden*, *hunluiden*, *hun*, *hunl.*, *haarlieden*, *haarluiden*, *haarl.*, *haar*, *heurlieden*, *heurluiden*, *heurl.*, *heur*, *henlieden*, *henluiden*, *henl.*, *hen*, *zijlieden*, *zijluiden*, *zijl.*, and *ze*.⁷³ Although *hem* can refer only to singular

⁷³ While this list shows only the standardised form, spelling differences of these pronouns were considered (cf. Appendix).

masculine referents today, it could be employed too for plural referents in earlier stages of Dutch (De Vogelaer & Coussé, 2008, p. 24). The corpus was checked for the form, yet *hem* was not attested as a plural personal pronoun. Also the variant *heur* is not found as a plural pronoun in the *HCD*. The highly dialectal *hullie* and *hulder* and the abbreviated forms *hunl.*, *haarl.*, *heurl.*, *henl.* and *zjl.* did not occur in the *HCD* either.

1.909 observations were obtained and verified manually for the function of the pronoun. Results that did not appear in the accusative or dative case were removed from the dataset. Most of the invalid observations were attestations of possessive pronouns, as illustrated in Example 10, or personal pronouns that denoted a singular referent, as Example 11 shows. Observations for which it was unclear whether the pronoun referred to a singular or plural referent were also removed from the dataset.

- (10) *omtrent twalif uren wierd getrommelt daar na volgde enige personen in **hun** hemde te paard met blote swaarde in de hand*
(EGO-1750-HO-2)

‘Around twelve o’clock there was drumming, after which some people followed on horseback in their shirts, with bare swords in hand’

- (11) *nochtans weijgherde zij vut te ghane, zegghende, men heeft mijnen lieuen man, om dwoorts wille ter doot ghebrocht, ende al ons ghoet wech ghenomen, waer bij zal Ic aerme vrouwe nv ghaen leuen, men trooste **haer**, ten besten datmen conde*
(EGO-1550-VL-1)

‘Nevertheless, she refused to leave, saying, they have put my dear husband to death for the sake of his words, and taken away all our goods; where shall I, a poor woman, go now to live? They comforted her as best as they could’

As several codifiers do not discuss reflexive pronouns as part of the accusative or dative case, plural pronouns with a reflexive function were not involved in the analysis either. Also dative constructions with *aan* ‘to’ (cf. Example 12) and other prepositional constructions were excluded from the results, as the prescription for the pronoun *hen* after a preposition was formalised only in the nineteenth century, while the general distinction between *hen* as the pronoun for the

accusative and *hun* as the pronoun for the dative was established already in the seventeenth century (Van der Horst, 2008, II, p. 1097; Van der Sijs, 2021, p. 427).

(12) *Wy begeiren [...] dat hun deel sal ontfangen worden door den Officier exploitteur, die het selve **aen hun** sal betaelen* (PAM-1750-VL-1)

‘We desire that their share shall be received by the executing officer, who will pay the same to them’

After cleaning the data, 331 personal pronouns that functioned as a direct or an indirect object and referred to a plural referent remained. These observations were annotated for the syntactic function (i.e. direct or indirect object) and the animacy of the referent. Except for four observations, all animate referees were human. For determining whether a personal pronoun was used in the accusative or dative case, I relied on my own sense of language, for which I applied the modern distinction between direct and indirect objects. In the discussion of the results, I therefore employ the concepts direct and indirect object alongside the concepts accusative and dative case.

4 Results

4.1 Language norms

In this section, the results in language norms are presented. I first discuss the metalinguistic salience of the feature, before I elaborate on the prescriptions for the plural personal pronouns in the context of a direct or indirect object.

4.1.1 Metalinguistic salience

Compared to other grammatical features that are investigated in this dissertation, the direct and indirect object forms of the plural personal pronoun are more prominently discussed in normative works. As Figure 62 shows, no fewer than 30 of the 73 works (41%) involve an explicit prescription on the topic, and thus discuss the pronouns that should be used as a direct and/or indirect object explicitly. The higher metalinguistic salience for this grammatical feature

is probably related to the fact that almost all full grammars include a discussion of case paradigms. Also compared to other grammatical features, like the comparative markers, for example, the issue is also mentioned early in the period under investigation. While comparative markers were explicitly discussed only from the eighteenth century onwards, explicit prescriptions on the plural personal pronouns appear more than a century earlier. This is related to the introduction of the accusative-dative distinction between *hen* and *hun* in the first half of the seventeenth century, of course. The drop in the metalinguistic salience in the second half of the seventeenth century, conversely, can be explained by the smaller number of grammars offering a comprehensive discussion of the case system. Most normative works in the corpus that were published in that period are spelling guides or basic elementary schoolbooks, which rarely discussed such case distinctions. From the eighteenth century onwards, the frequency of explicit prescriptions remains more or less the same.

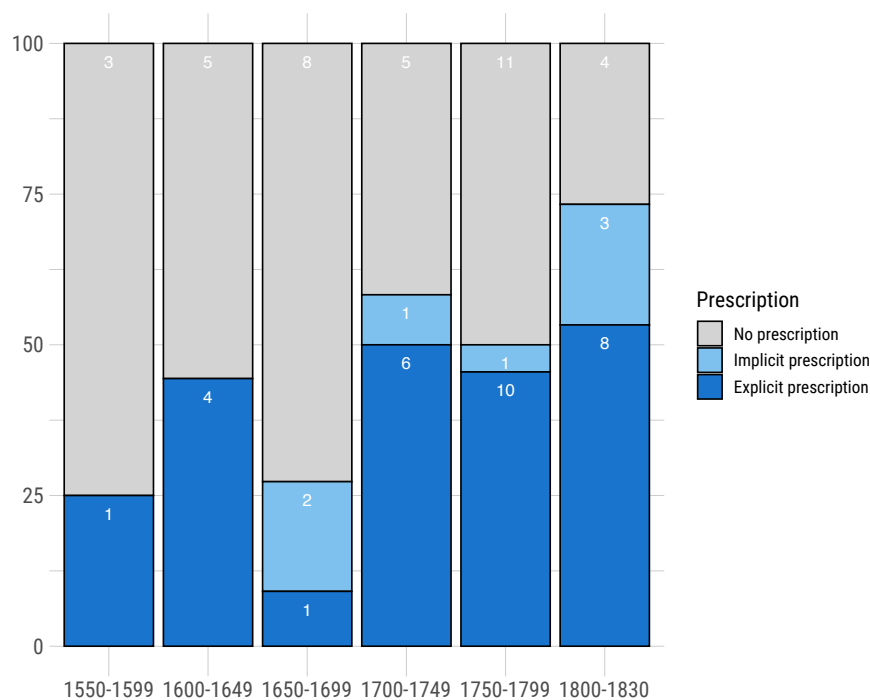


Figure 62: metalinguistic salience of the third-person plural object forms

4.1.2 Prescriptions

Turning to the prescriptions now, which are first presented across the different grammatical genders. The discussion thus indicates which personal pronouns are prescribed for referring to masculine, feminine, and neuter plural referents. The prescriptions are merged into four variant types: *hun(l)*, *haar(l)/heur(l)*, *hen(l)*, and *ze*. For the first three types, both the short form and the elongated form fall within the mentioned variant. After this general overview of prescribed pronouns in Figure 63 and Figure 64, the discussed plots in this section show the prescriptions for masculine plural referents only. I decided to focus solely on the prescriptions for the masculine referents, since we know from the normative tradition that the pronoun alternation between *hen* and *hun* mainly applies to masculine referents.

Norms per grammatical gender

For the overview of prescriptions across grammatical gender, Figure 63 presents the pronouns that are prescribed as a direct object, while Figure 64 depicts the differences in prescribed forms for an indirect object.

As for the direct object forms, codifiers generally allow for more than one variant. However, the prescribed pronouns depend on the grammatical gender of the referent. Especially the prescriptions for the feminine plural referents diverge from their masculine and neuter counterparts. More specifically, the pronouns *haar(l)/heur(l)* are with 68.3% (n=28) of the prescribed variants the dominant variant for feminine referents, while the forms appear only once (neuter) or twice (masculine) in the prescriptions for the other grammatical genders. For masculine and neuter referents, the variant *hen(l)* is clearly the main prescribed form. It makes up for 64.8% (n=35) of the prescriptions for the masculine referents, and for 57.7% (n=15) of the neuter gender. The variant *hun(l)* is only a minority form in the prescriptions for the masculine (7.41%, n=4) and neuter (7.69%, n=2) referents. The pronoun *ze* shows up for all grammatical genders, and it is often prescribed as an alternative variant (cf. Table 19 in section 4.1.3).

Direct object - accusative

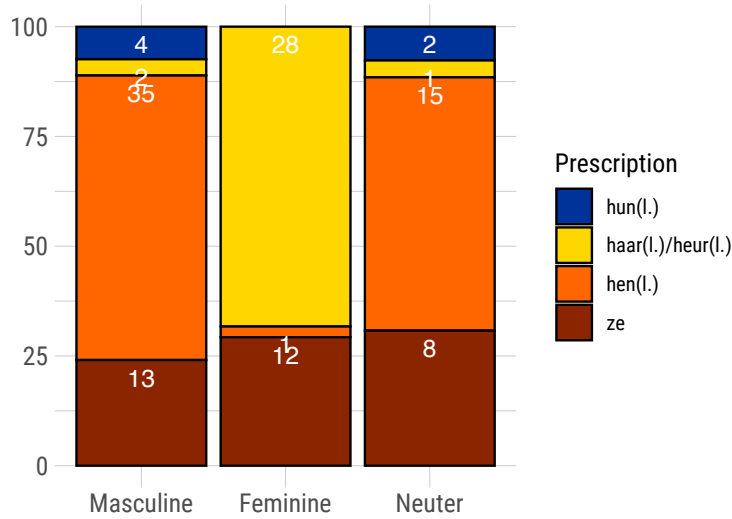


Figure 63: prescriptions for the direct object forms of the plural personal pronoun

Indirect object - dative

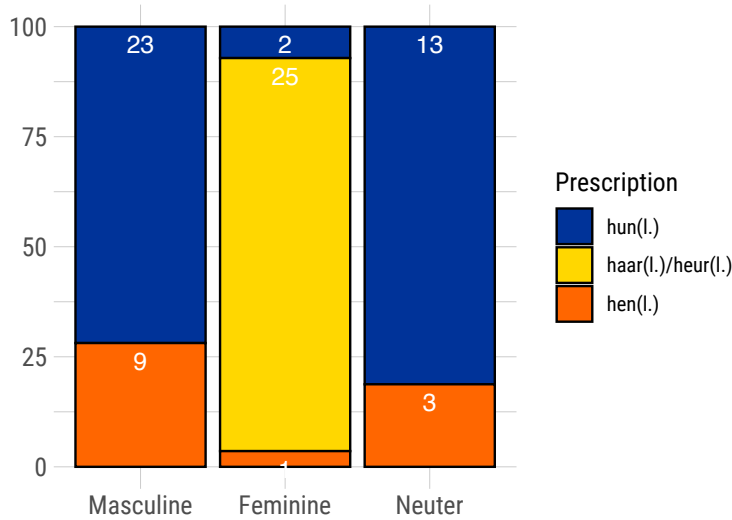


Figure 64: prescriptions for the indirect object forms of the plural personal pronoun

The prescriptions for the indirect object are less variable than those for the direct object, as Figure 64 summarises. Most apparent is the variant *ze*, which does not appear as a prescribed pronoun for an indirect object. Also, the variant *haar(l.)/heur(l.)* is clearly the preferred variant of norm givers for the feminine referents in the dative case (89.3%, n=25). The masculine and neuter forms again exhibit a similar pattern in the prescriptions, yet this time, *hun(l.)* is the main prescribed variant (i.e. 71.9%, n=23 for the masculine gender; 81.2%, n=13 for the neuter gender). The variant *hen(l.)* is prescribed (as an alternative variant) only by a few grammarians (cf. Table 19 in section 4.1.3).

Norms per period – masculine referents

When we divide the results per century, and focus solely on the prescriptions for the masculine gender while also visualising differences between explicit and implicit prescriptions, we obtain Figure 65 for the direct object and Figure 66 for the indirect object.

Both plots show that grammarians increasingly discuss the syntactic distinction between the plural pronouns. As for the pronouns prescribed for the direct object, a preference for *hen(l.)* emerges in the seventeenth century (55.6%, n=5). While the proportions of the prescriptions remain more or less stable until the nineteenth century, the absolute frequencies indicate that more grammarians formulated an explicit prescription in the two most recent periods. Variability in the prescriptions persists in the nineteenth century. The pronoun *ze* is still explicitly prescribed, yet most codifiers choose *hen(l.)* as the preferred variant in the direct object position. The same preference for *hen(l.)* is observed in the (small number of) implicit prescriptions.

In Figure 66, we see the opposite pattern unfolding. The choice for *hun(l.)* as the prescribed variant for the indirect object is made in the seventeenth century. And although the variant *hen(l.)* is prescribed in 35.3% (n=6) of the explicit prescriptions in the eighteenth century, the pronoun *hun(l.)* remains the main prescribed variant. While the prescriptions for the direct object are still variable in the nineteenth century, *hun(l.)* thus clearly establishes as the only prescribed pronoun for the indirect object.

Direct object - accusative

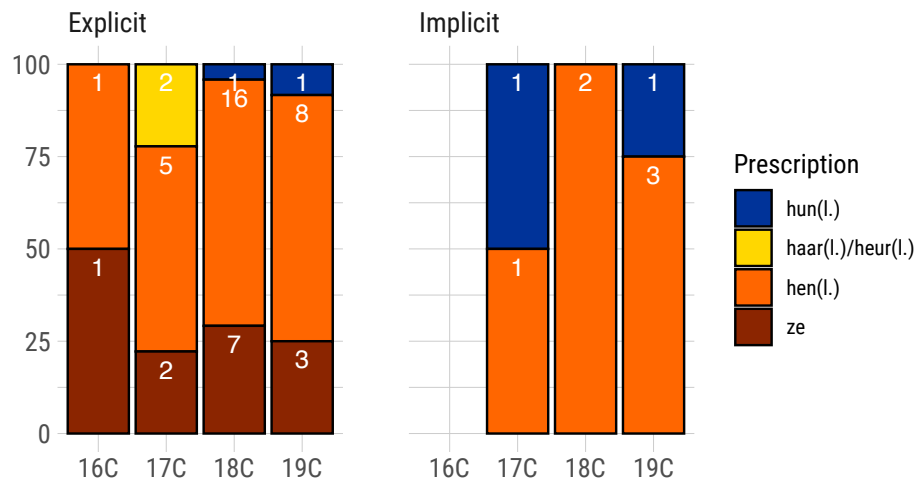


Figure 65: prescriptions for the direct object forms of the plural personal pronoun per period and per type of prescription – only prescriptions for masculine referents

Indirect object - dative

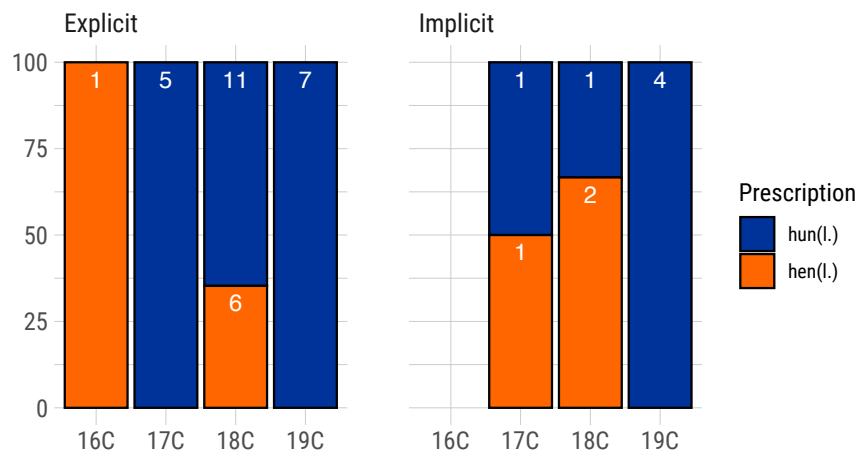


Figure 66: prescriptions for the indirect object forms of the plural personal pronoun per period and per type of prescription – only prescriptions for masculine referents

Norms per period and area – masculine referents

Splitting up the results for the Northern and the Southern Netherlands in Figure 67 and Figure 68, it is apparent that the object forms of the plural personal pronouns are more frequently discussed in normative works from the Northern part of the language area. This metalinguistic prominence in the North, however, also introduces a lot of diversity in the prescribed pronouns for the direct object. While the few Southern prescriptions favour *hen(l.)* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Northern norms prescribe four different variants in the seventeenth century. This variability in the North gradually disappears until only *hen(l.)* remains in the nineteenth-century prescriptions. At that time, more grammarians from the Southern Netherlands also formulate a prescription, which leads to an increase of variability in the Southern prescriptions. In addition to *hen(l.)*, Southern codifiers now also prescribe *hun(l.)* or *ze*, frequently treating them as equivalent variants to *hen(l.)* (cf. Table 19 in section 4.1.3).

For the indirect object, there is a distinctly defined norm in both parts of the language area. Almost all Northern grammarians recommend *hun(l.)* since the seventeenth century, whereas the Southern grammarians prescribe *hen(l.)*. This implies that Southern grammarians preferred the pronoun *hen(l.)* in both the accusative and dative case up until the nineteenth century.

As such, the accusative-dative distinction between the variants *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* is particularly pronounced in Northern language norms, where a preference for *hen(l.)* as the direct object form and *hun(l.)* as indirect object form emerges in the seventeenth century. However, the strict distinction, with prescriptions leaving no room for alternative variants, surfaces only in the nineteenth century. In the same period, the prescribed pronoun alternation emerges in Southern norms.

Direct object - accusative

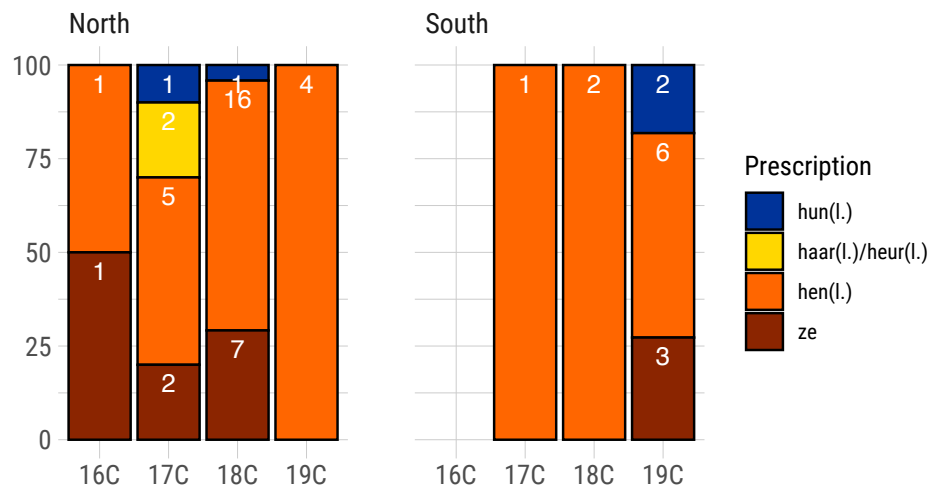


Figure 67: prescriptions for the direct object forms of the plural personal pronoun per period and area – only prescriptions for masculine referents

Indirect object - dative

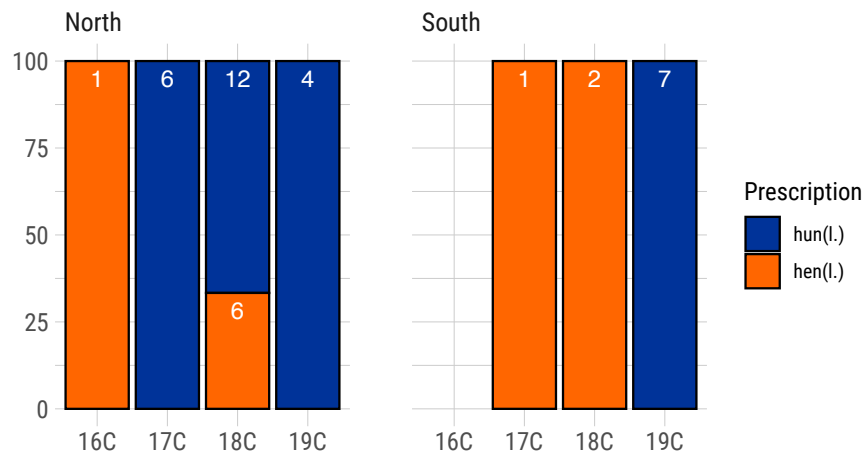


Figure 68: prescriptions for the indirect object forms of the plural personal pronoun per period and area – only prescriptions for masculine referents

4.1.3 Treatment of alternative variants

The prescriptions for the direct and indirect object forms already revealed that variability in the plural personal pronouns was accepted to a certain extent. Apart from the diverging pronouns that were prescribed for the different grammatical genders, norm givers frequently allowed for multiple pronouns within one grammatical gender, and especially in the accusative case. Table 19 gives a detailed overview of variation in language norms on the topic.

In Northern norms, a development from acceptance of variability to the one-form-one-function principle is observed. More specifically, in the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth centuries, the prescriptions for the direct object differ between grammarians, who frequently allow for optional variation within one grammatical gender. For example, a codifier like Van Heule (1633) prescribed *hen*, *haer*, and *ze* as masculine forms of the direct object, while Ten Kate (1723) favoured both *hen* and *hun* in the same context. As De Vos (2022, pp. 136-137) already suggested, more inter-grammarian consistency is attested in the further course of the eighteenth century. Northern grammarians then seem to align their prescriptions while also restricting the number of pronouns that could be used. Only the variant *ze* is maintained as a tolerated variant. In the nineteenth century eventually, most norm givers do not allow for optional variation anymore. Even though the introduced accusative-dative distinction for masculine and neuter referents faces strong criticism at the time, with norm givers like Siegenbeek (1804, p. 174) claiming that the case distinction between *hen* and *hun* is *ongegrond en noodeloos* ‘unfounded and unnecessary’, the same grammarians assert that the distinction is now widely applied that is better to maintain it. As such, *hen* and *hun* are set as the only personal pronouns for the masculine and neuter accusative and dative case respectively.

daar de onderscheiding, welke Huydecoper tusschen hun en hen gemaakt heeft, door het gebruik alreeds gevestigd is, achte ik het raad-zaamst, dezelve te behouden [...]. Den dichteren nogtans blijve het vrij, om hen en hun, even als haar en heur, onverschillig te gebruiken
(Siegenbeek, 1804, pp. 174-175)

‘Since the distinction that Huydecoper made between *hun* and *hen* has already been established in usage, I consider it advisable to maintain it. Nevertheless, poets should still be free to use *hen* and *hun*, as well as *haar* and *heur*, interchangeably’

The acceptance of alternative variants evolves differently in Southern prescriptions. The first codifier targeting a Southern readership with an explicit prescription is the Northern E.C.P. (1713), who prescribes only one variant for the masculine forms, and another variant for feminine referents, without even considering a case difference. Although a pronoun distinction between the accusative and dative case is still not made in the middle of the eighteenth century, more variation is then allowed for the direct object. Des Roches (s.d. [1761], p. 37), however, restricts the use of the alternative direct object variant *ze* to *den gemeenzaemen styl of samenspreékinge* ‘the colloquial style or way of speaking’. This restriction in norms evaporates soon, as most codifiers in the nineteenth century consider *ze* an equal variant to *hen* for the direct object. As for the indirect object, little variation is accepted, and the only optional form of variation that is tolerated, are prepositional forms like *aan hen* ‘to them’ (e.g. Ter Bruggen, 1817-1818) or the elongated form with *-lieden* (cf. Moke, 1823).

The direct and indirect object forms of the plural personal pronoun are thus prone to variation in language norms, with codifiers not only prescribing separate variants for the different grammatical genders in the accusative and dative case, but also tolerating – or even prescribing – optional variants which the writer can choose from. This rather liberal attitude towards optional variation is particularly pronounced in the norms for the direct object. However, Northern norms become stricter and more consistent in the second half of the eighteenth century. Southern codifiers, on the contrary, adopt a more lenient stance in the nineteenth century, at the time that the accusative-dative distinction in the plural personal pronouns gains prominence in the Southern normative discourse.

GRAMMARIAN	YEAR	AREA	DIRECT OBJECT		INDIRECT OBJECT		OTHER VARIANT
			PRESCR EXPL	PRESCR IMPL	PRESCR EXPL	PRESCR IMPL	
Lambrecht	1550	South	--	--	--	--	
Sexagius	1576	South	--	--	--	--	--
De Heuiter	1581	North	--	--	--	--	
Spiegel	1584	North	m:hen(luiden), ze f:haarluiden, ze	--	m:hen(luid en) f:haar(luide n)	--	--
Van der Schuere	1612	North	--	--	--	--	--
De Hubert	1624	North	--	--	--	--	--
Van Heule	1625	North	m:hen f:heur, heurl, haer		m:hun f:heur, heurl, haer	--	--
Dafforne	1627	North	--	--	--	--	--
Ampzing	1628	North	m:hen f:heur	--	m:hun f:heur	--	se: tolerated as DO
Plemp	1632	North	--	--	--	--	--
Van Heule	1633	North	m:haer, ze, hen f:heurr, ze	--	m:hun f:hun	--	--
Montanus	1635	North	--	--	--	--	--
Kók	1649	North	m:haar, ze, hen f:huer, ze n:haar, ze, hen	--	m:hun f:hun n:hun	--	--
Van der Weyden	1651	North	--	--	--	--	--
Leupenius	1653	North	--	m:hun f:heur	--	m:hun f:heur	--
Bolognino	1657	South	--	m:hen f:hen	--	m:hen f:hen	--
De Gelliers	1661 [± 1640]	North	--	--	--	--	--
Van Niervaart	1669 [± 1600]	North	--	--	--	--	--
Van Atteveld	1682	North	--	--	--	--	--
Gosens van Helderer	1683	North	--	--	--	--	--
Winschooten	1683	North	--	--	--	--	--
Vollenhove	1686	North	m:hen	--	m:hun	--	--
Duykerius	1696	North	--	--	--	--	--
Francius	1699	North	--	--	--	--	--
Van Geesdalle	1700	South	--	--	--	--	--
Nylöe	1703	North	--	--	--	--	--
Hilarides	1705	North	--	--	--	--	--
Moonen	1706	North	m:hen, ze f:haer, ze n:hen, ze	--	m:hun f:haer n:hun	--	--
Nylöe	1707	North	--	--	--	--	--
Séwel	1708	North	m:hen, zich, ze f:haar, ze	--	m:(aan) hen, hun, zich f:(aan) haar, zich	--	--

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Séwel	1712	North	m:hen, zich, ze f:haar, ze	--	m:(aan) hen, hun, zich f:(aan) haar, zich	--	--
E.C.P.	1713	North	m:hen lieden f:haerlieden	--	m:hen lieden f:haerlieden	--	--
Ten Kate	1723	North	m:hen , hun f:haer(lieden), heur n:hen , hun	--	m:(aen) hen, (aen) hun f:(aen) haer, (aen) heur n:(aen) hen, (aen) hun	--	ze: tolerated as DO
Huydecoper	1730	North	hen	--	hun	--	--
Hakvoord	1746 [1698]	North	--	m:hen	--	m:hen	--
Van Belle	1748	North	--	--	--	--	--
Verpoorten	1752	South	--	--	--	--	--
Van Belle	1755	North	--	--	--	--	--
P.B.	1757	South	--	--	--	--	--
Verpoorten	1759	South	--	--	--	--	--
Des Roches	[1761]	South	m:hen f:haer	--	m:(aen) hen f:(aen) haer	--	ze: tolerated as DO
Elzevier	1761	North	m:hen , ze f:haer, ze n:hen , ze	--	m:hun f:haer n:hun	--	--
De Haes	1764	North	m:hen , ze f:haer, ze n:hen , ze	--	m:(aen) hun f:(aen) haer n:(aen) hun	--	--
Van der Palm	1769	North	--	m:hen f:haer	--	--	--
Zeydelaar	1769	North	--	--	--	--	--
Zeydelaar	1772	North	m:hen , ze f:haar, ze n:hen , ze	--	m:(aan) hun f:(aan) haar n:(aan) hun	--	--
Van Belleghem & Waterschoot	[1773]	South	--	--	--	--	--
Janssens	[1775]	South	--	--	--	--	--
Van Boterdael	1776 [± 1774]	South	--	--	--	--	--
Cramer	1777 [± 1769]	North	--	--	--	--	--
Zeydelaar	1781	North	hen, ze	--	-- (aan) hun	--	--
Stéven	1784 [1714]	South	--	--	--	--	--
Ballieu	1792 [1771]	South	m:hen f:haer n:hen	--	-- m:hen f:haer n:hen	--	hun: reallocated
Van Bolhuis	1793	North	m:hen f:haar n:hen	--	m:aan hun f:aan haar n:aan hun	--	heur: tolerated for the feminine gender
Wester	1797	North	m:hen f:haar n:hen	--	m:hun f:haar n:hun	--	--
Van Varik	1799	North	m:hen f:haar, heur	--	m:hun f:haar, heur	--	--

Weiland	1799	North	m:hen f:haar n:hen	--	m:(aan) hen f:(aan) haar n:(aan) hen	--	hun: tolerated for m. + n. IO
Siegenbeek	1804	North	hen	f:haar, heur	hun	f:haar, heur	poets are free to choose
Weiland	1805	North	hen	--	hun	--	poets are free to choose
Schilperoort	1806	North	--	--	--	--	--
Anslijn	1814	North	--	m:hen f:haar	--	m:hun f:haar	--
Henckel	1815	South	m:hen, ze f:haer, ze n:hen, ze	--	m:aen hun f:aen haer n:aen hun	--	--
De Neckere	1815	South	hen	--	--	hun	--
Ter Bruggen	1817-1818 [1815]	South	m:hen, ze f:haer, ze n:hen, ze	hen	m:(aen) hun f:(aen) haer n:(aen) hun	--	--
Behaegel	1817	South	--	--	--	--	--
Cannaert	1823	South	--	--	--	--	--
Moke	1823	South	m:hen(lieden), ze f:haar(lieden), ze n:hen, ze	--	m:hun(lieden) f:haar(lieden) n:hun(lieden)	--	--
Willems	1824	South	--	--	--	--	--
Behaegel	[± 1825]	South	m:hun, hen f:haar n:hun, hen	--	m:hun f:haar n:hun	--	--
Bilderdijk	1826	North	--	hen	--	hun	--
De Simpel	[1827]	South	m:hen f:haar n:hen	--	m:hun, aan hen f:(aan) haar n:hun, aan hen	--	heur: tolerated as a feminine form in literature
Behaegel	[± 1829]	South	--	hun	--	hun	--

Table 19: norms and variant treatment third-person plural object forms

Conclusion

The discussion of the language norms shows that the distinction between the accusative pronoun *hen(l.)* and the dative form *hun(l.)* was indeed a prominent topic in Northern grammars from the seventeenth century onwards. However, as was also indicated by De Vos (2022), the normative discussion on the feature reaches far beyond this binary distinction of plural personal pronouns. Not only do we attest different prescriptions for the individual grammatical genders, also the prescribed forms for the masculine gender diverge greatly. While *hen(l.)* clearly emerges as the main prescribed variant in the accusative case, and *hun(l.)* in the dative case, most grammarians promote multiple variants for masculine referents. The pronoun *ze* thereby holds a notable position as an alternative

variant in the accusative but not in the dative case. This optionality in accusative forms disappears from Northern norms in the nineteenth century, when codifiers strive for one-form-one-function symmetry. Northern codifiers then become consistent and stricter in their prescriptions, and solely *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* remain as the prescribed direct and indirect object forms.

In Southern norms, the accusative-dative distinction between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* only becomes a topic of importance in the nineteenth century. In earlier times, Southern codifiers prescribed the variant *hen(l.)* for direct and indirect objects, and they thus did not make the case distinction that was introduced in Northern norms. In the nineteenth century, Southern norm givers suddenly shift their dative prescriptions from *hen(l.)* to *hun(l.)*. For the first time, Southern norms thus introduce an accusative-dative distinction, as is also indicated by the Flemish grammarian Moke (1823, p. 49), who mentions:

Het onderscheid tussen hen en hun, wegens naamval, werd éértijds niet waargenomen, oók ziet men dit in de vlaamsche spraakkunsten méést verkeérdelijk opgegeven. Wij gelooven niet dat dit onderscheid van een groót gewigt zij, evenwel hebben wij dienaangaande het hedendaags méést doorgaande gebruik, hoe kortelings oók ingevoerd, als den verkieslijken regel voorgehouden
(Moke, 1823, p. 49)

‘The distinction between *hen* and *hun*, based on case, was not previously distinguished, and it is also often incorrectly stated in Flemish grammars. We do not believe that this distinction is of great importance; nevertheless, we have held the most common contemporary usage, although recently introduced, as the preferable rule’

Since this normative change takes place in the early nineteenth century, and particularly during the period of Dutch reign in the Southern Netherlands, the increased contact with Northern language norms may have influenced Southern codifiers in adopting the ‘Northern’ case distinction between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* (cf. Vosters et al., 2014).

4.2 Language use

In this section, the results for the direct and indirect object forms of the plural personal pronouns in language use are discussed. The observed results from the *HCD* are analysed with descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. For the descriptive analysis of the results, all variants that are attested in the usage corpus are analysed. As for the inferential statistics, a binomial logistic regression analysis is carried out on the results of *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* as the main variants in the usage corpus. The minority variant *haar(l.)* is not included in the regression analysis, since the variant is commonly used as a feminine pronoun and can therefore not simply be juxtaposed to traditionally masculine and neuter pronouns. The variant *ze* is not considered in the statistical analysis either, since the form is mostly used for referring to inanimate referents and can therefore not be seen as a full equivalent of *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)*, which are primarily used for referring to animate referents.

I began model building with a minimal logistic regression model, using the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) to identify the base model with the best balance between fit and complexity. I incrementally added different fixed predictors and interactions of interest, retaining them if they improved model quality and accuracy. While I considered incorporating random effects to account for potential variability across individual texts, a mixed-effects approach led to excessive model complexity and convergence issues.

Ultimately, the best model fit and accuracy were achieved with a simple logistic regression model that included the fixed predictors *period*, *region*, *genre*, and *function* of the pronoun, along with interactions between *period* and *function*, and between *region* and *function* (AIC: 214.36, C-statistic: 0.94, R^2 Tjur: 0.59, classification accuracy: 85%). However, the model encountered complete separation issues for the response variable (i.e. the occurrence of *hen* vs. *hun*) within the reference level, leading to inflated standard errors and unreliable estimates for the interaction terms. Attempts to address this by altering the reference level or excluding the levels where complete separation occurred (specifically, the entire sixteenth century) were unsuccessful.

Therefore, I opted to use a regression model which retained the same fixed predictors but excluded the interaction terms. This model avoided the problems associated with complete separation and provided more reliable estimates. The results of this logistic regression analysis are summarised in Figure 69, where the estimates show the log-odds of the pronoun *hun(l.)* as incoming form. With an R^2 Tjur of 0.54, a C-index of 0.92, and a classification accuracy of 82%, the model performance metrics indicate that the regression model is effective in discriminating between classes and has a good overall predictive power.

Main effects on the occurrence of 'hun(l.)' as incoming form			
Predictors	Log-Odds	CI	p
(Intercept)	-5.59	-7.25 – -4.17	<0.001
PERIOD - 17th century	3.83	2.61 – 5.29	<0.001
PERIOD - 18th century	4.50	3.30 – 5.94	<0.001
PERIOD - 19th century	5.01	3.78 – 6.49	<0.001
REGION - Zeeland	-0.25	-1.52 – 1.00	0.694
REGION - Brabant	1.22	0.30 – 2.18	0.011
REGION - Vlaanderen	2.36	1.29 – 3.52	<0.001
GENRE - Administrative	0.76	-0.10 – 1.68	0.091
GENRE - Ego-documents	1.47	0.29 – 2.78	0.020
FUNCTION - Indirect object	1.26	0.49 – 2.08	0.002
Observations	281		
R^2 Tjur	0.537		

Figure 69: regression table of the main effects on the occurrence of *hun(l.)* as the incoming form in language use

In what follows in this section, I present the observed results in language use, employing descriptive statistical techniques, alongside the predictions of the regression model. Where applicable, effect plots are used to shed light on the significant effects.

General distribution

The plural personal pronouns that are employed in the *HCD* as direct or indirect object forms are presented in Figure 70, which shows the general distribution of the variants in language use. From the 331 observations that were obtained, two main variants arise. The pronoun *hun* is the dominant variant with a relative proportion of 45.3% (n=150), followed by *hen* which shows up in 34.4% (n=114) of the results. The remaining 20.3% of the datapoints are divided among the pronouns *haar* (8.2%), *ze* (7.0%), *henlieden/-luiden* (4.2%), and *hunlieden/-luiden* (0.9%).

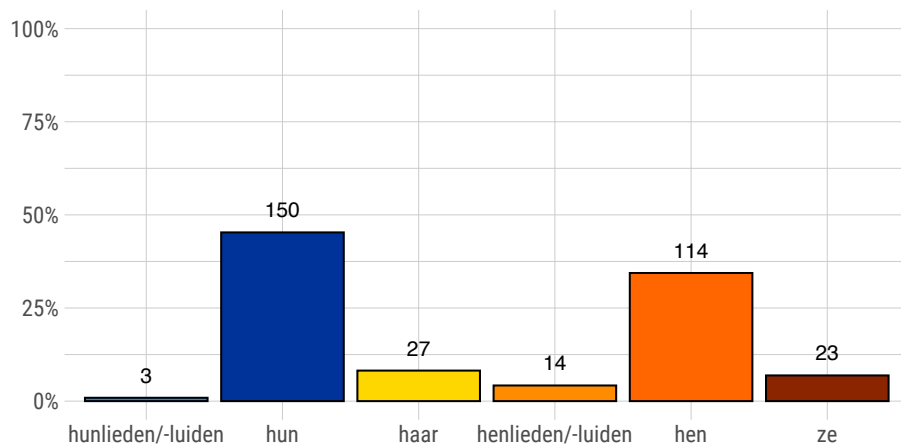


Figure 70: general distribution of object forms of the plural personal pronoun

Merging these pronouns into the four variant categories that were also discussed in language norms, Figure 71 summarises the distribution of the variants across the syntactic function of the pronoun, i.e. whether the pronoun acts as a direct or indirect object.

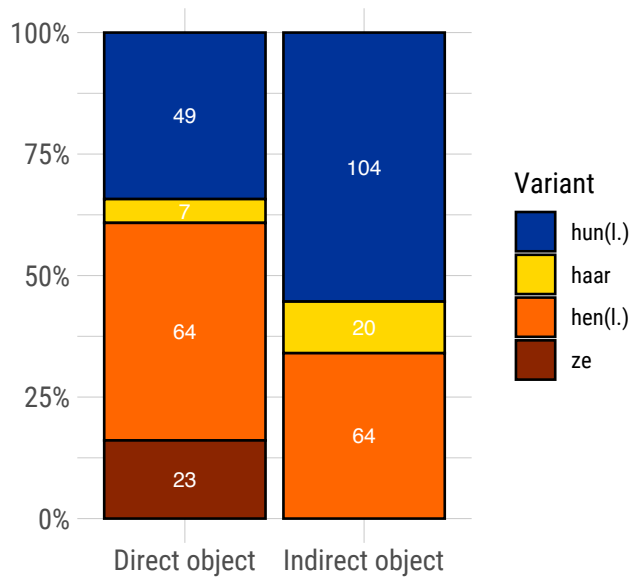


Figure 71: general distribution of object forms of the plural personal pronoun per function

From the 143 plural pronouns that function as a direct object, the form *hen(l.)* is dominantly used (44.8%, $n=64$). For the indirect object, 188 results were attested in the usage corpus. In this syntactic case, 55.3% ($n=104$) of the results were observations of *hun(l.)*. Figure 71 demonstrates that the pronoun use for the direct and indirect object is variable, and that the variant *hen(l.)* is also the second largest variant for the indirect object (34.0%, $n=64$), while the form *hun(l.)* is also applied for the direct object (34.2%, $n=49$). Nonetheless, as the effect plot in Figure 72 illustrates, the regression model indicates a significantly higher occurrence of the variant *hun(l.)* as an indirect object compared to the direct object as the reference level ($p = 0.002$).

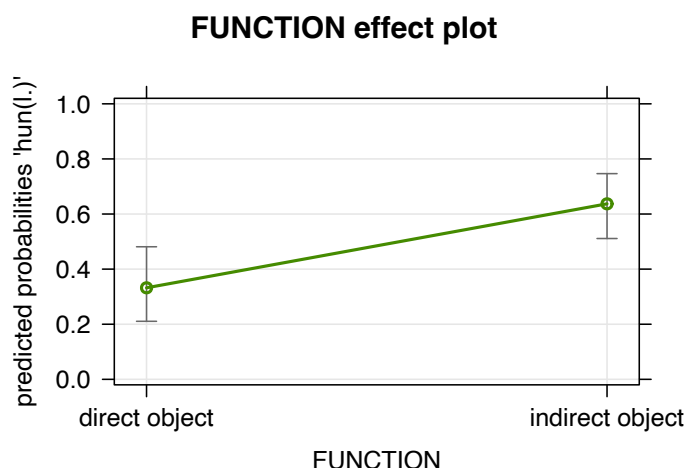


Figure 72: effect plot *function* – object forms plural personal pronoun

Turning to the other possible pronouns, Figure 71 shows that the plural form *haar* takes up a minority position in usage (i.e. 4.8% as a direct object; 10.6% as an indirect object). Note that, while *haar* was only rarely prescribed for masculine referents, these results summarise the occurrence of the form across the different (grammatical) genders. Example 13, for instance, illustrates that the observations of *haar* also include references to plural feminine referents. This anyhow suggests a very low overall frequency of the pronoun *haar* as a plural object form.

- (13) *Na de mis, geweerdigt hy zich het ontbijt in het huis der overste te nemen, daerna geeft hy aen de vereenigde Beggynen eene vaderlyke vermaning, haer opwekkende om met moed en vertrouwen, niet tegenstaende alle moeijelykheden, het begonnen werk der herstelling van het Hof voortzetten*
(EGO-1850-VL-3)

‘After the mass, he honoured himself by taking breakfast in the house of the superior; afterwards, he gave a fatherly admonition to the united beguines, encouraging them to continue the work of restoring the court with courage and confidence, despite all difficulties’

The pronoun *ze*, which historical codifiers often promoted as an alternative variant for the direct object, indeed appears exclusively as a direct object in usage (16.1%, n=23). However, further investigation reveals that 15 out of the

23 observations of *ze* (65%) referred to inanimate referents, as demonstrated in Example 14. *Ze* is thus solely a minority variant for plural animate referents in usage.

(14) *De wetgevende magt maakt de Wetten, de regterlijke magt past ze toe*
(PAM-1850-HO-5)

‘The legislative power makes the laws; the judicial power applies them’

Per period

Measuring the probability that *hun(l.)* will be used instead of *hen(l.)* across the different periods, the regression model shows a positive significant effect in the seventeenth ($p < 0.001$), eighteenth ($p < 0.001$), and nineteenth ($p < 0.001$) centuries, when compared to the sixteenth century as the reference level. A pairwise comparison additionally reveals that the use of *hun(l.)* differs significantly between the seventeenth and the nineteenth century ($p = 0.02$), but not when comparing the seventeenth to the eighteenth, and the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. As the effect plot in Figure 73 illustrates, the statistical analysis thus indicates that the use of the pronoun *hun(l.)* increases over time, yet the increase is only significant when compared to the sixteenth century, or when the nineteenth century is set against the seventeenth century.

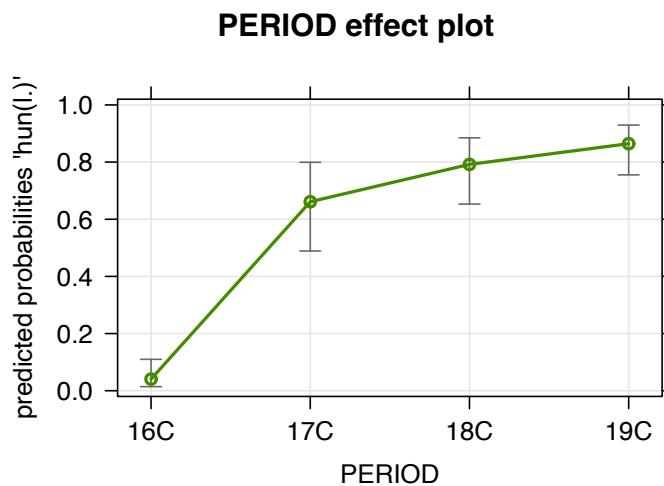


Figure 73: effect plot *period* - object forms plural personal pronoun

Of course, the regression model considers only the occurrence of *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* over time, not accounting for the function of the pronoun. All observations from the usage corpus are therefore summarised into Figure 74, where the relative proportions of each variant category are visualised per period, also factoring in the syntactic function of the pronoun.

It is immediately clear that *hen(l.)* was the most common plural pronoun in the sixteenth century, irrespective of the grammatical function. With 97.2% (n=35) of the instances of the direct object, and 77.4% (n=41) of the indirect object, *hen(l.)* is indeed the majority variant both as a direct and indirect object. However, the variant experiences a general decline in seventeenth-century usage. As a direct object, the form is then used only in 13% (n=3) of the instances. Although *hen(l.)* rises again as a direct object in the eighteenth century (44.4%, n=16), the variant does not grow into a dominant variant anymore, as is indicated by its decrease in the nineteenth century (20.8%, n=10). As an indirect object, the pronoun *hen(l.)* knows a gradual decline until it becomes a marginal variant in the nineteenth century (9.5%, n=4).

This demise of *hen(l.)* as an indirect object is accompanied by a strong increase of the variant *hun(l.)*. This pronoun increases until it reaches 92.7% (n=38) in the nineteenth century. Moreover, along with its dominance as an indirect object, the variant *hun(l.)* also takes up a considerable role as a direct object, where its frequency strongly inclines from 2.8% (n=1) in the sixteenth century to 52.2% (n=12) in the seventeenth century. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the pronoun *hun(l.)* stabilises as a direct object with proportions ranging from 33.3% (n=12) to 50% (n=24).

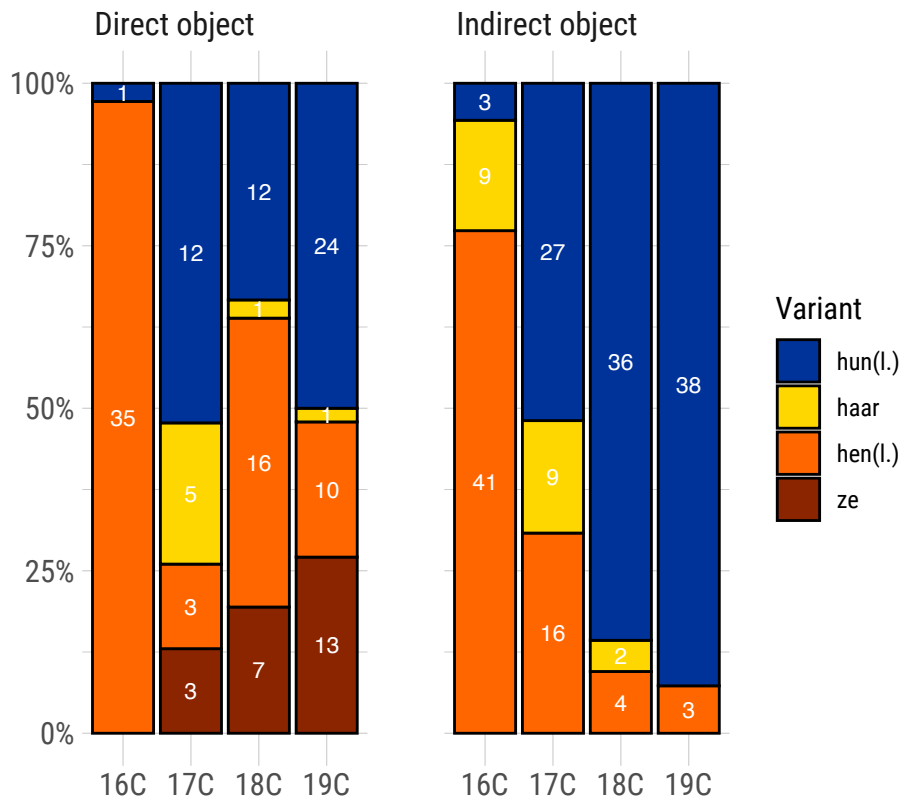


Figure 74: object forms of the plural personal pronoun per period and function

The variant *haar* shows up as a minority variant in the accusative and dative case. After its strongest use in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with occurrences of around 17–21% in both cases, the proportions of form decline to less than 5% in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The alternative variant *ze* appears only as a direct object. This pronoun shows up for the first time in the seventeenth century (13%, $n=3$), from whence it gradually increases to 27.1% ($n=13$) in nineteenth-century usage. However, as mentioned before, most of these observations refer to inanimate referents.

While a compelling shift to *hun(l.)* is thus observed for the indirect object, the pattern of change is much less clear for the direct object. In this grammatical case, more variability is attested, and there certainly is no convincing increase of one variant. Perhaps regional differences shed more light on the matter.

Per period and region – area

In addition to the influence of *period*, the regression model indicates a main effect of the predictor *region*. More specifically, a significant effect is determined for Brabant ($p = 0.011$), and Vlaanderen ($p = < 0.001$), suggesting a significantly increased use of *hun(l.)* in the two Southern regions, when opposed to Holland as the reference level. Furthermore, a pairwise comparison of the different regions also indicates a significant effect of Brabant ($p = 0.012$) and Vlaanderen ($p = < 0.001$) when contrasted to Zeeland. The usage between Holland and Zeeland, on the contrary, does not differ significantly. While such predictions initially suggest a broader distinction between Northern and Southern usage, the regression model shows that differences within the individual regions explain more variation than broader geographical categorisations. After all, the pairwise comparison demonstrated that the use of the pronoun *hun(l.)* also deviates significantly when comparing Vlaanderen to Brabant ($p = 0.02$), with the model predicting a stronger use of *hun(l.)* in Vlaanderen. This means that we cannot simply distinguish between Northern and Southern usage when it comes to the use of these plural pronouns. While there is no significant difference in usage between Holland and Zeeland, Brabant and Vlaanderen show distinct variations, not only from the Northern regions, but also from each other. As shown in the effect plot in Figure 75, the regression model thus suggests an increased use of *hun(l.)* in Brabant, and an even higher frequency of the form in Vlaanderen.

REGION effect plot

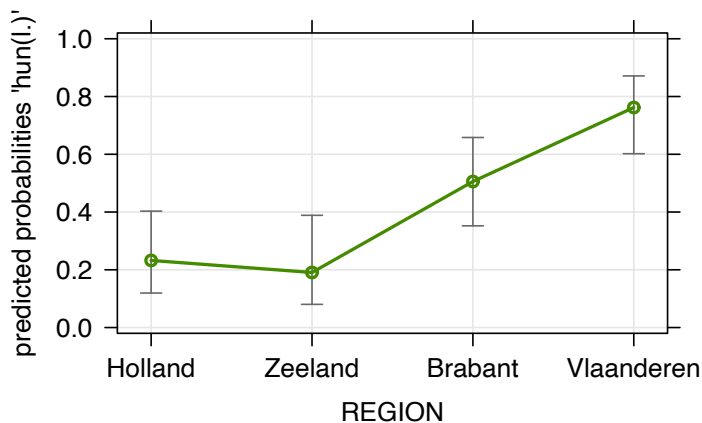


Figure 75: effect plot *region* - object forms plural personal pronoun

Turning to the actual observations, Figure 76 outlines usage across the investigated regions while also accounting for the function of the pronoun. Note that we are observing a relatively small number of observations, which leads to a skewed view of the relative proportions, especially in the regions of Holland and Zeeland.

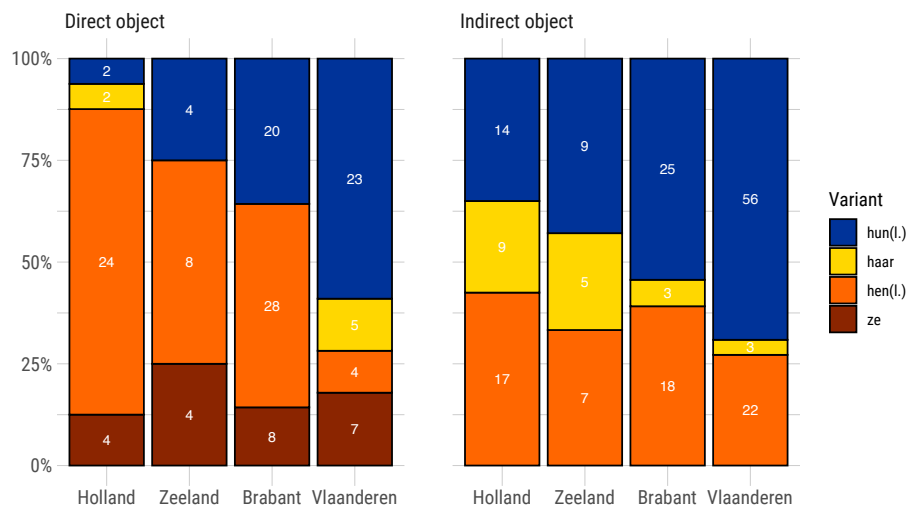


Figure 76: object forms of the plural personal pronoun per region and function

First, the alternative variants *ze* and *haar* are attested in every region. Both are minority forms with comparable frequencies across the four regions. Focusing on the two main variants, then, the proportions of *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* differ considerably across the investigated regions. As was also indicated by the regression model, the pronoun *hun(l.)* is used more frequently in Brabant and Vlaanderen. However, the observed data now also illustrate that *hun(l.)* maintains strong as both a direct and indirect object in the Southern regions. In Vlaanderen, the variant is actually the predominant pronoun in both syntactic cases (viz. 69.1% as direct object; 59.0% as indirect object). In the Northern regions, conversely, *hun(l.)* is never a dominant variant. In Holland, in particular, *hen(l.)* prevails as a direct object form (75.0%), yet it is also frequently applied for the indirect object (42.5%). Zeeland and Brabant demonstrate less pronounced proportions of one variant. Although both regions employ *hen(l.)*

more often as a direct object, and *hun(l.)* as an indirect object, Zeeland and Brabant use the two variants to a considerable extent in each syntactic case.⁷⁴

Although the results so far already showed that a division by parts of the language area is not appropriate due to strong regional differences, I present the results divided by area and by period in Figure 77. This is necessary if we want to shed light on the diachronic development while also considering geographic differences. The interaction between region, period, and function contains only a very low number of datapoints, resulting in a possibly unreliable representation of the development. Thus, despite using the North-South division, the results are interpreted with nuance for the regional differences.

When analysing whether a distinction is made between the pronouns used as a direct and indirect object, no rigid distinction is made in one of the areas. In the Northern Netherlands, it is possible that a case distinction is at play from the eighteenth century onwards. At that time, the use of the prescribed *hen(l.)* as direct object increases to 57.1%, whereas for the indirect object, the promoted variant *hun(l.)* inclines from 42.9% to 83.3%, yet only in the nineteenth century. A detailed look at the results per region reveals that an absolute distinction between *hen(l.)* and *ze* as direct object forms, and *hun(l.)* as the indirect object variant, is made in Holland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In Zeeland, variability in the use of pronouns remains, with both *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* being used as direct and indirect object forms.

For the Southern Netherlands, Figure 77 shows a temporary increase of *hen(l.)* as a direct object in the eighteenth century (36.4%). The alternative variant *ze* inclines to 25% in the nineteenth century, while *hen(l.)* decreases again in favour of *hun(l.)*. The regional differences also indicate that the initial increase of *hen(l.)* in the eighteenth century is entirely situated in Brabant. Language use in Vlaanderen does not show any sign of *hen(l.)* at the time.

⁷⁴ Direct object: 50.0% *hen(l.)* vs. 25.0% *hun(l.)* in Zeeland; 50.0% *hen(l.)* vs. 35.7% *hun(l.)* in Brabant
Indirect object: 42.9% *hun(l.)* vs. 33.3% *hen(l.)* in Zeeland; 54.3% *hun(l.)* vs. 39.1% *hen(l.)* in Brabant

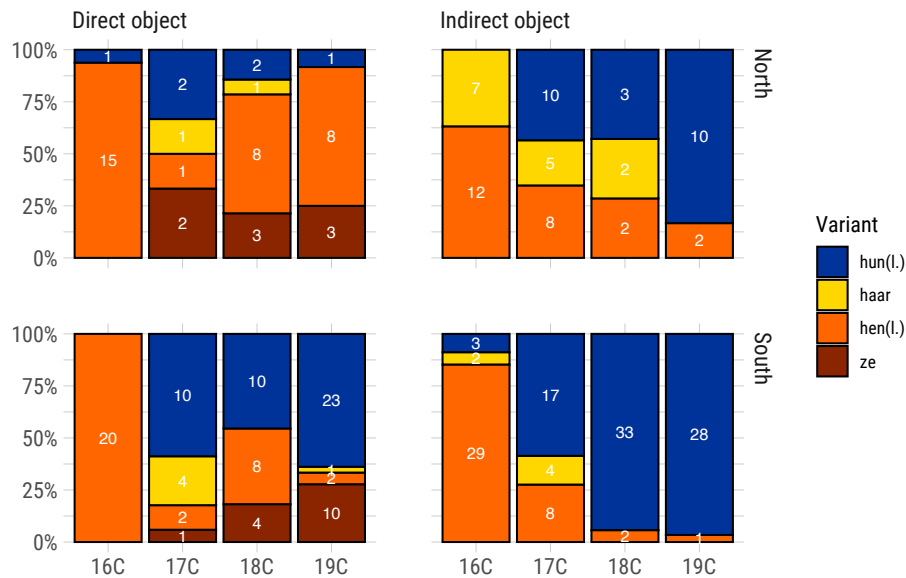


Figure 77: object forms of the plural personal pronoun per period, area, and function

While the picture is thus somewhat scattered for the direct object, Brabant and Vlaanderen completely align for the indirect object. The pattern that Figure 77 draws for Southern usage is thus applicable to both regions. Brabant and Vlaanderen showcase a considerable proportion of *hun(l.)* already in the seventeenth century (viz. 43.8%, $n=7$ in Brabant vs. 76.9%, $n=10$ in Vlaanderen), and the use of this pronoun increases in the eighteenth century until uniformity is (almost) reached (viz. 84.6%, $n=11$ in Brabant vs. 100%, $n=22$ in Vlaanderen).

Thus, these results indicate that the proposed syntactic distinction between the plural pronouns *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* was possibly made in Holland and Brabant during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, yet other regions do not convincingly follow this syntactic differentiation. In Zeeland, the usage rates of *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* remain high for both direct and indirect objects, whereas in Vlaanderen, *hun(l.)* is typically used regardless of the syntactic context.

Per genre

Finally, the regression model indicates a significant effect of the predictor *genre*, with usage in the ego-documents differing significantly from the pamphlets as a reference level ($p = 0.02$). As the effect plots in Figure 78 shows, the regression model predicts a positive effect, which means that a significantly higher frequency of *hun(l.)* is estimated for the genre of ego-documents.

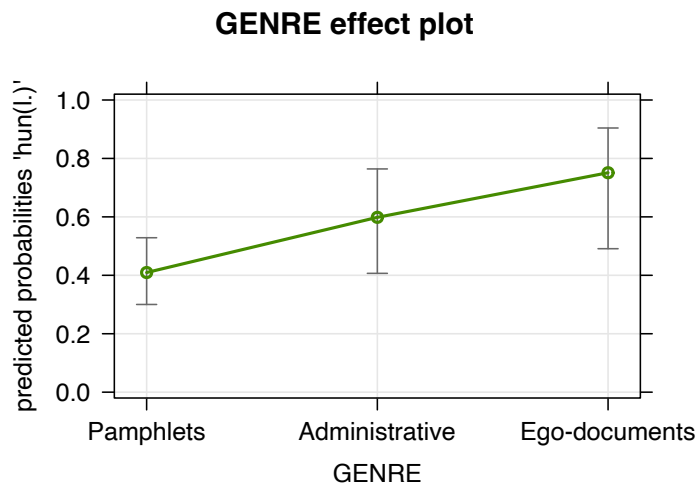


Figure 78: effect plot *genre* - object forms plural personal pronoun

The observed results from the usage corpus confirm the predictions of the regression model, although nuance is required with regards to the pronouns *haar* and *ze*. In fact, the relative proportions of *haar* and *ze* are the highest in the ego-documents, as Figure 79 shows. *Ze* is with 12.1% used most often in ego-documents. This is not very surprising, since we know from contemporary grammars (e.g. Haeseryn et al., 1997) that *ze* is typically used as a plural pronoun in spoken and informal registers. Although the differences between the other genres in the *HCD* are small, a similar register distinction possibly existed in the past as well. As for the plural pronoun *haar*, the form also is used most frequently in the genre of ego-documents, where it constitutes 40% of the results of the indirect object. Apart from an individual occurrence of *haar* in the administrative texts, the pronoun also shows up in the pamphlets (viz. 7.4% as direct object and 8% as indirect object), albeit to a smaller extent than in the ego-documents.

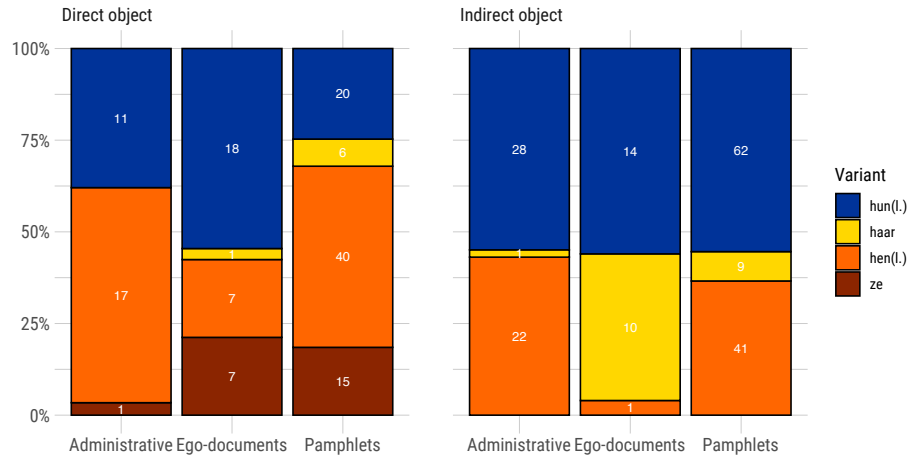


Figure 79: object forms of the plural personal pronoun per genre and function

Of course, the main variants in usage are still *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)*, which are employed as direct and indirect object forms across all genres. This is also illustrated in Figure 79. The plot shows that the pronoun *hen(l.)* is used most frequently as a direct object in the administrative texts (58.6%) and pamphlets (49.4%), yet these formal or printed genres also have the greatest use of *hen(l.)* as an indirect object (viz. 43.1% in the administrative texts; 36.6% in the pamphlets), suggesting that no strict case distinction was applied in these genres. Interestingly, this exact pattern, in which administrative texts and pamphlets apply *hen(l.)* as the dominant variant for the direct and indirect object, is pronounced in the Northern and Southern Netherlands. The ego-documents, on the contrary, have the smallest use of *hen(l.)*. As such, these findings show that the use of plural pronouns also differs between the genres in the usage corpus. While (especially Southern) ego-documents have the greatest proportions of *hun(l.)*, the more formal administrative texts and printed pamphlets employ *hen(l.)* most frequently, regardless of the syntactic function.

Conclusion

As could be expected from previous studies (e.g. De Vogelaer & Coussé, 2008), the results in language use revealed that variation is prevalent for the object forms of the plural personal pronouns. The current analysis shows that large parts of variation appear to be driven by sociolinguistic forces. Focusing on the pronouns *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)*, a general change from *hen(l.)* to *hun(l.)* is observed after the sixteenth century. This is particularly true for the indirect object, where a gradual change to *hun(l.)* emerges in the period under investigation. This pronoun, however, also gains prominence as a direct object in the seventeenth century. Although the use of *hen(l.)* thus decreases in favour of *hun(l.)*, the pronoun *hen(l.)* remains a main variant in usage. It is mainly used as a direct object, alongside alternative forms like *ze* and *haar*.

General genre differences are also observed. The results from the corpus analysis indicate that pamphlets and administrative texts strongly adhere to *hen(l.)* in both grammatical contexts, whereas ego-documents exhibit more variable usage and are more influenced by geographical differences. These findings may align with what is attested in contemporary research, which shows that the written language prefers the pronoun *hen* irrespective of the grammatical function of the pronoun (e.g. De Rooij, 1990, 1991; Hubers et al. 2020).

Furthermore, no compelling syntactic distinction in pronoun usage is attested before the eighteenth century. Instead, the results from language use suggest that the use of certain pronouns rather depends on regional preferences. Despite the reigning variation in usage, *hen(l.)* appears to be specifically favoured in Holland, while *hun(l.)* is predominantly used in Vlaanderen. Brabant also shows a stronger inclination towards *hun(l.)* compared to Holland (and to a lesser extent, Zeeland). After the eighteenth century, a clearer syntactic distinction emerges in pronoun usage, with solely *hen(l.)* and *ze* being used as direct object variants, and *hun(l.)* as the indirect object form. This distinction seems most pronounced in Holland and Brabant. In Vlaanderen, *hun(l.)* remains the dominant form for both direct and indirect objects.

While these changes in usage certainly reveal broader sociolinguistic patterns in pronoun use and suggest the possibility of syntactic differentiation, it is important to approach this conclusion with caution. Due to the low frequency of

data, especially when correlating multiple sociolinguistic factors in the analysis, providing a solid overview of the development of plural pronouns and the presence of a syntactic distinction is not feasible. It would therefore be prudent to consider the patterns identified here as hypotheses for further investigation in larger corpus studies. Although the scarcity of data also complicates the evaluation of prescriptive influence, particularly in determining the extent of prescriptive interference in a fine-grained manner, the analysis presented in the remaining of this chapter builds on the current observations. However, these findings are also supplemented with the usage patterns of individual language users. By incorporating this micro-level analysis, I aim to achieve the granularity that cannot be attained at the macro level due to the aforementioned reasons.

4.3 Prescriptive influence

In this section, I investigate whether the changes attested in usage were caused or influenced by prescriptivism. The results in language norms and language use are discussed together, and patterns of variation and change are compared in both to determine the chronology of language change. For both syntactic functions, the developments in language norms and usage are visualised per year in Figure 80 and Figure 81 for the direct object, and in Figure 82 and Figure 83 for the indirect object. For the visualisation of the development per year, the observed results are projected onto an underlying numeric scale with equal distance between the different variants.

Chronology of language change

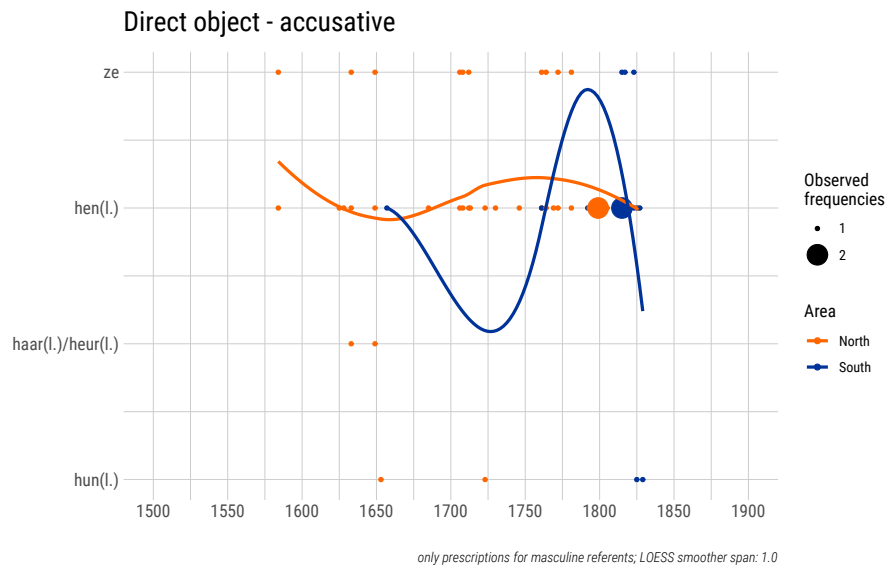


Figure 80: prescriptions direct object forms of the plural personal pronoun per year and per area

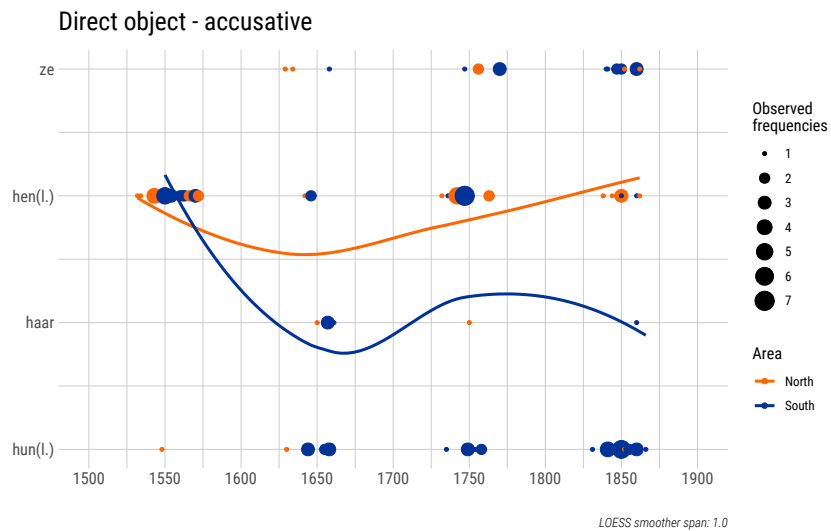


Figure 81: language use direct object forms of the plural personal pronoun per year and per area

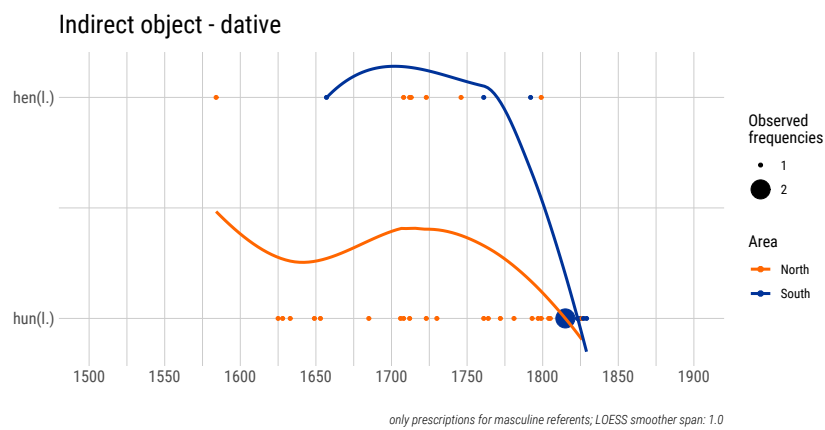


Figure 82: prescriptions indirect object forms plural personal pronouns per year and per area

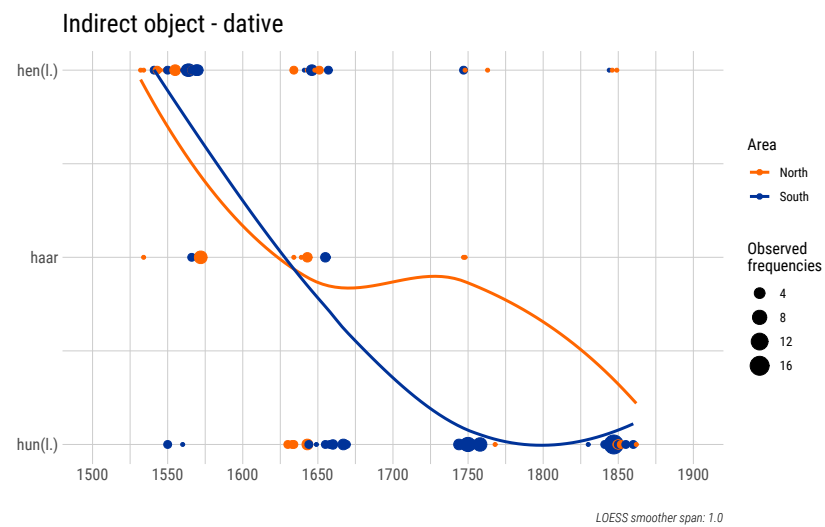


Figure 83: language use indirect object forms of the plural personal pronoun per year and per area

Before the first language norms on the object forms of the plural personal pronouns were formulated, language use in the sixteenth century was more or less uniform, with language users in the Northern and Southern Netherlands using the pronoun *hen(l.)* for both the direct and indirect object. The variant *hun(l.)* was rarely applied, and only by individual language users. When Spiegel (1584) formulated the first explicit prescription on the topic, he promoted the variant *hen(l.)* for both the accusative and dative case, and thus did not make a case distinction for the plural pronouns. This codifier therefore rather reflects patterns in usage in the sixteenth century, without exerting an impact on usage. A few decades later, Van Heule (1625) introduced the famous accusative-dative distinction between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)*. In 1633, he reiterated this distinction, while also adding the pronouns *haer* as an alternative variant for plural masculine referents, and *heurr* for plural feminine referents in the accusative case. The prescriptions for these alternative forms, which diverged from general usage, do not seem to have changed usage. As for the diverging use between *hen(l.)/ze* vs. *hun(l.)*, however, Northern usage aligns with the syntactic distinction that Van Heule introduced in norms, as we observe usage for the indirect object changing to *hun(l.)* in the seventeenth century, whereas eighteenth-century usage indicates that *hen(l.)* remains in use as a direct object. Most of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century codifiers in the North also adhere to Van Heule's distinction, and Northern usage thus largely reflects the exact difference that norms propagated. With Northern prescriptions and usage aligning, possibilities of prescriptive interference certainly arise in Northern usage.

As was already explained in section 4.1, the object forms of the plural personal pronouns are less frequently discussed in normative works in the Southern Netherlands, which makes prescriptive influence already less evident. For example, the first (implicit) prescription on the topic emerges only in the seventeenth century, and it is not until the beginning of the eighteenth century that a Northern grammarian targeted a Southern readership and explicitly prescribed *hen(l.)* as the accusative and dative variant in Southern usage. The example of solely prescribing one variant for both syntactic cases is also followed by other norm givers in the South, like Des Roches (s.d. [1761]) and Ballieu (1792) in the eighteenth century. Before these prescriptions appeared, Southern language use was already applying both pronouns *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* as a direct object, and *hun(l.)* as an indirect object. Although large-scale prescriptive

interference of these grammarians is thus unlikely, there is still an instance in which norm givers may have influenced Southern language use, as I will explain later. While patterns in Southern norms and usage thus largely diverge until the eighteenth century, a partial convergence of norms and usage is attested for the dative case in the nineteenth century. In this case, the change in usage entirely precedes the adapted norms, thus diminishing the possibility of prescriptive interference. Although the scatter plots also do not suggest aligning developments for the direct object, I will explain that a (very) small effect of prescriptivism is still possible in the nineteenth-century South.

As such, for the object forms of plural personal pronouns, several options in which prescriptivism possibly interfered in language use are detected in the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. The instances in which prescriptivism may have steered a new change or influenced an ongoing change in usage are summed up below. These options of prescriptive success are interpreted and discussed in the remaining of this chapter.

- (1) In the seventeenth century, Van Heule (1625) was the first codifier to introduce the pronoun distinction between the direct and indirect object. While most language users in the sixteenth century still employed *hen(l.)* in both syntactic contexts, a change that aligns with the proposed distinction, viz. *hen(l.)* or *ze* as direct object vs. *hun(l.)* as indirect object, arises in Northern usage.
- (2) The syntactic distinction of Van Heule is followed by most codifiers in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A few grammarians from the North, like Leupenius (1653) and Ten Kate (1723), however, prescribe *hun(l.)* in both contexts, or allow for variation between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* in the direct and indirect object, thus subverting Van Heule's syntactic distinction.
- (3) Although criticism towards Van Heule's distinction emerges in the normative discussions of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, almost all Northern grammarians at the time prescribe this exact distinction. The same distinction is now almost uniformly adopted in Northern usage.

- (4) Southern language use shows the start of a change from *hen(l.)* to *hun(l.)* in the seventeenth century. Although the shift to *hun(l.)* is attested for the direct and indirect object, the increase of the form takes place after the introduction of the syntactic distinction between *hen(l.)/ze* and *hun(l.)* in Northern norms.
- (5) Explicit prescriptions on the topic targeting a Southern audience show up only from the eighteenth century onwards. These prescriptions do not make a case distinction and promote the pronoun *hen(l.)* for the direct and indirect object. A slight increase of *hen(l.)* as a direct object is observed in Southern usage in the middle of the eighteenth century.
- (6) In the early nineteenth century, Southern norm givers abruptly adapt their prescriptions and they now also promote Van Heule's syntactic distinction. Although Southern language users still dominantly use *hun(l.)* without making a case distinction, an increase of the alternative variant *ze* is attested in the accusative case.

Pronoun use of individual writers

As was already mentioned in the conclusion of section 4.2, relatively few results are obtained in language use to consistently correlate the syntactic function of the pronoun with other sociolinguistic factors, like region or genre. Moreover, since grammarians either opted for prescribing a single pronoun for both contexts (e.g. Southern grammarians in the eighteenth century) or for making a case distinction (e.g. Van Heule), it is important to also look at the usage patterns of individual writers to check whether these writers actually made the prescribed (lack of a) case distinction. Figure 84 is therefore employed as an additional tool in evaluating prescriptive impact. In this visualisation, I included the 45 texts from the corpus that contained plural personal pronouns in both the context of a direct and an indirect object. This allowed me to determine for each text – or for each writer, for that matter – whether they consistently used *hen(l.)* or *hun(l.)* in the accusative and dative case, mixed different pronouns, or applied the syntactic distinction advocated by Van Heule and his followers.

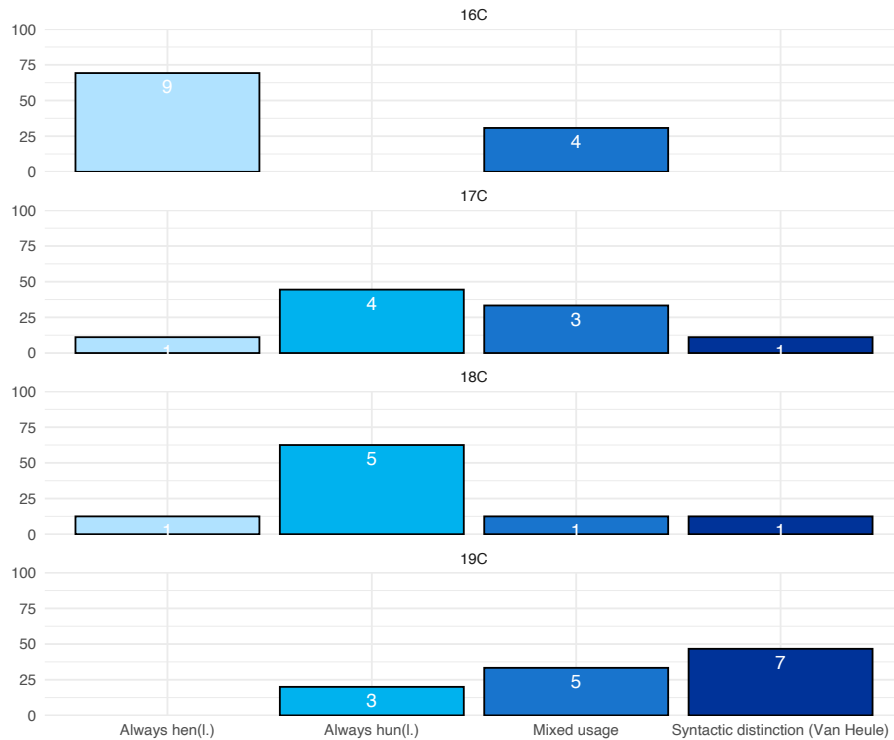


Figure 84: usage patterns object forms of the plural personal pronoun per period

Figure 84 illustrates that individual writers prefer *hen(l.)* in the sixteenth century but increasingly use *hun(l.)* in the following centuries. Individual writers generally make a complete shift in that they always use *hun(l.)*, regardless of the syntactic function of the pronoun. Although there are still individual language users who only use *hun(l.)* in the nineteenth century, the case distinction that Van Heule proposed also rises in usage. While one writer in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries applies the pronoun alternation correctly, seven authors employed the syntactic distinction in the nineteenth century. The fact that the proposed case distinction was applied already in the seventeenth century, and was further adopted in later centuries, suggests that prescriptivism was successful in influencing usage. In the next section, I discuss whether an interference of prescriptivism is likely in this case. I also interpret the individual usage patterns to find out which writers and genres were possibly influenced by the prescriptions.

5 Discussion

Starting with the possible interferences of prescriptivism in Northern usage, in **option 1**, I evaluate the impact of the ‘inventor’ of the accusative-dative distinction between the pronouns *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)*. While Van Heule’s impact on fellow norm givers is crystal clear – almost all Northern codifiers after him promote the same distinction –, his proposed distinction appears to be implemented in Northern usage as well. An influence of Van Heule is at least suggested when exploring Northern usage in the seventeenth century. Despite the initial absence of clear evidence for the direct object – only very few results are available for Northern usage in this period – the form *hun(l.)* appears as an indirect object a few decades after Van Heule prescribed the variant. This use of *hun(l.)* is noticeable in two administrative texts and two pamphlets from Holland. The fact that the pronoun *hun(l.)* emerges as an indirect object, viz. in a context where it was not used before the prescription, and specifically in formal and printed texts, suggests that prescriptive influence may be at play. More specifically, the potential influence on writers of administrative texts and pamphlets from the Hollandic region suggests that Van Heule’s possible impact was limited to the region where he and his followers (e.g. Ampzing, 1628; Kók, 1649) were active, which is the same region where his normative work was published.

Additionally, the usage patterns presented in Figure 84 show evidence of the application of the accusative-dative distinction in one text from the seventeenth century, which uses plural *ze* as a direct object and *hun(l.)* as an indirect object. The fact that the prescribed distinction was made in an ego-document from Zeeland (viz. EGO-1650-ZE-2), suggests a possible wider geographical spread of Van Heule’s influence by the middle of the seventeenth century.

In **option 2**, I evaluate the influence of the late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century prescriptions that also promoted the syntactic difference. I determine whether the few prescriptions that did not adhere to this distinction influenced Northern language use in the eighteenth century. As was already explained before, most grammarians in the Northern Netherlands supported the syntactic distinction of Van Heule, and thus adopted the same distinction in their prescriptions. Yet, some Hollandic norm givers, like Leupenius (1653) and

Ten Kate (1723), did not adopt the introduced case distinction. Leupenius prescribed the pronoun *hun(l.)* for both the direct and indirect object, and Ten Kate allowed for both *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* irrespective of the syntactic function of the pronoun. Despite the diverging prescriptions, Northern language use seems to favour Van Heule's distinction. While there is limited data on Northern usage regarding the indirect object in the eighteenth century, sufficient results from this period are available for the direct object. These results show that Northern language users opt for *hen(l.)* or *ze* when it comes to the direct object. It should be noted, however, that all these Northern observations of *hen(l.)* and *ze* derive from pamphlets from Holland and Zeeland, as well as from administrative texts from Zeeland. In fact, one of the Hollandic pamphlets (i.e. PAM-1750-HO-7) features both direct and indirect objects, and makes the exact distinction between *ze* and *hun(l.)* that the Northern prescriptions propose. The only eighteenth-century ego-document from which I have results, uses the pronoun *hun(l.)* for the direct object, and thus does not align with the prescriptions of Van Heule's followers. With caution, it can thus be proposed that the accusative-dative distinction in norms was implemented in some printed texts from Holland and Zeeland, and similarly in some formal handwritten texts in Zeeland. In contrast, ego-documents do not (yet) appear to be influenced by prescriptivism in this matter.

The diverging prescriptions of grammarians like Leupenius and Ten Kate, moreover, seem to have had little or no influence on usage. This is evidenced by the usage patterns in Figure 84. Although this plot shows that there are four texts in the seventeenth century that use the pronoun *hun(l.)* in the accusative and dative case, thus aligning with Leupenius's prescription, these observations represent exclusively Southern documents. In the Northern regions, Leupenius's prescription is thus not followed. There are also no Northern documents that contain both direct and indirect objects with varying pronouns. The single eighteenth-century document that always uses *hen(l.)*, derives from the North, and is a Zeeland pamphlet. That makes it unlikely that a Hollandic grammarian, like Ten Kate, would have exerted influence with his flexible prescriptions in Zeeland, without having an impact in Holland itself.

Option 3 is the last discussion that focuses on prescriptive influence on Northern usage. This option deals with the stronger adoption of the case distinction in nineteenth-century usage. While almost all Northern grammarians advocated

the syntactic distinction at the time, certain norm givers, including Siegenbeek (1804) and Weiland (1805), express critical views about the – in their words – trivial distinction between the accusative pronoun *hen(l.)* and the dative form *hun(l.)*. Despite that criticism, Northern grammarians no longer prescribe the alternative form *ze* for the direct object, and thus prescribe only *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* as the two variants for respectively the direct and indirect object. Although *ze* was not explicitly rejected for usage, the results from this usage corpus reveal that the pronoun *ze* was rarely in use as a direct object for referring to plural animate referents. Except for two individual occurrences, the variant is used only for referring to inanimate referents in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The fact that grammarians omitted *ze* as an alternative variant may thus simply reflect patterns in Northern usage.

In the nineteenth century, Northern usage thus aligns almost perfectly with the accusative-dative distinction that has been advocated in norms. However, most of the results I am observing here derive from the genre of pamphlets, which may skew the patterns in usage.⁷⁵ Figure 84 shows that seven documents make the pronoun distinction that the norms introduced. A closer inspection of these texts indicates that four of the seven documents were, in fact, pamphlets from the North. It turned out that especially pamphlets that were published in Holland made the syntactic distinction between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)*. The small share of results from administrative texts and ego-documents, conversely, makes it difficult to determine whether the syntactic distinction is also made in these genres. However, with one ego-document from Zeeland (i.e. EGO-1850-ZE-5) applying the accusative-dative distinction, and another using the variants interchangeably as an indirect object, this genre appears more variable in pronoun use, with some writers that are influenced by the prescriptions and others that are not. The same is probably true for the administrative texts, albeit to a lesser extent.

While Southern grammarians only discuss the plural pronouns from the eighteenth century onwards, **option 4** addresses the possible influence of Northern prescriptions on Southern usage in the middle of the seventeenth century. I am particularly interested in whether the famous prescription of

⁷⁵ More specifically, I rely on the results from 1 administrative text, 4 ego-documents, and 6 pamphlets.

Van Heule impacted Southern language users. This may be the case since Southern usage also changes in the middle of the seventeenth century. While Northern usage shifts towards the introduced distinction in norms already in the seventeenth century, Southern usage changes in a different direction. Most language users from the South employ the pronoun *hun(l.)* in both the accusative and dative case. Although the variant is not uniformly used, and variation thus exists, a careful analysis of the results indicates that most documents from the South use either *hen(l.)* or *hun(l.)* in all contexts. These writers thus do not make a case distinction. This is also indicated in Figure 84, where all writers who always use *hun(l.)* derive from the Southern Netherlands. Although there are also authors that apply different forms for the accusative and dative case (viz. the three documents representing ‘Mixed usage’ in the seventeenth century, cf. Figure 84), the use of pronouns then appears arbitrary. Such findings suggest that the case distinction of Van Heule did not influence Southern usage in the seventeenth century.

The lack of a case distinction in the South is also confirmed in norms later in the eighteenth century. When explicit prescriptions on the topic emerge in the South, grammarians do not propose a case distinction, and codifiers like E.C.P. (1713), Des Roches (s.d. [1761]) and Ballieu (1792) prescribe *hen(l.)* for both the direct and indirect object. In **option 5**, I therefore examine whether the increase of *hen(l.)* as a direct object in eighteenth-century usage is related to these prescriptions. First, for the indirect object, Southern usage continues using *hun(l.)*, indicating no influence of prescriptions in this regard. For the direct object, however, the increase of *hen(l.)* is accompanied by a rise in the use of *ze*. As such, the distinction that emerges in Southern usage resembles the one made in the Northern Netherlands, with *hen(l.)* and *ze* being used for the direct object, and *hun(l.)* for the indirect object. A closer inspection of these results reveals that two pamphlets from Brabant use *hen(l.)* to refer to plural animate entities, while *ze* is applied only for referring to inanimate objects. Unfortunately, there are no observations from these sources regarding the indirect object, so it cannot be confirmed whether these Brabantine pamphlets follow the prescriptions of Southern grammarians. Although an influence of prescriptivism is certainly possible – especially given the origin and prominence of Des Roches in the region of Brabant – it is anyhow temporary. Moreover, it would indicate a very limited influence on specific individuals in Brabant (cf. option 6). In fact, two of the five documents that consistently use *hun(l.)* in the eighteenth century (cf. Figure 84)

are also texts from Brabant. This means that other writers from the same region were not influenced by the prescriptions for *hen(l.)*.

While eighteenth-century grammarians may thus have influenced individual writers of printed texts in only using *hen(l.)*, in the early nineteenth century, Southern codifiers suddenly shift their norms and prescribe the exact case distinction that had been advocated in the North. Of course, this sudden change in norms is probably related to broader socio-political developments, with Northern norms entering the Southern language area due to the political reunification of the Low Countries into the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (Vosters, 2011; Vosters et al., 2014). In **option 6**, I therefore determine whether the introduction of the case distinction in Southern norms impacted Southern usage.

Although Southern grammarians also prescribe *ze* as an alternative variant for the direct object, in addition to *hen(l.)*, the increase of the variant in the nineteenth century largely denotes references to inanimate objects. As such, with only four observations of *ze* for plural animate referents in Southern usage (viz. in pamphlets and ego-documents), the increase of the variant in nineteenth-century usage is probably not related to the prescriptions for this form. Also when focusing on the case distinction between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)*, Southern usage does not appear to be influenced by the recent changes in the prescriptions. This is evidenced in the developments of the accusative and dative case. As for the dative case, Southern language users were almost exclusively using *hun(l.)* already before the prescriptions in the nineteenth century. It is thus unlikely that usage oriented towards the prescriptions for the dative case. For the direct object, on the contrary, some Brabantine documents were employing *hen(l.)* in the eighteenth century (cf. option 5). While *hen(l.)* was still prescribed for the accusative case in the nineteenth century, the form disappears almost entirely from Southern usage at the time. As Figure 84 shows, three documents from the South evidence the use the pronoun *hun(l.)* in each syntactic case. Two of these documents derive from Vlaanderen (viz. ADM-1850-VL-1; PAM-1850-VL-4), the region that strongly adhered to *hun(l.)*. Also in Brabant, however, language users are not convincingly influenced by the introduced accusative-dative distinction. Only two Brabantine writers (i.e. PAM-1850-BR-2; PAM-1850-BR-4) follow the prescribed case distinction in their pamphlet. So, apart from

influencing individual writers of printed texts, prescriptivism did not have a large-scale impact on language use.

6 Conclusion

This chapter aimed to determine whether prescriptions regarding the object forms of the plural personal pronoun were successfully implemented in language use. Central to this investigation was the accusative-dative distinction between the pronouns *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)*, which was introduced in seventeenth-century language norms. Before arriving at a general conclusion about prescriptive influence on the matter, I reflect on the hypotheses that were formulated for each of the variants in the beginning of this chapter.

Hypothesis 1, discussing the development of the pronoun *hun(l.)*, is only partly confirmed. Although the elongated variant rarely shows up in usage, and *hun* is indeed the common variant of the two, the pronoun *hun* is not dominant in all investigated regions. In fact, in the North of the language area, *hun* is only the majority variant as an indirect object in the nineteenth century. Here, the increase of the variant was attributed to prescriptive influence. In the South, conversely, *hun* is the main variant already in seventeenth-century usage, both as a direct and indirect object, which excluded the possibility of prescriptive interference.

The variants *haar* and *heur* were the subject of hypothesis 2. As was expected, the variants are in use in the sixteenth century but decline already in the seventeenth century. While *haar* and *heur* rarely appear in the *HCD*, the forms do not disappear entirely and remain in use as plural object forms until the nineteenth century. No effect of the single prescriptions for *haar* and *heur* were attested for the masculine forms.

As for the other main variant, *hen(l.)*, hypothesis 3 received partial confirmation, as the pronoun was dominant in sixteenth-century usage. What is more, *hen(l.)* was indeed the most common pronoun for the direct and indirect object at the time. The form also increased in eighteenth-century usage, although this was only true for the Northern Netherlands. In the South, *hen(l.)* is solely a minority variant from the seventeenth century onwards. While the increase of the form in

the North was explained by an influence of prescriptivism, no considerable effect of prescriptions was found in Southern usage.

Finally, also hypothesis 4, regarding the variant *ze*, was partially supported. As expected, the variant was prescribed as an alternative form for the direct object. In language use, *ze* indeed appears from the seventeenth century onwards and its use increases over time. However, the pronoun is mostly used to refer to inanimate entities. So, despite the prescriptions as an alternative variant, no compelling influence of prescriptivism was attested for this pronoun. Perhaps the form was not as common as it is today or – considering that the form is today typically used in speech and in informal texts – the documents in the *HCD* may not be closely enough aligned with the conceptually spoken code to capture the variant in usage (cf. Koch & Oesterreicher, 1985).

As for prescriptive influence, this case study demonstrates that the accusative-dative distinction between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* is primarily a Northern phenomenon, with Van Heule as the inventor of the distinction influencing later generations of Northern grammarians. While most of these norm givers thus adopted and prescribed the same distinction, the issue remained largely unnoticed by Southern codifiers, who prescribed no case distinction until the nineteenth century. The lacking reflection on such a case distinction in the South possibly indicates that the Northern norms on the subject did not reach the South, and Southern norms therefore developed somewhat independently. It is not until the period of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands that Southern grammarians adopt the case distinction in their prescriptions.

The fact that the case distinction did not reach the South before the political reunification in the nineteenth century already suggests something about the spread of the syntactic distinction between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* in language use. Although Van Heule's prescriptive rule did not fail, the results in language use show that the effect was initially visible only in the region where the prescriptions were published, i.e. in Holland. From there, the prescriptive effect slowly spread geographically. In the eighteenth century, the distinction appeared more frequently in Zeeland, and after Southern grammarians also prescribed the syntactic distinction in the early nineteenth century, a few pamphlets from Brabant applied the distinction as well. In Vlaanderen, the norm did not take hold, as *hun(l.)* was used as the main pronoun in the accusative and dative case.

While Van Heule and his followers thus actuated a slowly progressing change at a geographical level, the influence of prescriptivism appears to stagnate at the level of the genre. Although it is necessary to confirm this conclusion in a larger corpus, throughout the investigated period, the impact of the prescribed case distinction remained largely confined to pamphlets. Administrative texts were influenced by prescriptivism to a smaller extent. Along with ego-documents, it is more likely that certain writers of these handwritten texts were aware of the norm, and thus applied the syntactic distinction, while other writers were not influenced. This suggests that the implementation of the case distinction between *hen(l.)* and *hun(l.)* was mainly limited to the elite circles of norm givers and other printed genres, which were edited and thus typically subject to influences 'from above'.

Chapter 10 – Discussion

1 Introduction

As the five case studies in this dissertation indicate, prescriptive success can take many forms, with influences ranging from the implementation of a new variant to the deceleration of a form that was widely applied in usage. Since these varying appearances were all denoted as (stronger or weaker) influences of prescriptivism, I now synthesise the observed effects into an overarching account of how prescriptivism can impact language change.

This account of prescriptive success is presented in different scenarios. The reasoning behind these scenarios is that each type of influence is often linked to a particular stage within the change, occurs in unique socio-historical contexts, involves specific discursive approaches, and influences certain groups of language users or genres. These are all principles governing the constraints of a particular type of influence. In total, eight (sub)scenarios are defined, which are categorised into five umbrella types of prescriptive influence. In addition to distinguishing different effects of prescriptivism, I thus take a typological perspective on my research findings, uncovering the social and structural properties underlying the different successes of prescriptivism.

For defining these scenarios, I depart from the factors that previous studies suggest may influence the success of prescriptivism (cf. Chapter 2). First, I identify the possible effects of prescriptivism based on two determinants that Rutten & Vosters (2021) proposed. I consider (1) the chronology of language change and (2) whether codifiers prescribed progressive or conservative norms, to discern different effects of prescriptivism along the S-curve of language change (cf. Anderwald, 2012). While the chronology of change reveals at what stage of the change prescriptivism influenced usage, the prescribed variants indicate whether norm givers successfully accelerated or slowed down a change in usage.

Next to delineating the effect of prescriptivism, I further define the scenarios by considering the discursive approaches that are employed by codifiers. I do this as Moschonas (2022, p. 33) hypothesised that strict prescriptions in the form of correctives proper are perhaps more influential than permissives. I thus determine whether certain discursive approaches lead to the observed effect in usage. Furthermore, based on the possible determinants of Rutten & Vosters (2021) – i.e. the nature of the variable, the complexity of the feature, and its metalinguistic salience – I ascertain which features are susceptible to the described effect. Defining what type of feature is prone to a specific influence of prescriptivism is possible because these three factors (i.e. nature, complexity, metalinguistic salience) formed the basis for the selection of features investigated in this dissertation (cf. Chapter 4). And lastly, I determine the reach of the observed effect – comprising the period, regions, and genres that are affected – and the duration of the effect. These aspects are based on the work of scholars like McLelland (2014), Vosters et al. (2014), Anderwald (e.g. 2016, 2019), and Rutten & Vosters (2021), who showed that prescriptive influence often occurs in specific socio-historical contexts (Vosters et al., 2014; Rutten & Vosters, 2021), is temporary, and restricted to specific genres or language users (McLelland, 2014; Anderwald, 2016, 2019). As such, the eight (sub)scenarios of prescriptive influence are defined in terms of the stage on the S-curve, the discursive approaches, the features susceptible to the described type of influence, the reach of the prescriptive effect, and the duration of the effect.

Although each of the scenarios of prescriptive influence is considered self-contained, there is some overlap between them in the sense that specific discursive approaches, for example, show up in more than one scenario but lead to a different outcome. Furthermore, the scenarios do not exist in isolation, implying that the occurrence of one scenario does not necessarily exclude the possibility of other scenarios of prescriptive influence. In fact, as will be illustrated later, different scenarios may form subsequent stages of prescriptive influence in the process of language change.

It is important to remark that this discussion of scenarios is by no means an exhaustive list of all the influences prescriptivism can have. It is likely that other case studies investigating different contexts or materials result in other or additional scenarios of prescriptive influence. In line with this, note that the scenarios described here derive from the case studies that were investigated in

this dissertation. For a few scenarios, I supplement my findings with those from recent historical-sociolinguistic research exploring prescriptive influence in the Dutch language area. The scenarios presented in this chapter are therefore restricted to the success of prescriptivism in the context of Dutch standardisation. The scenarios do not aspire to make claims or generalisations about prescriptive interference in other settings. Nonetheless, with these scenarios of prescriptive influence, I explicitly call for the facilitation of comparative sociolinguistic research in other contexts and languages.

In the remaining of this chapter, the eight (sub)scenarios are discussed and illustrated with examples from the relevant case studies. After this detailed presentation, the main features of each scenario are summarised in an overview of the discussed scenarios of prescriptive influence. This summary can be found at the end of this chapter.

Scenarios of prescriptive influence**1. Triggering a change**

In the context of invariability in usage, where only variant A is applied, codifiers initiate the dissemination of a new variant B. Their prescriptive efforts for the adoption of this variant B subsequently trigger language users in deliberately implementing the new form.

2. Accelerating an ongoing change

In instances of dynamic variability between (an outgoing) variant A and (an incoming) variant B, codifiers accelerate the transition towards variant B. The nuances of this scenario depend on the stage of the change in usage. I differentiate between **(a) diffusing the innovation**, and **(b) eradicating remaining variability**.

3. Slowing down an ongoing change

Also in the case of dynamic variability between (an outgoing) variant A and (an incoming) variant B, codifiers seek to halt the increase of variant B. Depending on their discursive approaches, norm givers aim for **(a) slowing down undesired innovations**, or **(b) reviving archaic usage**.

4. Discursive influence

The impact of codifiers is not always (immediately) apparent in language use. Prescriptive influence can be confined to the discursive level, with norm givers **(a) forming a discourse community**, and **(b) spreading social meanings**.

5. No probable influence

More often than not, prescriptivism does not have an effect on language use. Despite the prescriptive interventions, the desired impact on usage remains elusive.

2 Scenario 1: Triggering a change

The scenario in which norm givers initiate new changes, with innovative linguistic items finding their way to usage in a ‘from above’ fashion, is sometimes considered the default effect of prescriptivism. The case studies in this dissertation, however, confirm the findings of previous research (e.g. the contributions in Rutten et al., 2014a; Anderwald, 2016; Krogull, 2018) in that grammarians rarely have an impact on language use in the *actuation* stage of language change (cf. Weinreich et al., 1968, p. 186; Rutten & Vosters, 2021, p. 79). In fact, only in an exceptional case can norm givers be seen as innovators promoting new forms or constructions that were not or barely in use before.

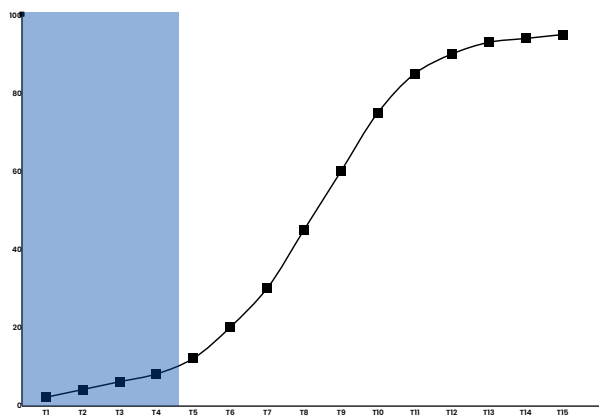


Figure 85: position of scenario 1 on the S-curve of language change

Although this scenario is not very common, I have found possible evidence of grammarians triggering a change at the incipient stage of the S-curve (cf. Figure 85). This appears to be true for two features that were investigated in this dissertation. Both the initial adoption of the spelling <aa> in closed syllables and the implementation of the case distinction between the grammatical pronouns *hen* and *hun* were attributed to prescriptive influence. In the case of the spelling feature, the triggering effect of prescriptivism is situated in disseminating the new variant <aa> into the language community before it is common in usage, while the actuating effect of prescriptivism is different for the grammatical feature. Here, prescriptivism does not introduce new variants, but it activates a case distinction that was not common in usage. A distinction based on case was

not new, of course. Mother-tongue language users naturally differentiate between forms based on case, for example, between the nominative and accusative case. Yet, the exact case distinction between the *hen* and *hun* was thus not operationalised in usage prior to the codification.

While norm givers introduced the case distinction between *hen* and *hun* in language use, they are not always the innovators of a change. In fact, it is quite rare that norm givers successfully introduce a completely new linguistic element in usage. However, even when they are not the very first ones to employ an innovation, they can still have initiated a change in the broader language community. The theoretical concept of *social networks* is therefore particularly relevant for explaining how codifiers may have started such a change in language use. In applying the theoretical principles of social networks to this scenario of prescriptive influence, I rely on the foundational work on social network structures of Granovetter (1973) and Milroy & Milroy (1985).

In the case of the spelling <aa>, codifiers were only among the first ones to employ the new spelling variant. In this case, the actual innovator of the change is probably not situated in the circle of the of norm givers but is rather a member of another social network. Since an innovating individual is typically at the margins of a network, they are known for maintaining different weak interpersonal ties with members of other social networks. As a result, the individual who first used the spelling variant can transmit the new form to members of other social networks, who in turn act as *early adopters* of the change. These early adopters are the ones who set the ball rolling, and this is probably where norm givers step in. As (very) early adopters of the innovation, norm givers are still ahead of the broader language community in using the spelling <aa>. As such, the first prescriptions for <aa> in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries could still have initiated a change in general usage.

Discursive approaches

One discursive approach characterises the two case studies that underpin this scenario. In both cases, grammarians promote one-form-one-function symmetry in usage. Codifiers thus not only explicitly prescribe the innovation, but also relegate the alternative variant to another context by structural reallocation (cf. Britain & Trudgill, 2005, pp. 184-187). As for the spelling feature,

grammarians mostly argued that the variant <ae> must be used for representing a diphthong or the Middle Dutch long *ē*, signalling that there was no longer a variant to represent the long /a/. In the case of the artificial case distinction, conversely, Van Heule (and his seventeenth-century followers) allocated distinct syntactic functions to the main personal pronouns that were already applied in usage. Although the norm givers allowed for some variation (mainly between *hen* and *ze*) in the accusative case, the codifiers explicitly indicated that the pronoun *hun* was expected only in the dative case. Since codifiers relegated the old spelling <ae> to other linguistic contexts and allocated distinct syntactic functions to the pronouns that were first used interchangeably as a direct and indirect object, the main approach of prescriptivists was to stress the structural need of implementing the innovation in usage.

Features

Since the scenario in which prescriptivism triggers changes in usage is rare, it is naturally subject to restrictions. First, in terms of features that are susceptible to this type of prescriptive influence.

The two case studies under review are both highly specific in their own way. The spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables is a prominent feature that is frequently employed in language use. Its high visibility and frequent usage, combined with the vehement normative discussions on the topic early on, may therefore have contributed to the adoption of the innovative spelling <aa> by individual language users.

Although the case distinction between plural personal pronouns is a less prominent feature, it too became a subject of early metalinguistic discussion. However, rather than introducing an entirely new variant, this grammatical case involved a syntactic distinction between two existing variants, i.e. *hen* and *hun*. While involving two main variants, this feature is more complex in linguistic embedding than the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables. The grammatical feature is also less frequently applied in usage and is therefore perhaps less visible among language users.

Despite the visible influence of prescriptivism on seventeenth-century language use, no clear patterns emerge to explain why prescriptivism succeeded in

initiating changes for these two features. Perhaps the early normative discussions on the topic during the period of variant selection by grammarians made these features susceptible to the initiating influence? It is anyhow clear that these are exceptional cases in which prescriptivism, for reasons still unknown, managed to introduce a new variant or distinction in usage.

Reach

When a change in usage progresses towards the (upper)middle part of the S-curve, the speed of the change is at its highest rate, and the innovation is thus picked up by increasingly more people. In the very beginning of the change, on the contrary, the innovation is still rare and does not reach many language users. This also explains why the scope of prescriptive influence is limited in the early stages of the change. In fact, when norm givers actuate a change in usage, their influence is limited to **individual language users**. These language users are often from the same region where the prescription appeared. In both case studies substantiating this scenario, individuals from **Holland** adapted their language practice after the initiating prescriptions were also published in Holland. An influence on language users from other regions is not ruled out, though. In terms of genre, writers of **printed genres** like pamphlets are influenced in both case studies, although also authors of handwritten documents may be impacted by the prescriptive interventions.

Duration

In both case studies, prescriptivism thus triggers a change in the language practice of individuals. If the change progresses to larger parts of the language community, and prescriptivism plays its part in the diffusion of the variant, the current scenario transforms into one of the following scenarios in which prescriptivism influences ongoing changes in usage.

3 Scenario 2: Accelerating an ongoing change

Different from the first scenario of prescriptive influence, which theoretically starts from previous invariability in usage, this scenario requires two or more linguistic variants in dynamic competition, and thus involves an ongoing change in usage. More specifically, the scenario covers the instances in which norm givers speed up the diffusion of an innovation.

This scenario is strongly embedded within the *transition* problem that is described by Weinreich et al. (1968, p. 184), who argue that the transfer of change takes place via “speakers with heterogeneous systems characterized by orderly differentiation”, pointing to contact between language users for diffusing linguistic innovations. This indicates that a change in usage can progress along the S-curve also without prescriptive interference, mostly via weak tie connections between social groups (Trudgill, 1983; Milroy & Milroy, 1985, p. 380). Since it is impossible to ascertain how the diffusion process would have evolved without prescriptive interference, Anderwald (2019, p. 93) alerts that we cannot establish with certainty whether codifiers actually influenced the acceleration of a change in usage. The discussion of this scenario should therefore be regarded as a mere possibility of norm givers exerting an influence on usage. Since such prescriptive effects may be visible at different stages of the S-curve, the distinction is made between two related scenarios: norm givers (a) diffusing the innovation, and (b) eradicating remaining variability.

3.1 A – diffusing the innovation

The effect of this (sub)scenario, norm givers diffusing an innovation, most likely occurs when the change is still growing, typically at the stages of new and vigorous or mid-range changes, although the diffusion may also reach the stage in which the change is nearing completion (cf. Labov, 1994; cf. Figure 86). Despite its wide scope on the S-curve, the overall trait of this scenario is that prescriptive influence does not lead to uniformity in usage. By spreading the change, codifiers solely cause a steeper rise in the adoption of the variant.

The case studies in this dissertation illustrate that the possibility of codifiers accelerating ongoing changes is more common than norm givers triggering new changes in usage. Multiple possibilities of codified norms influencing ongoing changes were uncovered. These examples serve for defining this scenario. I specifically refer to the case studies on the orthographic representation of long /a/ in closed syllables, the spelling of /t/ in *d*-stem verbs, and the accusative-dative distinction between the plural personal pronouns.

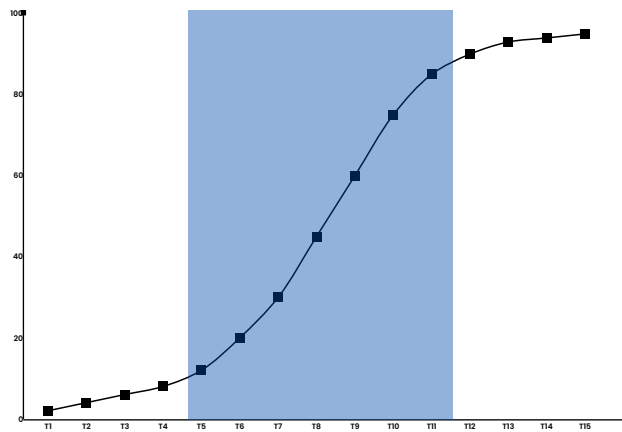


Figure 86: position of scenario 2A on the S-curve of language change

Discursive approaches

For prescriptivism to accelerate a change in usage, codifiers agreed that the ongoing change should be further implemented in usage. To achieve this effect, norm givers prescribed the incoming variant explicitly. The prescribed form often showed up in their implicit prescriptions as well, and grammarians used the variant as a majority form in their own usage.

Alongside the explicit prescriptions, most grammarians formulated an explicit proscription for the outgoing variant. They did so either by rejecting the variant for usage in the form of correctives proper (cf. Moschonas, 2020), as was the case with the spelling <t> and <d> in *d*-stem verbs, or by relegating the variant to other contexts. Several norm givers from the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century reallocated the new spelling variants <aa> and <dt> for usage in Holland (i.e. socio-stylistic reallocation). With these grammarians ascribing this specific

social meaning to the variants in crucial periods of nation building and identity formation, they also spread awareness of the socio-political traits expressed by these spelling shibboleths (Vosters, 2011, pp. 238-240).

While the structural reallocation of *hen* as accusative variant and *hun* as dative form was not shared by every single grammarian after Van Heule, Northern norm givers generally promoted this exact case distinction from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards. The accelerating effect of prescriptivism is therefore more likely after multiple grammarians formulated explicit prescriptions on the matter. The fact that normative comments by numerous codifiers were necessary to influence usage may indicate that a discourse community of norm givers is required for successfully speeding up a change in usage (cf. Watts, 1999; 2008). Grammarians within a discourse community also shared the same ideas about proper language use, and the involved codifiers often agreed on which variants to prescribe and proscribe. As such, the existence of a discourse community also implied increased uniformity in the prescriptions, which possibly aided in accelerating the change.

Features

The strength of the accelerating effect of prescriptivism possibly depends on the nature of the feature undergoing change (spelling vs. grammar). Although there is evidence that grammatical changes are subject to this type of influence, in comparison to the spelling variables that represent this scenario, the diffusion of the accusative-dative distinction is less progressed in usage. In fact, the two spelling changes which prescriptivism probably accelerated were progressed to the second part of the S-curve, whereas the influence in the grammatical change was particularly visible in specific genres and regions. This suggests that **spelling features** are more susceptible to the accelerating effect of prescriptivism.

An example in which grammarians presumably had a **large-scale influence** in speeding up an ongoing change is detected in the Northern Netherlands, where the new variant <aa> was massively implemented across all regions and genres in the eighteenth century. This spelling feature was probably subject to prescriptive influence at an earlier stage of the change (cf. scenario 1). It may therefore be the case that the **previous success of codifiers** lingered on and

caused a sequential influence in accelerating the diffusion of the innovation. However, also (1) the high **metalinguistic salience** of the feature, (2) its **high frequency** in general usage, and (3) the simple **opposition of two variants**, may have facilitated the strong accelerating effect across different regions and genres.

Such large-scale effects across the board are rather an exception than a rule, though. In other successful examples of this scenario, the influence of prescriptivism was less pronounced, restricted to **specific genres**, and the effect of prescriptivism was probably **strengthened by** the strong representation of the innovation in a **printed genre** (i.e. pamphlets). The strong influence of prescriptivism across different regions and genres is thus probably explained by the fact that the long /a/ in closed syllables is a feature that is exceptionally prone to prescriptive interference.

Reach

Following on the need of a discourse community to accelerate a change, it is no wonder that the increased diffusion is always situated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. More consistent normative practices characterise the later periods of standardisation, after all. What also aligns with the discourse community of grammarians, is the **standard language ideology** which was spread at a broader scale at the end of the eighteenth century. The need for a uniform written language, and the awareness of social values ascribed to linguistic features, was increasingly expressed, and disseminated ‘from above’ into the language community. Together with this standard language ideology, also the **institutionalisation of codified norms**, and a gradual **broadening of the target audience** of normative works emerged. These related factors are all covered in what Curzan (2014, p. 30) defines as *standardi[s]ing prescriptivism*. Since prescriptive success is limited to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this strand of prescriptivism is crucial in enabling norm givers to speed up an ongoing change in usage.

Although the standard language ideology turns out to be a determinant for grammarians accelerating a change, in a single instance, grammarians also facilitated the adoption of an innovation without the prevalence of the standard language ideology. This is the case for spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables, which was **highly salient** at a metalinguistic level, and contained **social**

significance in earlier periods. As a result, this feature had been subject to prescriptive influence in earlier stages of the change to <aa> (cf. scenario 1). While the standard language ideology was not at play when the variant strongly increased in Northern usage, it is important to consider that the social significance of the spelling was expressed by a variety of normative works, with target audiences ranging from poets and ministers to the wider public in accessible schoolbooks. The **broader social reach of the discursive approaches** may therefore also have enabled the large-scale increase of the variant in usage.

As was mentioned before, a large-scale effect of codifiers speeding up changes across different genres is less common and occurs only with one specific spelling feature. In other cases, norm givers succeeded only in accelerating a change in specific genres. This is apparent in the case study on the plural personal pronouns, where particularly pamphlets showed the prescribed case distinction. Ego-documents, conversely, always appear less susceptible to this type of influence. The case studies in this dissertation, moreover, show that pamphlets are not always directly influenced by prescriptivism. In the two spelling cases, the printed genre applies the innovation as a majority variant while norm givers also prescribed the form. As such, progressive genres of **printed texts may aid prescriptivism in diffusing the change** to other genres (cf. transition, Weinreich et al. 1968).

Since this effect of prescriptivism is primarily visible in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, also the socio-historical context may enable the further diffusion of a change. More specifically, the combination of the standard language ideology and the changed **socio-political context** of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands resulted in the diffusion of Northern innovations to Southern territories. This is illustrated in the case study on plural personal pronouns, for example, where the case distinction spread to the Southern Netherlands only in the nineteenth century. The diffusion of linguistic innovations to other geographical regions within this highly specific context was also indicated by Vosters (2011) and Vosters et al. (2014).

In sum, when prescriptivism succeeds in accelerating a change in usage, it is most likely with spelling features. This influence is typically seen in specific genres, though the increased visibility of the incoming variant in printed texts can also

accelerate its diffusion. However, ego-documents tend to be less affected by such prescriptions. Only in one exceptional case, the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables, prescriptivism exerted a particularly strong influence, impacting multiple genres and regions simultaneously. For prescriptivism to effectively speed up an ongoing change, a consistent discourse community of grammarians providing clear prescriptions is crucial. In this study, the accelerating effect was observed only after the target audience of normative works broadened at a societal level, thus limiting prescriptive influence to the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Duration

Since codifiers can accelerate the rate of diffusion on a wide span of the S-curve, this scenario of prescriptive influence is not necessarily restricted in duration. The examples from the case studies, however, indicate that **continuing prescriptive efforts** are required for a **lasting influence** on usage. If successful prescriptive injunctions appear for a limited time only, the accelerating effect soon fades. This is illustrated by the temporary increase of the spelling <d> in the Southern documents from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, where the frequency of the form strongly declined after the prescriptions changed to <dt>. This contrasts with the effect of the Northern prescriptions of the time, which continued promoting <dt>, and had a lasting influence on usage.

3.2 B – eradicating remaining variability

When norm givers succeed in accelerating ongoing changes in usage, the overall result may be twofold. Prescriptivism either pushes the change somewhat (or a lot) further along the S-curve, as is the case in scenario 2A, or this push can have a stronger result. The latter outcome leads to uniformity in (some parts of) language use, which indicates that the change in usage is complete. As prescriptivism eradicates remaining variability in language use, this (sub)scenario aligns with the suggestion that standardisation leads to the “suppression of optional variability in language” (Milroy & Milroy, 2012, p. 6). As this scenario discusses prescriptive influence in the final stage of the S-curve (cf. Figure 87), it can be regarded as a subsequent stage of scenario 2A. Yet, as I

will explain below, the scenario may also follow on other types of prescriptive influence.

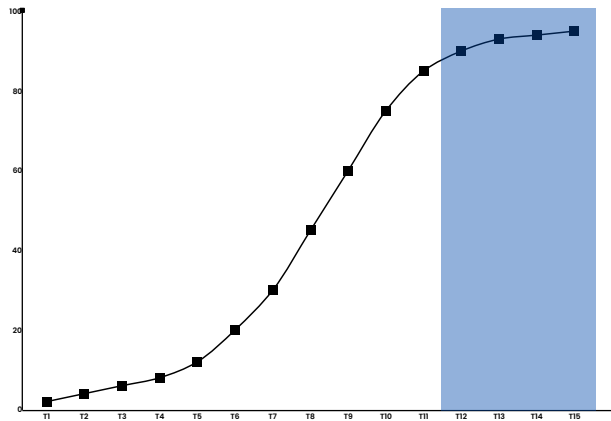


Figure 87: position of scenario 2B on the S-curve of language change

Although prescriptive influence leading to uniformity in usage is rare, the case studies in this dissertation revealed that such an effect of prescriptivism is possible in one highly specific socio-historical context. This is the case with far-reaching efforts of language planning, with the institutionalisation of codified norms advancing into a national language policy in the Northern Netherlands (cf. Siegenbeek, 1804; Weiland, 1805).

With this scenario evolving from the previous one, there is some overlap between the two scenarios, and I build on a few examples that were discussed there. More specifically, the examples in which the increase of the innovation eventually led to uniformity are now discussed in more detail. These examples are found in two case studies on spelling, i.e. the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables and the orthographic representation of the verb-final /t/. In addition, the completion of the change towards the comparative marker *dan* is also applied as an example. The latter instance of prescriptive influence is a consecutive stage of scenario 3A, comprising the slowdown of ongoing changes.

Since this scenario takes place only in the context of the national language policy in the Northern Netherlands, I supplement the results obtained in this dissertation with findings from the study of Krogull (2018), who specifically

investigated the effectiveness of the national language policy in the nineteenth century.

Discursive approaches

The discursive approaches that were discussed in scenario 2A, with a discourse community of norm givers explicitly prescribing the incoming form, on the one hand, and proscribing the outgoing variant in the form of correctives or permissives, on the other hand, are still relevant in scenario 2B.

With the emergence of the standard language ideology, more awareness about the 'correct' variant was disseminated to language users. Weinreich et al. (1968, p. 187) indicate that the process towards the completion of the change "may be accompanied by a rise in the level of social awareness of the change and the establishment of a social stereotype". As such, we can assume that the **social significance** of the incoming variant increased even more with the appearance of the national language policy in the nineteenth century. After all, people were probably aware that the national language policy aimed for spreading the only 'correct' and 'national' language to the entire language community.

Features

Since some of the examples of prescriptive influence derive from scenario 2A, particularly spelling features are susceptible for prescriptivism to eradicate variability from usage. Krogull (2018) detects an influence of prescriptivism creating uniformity only with spelling features. In this dissertation, however, also one grammatical feature showed a complete change that is probably related to prescriptive interference. As such, the prescriptive effect at the final stages of the S-curve is **not restricted to spelling variables**.

In fact, not the nature of the variable but the complexity of the feature appears to determine whether prescriptive influence is possible. For codifiers to complete a change in usage, spelling features and grammatical variables which lack complexity are more prone to prescriptive influence. This means that features with a **binary opposition** of variants, where the outgoing variant can simply be exchanged by the incoming innovation, most likely reach uniformity due to prescriptive influence. In addition, these binary features also require

limited complexity in terms of linguistic embedding. For example, when comparing the grammatical feature of comparative markers (cf. Chapter 7) to the orthographic representation of /xt/ that Krogull (2018) investigated, both have only a binary opposition of forms. However, only the grammatical variable reached uniformity after the national language policy. Since the spelling case is more complex, in that language users must know the etymology of word in order to apply the correct spelling practice, this could indicate that the more **superficial linguistic embedding** of the grammatical feature increased the likelihood for prescriptive success in this scenario.

Reach

As was explained before, the instances in which norm givers possibly induced uniformity in usage are not widespread, and they are limited to the highly specific context of the national language policy in the nineteenth century. The language regulations that appeared within this language policy were officially introduced and applied in the Northern Netherlands only. Although the possibility of spreading such Northern norms to the South was discussed in scenario 2A, no examples in which such diffusion patterns led to uniformity in Southern usage were detected in this study. The prescriptive effect of eradicating remaining variability is therefore also **restricted to the Northern Netherlands**, the area for which the language policy was intended.

When prescriptivism succeeded in eradicating variability in language use, the effect was most likely **restricted to specific genres**, often genres of which can be assumed that they are most prone to prescriptive influence, such as printed and/or edited texts (e.g. newspapers, pamphlets, administrative texts). In these documents, uniform writing practices were achieved even if the change was still in its early stages prior to the introduction of the national language policy.

To illustrate the matter, let us have a look at the spelling of /t/ in *d*-stem verbs, which was investigated in this dissertation (cf. Chapter 6) and by Krogull (2018). In both case studies, the incoming variant <dt> did not soar above 50% in the eighteenth century and reached (almost) uniform usage after the implementation of the language policy. This effect was achieved in newspapers (Krogull, 2018, p. 111), in pamphlets, and in the formal genre of administrative texts, while the proportions of the variant did not reach up to 65% in the other

(more informal or speech-like) genres. This at least points to considerable genre differences when it comes to the national language policy eradicating variability in usage.

In one case study, uniformity was achieved **across all genres**. Such a strong effect of eradicating variability occurred only with the spelling variant <aa> which already advanced to the upper half of the S-curve before the national language policy appeared.

Although I considered the possibility of a divergent effect – uniformity in specific genres versus uniformity in general usage – depending on the stage of the change prior to the implementation of the national language policy, this threshold ultimately proves irrelevant in this context. Not in the least because this would also require setting an upper bound on the S-curve, after which achieving uniformity in usage is less likely. After all, at the top stage of the curve, “the selective effect of having two forms to [...] choose from is again weak” (Denison, 2003, p. 58), and as Labov (1994, p. 66) explains, there probably is a threshold after which the pressure to change diminishes. This stagnation of the change in the tail of the S-curve is also shown in Krogull’s (2018, pp. 153-154) case study on the spelling of the sharp-long *ê*, where the proportion of the incoming variant was already at 90%, and barely increased after the appearance of the national language policy.

As such, thorough efforts of language planning, as those undertaken in the Northern Netherlands in the nineteenth century, can effectively eradicate – or suppress – variability in usage. However, this influence of prescriptivism is typically confined to the area where the policy is enforced and tends to impact printed or edited genres. An exception to this is the case of the long /a/ in closed syllables, where uniform writing practices are observed across all genres. The exceptionally strong effect seen in this instance is likely due to the long-standing history of prescriptive influence for this feature (cf. scenario 1-2A).

Duration

This scenario describes a highly specific case of prescriptive influence in the nineteenth century. The corpus data from this study do not reach beyond 1850, which makes it impossible to draw any empirically based statements on the

duration of the effectiveness of the official language policy. However, since some of Siegenbeek's (1804) and Weiland's (1805) codifications are still in force today, a lasting effect in maintaining uniformity may be presumed, at least for the features for which there was a continued endorsement of the norms established in the national language policy. Nonetheless, empirical investigations on late nineteenth- and twentieth-century precept and usage data are necessary to substantiate this claim.

4 Scenario 3: Slowing down an ongoing change

Like scenario 2, this scenario discusses prescriptive interventions in changes that are under way in usage. Scenario 3 therefore also entails contexts with dynamic variability between two or more variants, with an incoming variant gradually pervading language use. Contrary to the previous scenarios, where codifiers tried to accelerate ongoing changes, norm givers usually do not welcome changes which arose from 'from below'. Codifiers may therefore seek to prevent them from increasing in usage. Norm givers then attempt to halt disfavoured changes in different yet related ways, for example, by (a) slowing down undesired innovations, or by (b) reviving archaic usage.

4.1 A – slowing down undesired innovations

When norm givers notice undesired linguistic variants or constructions emerging in usage, they will make every effort to get rid of the form. Although a complete halt of the change may be the desired effect, if norm givers succeed in influencing usage, they often manage only in (temporarily) slowing down the ongoing change (cf. Anderwald, 2019).

As opposed to the scenarios that were discussed before, this kind of prescriptive influence is not necessarily restricted to a specific stage on the S-curve. Anderwald (2012, p. 44), however, notes that codifiers tend to observe linguistic innovations only when the frequency of the new form in usage has "progressed beyond a certain threshold", which she believes encompasses the incipient stage on the S-curve. Successful instances in which prescriptivism slows down changes are therefore highly unlikely in the earliest stage of the change.

In addition to the stage of the change, Anderwald (2012) draws attention to the rate of the change for grammarians to observe undesired innovations. She notices that especially rapid changes invoke strong criticism of grammarians (Anderwald, 2012, p. 44). The case studies in this dissertation also suggest that the rate of the change is instrumental in halting innovations from increasing in usage. This is illustrated in the case study on the comparative markers, where a rapid increase of *als* was attested in seventeenth-century usage. The use of the marker massively inclined from 8.6% in the sixteenth century to 70.3% in the seventeenth century. Consequently, in line with Anderwald's observations, norm givers were quick to criticise the change in the eighteenth century. These interventions of codifiers also appear successful, since a return to the prescribed marker *dan* was attested in the nineteenth-century usage.

This scenario of prescriptive influence is substantiated with the case studies on the comparative markers and the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables. In both cases, prescriptivism succeeds in slowing down the increase of an undesired variant when it is still progressing in the middle part of the S-curve (cf. Figure 88). These findings, however, do not imply that prescriptivism is only effective in that middle part of the change. In fact, further research is necessary to confirm that a rapid, yet still progressing change is most prone to be slowed down due to prescriptive interference.

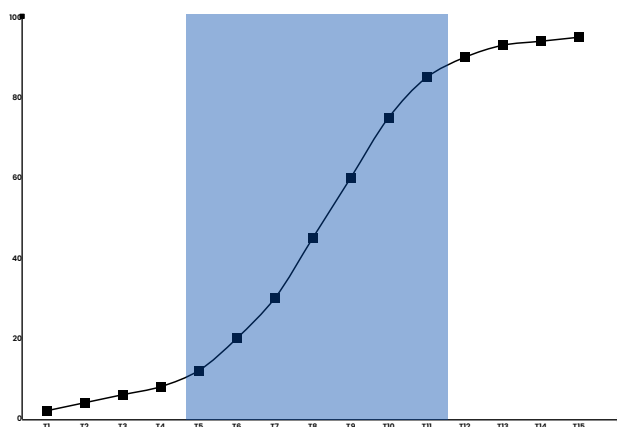


Figure 88: position of scenario 3A on the S-curve of language change

Discursive approaches

Like in other scenarios, norm givers often applied a combination of discursive approaches to remove undesired variants from usage. Almost all codifiers explicitly proscribed the innovation, sometimes in the form of correctives, but more often by reallocating the variant to another linguistic or socio-stylistic context. The comparative marker *als* was mostly reallocated at a structural level, with grammarians restricting the use of *als* to the linguistic context where it was admitted for usage, viz. as a marker in comparatives of equality. For the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables, Southern grammarians in the eighteenth century reallocated the spelling <aa> at a socio-stylistic level, since they relegated the variant for usage in Holland. With their metalinguistic evaluations of the spelling feature, these Southern norm givers also ascribed a socio-political stigma to both spelling variants. The stigmatisation of these forms at times of nation-building processes should therefore be regarded as a prescriptive strategy for removing the ‘Northern’ <aa> from Southern usage. In addition to these proscriptions, all norm givers also formulated a prescription to illustrate which variant they preferred for usage.

Features

Both features representing this scenario have a dichotomy of variants, and no or only a superficial linguistic embedding of variation. These characteristics of the features possibly make them more susceptible for prescriptive interference. I cannot confirm that prescriptivism fails to slow changes in more complex variables. However, the lack of success when grammarians try to revive a variant in a complex feature (cf. scenario 3B) suggests that prescriptivism is likely ineffective in slowing down a change as well.

Reach

The examples in which prescriptivism succeeds in slowing down a change are all situated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This restriction in terms of period indicates that this scenario was successful only in periods of *standardi[s]ing prescriptivism* (cf. Curzan, 2014); the strand that strongly aligned with nation building, the **ideology of creating a standard language** that represented the nation, and for that standard language to be used by the entire

public. As such, only normative works with a **broader social reach**, which were often used in pedagogical contexts, were able to influence general usage in a way that norm givers managed in holding back undesired usage.

In the two case studies that serve as successful examples of this scenario, **writers of edited texts (both printed and handwritten)** were influenced in the first place. As for the comparative markers, a few authors of pamphlets and administrative texts changed their language practice to the marker *dan* in the eighteenth century, while other genres showed the return to the prescribed variant in the nineteenth century. This genre difference is also visible in the case of the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables. When Southern grammarians stigmatised the spelling <aa> as ‘Northern’, the change towards the form stagnated in the pamphlets first. Other genres in the South were influenced to a lesser extent, in that they showed a small increase of the stigmatised <aa> in the nineteenth century. However, the incline of the variant was much less pronounced than it was for features which were not subject to socio-political stigmatisation. This comparison therefore suggests that the social meaning of the spelling variants facilitated the slowdown of the change to <aa> in the Southern Netherlands.

These findings imply that prescriptivism succeeds in slowing down an undesired change only in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Codifiers affect writers of edited genres in the first place but can also impact other genres when the standard language ideology knows a wider dissemination in the nineteenth century.

Duration

As Anderwald (2019, p. 103) concludes, the effect in which codifiers slow down changes is of a **temporary** nature in most cases. She explains that the change in usage is often reverted as soon as grammarians reduce the pressure. Completely abating the undesired innovation from usage is therefore rare.

In this dissertation, I only found one example of norm givers completely halting a change in usage. This is the case in the nineteenth-century North, where the comparative marker *als* disappeared from usage a few decades after the national language policy appeared (cf. scenario 2B). Yet, the form vanished only from

specific genres. This lasting effect in the Northern Netherlands is not surprising. Grammarians started only recently (i.e. in the eighteenth century) with their prescriptive efforts to eradicate the variant from usage, and they held pressure at least until the nineteenth century. The case studies contributing to this scenario therefore confirm that the prescriptive effect lasts if the normative pressure is maintained.

4.2 B – reviving archaic usage

Most of the time, norm givers are not satisfied with how language has evolved. According to Labov's *Golden Age Principle*, also grammarians believe that "at some time in the past, language was in a state of perfection" (Labov, 2001, p. 514). In their melancholy for language use from earlier times, codifiers can attempt to revive archaic writing practices. This scenario links up with what Curzan (2014, pp. 36-38) calls *restorative prescriptivism*, although it differs in that the norm givers in my corpus still aimed for advocating these archaic forms as the standard. The archaic variants they wanted to revive were thus not obsolete in usage yet.

Norm givers typically tried to revive archaic variants when they noticed the outgoing variant's (sudden) decline (in specific genres), as was the case with the velar diminutive suffix *-ken* when the form was being replaced by palatal counterparts in between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Also with slowly progressing changes, which sometimes span over a thousand years, codifiers made efforts in reviving the constructions in usage. This is the case for the loss of the genitive case, investigated by Scott (2014), Krogull (2018), and Krogull & Rutten (2021).

Mind that, in the case of a slowly progressing change, the middle part of the S-curve is a lot less steep when compared to the more rapid change of the diminutive suffix. As visualised in the idealised plot in Figure 89, a slowly progressing change, like the change from synthetic to analytical genitival constructions, therefore represents a long-stretched curve, and instead of observing almost the entire S-curve in a period of four centuries, the discussion here captures only a short time frame of the change.

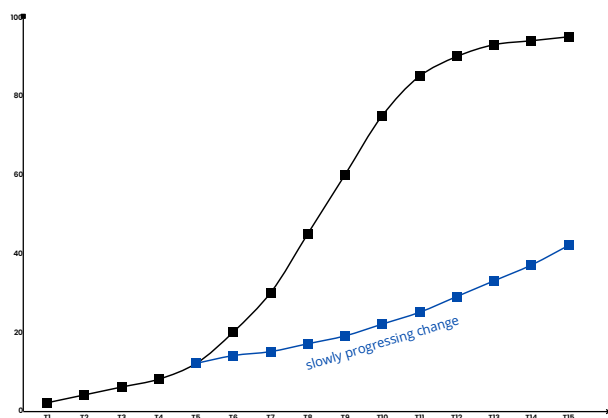


Figure 89: slowly progressing change

The position of this scenario on the S-curve is similar to that of the previous one in scenario 3A (cf. Figure 90). The threshold for codifiers to observe a change (Anderwald, 2012) also applies here, making prescriptive interference unlikely in the incipient stage of the change. For delineating this type of influence on the upper side of the S-curve, I rely on the one case study in Dutch where codifiers succeed in reviving an archaic variant. The case study I am referring to is the genitive case, investigated by Krogull (2018) and Krogull & Rutten (2021), who noticed that low frequencies of the outgoing variant suffice for (temporarily) reviving the form in usage. These studies thus suggest that prescriptive influence is still possible when the change – in this case, the loss of the genitive – has progressed until the upper half of the S-curve.

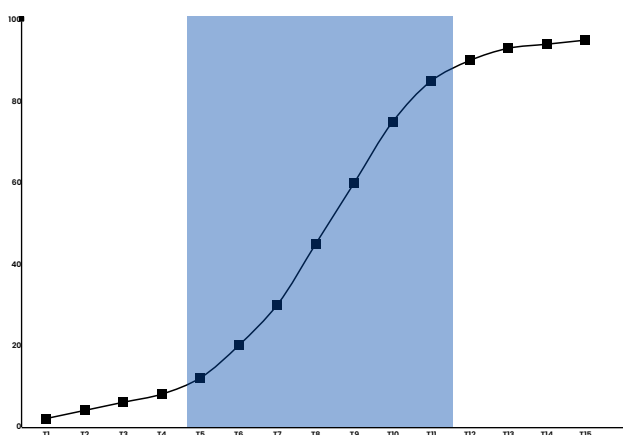


Figure 90: position of scenario 3B on the S-curve of language change

A successful revival by prescriptivism is thus attested for the synthetic genitival constructions, which had been in decline for several centuries. In the eighteenth century, the inflectional genitive declined to 36% in the study of Krogull (2018) and Krogull & Rutten (2021). However, they also illustrate that the synthetic genitive experiences a revival due to prescriptive interference in the nineteenth century. These prescriptive attempts for reviving the genitive were successful only with feminine and plural nouns, though. This is probably because the feminine and plural *der*-constructions were more frequently used compared to the masculine and neuter *des*-forms, which were already marginal at the time (Scott, 2014, p. 121; Krogull & Rutten, 2021). Although some linguistic environments are less prone to change, and even resist change altogether (Labov, 1994, p. 66; Nevalainen, 2015), for prescriptivism to successfully revive an archaic variant, the use of the form must probably reach beyond fixed constructions and formulaic expressions (cf. Simons & Rutten, 2014, p. 67). While the prescriptive effect is thus not necessarily restricted to a specific stage on the S-curve, the interferences plausibly have the highest success rate when the variant to be revived is used beyond fixed constructions.

Discursive approaches

In most instances in which grammarians tried to revive archaic writing practices, their discursive approaches were rather mild. Codifiers often **prescribed the new form alongside the archaic variant**. Some of these grammarians additionally **stigmatised** the incoming variant as ‘new’, while they considered the older variant ‘traditional’, ‘refined’ or ‘dignified’. The Northern codifier Huydecoper (1730), for example, ascribed such a **praising social meaning** to the diminutive suffix *-ken* when the form had almost disappeared from Northern usage. Furthermore, different codifiers opted for **explaining away variability** based on socio-stylistic differences, as Ten Kate (1723, I, p. 338) did for the genitive case. This grammarian generally considers stylistic differences in his prescriptions, and also for the genitive, he expected analytical forms like *des* only in the *Hoogdravende* ‘sublime’ style, whereas the analytical form *van den* was reallocated to less formal styles of writing. Other grammarians structurally relegated the genitival constructions to specific linguistic contexts to proof the relevance of applying both the new and the older form.

Explicit proscriptions, in which the incoming variant is entirely discarded for usage, are not very common in this scenario. However, in some individual normative arguments, grammarians do not mention the incoming variant in their comments, and as such, they **'erase'** the variant from the linguistic repertoire as if it did not exist (cf. Irvine & Gal, 2000). This strategy is applied by Weiland (1805) in his prescription on the genitive. As opposed to his predecessors, who increasingly allowed for both constructions, the Northern codifier is more conservative and prescribes only the synthetic genitive forms as part of the national language policy (Krogull, 2018, pp. 215; Rutten, 2019, p. 260). Since the genitive was indeed revived after Weiland's grammar appeared, such strict prescriptions are perhaps more successful than milder attempts in which the archaic variant is prescribed in specific context, next to the incoming suffix. The latter approach was taken by codifiers who tried – but failed – to revive the diminutive suffix *-ken* in the eighteenth century.

Features

Based on the case studies in this dissertation and the other studies that substantiate this scenario, it seems that norm givers particularly aimed for reviving **grammatical features**. Older variants used for the diminutive suffix and the genitive were commented upon with praise, while similar evaluations are rarely found for spelling features.

Since the synthetic genitive was successfully revived in usage (Krogull & Rutten, 2021), and the velar diminutive suffix did not enjoy such a resurgence, this could indicate that features which are rapidly evolving from one variant to the other, and which consist of multiple variants and a complex linguistic embedding of variation, are less susceptible for the revival of an older variant. After all, the diminutive suffix *-ken* gradually changed from velar to different, more palatal forms in a relatively short period of time (cf. Chapter 8). When some grammarians tried to revive the velar suffix, the swift dynamics of this feature may have obstructed the revival of the form in usage. The loss of the genitive case, conversely, is a **slowly progressing change** in usage, with only two possible variants (but with a complex linguistic embedding within the synthetic genitive forms). The **binary opposition of variants** and the slowly progressing change may therefore have facilitated the success of the revival of the genitive case.

Reach

Although this scenario is based on just one successful and one failed example of prescriptivism reviving an archaic variant, it is still possible to provide a careful assessment of the extent of influence.

First, it is important to note that, despite its slow decline in usage, the synthetic genitive remained prescribed by codifiers in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. While codifiers gradually became more tolerant towards the analytical constructions at the end of the eighteenth century, the prescriptions again shifted to synthetic forms in the early nineteenth century (Rutten, 2019, p. 260). Only when Weiland (1805) prescribed the synthetic genitive as part of the national language policy, a revival of *der* forms was attested in usage. This is to say that a discourse community of grammarians, several of which already targeted their prescriptions at a broader audience, did not influence usage with their attempts to revive the synthetic genitive. The prescriptive efforts were thus only successful with the **culmination of institutionalised prescriptivism into the national language policy** in the nineteenth century (Krogull, 2018; Krogull & Rutten, 2021). The failed attempts for reviving the diminutive suffix *-ken*, conversely, were less institutionalised, as they were only shared by a few grammarians from the eighteenth century. It is therefore less likely that prescriptivism succeeds in reviving a variant when the archaic forms is backed only by individual codifiers.

In the success story of the revived genitive case, the prescriptive effect is most pronounced in **newspapers** as an edited and printed genre, and in the handwritten **diaries and travelogues**, which are perhaps also subject to editorial interventions. Personal letters are influenced to a smaller extent (Krogull, 2018, p. 224). As such, genres which are more prone to an influence ‘from above’ due to some kind of editorial intervention, show the strongest effect of prescriptivism in this scenario.

Duration

Alike in the previous scenario, there is **no evidence for a lasting impact** on usage based on our empirical data. Although this stance thus requires further investigation, given the findings in scenario 3A, it could be hypothesised that a

continued pressure of norm givers is necessary for maintaining the reviving effect in usage.

5 Scenario 4: Discursive influence

So far, I have discussed possible effects of prescriptivism that are visible in language use. Apart from these linguistic effects, norm givers may also have an impact that is not (immediately) observed in usage. In fact, any linguistic effect of prescriptivism is preceded by a discursive influence in which language users are made aware of the existence of a norm. In this scenario, I discuss two options of discursive influence. The first (sub)scenario involves the context where norm-giving authorities influence fellow codifiers, and as such, they form a discourse community of normative practice. In a second (sub)scenario, I discuss the context in which metalinguistic activities spread social meanings into the language community.

5.1 A – forming a discourse community

Previous scholars, and most notably Milroy (2001, p. 535) claimed that language standardisation is first and foremost a metalinguistic phenomenon, which has the principal effect of spreading “the consciousness [...] of a ‘correct’, or canonical, form of language” into the language community (cf. also Rutten et al., 2014b, p. 11). This discursive influence of standardisation is also encapsulated in the standard language ideology, which comprises the idea that one variety acts as the only correct variety in a language community.

Before that standard language ideology was disseminated into the entire language community, the idea of standardisation was shared by a relatively small and elite network of norm givers who constructed the normative discourse on ‘good’ and ‘proper’ language use (Rutten & Vosters, 2021, p. 78). The corpus of normative works that is applied in this study demonstrates that multiple language authorities – particularly literary authors, ministers, and grammarians – engaged in metalinguistic discussions to codify the Dutch language in normative works. The authors of these grammars were not necessarily sharing personal ties with one another (Busse et al., 2018, pp. 436-437). Without actually

knowing who else is part of the norm-giving community, these codifiers (unknowingly) formed a network that contributed to norm dissemination. This network can be called a *discourse community* of grammarians (cf. Watts, 1999, 2008). By positioning themselves within normative practices such as grammar writing, norm givers also established a *discourse tradition*. In this tradition, grammars and other normative works emerged as a distinct genre, inheriting (para)textual features from earlier normative works (McLelland, 2021, p. 268). Before the codifications of norm givers thus spread to the wider language community, the standardisers influenced each other at a discursive level. It is this type of influence that is discussed in this scenario.

Such a discourse community is not related to the stage of language change and the position on the S-curve. However, the existence of a discourse community is an important step in the standardisation process, and more specifically in between the codification of the norm, and the implementation thereof by the wider language community (cf. Haugen, 1966, 1972, 1987). After all, several of the scenarios of prescriptive influence that were discussed in this chapter pointed to the importance of a discourse community for prescriptivism to have a visible impact on language use.

The discursive influence between norm givers is also illustrated in the case study on the comparative markers. In this case, the social significance that was ascribed to the literary language use of Vondel resulted in the codification of the marker *dan*. As such, after Vondel (and other literary authors in the seventeenth century) started applying that variant, the first prescription for *dan* was formulated by Huydecoper (1730), who explicitly referred to Vondel's exemplary usage. Many (elitist) grammarians after Huydecoper adhered to his example in prescribing and using that preferred form. This influence of Huydecoper on other grammarians took place before the prescriptions for *dan* reached the wider language community (cf. scenario 3A). The discursive influence that Huydecoper exerted on his followers is even more apparent with the explicit references to the grammarian, and the copying practices from one normative work to the other. The case study on the comparative markers is therefore a compelling example to illustrate that eighteenth-century codifiers were discursively influenced by an authoritative predecessor, before this ideology of 'proper' or 'standard' usage reached the wider language community.

Discursive approaches

In the case of Dutch, the most authoritative norm givers who influenced later grammarians are part of the tradition of Vondelianists. Norm givers like Moonen (1706), Séwel (1708, 1712), and Huydecoper (1730) explicitly rely on Vondel for setting the norm, and in turn, they are the authorities that are referred to by later grammarians. The discursive influence that these codifiers had on fellow grammarians was already indicated by Rutten (2019, pp. 54-55), who explained that civil grammars in the second half of the eighteenth century were merely simplifications of earlier elitist grammars that were published in the first half of the century (cf. Chapter 2). Since the chain reaction of norm givers influencing each other presumably occurred **spontaneously**, norm givers did not employ deliberate strategies for the formation of a discourse community. However, the **explicit references to earlier codifiers**, and the prescriptions which are often **literally copied** from one grammar to the other, clearly indicate that norm givers were influenced by their predecessors.

Features

Since the formation of a discourse community is strongly embedded within the **socio-historical context** in which language standardisation took place, this scenario of prescriptive influence does not apply more (or only) to specific linguistic features. Although the existence of a discourse community is more visible for features which are frequently discussed in normative works, the concept of norm givers influencing each other at a discursive level should be considered a **macro-level phenomenon** that operates in contexts of deliberate language standardisation.

Reach

While the formation of a discourse community is situated in the eighteenth century, it becomes an increasingly institutionalised enterprise with the emergence of the standard language ideology. From the moment that the ideology of a correct and homogenous form of language emerged and spread to the broader society, **new codifiers and institutions** probably **joined the discourse community**, as is shown by the numerous schoolbooks that

underpinned and copied the prescriptions of Siegenbeek (1804) and Weiland (1805) in the nineteenth century (Schoemaker, 2018).

Furthermore, the prevalence of this Northern discourse community also spread to the Southern territories when the socio-political context changed in the early nineteenth century. More specifically, the **dominance of the North** during the period of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands had the implication that the prescriptions of Northern grammarians **were implemented by most codifiers in the South**. This is illustrated in different case studies in this dissertation. In the case study on the spelling of the verb-final /t/, for example, Southern codifiers abruptly changed their prescriptions from <d> to the Northern <dt> in the first half of the nineteenth century (cf. also Vosters et al., 2014). The same is true for the Northern accusative-dative distinction between *hen* and *hun*, which Southern grammarians adopted only from the early nineteenth century onwards. Also numerous metalinguistic comments, in which Southern codifiers explicitly referred to Siegenbeek (1804) and Weiland (1805), indicate the discursive influence of Northern codifiers on Southern colleagues in the nineteenth century. This is clearly shown in the citation of the Flemish grammarian De Simpel (s.d. [1827]), who explains in the preface of his *Taalkundige Tweespraak*:

ik heb in de Tweespraak de spraakkunst van den heer Weiland ordelijk opgevolgd; en al dat tegen derzelver voorgedragen taalregels en de spelling van den heer Siegenbeek, van de Vlaamsche Taalleeraren, is opgeworpen, bijgebracht; de strijdige gevoelens opgewogen, en den lezer, zoo veel het mij immers mogelijk was, daarvan de waarde doen kennen
(De Simpel, s.d. [1827], p. 9)

‘I have systematically followed Mr. Weiland’s grammar in the *Tweespraak* and addressed all objections raised against its linguistic rules, as well as against Mr. Siegenbeek’s spelling, brought forward by the Flemish language teachers. I have weighed the conflicting opinions and, as much as I was able, made the reader aware of their significance’

As such, the formation of a discourse community of normative practice is one of the most obvious effects that prescriptivism exerted during periods of language standardisation. While the discursive influence between codifiers is not explicitly investigated in this study, the references to predecessors were often

made explicit and were attested in the normative component in each of the case studies investigated in this dissertation. What is more, as previous scenarios have indicated, the existence of such a discourse community is often a prerequisite to observe a linguistic effect of prescriptivism in usage. In many cases, the discursive influence between grammarians thus precedes the (large-scale) prescriptive impact on general usage.

5.2 B – spreading social meanings

A discursive influence of prescriptivism is not restricted to fellow codifiers and other members who are closely connected to the elite community of norm givers, of course. In formulating prescriptions and evaluating variants as ‘good’ or ‘correct’ forms of Dutch, while other variants are classified as dialectal forms, mistakes or ‘incorrect’ usage, norm givers disseminate social meanings and awareness about stigmatised variants into society.

The clearest example of prescriptivism spreading social meanings can be seen with the emergence of the standard language ideology, when the metalinguistic discourse becomes divided between standard and non-standard usage. Grammarians then increasingly formulate evaluative judgements on which variants are considered ‘standard’ and ‘non-standard’. The idea that there is such a thing as standard and non-standard usage, and that this ideology spreads among language users, is therefore one of the most obvious influences of prescriptivism (cf. Rutten, Vosters & Vandenbussche, 2014b, p. 11).

Apart from spreading awareness of the standard language into society, norm givers also disseminate other types of social meanings and stigmatisation. As some of the previously discussed scenarios of prescriptive influence indicated, grammarians form evaluative opinions of linguistic variants as an approach to change language use. For example, in the case of the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables, Southern grammarians ascribed the social meaning ‘Hollandic’ to the incoming variant <aa>. Together with prescriptions for the ‘Southern’ variant <ae>, prescriptivism managed to influence Southern usage with this social evaluation. While the stigmatisation of variants had linguistic consequences in this case study, this is certainly not always the case. In fact, the impact of norm givers is more often restricted to the discursive level, in that

prescriptivists solely spread the social meaning without changing the linguistic behaviour.

Discursive approaches

Grammarians commonly invoke social evaluations of linguistic variants as arguments for their prescriptions. For example, the social meaning of ‘correct’ versus ‘incorrect’ usage, as part of the standard language ideology, is reflected in Weiland’s (1799) prescription on the comparative marker. The grammarian clearly attributes the social meaning of ‘incorrectness’ to the marker *als*, while *dan* is considered the standard variant:

Eindelijk moet nog aangemerkt worden, dat als zeer dikwijls, schoon verkeerdlijk, in de plaats van dan, achter den vergrootenden trap der bijvoegl. naamwoorden [...] gebruikt wordt, b.v. zoeter als, voor dan, [...] Deze misstelling, waarvoor men zich zorgvuldiglijk moet wachten, is, onmiddellijk na de komst van den Hertog van Alva (1568) in gebruik gekomen
(Weiland, 1799, p. 223)

‘Finally, it should be noted that *als* is very often, though incorrectly, used in place of *dan* after the comparative degree of adjectives, e.g. *zoeter als* instead of *zoeter dan*. This incorrect usage, which one must carefully avoid, came into use immediately after the arrival of the Duke of Alba (1568)’

Apart from evaluations related to the ‘standardness’ of a form or construction, other social evaluations also accompany prescriptions. The case study on the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables is the most apparent example for illustrating that codifiers stigmatised linguistic forms in their prescriptions. In the seventeenth century, for example, multiple Hollandic codifiers formulated an evaluative judgement for rejecting the spelling <ae>. Most of them argued that the variant represented the sound of the long /a/ that was used in the local Hollandic dialect, which probably made language users aware of the stigma that was ascribed to the spelling as well. In this case, however, codifiers not only had a discursive influence, as they were able to reinforce the shift to the prescribed <aa>.

Social evaluations are generally formulated by **ascribing a stigma to the form**, e.g. ‘variant x is used by the working class’, or by **relegating the variant to**

another context or register, e.g. ‘variant x should be used in elevated styles of writing’. The latter strategy, in which writing styles are differentiated, is strongly associated with what Curzan (2014, pp. 33-36) calls *stylistic prescriptivism*.

Features

It goes without saying that features that are prone to social evaluation score high on norm givers’ awareness of the forms, with codifiers explicitly commenting on the feature in their normative works. Social evaluation thus takes place with features that are noticed by grammarians. In the case of strong metalinguistic judgement, these features often grow into *markers* or *stereotypes*, as Labov (2001, pp. 196-197) describes **salient features** of which the social or stylistic stratification is (strongly) marked (cf. also Silverstein, 2003).

Although different kinds of variables undergo social evaluation, in his research on language variation and change in the period of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, Vosters (2011, pp. 183-184) notes that **especially spelling features** were applied as markers for expressing a political or religious identity. Although spelling is certainly one of the more “conscious aspects of language” (Hickey, 2000, p. 57), these findings do not imply that other written features are not being socially evaluated or stigmatised. Case studies in other languages, like German (e.g. Langer, 2001) and English (e.g. Yáñez-Bouza, 2014, 2016, Anderwald, 2014a, 2020), indicate that grammatical features are equally prone to social evaluation by grammarians. Also in this research, the case study on the diminutive suffix shows that norm givers evaluated the suffix *-ken* as ‘dignified’ in the eighteenth century.

Reach

In the case studies investigated in this dissertation, codifiers attributed stigmas to linguistic variants, particularly of spelling features that were deeply rooted in the socio-historical and language-political context of **nation building** (cf. Vosters, 2011). The case studies in this dissertation showed that such highly specific historical settings may invoke stigmatisation or may affect the intensity of an existing stigma. For example, an incipient **socio-political stigma** (i.e. ‘Northern’ vs. ‘Southern’) **intensified** strongly in periods in which identity formation was prevalent, as was the case before and during the United Kingdom

of the Netherlands. This probably also increased **awareness of socio-political stigmas** among language users.

When it comes to language users' consciousness of stigmatised forms, language users may have been aware of the social or stylistic stratification of variation *before* grammarians started stigmatising the form. Although it is difficult to determine whether historical language users were indeed aware of stigmas ascribed to specific forms, it is important to consider the possibility that grammarians simply captured the 'talk about talk' that was already circulating within society. The effect of grammarians spreading social meanings may therefore be twofold: in line with the linguistic effects described in scenario 1, codifiers may be among the first to observe indicators of variation to **trigger stigmatisation**. In line with scenario 2, conversely, codifiers may **reinforce** the existing social meaning, not to create it anew, but to keep it alive and to **further spread** it throughout society. By generating and strengthening these social evaluations, the scrutinised features may also rise in Labov's (2001) *hierarchy of salience*, with or without influencing language use.

Note, however, that prescriptivists are not the only sources that stigmatise and create social awareness of linguistic features. Social evaluation and stigmatisation can also take place in other texts, like stylistic sources and literary texts.⁷⁶

Duration

The duration of stigmatisation and the awareness of metalinguistic judgements depends on many factors, such as the kind of stigma, the (changes in the) socio-historical context, the position of the feature in the hierarchy of salience, the lifespan of the stigma in metalinguistic works, and so on. In some instances of social evaluation, the stigma that historical codifiers ascribed to features lives on until today (for an example, see Anderwald, 2020). The same applies to the divide in the metalinguistic paradigm between standard and non-standard usage. After all, the standard language ideology that emerged in the second half of the eighteenth century remains influential to this day.

⁷⁶ For a historical perspective, see for instance Beal (2009, 2017) and Hodson (2017) on English.

6 Scenario 5: No probable influence

The final scenario of prescriptive influence that is discussed here is the scenario where codifiers fail to influence usage. Although the focus of this study was primarily on the instances in which prescriptivism was successful, a few factors potentially indicate why codifiers fail to exert an influence. These unsuccessful interventions of prescriptivism are captured in this scenario, which should be read only as possible hypotheses for prospective research into failed attempts of historical prescriptivism.

Discursive approaches

It goes without saying that features changing **below the radar** of norm givers are not picked up by codifiers in their normative works and are thus automatically excluded from any type of prescriptive influence. The different case studies in this dissertation, however, also indicate that codifiers who **only** use the codified form in their **own usage**, and who additionally touch upon the linguistic item **implicitly**, do not impact language use. This is illustrated, for example, in the case study on the verb-final /t/, where the implicit prescriptions for <t> in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries did not lead to an increase of the variant in usage. Also the implicit prescriptions for the diminutive suffix *-ken* in the early seventeenth century did not halt the demise of the velar suffix in Northern usage. Explicit prescriptions, which clearly aim for raising awareness of the topic, therefore appear necessary for prescriptivism to exert an impact on general usage. For influencing fellow codifiers, conversely, the language practice of an authoritative writer or grammarian suffices for prescriptivism to have an impact (cf. scenario 4A).

The case studies in this dissertation also suggest that solely formulating explicit comments is not sufficient to influence general language use. **Explicit prescriptions** which are set out to initiate new **variants that deviate from the selected norm** are also rarely successful. The most apparent example from this research derives from a seventeenth-century grammarian. The Brabantine Bolognino (1657) is known for formulating prescriptions which differ from the common practice at the time. For example, he prescribed the variant <á> instead of the usual <ae> or <aa> for representing the long /a/ in closed syllables, and

for the diminutive suffixes, he believed the suffix *-tien* was more suited than the variant *-tjen*. Although previous research indicates that such prescriptions may temporarily affect language users in certain networks, often close to the circle of the innovating grammarian, deviant prescriptions are **not likely to experience success at a broader scale** (Rutten & Vosters, 2010a; 2010b; Vosters et al., 2014). These failed attempts of prescriptivism are probably linked to the fact that innovating prescriptions are often articulated only by one or a few codifiers, and thus **lack support** from a larger group of norm givers. In fact, multiple of the scenarios of prescriptive influence indicated that prescriptions were successful only when they were backed by several codifiers or even a discourse community of normative practice.

Features

In terms of features, the case studies in this dissertation showed that prescriptivism is less likely to influence usage when features show some kind of **complexity**.

Features consisting of **multiple variants and a complex embedding of variation** appear less prone to a linguistic influence of prescriptivism. This is illustrated by the case study on the plural personal pronouns. Although the use of *hen* and *hun* was subject to prescriptive influence in printed genres and affected some individual language users from other genres, the visible impact was considerably lower in this case study than it was for other (grammatical) features. Although the distinction between the pronouns appears quite simple, it is more complex than it seems at first sight. For instance, language users must know the difference between the accusative and dative case in order to apply the distinction between the pronouns correctly. Furthermore, the prescribed variants extend beyond the two main variants *hen* and *hun*. The variant *ze* is also prescribed as an alternative form, yet to make matters even more difficult, *ze* is only prescribed in the accusative case. Moreover, for the feminine grammatical gender, other pronouns than *hen* and *hun* are prescribed and used. As such, it is safe to say that this feature shows itself a linguistically more complex feature than, let us say, the comparative marker. This possibly indicates why the case distinction between the plural personal pronouns is less susceptible to a large-scale effect of prescriptivism.

A similar example in which complexity in norms possibly acts as a hindering factor for prescriptive influence is found in the case study on the diminutive suffix. While this grammatical feature is complex at a language-internal level, in that it comprises different allomorphs within one suffix (e.g. *-tje*, *-etje*, *-pje*, *-je*), language norms also show complexity in explaining variation. As was discussed in Chapter 8, grammarians in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sometimes proposed **a multitude of exceptions to the general norm**. Codifiers often promoted velar and palatal suffixes, which were consequently attributed to diverging linguistic contexts. The linguistic principles governing the variable prescriptions were also not clearly pronounced and were not consistent between the codifiers. Moreover, the patterns of variation that were described in language norms were certainly not attested in actual usage. For example, the velar suffix *-ken* which was part of the discussed mixed prescriptions, almost disappeared from Northern usage in the eighteenth century. As such, any influence of these complex prescriptions on usage is ruled out. This case study therefore suggests that complex prescriptions with intricate exceptions to the general rule are also less susceptible for implementation in language use. After all, when prescriptions for the diminutive suffix became more uniform at the end of the eighteenth century, and thus only promoted the suffix *-je(n)*, a possible influence of prescriptivism emerged. It is therefore less likely that the earlier lack of prescriptive influence can be attributed (only) to the feature's language-internal structure. The complexity and inconsistency of the prescriptions likely disrupted prescriptive influence as well (cf. Poplack et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the findings from this research suggest that developments in spoken usage may undermine the impact of prescriptivism on written usage. Considering the case studies where prescriptivism was not successful, or where prescriptivism was influential only at a very restricted scale, we are looking at the diminutive suffix, on the one hand, and the accusative-dative distinction between the personal pronouns, on the other hand. As was mentioned before, both are complex grammatical features. Contrary to the spelling variables that were investigated, however, grammatical features are also used in speech. Grammatical patterns in writing may therefore show **interference with the spoken language**. More specifically, in the case of the diminutive suffix, the change from velar to palatal suffixes first took place in speech, before codifiers prescribed the suffix *-je(n)* for written usage (cf. Chapter 8). As was explained earlier, Northern codifiers also prescribed *-ke(n)* in the eighteenth century, while

the form had practically disappeared from Northern usage. In general usage, it was thus very uncommon to apply the velar suffix at that time. Given that the change occurred in speech first, we can only imagine how outdated the velar *-ke(n)* must have sounded in spoken usage. The fact that spoken usage preceded the change in the written language may therefore offer an additional explanation for why the prescriptions for *-ke(n)* were not implemented in writing.

A similar argument can be made for the accusative-dative distinction between the plural personal pronouns *hen* and *hun*. These forms were used interchangeably as a direct and indirect object before the case distinction was introduced in the seventeenth century (cf. Chapter 9). While other codifiers and printed genres gradually adopted the proposed case distinction, no large-scale influence of prescriptivism was detected across other genres. Also when other grammatical features – like the comparative marker and the diminutive suffix – were prone to prescriptive influence in the nineteenth century, the implementation of the accusative-dative distinction was restricted to individual language users. The fact that this introduced case distinction between *hen* and *hun* **contradicts native speaker intuition**, may explain why the distinction was primarily implemented in texts that were subject to editorial interventions.

While the complexity of the feature and the interference with the spoken language might imply that grammatical variables are not – or at least less – influenced by prescriptivism, this seems like an overly simplistic conclusion. Especially since the prescriptions for another grammatical feature, i.e. the comparative marker, were successful across the board. In that case, however, we observe a very swift change from *dan* to *als* in seventeenth-century usage. Due to the rapid nature of the change – *dan* sharply declined over just a few decades – it is likely that the variant was not yet considered **uncommon or archaic in usage**. This is further supported by the fact that the form was still relatively common in the seventeenth century, occurring in about 25% of the instances prior to the prescriptions for *dan*. In this respect, the comparative marker differs from the other grammatical features that were investigated. While the prescriptions for the comparative marker *dan* were not too far removed from common usage, the prescribed suffix *-ke(n)* was archaic in Northern usage, and the case distinction between plural pronouns simply felt unnatural for mother-tongue language users. The fact that the comparative marker *dan* was thus still common in usage at the time of prescriptive interventions may explain the

success of prescriptivism. Additionally, the relatively simple nature of this variable, with two variants present in writing (both of which were probably also used in speech), likely contributed to the successful implementation of these grammatical prescriptions in usage.

7 Summary

1. Triggering a change

embedding in Dutch language history - Prescriptivism actuates a change in usage in the period that Holland experiences its 'Golden Age'. Standardisers from this region initiate variant selection and codify the selected variants in normative works (cf. Haugen, 1966).

period in which the effect is visible - Right after the first codifications of the selected form, in the middle of the seventeenth century.

affected regions or areas - An evident impact on individuals from Holland, although language users from other regions are also influenced.

influenced genres - Individual authors of printed texts, like pamphlets. An influence on writers of other genres is not ruled out, though.

susceptible features - Specific features that were strongly involved in metalinguistic discussions in the period of (variant) selection.

frequency of the scenario - Although this scenario arises in two of the investigated case studies, it occurs in a specific context and involves highly particular features, making its overall frequency rare.

2A. Diffusing an innovation

embedding in Dutch language history - Prescriptivism succeeds in accelerating an ongoing change when normative works widened their social reach. Particularly the civil and national grammars therefore aid in diffusing the innovation (Rutten, 2019). The emerging standard language ideology also implied a greater awareness of the existence of language norms.

period in which the effect is visible - Since a discourse community of grammarians prescribing for a broader target audience is necessary, the effect in usage is only possible from the eighteenth century onwards.

affected regions or areas - This scenario is mainly observed as an influence of Northern norms on Northern usage, and of Southern prescriptivism on Southern usage. Additionally, the socio-historical context in the nineteenth century facilitated the diffusion of Northern innovations to Southern parts of the language area.

influenced genres - Different genres are impacted. Printed texts, like pamphlets, are either first affected or show little direct influence of prescriptivism. In the latter case, printed texts help spreading the innovation. Ego-documents are less influenced overall.

susceptible features - Particularly spelling features. Grammatical variables are also influenced, though with a weaker impact on usage.

frequency of the scenario - This type of influence is more common than scenario 1, appearing in three of the five case studies.

2B. Eradicating remaining variability

embedding in Dutch language history - The strong effect of prescriptivism in eradicating variability from usage is only achieved through extensive language planning efforts. In the Northern Netherlands, the gradually increasing institutionalisation of language norms culminated in the national language policy of 1804 and 1805.

period in which the effect is visible - After the official language policy was implemented nationwide in the early nineteenth century, with its effect becoming noticeable a few decades later.

affected regions or areas - The Northern Netherlands, the area for which the language policy was intended.

influenced genres - Genres subject to some form of editorial oversight, whether printed or handwritten.

susceptible features - Both spelling and grammatical features. However, only those features with a simple opposition of (main) variants and limited linguistic complexity achieve uniformity.

frequency of the scenario - As a follow-up scenario, reflecting an intensified influence of prescriptivism, this scenario is less frequent than scenario 2A but more common than scenario 1.

3A. Slowing down undesired innovations

embedding in Dutch language history - Prescriptivism (temporarily) slows down changes in usage during the period when normative works became more institutionalised and targeted a broader readership. The impact gradually strengthened, also due to the rise of the standard language ideology.

period in which the effect is visible - Similar to scenario 2A, the existence of a discourse community of grammarians is essential for observing an influence, limiting the effect to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

affected regions or areas - While Southern prescriptivism affects Southern usage, Northern prescriptivism influences Northern usage and, to a lesser extent, usage in Brabant.

influenced genres - Genres that undergo some form of editorial scrutiny, such as pamphlets and administrative texts, are influenced first in the eighteenth century. Other genres are impacted later, in the nineteenth century, following the further institutionalisation of prescriptivism.

susceptible features - Spelling and grammatical features with a simple opposition of (main) variants and limited linguistic complexity seem most susceptible to this type of prescriptive influence. The absence of influence on more complex features is not confirmed, though.

frequency of the scenario - Only a few attempts to slow down changes were identified in this study. However, with two successful examples, the scenario appears less common than scenario 2A.

3B. Reviving archaic usage

embedding in Dutch language history - The successful revival of an archaic variant is attested only through intensive language planning efforts at times of nation building, which ultimately resulted in the national language policy in the Northern Netherlands.

period in which the effect is visible - After the dissemination of the national language policy, in the nineteenth century.

affected regions or areas - Scholars focused solely on the Northern Netherlands, where an influence was observed. However, an influence in the Southern part of the language area cannot be ruled out. Given that Northern prescriptions spread to the South in the early nineteenth century, it is reasonable to hypothesise that Northern prescriptivism impacted Southern usage as well.

influenced genres - The revival of an archaic variant is most pronounced in heavily edited printed genres, such as newspapers, and handwritten texts that undergo some form of editorial intervention. More informal genres, like ego-documents, are influenced but to a lesser extent.

susceptible features - Grammatical features appear to be the primary focus of grammarians. Prescriptivism succeeded in reviving one slowly progressing change that involves a binary opposition of variants. For this success, the variant to be revived still needs to be used beyond fixed constructions.

frequency of the scenario - Since only one instance was documented in this dissertation, it suggests that prescriptive attempts to revive archaic variants are relatively rare, at least in the context of Dutch.

4A. Forming a discourse community

embedding in Dutch language history - When codifying the Dutch language, standardisers influenced each other, and formed a discourse community centered around normative practice (cf. Watts, 1999, 2008).

period in which the effect is visible - During the period of codification and implementation of the standard, from the early eighteenth century onwards.

affected regions or areas - This discursive influence is evident among Northern and Southern codifiers, although it appears somewhat later in the South.

influenced genres - Not applicable. The influence is limited to norm givers who contribute to the normative discourse.

susceptible features - Not applicable, since this is a macro-level phenomenon related to standardisation. However, the existence of a discourse community is particularly visible in the prescriptions for features that are frequently discussed in normative works.

frequency of the scenario - A discursive influence between norm givers is observed in all of the investigated case studies. As a natural outcome of codification, this scenario is highly common.

4B. Spreading social meanings

embedding in Dutch language history - From the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, the standard language ideology became more prominent, leading to an increase of evaluative comments on what constituted standard or non-standard usage. This shift occurred in the context of nation-building processes, which also introduced socio-political stigmas attached to language use (Vosters, 2011). However, also before the eighteenth century, social meanings and stigmas were attributed to specific usage, and these meanings could spread among language users.

period in which the effect is visible - The spread of social meanings within the language community is not confined to any specific period. However, the dissemination of the idea of a standard language became more characteristic from the eighteenth century onwards. It is likely that other social meanings also spread more easily during this time, particularly due to the rise in metalinguistic reflection and the increased production of normative works.

affected regions or areas - The entire language area is prone to this discursive influence of prescriptivism.

influenced genres - Not applicable.

susceptible features - Features with marked social or stylistic stratification are more susceptible to stigmatisation (Labov, 2001, pp. 196-197).

frequency of the scenario - This scenario is probably more common than any of the scenarios in which prescriptivism has a linguistic influence, making it a highly frequent scenario.

5. No probable influence

embedding in Dutch language history - Before the eighteenth century, explicit discussions of linguistic issues were often lacking. Prior to prescriptivism gaining a more institutionalised status - marked by the formation of a discourse community of grammarians who explicitly debated these topics - its influence on general usage is therefore unlikely.

period in which the effect is visible - An observable effect of prescriptivism on language use is unlikely before the eighteenth century. While linguistic influence of prescriptivism is not entirely ruled out prior to this period, its impact is generally confined to individual language users.

affected regions or areas - The absence of prescriptive influence is observed in both the Northern and the Southern parts of the language area.

influenced genres - Not applicable.

susceptible features - Spelling and grammatical features that exhibit complexity - whether through multiple possible variants, many exceptions in the prescriptions, or intricate linguistic embedding in usage - are less likely to be influenced by prescriptivism. Strong interference with the spoken language or deviations from common practice are additional indicators that prescriptivism may not be successful in influencing usage.

frequency of the scenario - The scenario in which prescriptivism fails to impact usage is common, especially before the eighteenth century.

Chapter 11 – Conclusion

1 Introduction

In this dissertation, I investigated the relationship between codified norms and language use in Early and Late Modern Dutch (1550-1850). This is the period marked by the most intensive efforts of language standardisation. In traditional language histories, this standardisation process has been portrayed as a linear development, with language norms codified in normative works seamlessly finding their way to language use. Based on empirical research, however, it is suggested that the implementation of codified norms was not always successful (Deumert & Vandenbussche, 2003, p. 7). In fact, recent corpus studies show that codified norms rarely have a lasting and large-scale impact on usage. While some scholarship indicates that prescriptive efforts sometimes have a small influence on usage in (temporarily) accelerating or slowing down changes in specific genres (e.g. Yáñez-Bouza, 2014; Simons & Rutten, 2014; Anderwald, 2016; Krogull, 2018), other researchers cannot find any evidence of prescriptive interference in language use (e.g. Rutten & Vosters, 2010a; 2010b; McLelland, 2014). Since we know little about the linguistic features and contexts which are susceptible to prescriptive influence, this dissertation aims to shed light on the conditions under which prescriptivism is successful.

To ascertain in which circumstances prescriptivism influences usage, Rutten & Vosters (2021) proposed different determinants that possibly influence the success of prescriptive interventions. Based on this proposition, I operationalised (1) the nature of the variable, (2) the complexity of the feature, and (3) the metalinguistic salience of the variable in my research design to assess the impact of these factors in the relationship between codified norms and usage. As the period of Dutch standardisation serves as a case study for examining prescriptive success, I explored five linguistic developments that took place in Dutch between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries. Each of the investigated case studies is therefore centred around one specific orthographic or grammatical development. In every case study, I systematically compared

language norms, employing a corpus of normative works, to patterns of variation and change in the multi-genre *Historical Corpus of Dutch* (Van de Voorde et al., 2023) to assess the possibility and extent of prescriptive influence on usage.

The conclusion of this research is presented in this chapter, where I tie together the findings from the empirical chapters to address the central research objectives. In section 2, I refer to the main findings and conclusions from the five empirical case studies, in which I summarise whether prescriptive success was attested for the feature under scrutiny, and if so, to what extent prescriptivism influenced language use. Section 3 builds on these findings, and briefly reflects on the scenarios of prescriptive influence that were discussed in Chapter 10. The general conclusion of this dissertation is outlined in section 4, where I assess the relationship between codified norms and usage and reflect on the implications for understanding language standardisation as a process ‘from above’. Finally, in section 5, I provide some concluding remarks, in which I also present an outlook for future research.

2 Conclusions per case study

In order to operationalise the possible determinants of prescriptive success proposed by Rutten & Vosters (2021), I selected different linguistic developments to investigate. I considered features from different domains of the language (spelling vs. grammar), which either consist of a simple opposition of variants or comprise multiple possible forms. Moreover, I made sure that the selected features enjoyed differing degrees of metalinguistic attention (cf. Chapter 4). In this section, I reflect on the possibility and extent of prescriptive influence for each of the investigated features.

Spelling of /a/ in closed syllables

The first feature that was investigated is change from the spelling <ae> to <aa> to represent the long /a/ in closed syllables. This orthographic variable has a basic dichotomy of main variants, in which the variant <ae> is replaced with <aa>, without any difficulties in linguistic embedding. This change in spelling was frequently discussed by grammarians already in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and it remained a heavily debated issue until the

nineteenth century, making this the feature with the highest metalinguistic salience in this dissertation. While the very first codifiers prescribed the new variant <aa>, the two writing practices grew into spelling shibboleths in the eighteenth century (Vosters, 2011, pp. 238-240). Northern grammarians then generally prescribed the ‘Northern’ variant <aa>, whereas Southern codifiers adhered to the ‘Southern’ form <ae>. These diverging spelling practices were also visible in language use. In Northern usage, the variant <aa> gradually increased until the change was practically completed in the nineteenth century. In Southern usage, conversely, the older spelling <ae> remained dominant for the entire period under scrutiny. In this part of the language area, only the very beginning of a change to <aa> was observed.

For this spelling feature, language use was probably strongly influenced by prescriptivism. Six potential options of prescriptive influence were identified, and in all cases, prescriptivism possibly influenced language use. I argued that codifiers were at least partly responsible for kickstarting the change to <aa> in Northern usage in the seventeenth century. After the actuation of the change in general usage, grammarians also accelerated the further diffusion of <aa> among Northern language users. This reinforcing effect took place from the eighteenth century onwards, right after the new variant became firmly embedded in the normative discussions, with normative works targeting a broader readership consistently promoting the spelling <aa>. At the same time, prescriptive interventions of Southern codifiers also impacted usage in that codifiers probably held back the change to <aa> in Southern usage. However, the emergence of the variant <aa> in the nineteenth-century South is most likely related to the dominance of Northern norms during the period of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (Vosters, 2011). In this case, prescriptive influence was thus attested at a large-scale, affecting different genres in both parts of the language area.

Spelling of final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs

The second orthographic feature that was investigated is the representation of the final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs. In the history of Dutch, three different spelling practices were in use for the second- and third-person singular and the second-person plural of the present indicative. These are: <t>, <d>, and the modern-day standard spelling <dt>. With three possible variants, this feature is a multivariate

feature, and it is therefore more complex in nature than the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables. In terms of metalinguistic salience, this variable also features less prominently in the normative discussions than the long /a/ in closed syllables. Although explicit prescriptions on the spelling of the verb-final /t/ appear from the seventeenth century onwards, it only becomes a topic of importance in the eighteenth century. This is also the period when most norm givers in the North decide on prescribing the modern-day <dt> after a century of variable prescriptions. Southern grammarians, on the contrary, still prefer the variant <d> at the time. These codifiers only start switching to <dt> prescriptions in the early nineteenth century, when the contact with the North intensified in the context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands (Vosters, 2011). In language use, the spelling <dt> was applied already in the sixteenth century, long before the first prescriptions for the modern-day variant appeared. Prescriptivism could thus not have initiated a change to <dt> in usage. However, while usage remained variable for the entire period under investigation, the spelling <dt> increased strongly in the nineteenth century. An almost complete shift to the modern-day form is even observed in the Northern pamphlets and administrative texts. This increase of <dt> is also observed in Southern usage, although the shift is less convincing here. The variant <d> also held a strong position in this part of the language area, and particularly in handwritten documents.

Out of six options of potential prescriptive interference, prescriptivism proved effective in only three. While grammarians did certainly not initiate a change for this spelling variable, it is likely that they had a reinforcing influence on usage. This impact is observed for two specific developments in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. After the social reach of normative works broadened in the context of nation building, and a standard language ideology was spread into the language community, prescriptivism may have strengthened the use of <d> in the South. Together with the strong presence of the spelling <d> in printed genres, Southern grammarians probably caused a temporary rise of the form in handwritten genres in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, a reinforcing effect of prescriptivism is attested after the national language policy appeared in the Northern Netherlands. I argued that the prescriptions in this official language policy probably accelerated the increase of <dt> in nineteenth-century usage.

Comparative marker

The use of the comparative marker was the third feature investigated in this dissertation. For this grammatical variable, I restricted the case study to the context in which *inequal* parts are compared, as is shown in an example like *Hij is groter dan ik* ‘He is taller than I’. From the eighteenth century onwards, codifiers generally prescribed the variant *dan* for these comparative constructions, while the marker *als* was prescribed in constructions in which *equal* parts are compared. While other complementisers may have been in use in local speech – for example, *of* in the Flemish dialects (Barbiers et al., 2005) – only *als* and *dan* appeared in writing. This feature therefore contains little complexity in that only two variants were used in writing. It is also a feature that is infrequently discussed in the normative discourse. Only a small group of grammarians explicitly commented on the feature from the eighteenth century onwards. In fact, these normative discussions emerged when a rapid change to the marker *als* took place in seventeenth-century usage. A few decades after the prescriptions for *dan* were published, language use shifted again to the prescribed marker.

Since the general return to *dan* in language use was attested in the nineteenth century, right after multiple prescriptions for the marker were formulated, it is highly likely that prescriptivism interfered and reverted the change to *als* in usage. In fact, the two options of prescriptive interference that I discussed were probably both successful influences of prescriptivism. While codifiers clearly set the norm for the marker *dan* in the eighteenth century, they particularly influenced each other at first. It is therefore more probable that the large-scale influence of prescriptivism is caused by the national language policy in the nineteenth century. These prescriptions had the impact and social reach of affecting varying genres and regions at the same time (cf. Krogull, 2018). The effect of the national language policy also spread to the Southern Netherlands during the United Kingdom of the Netherlands, where it influenced Southern codifiers and overall language use.

Diminutive suffix

With the diminutive suffix, a grammatical feature with more complexity was included in this dissertation. For this variable, I specifically investigated the change from velar to palatal suffixes which emerged in spoken usage before it was attested in writing. I made the distinction between four suffix types, each representing a different stage of the palatalisation process. Although this change in the diminutive suffixes is involved in normative discussions of the sixteenth century, the topic does not soar high in the prescriptions before the nineteenth century. At the level of metalinguistic salience, the feature is therefore more frequently discussed than the comparative marker, but it never becomes as salient as the spelling features that were investigated in this study.

In language norms, the velar suffix type *-kin/ke(n)* gradually lost ground in favour of the palatal suffix *-je(n)*, which generally grew into the favoured suffix of Northern grammarians. As the main variant of the velar suffix type, *-ken* was not rejected for usage, though. While the form was clearly outgoing in usage, Northern grammarians still prescribed or tolerated the suffix, as they considered it a 'dignified' form. Southern grammarians also continued prescribing the velar suffix as the only variant until the second half of the eighteenth century. In both parts of the language area, the prescriptions for *-je(n)* postdate the developments in language use.

Since language norms thus generally reflect patterns in usage, prescriptivism was not successful across the board. Only in two of the five options of possible prescriptive influence, prescriptivism may have influenced usage. In fact, prescriptivism probably exerted an influence on usage only in one specific context. In the nineteenth century, when normative works were strongly institutionalised, and prescriptions were more consistent in prescribing the suffix *-je(n)*, codifiers may have accelerated the change to *-je(n)* in language use. This influence is visible in the Northern and the Southern Netherlands. Due to the stronger adherence to *-ken* in the South, however, the effect is less pronounced in this part of the language area.

Direct and indirect object of the plural personal pronoun

The final feature that is investigated in this dissertation is the syntactic distinction between the object forms of the plural personal pronouns. The prime focus of this case study was on the alternating use of *hen* and *hun*, depending on the case in which the pronoun was applied. Although I argued that this accusative-dative distinction is quite complex at a linguistic level, in the sense that alternative variants (like *ze* and *haar*) were also in use, these forms were not entirely on a par with *hen* and *hun*. While *hen* and *hun* are always used for animate referents, *ze* was particularly employed for referring to inanimate referents. The variant *haar*, conversely, was a minority variant and was primarily prescribed and used for feminine referents. The alternation between the plural personal pronouns therefore mainly concerns the variants *hen* and *hun*. As such, I considered this a feature with an opposition of variants. The distinction between these variants is also binary in language norms, since *hen* was prescribed for the function of the direct object, whereas *hun* was allocated to the function of the indirect object. This case distinction was introduced by a Northern codifier in the early seventeenth century and was picked up and prescribed by later codifiers until it became firmly established in the eighteenth-century normative tradition. Furthermore, this distinction between the personal pronouns was typically included in the case paradigms in grammars, which makes it a prominent and visible topic in normative works. In fact, given its frequent appearance in case paradigms, this feature holds the highest metalinguistic salience among the grammatical features investigated in this dissertation.

The accusative-dative distinction between *hen* and *hun* was primarily visible in Northern norms. Southern grammarians did not adopt this distinction, and they generally prescribed the pronoun *hen* in both the accusative and dative case. It is only in the nineteenth century that most codifiers from the South also proposed the pronoun distinction based on case. In language use, we see Northern usage aligning with the case distinction already in the seventeenth century. This pattern is even more pronounced in later centuries. Southern usage, on the contrary, does not show this case distinction. In the nineteenth century, when Southern codifiers also prescribe the pronoun distinction, only a few individual writers from Brabant adopt the prescribed use of pronouns.

With the case distinction emerging in Northern usage immediately after Van Heule introduced the alternating pronoun use, an influence of prescriptivism was assumed. Although no large-scale influence of prescriptivism was identified, a smaller impact on usage was likely in four of the six discussed options of prescriptive influence. More specifically, Van Heule was able to initiate this pronoun distinction in language use. This actuating impact was limited to individual writers from the region of Holland at first. While the prescriptive effect probably lingered on, and thereby influenced writers from other regions, the effect did not spread at a generic level. Apart from individual writers, particularly the genre of pamphlets was influenced by prescriptivism.

3 Scenarios of prescriptive influence

For each of the features investigated in this dissertation, I detected a *possible* influence of prescriptivism. The type of influence and the reach of the prescriptive effect, however, differed strongly between the case studies. For some features, like in the case of object forms of the third-person plural pronoun, codifiers probably motivated individual language users in adopting a new pronoun distinction but did not influence the broader language community. In other case studies, such as the spelling of /t/ in *d*-stem verbs, codifiers did not introduce a new variant but probably caused the further spread of a form that was already applied in usage. Since recurring types of prescriptive influence were attested across the five case studies, I identified potential determining factors interfering in the observed effect. These findings were summarised into scenarios of prescriptive influence, which were discussed in Chapter 10.

Eight (sub)scenarios of prescriptive influence were distinguished in the case studies that were part of this dissertation. One of these scenarios, *scenario 5 – no probable influence*, proposes hypotheses for features and contexts in which prescriptivism probably failed to influence use, and two other scenarios, *scenario 4a – forming a discourse community* and *scenario 4b – spreading social meanings*, describe a solely discursive impact of prescriptivism. The five remaining scenarios, however, discuss an influence of prescriptivism that is visible in language use. The different effects summarised in these scenarios indicate that prescriptivism can either initiate a change in usage (*scenario 1 – triggering a change*), intervene in an ongoing change (*scenario 2a – diffusing an innovation*,

scenario 3a – slowing down undesired innovations, and scenario 3b – reviving archaic usage), or even push the change to completion at the tail of the S-curve (*scenario 2b – eradicating remaining variability*).

Nonetheless, the case studies in this dissertation showed that the varying effects of prescriptivism do not simply take place in every context or with every feature. In fact, for each influence of prescriptivism that is observed, both the period and specific socio-historical context, and the characteristics of the feature determine whether prescriptivism succeeds in its goal. The discussed impact of prescriptivism is often also restricted to specific language users, genres, or regions. Moreover, the case studies in this dissertation illustrate that the frequency of each prescriptive effect varies. While grammarians rarely initiate new changes in usage, they succeed more often in influencing an ongoing change in language use.

4 General conclusion

What do the results from the empirical chapters and the scenarios of prescriptive influence reveal about the relationship between language norms and usage in the period of Dutch standardisation? And what does that tell us about prescriptive success in general? In the final part of the conclusion, I reflect on the research objectives that were formulated in the introduction of this dissertation.

4.1 Determinants of prescriptive success

One of the objectives of this dissertation was to put the impact of (1) the nature of the variable, (2) the complexity of the feature, and (3) the metalinguistic salience on the success of prescriptive interventions to the test (Rutten & Vosters, 2021). Considering the results from all investigated case studies, I now assess the impact of these determinants.

I first discuss the influence of the metalinguistic salience of the feature under investigation. The case studies in this dissertation illustrate that several explicit prescriptions were necessary to observe a linguistic impact of prescriptivism. While the metalinguistic salience thus certainly plays a role in the success of

prescriptivism, the feature does not have to be discussed by every single grammarian to see a visible impact of prescriptivism. Once a feature or development is picked up by grammarians, and multiple prescriptions are formulated on the issue, prescriptivism can in principle influence usage. In fact, features with a lower metalinguistic salience, for which fewer explicit prescriptions appeared, like the comparative marker (cf. Chapter 7), also showed signs of potential prescriptive influence on language use. The results from the case studies therefore suggest that not a very high metalinguistic salience, but rather the continuity in the prescriptions is crucial for prescriptivism to have a lasting impact on language use (cf. also Anderwald, 2016).

Second, I turn to the nature of the variable as a possible determinant. The results this dissertation indicate that both spelling and grammatical features were susceptible to prescriptive influence, which suggests that the nature of the variable probably does not interfere in the success of prescriptivism. Nonetheless, the case studies in this dissertation also illustrate a more pronounced effect of prescriptivism for spelling features when compared to grammatical variables. It is possible that this stronger effect for spelling is related to the stance of grammarians towards innovations in language use. For the features investigated in this dissertation, codifiers were often reluctant to accept grammatical changes that they observed in writing. This is not very surprising, since grammatical changes often have a basis in the spoken language, and thus generally arise ‘from below’ (e.g. diminutive suffix). The interference with the spoken language could thus explain why norm givers try to reverse or adapt grammatical developments in usage. When codifiers observe innovations in spelling practice, conversely, these changes are often welcomed and backed by prescriptivism. This progressive stance of grammarians towards spelling innovations also implies that norm givers could easily influence usage. The desired effect of codifiers was to reinforce an orthographic change that was already on its way in usage, after all.

The complexity of the variable is the third, and final determinant that is evaluated. The findings from the empirical chapters clearly indicate that the complexity of the variable is the most decisive factor for hindering or facilitating prescriptive influence. While I operationalised this determinant in terms of features with an opposition of variants versus multivariate features, the case studies in this dissertation indicate that complexity needs to be interpreted at

multiple levels. In addition to the number of possible variants, it appears that both the linguistic embedding of variation in usage, and the incorporation of variants in language norms constitute to the complexity of the variable. A feature can thus consist of a dichotomy of variants and still be a complex variable in usage (e.g. direct and indirect object of the plural personal pronoun). While the complexity of the feature was not defined as broadly in the operationalisation of the determinants of prescriptive success, I considered the different meanings of complexity in the scenarios of prescriptive influence. These scenarios show that any form of complexity – whether in the number of variants, the embedding of variation in usage or in norms – impedes the effectiveness of prescriptivism in usage.

Whereas the impact of these determinants was evaluated for each factor individually, it is important to stress that strictly separating these determinants is not desirable due to their interrelatedness. The case studies in this dissertation, for example, indicate that the metalinguistic salience of a feature is intertwined with the nature of the variable. Compared to grammatical features, spelling issues are generally discussed already in early periods of codification, due to the appearance of mainly spelling guides in the sixteenth and seventeenth century and they remain frequently discussed in normative works in later periods. This inevitably results in a higher metalinguistic salience of spelling features, and thus points to an interaction between the nature of the variable and its metalinguistic salience. Furthermore, when compared to grammar, spelling is a domain of the language with less interference from the spoken variety. Although there certainly are prescriptions imposing a complex conditioning of spelling variants (e.g. the spelling of syllable-final /xt/, cf. Krogull, 2018), spelling features generally have a more superficial embedding of linguistic variation compared to grammatical features, and thus suggest a more limited complexity.

The case studies in this dissertation show that the combination of these determinants can also impact the success of prescriptivism. This is illustrated by the case study on the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables. This feature possesses multiple favourable characteristics that make the feature exceptionally receptive to prescriptive influence. The spelling variable not only consists of a simple opposition of variants and a limited complexity at a linguistic level, but it is also explicitly discussed by grammarians already in the sixteenth century, and it remained highly salient at a metalinguistic level for the entire

period under investigation. The feature was also subject to strong social evaluation from the eighteenth century onwards, with a socio-political stigma being ascribed to the form (Vosters, 2011). While stigmatisation of variants is certainly a form of salience (cf. Labov, 2001, pp. 196-197), the concept was not operationalised as such in this study. However, this kind of salience may also contribute to prescriptive success, as the social evaluation creates awareness of spelling variation among language users (cf. Rutten & Vosters, 2021). As the spelling of the long /a/ in closed syllables was more affected by prescriptivism than the other features investigated in this dissertation, this case study suggests that the interplay of multiple determinants explains why specific features are exceptionally susceptible to prescriptive influence.

4.2 The socio-historical context

In addition to the determinants, also the socio-historical and socio-political context of language standardisation impacts the success of prescriptivism and the reach of the effect. Especially the ideological change that took place in the eighteenth century, with the standard language ideology spreading into society (Milroy & Milroy, 2012, p. 19), influences the linguistic success of prescriptivism and the reach of the effect on usage. While the case studies in this dissertation show that a visible impact of prescriptivism is possible before the eighteenth century, a large-scale influence – with prescriptivism influencing different regions and genres – is observed only after many explicit prescriptions are formulated by a discourse community of grammarians (cf. Watts, 1999; 2008), and a strongly institutionalised form of prescriptivism emerged (Curzan, 2014, p. 32).

Large-scale influences of prescriptivism are thus observed in periods of emerging nation building, when the awareness of a standard language increased (Rutten, 2019). Since many normative works with a broader social reach appeared in this period, it is most likely that schoolbooks for a broader audience and official language regulations facilitated the large-scale success of prescriptivism. It is probably the most institutionalised and official forms of normative works, like the national language policy and the many schoolbooks that derived from this policy (cf. Schoemaker, 2018), that made language users reflect on – and consequently adapt – their language practice in the direction of

the prescriptions. These findings confirm the claim that standardisation ‘from above’ is an eighteenth-century phenomenon (Rutten & Vosters, 2021, p. 65), of which the effects in usage are primarily visible in the nineteenth century. Although the role of education in the diffusion of codified norms is undeniable (Haugen, 1987, p. 61), the results in the empirical chapters also illustrate that not all prescriptions were seamlessly implemented by their intended audience (e.g. direct and indirect object of the plural personal pronoun).

4.3 The importance of genre

Whenever a visible influence of prescriptivism was attested, whether in the language use of individual writers or on a broader scale, printed genres or formal handwritten texts were the prime sources affected. This indicates that texts which were subject to formal editorial practices, as is the case with printed texts, or documents that were written in a neat version – and thus subject to adaptations by the writer – were the first, and sometimes the only genres that were directly influenced by prescriptivism (cf. also Anderwald, 2016, 2019). Although less formal texts, which did not undergo editorial interventions, are less prone to prescriptive influence, these texts are not immune to normativity either. In these texts, the effect of prescriptivism is only less pronounced and occurs somewhat later than in the edited genres. This delayed effect may indicate that prescriptivism is not the sole actor in effectuating a prescribed change. As printed genres adopted the prescribed forms, the visibility of these variants increased within the language community. Contact with texts that use the prescribed form can therefore also accelerate the adoption of the variant in the wider language community.

The role of contact between texts and writers as a reinforcing factor for prescriptive influence is also evidenced by the shift towards Northern norms and writing practices in the South during the early nineteenth century. In every case study examined in this dissertation, Southern norms and usage shifted to align with the variants prescribed and used in the Northern Netherlands. While the specific socio-political context of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands contributed to the dominance of Northern norms, the increased contact between Northern and Southern language users also played an important role in the

success of Northern prescriptivism in the Southern Netherlands (cf. Vosters et al., 2014).

4.4 The relationship between norms and usage

While the case studies in this dissertation illustrated that prescriptivism *possibly* influenced language use during the period of most intensive standardisation in Dutch, they also showed that the relationship between norms and usage depends on specific determinants and socio-historical contexts. Prescriptivism appears to be primarily successful in influencing changes that are ongoing in usage. To define the relationship between norms and usage, we therefore need to move away from the idea that norm givers generally trigger changes in usage. Norm givers mostly reflect on what they observe in language use. They respond to patterns in usage, and under favourable conditions, these codified norms influence language use, which, in turn, also diffuses the prescribed form further in the language community. Prescriptivism is thus not a static phenomenon that operates in isolation from language use (Curzan, 2014, p. 13). It is a force that is both shaped and reinforced by language users.

4.5 Standardisation ‘from above’

This dissertation also adds nuance to traditional theories of language standardisation, which see the implementation of codified norms by the broader community as an evident outcome of the standardisation process (cf. Haugen, 1987). Although I detected several instances of possible norm implementation by language users, the case studies also suggest that the general acceptance of codified norms is far from self-evident. As the scenarios of prescriptive influence illustrate, a large-scale implementation of prescriptions occurs only for specific features and under the right circumstances. Moreover, the successful implementation of norms does not imply that new changes are initiated. Codified norms rather reinforce practices that are already ongoing in language use. As such, the selection of the norm by language users often precedes the codification and further implementation thereof.

Perhaps the results in this dissertation then suggest that we need to speak – in the terms of Joseph (1987) – of a process towards a language standard rather than a standard language? While that may be part of the story for Dutch, this study indicates that an engineered form of standardisation is then also imposed on top of the more circumstantially achieved layer of language convergence (cf. Joseph, 1987). The discursive impact of standardisation, with codifiers spreading the ideology of a standard language into society, is probably the most apparent effect of this process (Milroy & Milroy, 2012). However, this dissertation has demonstrated that prescriptivism also wields the power to influence language change when conditions are favourable.

5 Concluding remarks

The findings in this dissertation substantiate the paradigm shift that emerged in recent studies investigating prescriptive influence. While prescriptive influence was long considered the one-sided impact of codified norms on usage, recent scholarship acknowledged that prescriptivism does not work in a vacuum but interacts with language use (cf. Hinrichs et al., 2015; Kostadinova, 2020; Van der Meulen, 2023). With this dissertation, I aimed to contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics between codified norms and usage. With the standardisation period of Dutch as a case study, it was abundantly clear that a one-dimensional approach falls short of capturing the impact of prescriptivism on language use. Different types of prescriptive influence need to be distinguished to formulate an accurate answer on the effectiveness of prescriptivism, and the relationship between codified norms and language use.

Although this study is carried out on a modest-sized usage corpus, and similar analyses in larger corpora incorporating an even wider range of genres – both sources representing language use ‘from above’ and ‘from below’ – are necessary to understand the broader and more diffuse mechanisms of the relationship between codified norms and language use, this study demonstrates the relevance of approaching prescriptive influence from a multifaceted and typological perspective. To clarify the complexities in the relationship between codified norms and language use, this research calls for a comparative analysis across European languages to identify commonalities and differences in prescriptive influence.

Fruitful avenues for further research are also linked to theories of language standardisation and language change. It would be relevant to explore whether different effects of prescriptivism are connected to Haugen's (1966, 1972, 1987) stages of the standardisation process, and to investigate how changes 'from above' diffuse through social network structures (cf. Milroy & Milroy, 1985). Integrating theoretical models of standardisation and language change with fine-grained corpus analyses allows for re-evaluating established ideas about the relationship between codified norms and language use, after all.

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Appendix – Regular expressions in R

Spelling of long /a/ in closed syllables (cf. Van de Voorde, 2022)

Spelling with <ae>

```
\\b\\w{0,}ae[bcd fghklmnpqrstvwxyz]\\b|\\b\\w{0,}ae[bcd fghklmnpqrstvwxyz]{2,}\\w{0,}\\b
```

Spelling with <aa>

```
\\b\\w{0,}aa[bcd fghklmnpqrstvwxyz]\\b|\\b\\w{0,}aa[bcd fghklmnpqrstvwxyz]{2,}\\w{0,}\\b
```

Spelling of final /t/ in *d*-stem verbs (cf. Van de Voorde, 2022)

Spelling with <t>

```
\\b\\w{0,}[^d](t)\\b
```

Spelling with <d>

```
\\b\\w{1,}(d)\\b
```

Spelling with <dt>

```
\\b\\w{1,}(dt)\\b
```

Comparative marker

Comparative adjective + *als* and spelling variants

```
\\b\\w{2,}ere?n? (al?s)\\b
```

Comparative adjective + *dan*

```
\\b\\w{1,}ere?n? (dan)\\b
```

Comparative adjective + *of* and spelling variants

```
\\b\\w{2,}ere?n? (off?)\\b
```


Comparative adjective + *wie*

\\b\\w{2,}ere?n? (wie)\\b

Comparative adjective + any 1-4 words + comparative marker (here: *dan*)

\\b\\w{2,}ere?n? \\b\\w{2,20}\\b (dan)\\b

\\b\\w{2,}ere?n? \\b\\w{2,20}\\b \\b\\w{2,20}\\b (dan)\\b

\\b\\w{2,}ere?n? \\b\\w{2,20}\\b \\b\\w{2,20}\\b \\b\\w{2,20}\\b (dan)\\b

\\b\\w{2,}ere?n? \\b\\w{2,20}\\b \\b\\w{2,20}\\b \\b\\w{2,20}\\b \\b\\w{2,20}\\b (dan)\\b

Diminutive suffix

Suffix *-kijn* and *-lijn*, including spelling variants and plural *-s*

\\b\\w{2,}?(kijn|kyn)s?\\b

\\b\\w{2,}?(lijn|lyn)s?\\b

Suffix *-kin*, including plural *-s*

\\b\\w{2,}?(kin)s?\\b

Suffix *-ken* and *-ke*, including plural *-s*

\\b\\w{2,}?(ke)n?s?\\b

Suffix *-gin* and *-gen*, including spelling variants and plural *-s*

\\b\\w{2,}?(gh?i)n?s?\\b

\\b\\w{2,}?(chi)n?s?\\b

\\b\\w{2,}?(gh?e)n?s?\\b

\\b\\w{2,}?(che)n?s?\\b

Suffix *-jen* and *-je*, including spelling variants and plural *-s*

`\\b\\w{2,}? (je)n?s? \\b`

`\\b\\w{2,}? (ye)n?s? \\b`

`\\b\\w{2,}? (ije)n?s? \\b`

Suffix *-ien* and *-ie*, including spelling variants and plural *-s*

`\\b\\w{2,}? (ie?)n?s? \\b`

Direct and indirect object of the plural personal pronoun

Pronoun *hen*

`\\bhen \\b`

Pronoun *henlieden* and spelling variants

`\\bhen \\s?l(i|ie|y|ij|ÿ)den \\b`

Pronoun *henluiden* and spelling variants

`\\bhen \\s?l(ui|uy|uij|uÿ)den \\b`

Pronoun *henl.*

`\\bhenl.? \\b`

Pronoun *hun*

`\\bhun \\b`

Pronoun *hunlieden* and spelling variants

`\\bhun \\s?l(i|ie|y|ij|ÿ)den \\b`

Pronoun *hunluiden* and spelling variants

`\\bhun \\s?l(ui|uy|uij|uÿ)den \\b`

Pronoun *hunl.*

`\\bhunl.? \\b`

Pronoun *ze* and spelling variants

`\\b(z|s)e \\b`

Pronoun *haar* and spelling variants

`\\bh?(ae|aa)rr? \\b`

Pronoun *haarlieden* and spelling variants

\\bh?(ae|aa|a)r\\s?l(i|ie|y|ij|ÿ)den\\b

Pronoun *haarluiden* and spelling variants

\\bh?(ae|aa|a)r\\s?l(ui|uy|uij|uÿ)den\\b

Pronoun *haarl.*

\\bh?(aa|ae)r\\s?l.?\\b

Pronoun *heur* and spelling variants

\\bh?(eu|ue)rr?\\b

Pronoun *heurlieden* and spelling variants

\\bh?(eu|ue)r\\s?l(i|ie|y|ij|ÿ)den\\b

Pronoun *heurluiden* and spelling variants

\\bh?(eu|ue)r\\s?l(ui|uy|uij|uÿ)den\\b

Pronoun *heurl.*

\\bh?(eu|ue)r\\s?l.?\\b

Pronoun *hem*

\\bhem\\b

Pronoun *hullie* and spelling variants

\\bh?ull?(ie|y|i)\\b

Pronoun *hulder* and spelling variants

\\bh?ulder\\b

Dutch summary (*samenvatting*)

De standaard smeden. Normen en taalgebruik in het Vroeg- en Laattienuew nederlandse (1550-1850)

In dit proefschrift onderzoek ik de relatie tussen taalnormen en taalgebruik in het Vroeg- en Laattienuew nederlandse. Dat is grofweg de periode van 1550 tot 1850. Die periode wordt gekenmerkt door pogingen om het Nederlands ‘van bovenaf’ te standaardiseren. Dat wil zeggen dat hoog aangeschreven schrijvers en grammatici het initiatief namen om te bepalen wat ‘goed’ en ‘slecht’ taalgebruik was. Ze legden hun keuzes vast in normatieve werken, zoals spellingsgidsen, grammatica’s en schoolboeken. Zo probeerden ze taalnormen ‘van bovenaf’ te verspreiden naar taalgebruikers. In de achttiende eeuw groeiden deze normen uit tot een metalinguïstische tweedeling tussen standaardtalig en niet-standaardtalig Nederlands. Met de opkomst van het natie-denken en het Verlichtingsideaal, streefde men immers naar een brede implementatie van de Nederlandse standaardtaal. Daarom werden er initiatieven ondernomen om de taalnormen naar een breed publiek te verspreiden.

De selectie en codificatie van de standaardtaal, enerzijds, en de domeinuitbreiding en implementatie ervan, anderzijds, is wat we het klassieke standaardisatieproces noemen (cf. Haugen, 1966). Traditionele taalgeschiedenissen en theoretische modellen stellen dit proces vaak voor als een lineaire ontwikkeling. Daarbij wordt impliciet aangenomen dat gecodificeerde taalnormen probleemloos in het taalgebruik worden overgenomen. Historisch-sociolinguïstisch onderzoek toont echter aan dat die implementatie van taalnormen niet zo vanzelfsprekend is. In plaats van een directe impact van taalnormen op het taalgebruik, is het eerder een standaardtaalideologie die zich verspreidt naar de bredere bevolking (cf. Milroy & Milroy, 2012). De talige effecten van standaardisatie zijn vaak minder zichtbaar of zelfs afwezig.

Om dit fenomeen van norm implementatie ‘van bovenaf’ verder te onderzoeken, werpt dit proefschrift een diachrone blik op de relatie tussen taalnormen en taalgebruik in het Nederlands. Door middel van systematische corpusanalyses, onderzoek ik wat de precieze relatie is tussen opgelegde taalnormen en het eigenlijke geschreven taalgebruik. In welke mate werden de voorgeschreven varianten geïmplementeerd in het taalgebruik? Waren de grammatici inderdaad succesvol in hun opzet om de taal te standaardiseren? En, zo ja, waar en wanneer zien we dan een invloed van normen op het taalgebruik? Door deze vragen centraal te stellen, poogt dit proefschrift meer inzicht te verwerven in de relatie tussen taalnormen en taalgebruik, en daarbij ook in de standaardisatie van het Nederlands als een proces ‘van bovenaf’.

Na een inleidend hoofdstuk, waarin ik de bredere context van het onderzoek schets en de onderzoeksvragen presenteer, bespreek ik in hoofdstuk 2 het standaardisatieproces van het Nederlands. Ik koppel de concepten *selectie*, *codificatie*, *elaboratie*, en *implementatie* uit het standaardisatiemodel van Einar Haugen (1966, 1987) aan de ontwikkelingen in de normatieve traditie van het Nederlands. Ik beschrijf zo hoe standaardisatie van de zestiende tot vroege achttiende eeuw kan worden gezien als een fenomeen dat enkel van toepassing was op de hoogste lagen van de bevolking. Door de opkomst van het natiedenken en het Verlichtingsideaal in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw, werd correct taalgebruik verwacht van alle sociale lagen van de maatschappij. In dit hoofdstuk leg ik uit dat grammatici zich gradueel richtten op een breder doelpubliek, en dat die sociale verbreding van taalvoorschriften plaatsvond onder invloed van bredere sociohistorische en sociopolitieke veranderingen.

Hoofdstuk 3 vormt het theoretische kader van dit proefschrift en richt zich op het concept *prescriptivisme*. Ik definieer wat dit begrip omvat in mijn onderzoek en leg uit welke invloeden prescriptivisme precies kan uitoefenen. Daarnaast bespreek ik eerdere studies die de relatie tussen taalnormen en taalgebruik onderzoeken, zowel in het Nederlands als in andere Europese talen. Deze studies laten zien dat de relatie tussen normen en taalgebruik niet rechtlijnig is, maar eerder een complexe wisselwerking voorstelt. Taalnormen worden vaak beïnvloed door het taalgebruik, maar kunnen onder bepaalde voorwaarden ook een impact hebben op het taalgebruik. Hoewel eerdere bevindingen sterk uiteenlopen, suggereert historisch-sociolinguïstisch onderzoek dat bepaalde factoren het succes van prescriptivisme kunnen bepalen. Rutten &

Vosters (2021) noemen vier mogelijke bepalende factoren: (1) de aard van de variabele (viz. het domein van de taal), (2) de keuze voor progressieve of conservatieve varianten in de voorschriften, (3) de complexiteit van de variabele, en (4) de (metalinguïstische) saillantie ervan. In dit proefschrift onderzoek ik in hoeverre deze factoren daadwerkelijk invloed hebben op het succes van prescriptivisme en de implementatie van normen in het taalgebruik.

Hoofdstuk 4 presenteert de corpora en methode van dit onderzoek. Ik maak gebruik van twee corpora: enerzijds een corpus van normatieve werken, en anderzijds een corpus met taalgebruiksdata. Het corpus van normatieve werken is samengesteld om evoluties in taalnormen bloot te leggen. Dit corpus, dat voor dit project werd opgebouwd, bestaat uit 73 normatieve werken over het Nederlands die in de eerste plaats bedoeld zijn voor een publiek van moedertaalsprekers. Alle werken verschenen tussen 1550 en 1830 in het Noorden of het Zuiden van het taalgebied.

Om de resultaten uit het normatieve corpus te vergelijken met daadwerkelijk taalgebruik, maak ik gebruik van het *Historical Corpus of Dutch* (Van de Voorde et al., 2023). Dit corpus werd ontwikkeld binnen het doctoraatsonderzoek van Iris Van de Voorde (2022), waarin de historische pluricentriciteit van het Nederlands werd onderzocht. Het corpus bevat diachrone taaldata uit drie verschillende genres, afkomstig uit vier regio's binnen het taalgebied: Holland en Zeeland in het Noorden, en Brabant en Vlaanderen in het Zuiden. De tekstgenres in het corpus zijn: (1) administratieve teksten, die handgeschreven maar wel formeel van aard zijn, (2) egodocumenten, die ook handgeschreven maar minder formeel zijn dan de administratieve teksten, en (3) pamfletten, een gedrukt en dus ook geredigeerd genre. Dankzij de diachrone, diatopische, en multi-genre opbouw van het corpus biedt dit onderzoek inzicht in taalvariatie en taalverandering over verschillende periodes, regio's en genres heen.

Ook de selectie van onderzochte taalkenmerken wordt besproken in hoofdstuk 4. Die taalkenmerken selecteerde ik op basis van specifieke eigenschappen van de features, in lijn met de factoren die Rutten & Vosters (2021) voorstelden. Om de invloed van de aard van de variabele te onderzoeken, koos ik taalkenmerken uit verschillende domeinen (i.e. spelling vs. grammatica). Daarnaast varieert de complexiteit van de geselecteerde taalkenmerken. Sommige variabelen hebben slechts een tweedeling van varianten, terwijl andere meerdere mogelijke

varianten hebben. Tot slot variëren de geselecteerde kenmerken op vlak van de hoeveelheid metalinguïstische aandacht. Door veelbesproken features te vergelijken met variabelen die nauwelijks door grammatici werden opgemerkt, kan ik de invloed van de metalinguïstische saillantie op het succes van prescriptivisme analyseren. Op basis van deze criteria werden vijf taalkenmerken geselecteerd, dit zijn: (1) de spelling van de lange /a/ in een gesloten syllabe, (2) de spelling van de woordfinale /t/ in werkwoorden met een stam die eindigt in *-d*, (3) de comparatief markeerder, (4) het diminutiefsuffix, en (5) het direct en indirect object van de pronomina in de derde persoon meervoud.

Naast de selectie van taalkenmerken, licht ik ook de methode van dit onderzoek toe. Aan de hand van een kwantitatieve analyse bestudeer ik patronen van variatie en verandering eerst afzonderlijk in normen en taalgebruik. Daarna vergelijk ik de bevindingen uit de twee analyses. Om de precieze relatie tussen normen en taalgebruik te analyseren, bepaal ik consequent de chronologie van taalverandering. Die aanpak stelt mij in staat om te achterhalen of en op welke manier prescriptivisme een invloed heeft uitgeoefend op het taalgebruik. Ik benader deze vraagstelling vanuit een historisch-sociolinguïstisch perspectief, wat impliceert dat ik voornamelijk taalexterne factoren integreer in de analyse om patronen in de resultaten te verklaren.

De empirische analyses worden besproken in de hoofdstukken 5-9. Zo behandelt hoofdstuk 5 het eerste taalkenmerk, namelijk de spelling van de lange /a/ in een gesloten syllabe. Hierbij waren twee hoofdvarianten in gebruik: de oudere spelling <ae> die gradueel werd ingeruild voor de moderne spelling <aa>. Deze spellingskwestie was veelbesproken in het normatieve discours en had zelfs de hoogste metalinguïstische saillantie binnen de onderzochte variabelen. Hoewel de nieuwe spelling <aa> al in de zestiende eeuw werd voorgeschreven, groeide de spellingskwestie in de achttiende eeuw uit tot een sjibbolet van Noordelijk (<aa>) of Zuidelijk (<ae>) taalgebruik (Vosters, 2011, pp. 238-240). Noordelijke grammatici propageerden <aa>, terwijl Zuidelijke normgevers <ae> bleven verdedigen tot in de negentiende eeuw. Dit onderscheid was ook zichtbaar in het taalgebruik. In het Noordelijke taalgebruik zien we de variant <aa> gestaag toenemen tot de vorm bijna uniform wordt gebruikt, terwijl <ae> de dominante variant blijft in het Zuiden. Prescriptivisme speelde waarschijnlijk een belangrijke rol in deze ontwikkeling. Naast het helpen initiëren van de

verandering naar <aa> in het taalgebruik, versterkten grammatici wellicht de verspreiding van de variant naar de bredere bevolking. Tegelijkertijd versterkten Zuidelijke normgevers het behoud van de spelling <ae> in het Zuidelijke taalgebruik.

De tweede spellingsvariabele, de spelling van de slot-/t/ in vervoegingen van *d*-stam-werkwoorden in de tweede en derde persoon enkelvoud en de tweede persoon meervoud, wordt besproken in hoofdstuk 6. In de onderzochte periode werden drie spellingsvarianten gebruikt, dat zijn: <t>, <d> en de moderne spelling <dt>. Vergeleken met de spelling van de lange /a/ is dit een complexe variabele, die bovendien minder prominent aanwezig is in de normatieve discussies. Pas in de achttiende eeuw wordt het spellingskenmerk consequent besproken door grammatici. Vanaf dat moment schreven Noordelijke normgevers uniform <dt> voor, terwijl Zuidelijke grammatici eerst de spelling <d> prefereren. Zij stappen pas in de negentiende eeuw over naar <dt> voorschriften. Hoewel de moderne variant al sinds de zestiende eeuw voorkomt in het taalgebruik, was de spellingspraktijk op dat moment nog erg wisselvallig. Tot en met de achttiende eeuw werden de drie varianten veelvuldig gebruikt. Pas in de negentiende eeuw verdwijnt de oudste variant <t> uit het taalgebruik. In die periode neemt de spelling <dt> ook sterk toe, zowel in het Noorden als in het Zuiden. Wat de invloed van taalnormen betreft, detecteerde ik zes mogelijkheden van prescriptieve invloed. Slechts in drie gevallen lijkt er daadwerkelijk sprake te zijn van een impact van normen op het taalgebruik. Die invloed situeert zich telkens in de achttiende en negentiende eeuw. In die periode verspreidde de standaardtaalideologie zich onder bredere lagen van de bevolking en kon een doorgedreven taalbeleid – zoals de officiële taalregeling (Siegenbeek, 1804; Weiland, 1805) – de verandering naar de spelling <dt> wellicht versnellen.

In hoofdstuk 7 bestudeer ik een eerste grammaticale variabele, dat is het voegwoord in comparatiefconstructies van ongelijkheid. In die linguïstische context werden doorgaans de voegwoorden *als* en *dan* gebruikt. Andere dialectische varianten, zoals *of*, zijn niet aanwezig in dit corpus van geschreven taalgebruik. Aangezien enkel *als* en *dan* in de geschreven taal voorkomen, is dit een binaire variabele met een beperkte complexiteit. Het is daarnaast een feature dat weinig becommentarieerd werd door historische grammatici. Pas in de achttiende eeuw schreven normgevers de variant *dan* voor. Die vorm fungeerde

al als voegwoord in een comparatief in de zestiende eeuw, maar in de zeventiende eeuw nam het gebruik van *als* sterk toe in het taalgebruik. De corpusresultaten tonen aan dat de voorschriften voor *dan* mogelijk een volledige verandering naar *als* hebben voorkomen. We observeren namelijk een algemene terugkeer naar het voegwoord *dan* in het negentiende-eeuwse taalgebruik.

De invloed van prescriptivisme in de verandering van een velair naar palataal diminutiefsuffix wordt onderzocht in hoofdstuk 8. De ontwikkeling van velaire suffixen als *-kin* en *-ken* naar palatale suffixen als *-je(n)* vond gradueel plaats in het gesproken taalgebruik. Die evolutie werd ook weergegeven in het geschreven taalgebruik. In dit hoofdstuk onderzoek ik daarom of de ontwikkeling van een velair naar een palataal diminutiefsuffix in de geschreven taal werd beïnvloed door taalnormering. Door de grote variëteit aan suffixen, die bovendien verschillende stadia van het palataliseringsproces weergeven, is dit een feature met een hoge mate van complexiteit. Hoewel deze grammaticale variabele vaker wordt besproken in de normen dan bijvoorbeeld het voegwoord in de comparatiefconstructies, is dit feature zeker niet zo saillant als de spellingsvariabelen in dit onderzoek.

Voor deze variabele suggereren de corpusresultaten dat grammatici de verandering van het velaire naar het palatale diminutiefsuffix opmerkten in het taalgebruik. Ze reflecteren die ontwikkeling ook in hun voorschriften. Toch zijn er grammatici die het velaire suffix *-ken*, dat in de achttiende eeuw zo goed als verdwenen was uit het Noordelijke taalgebruik, bleven voorschrijven als alternatieve variant voor *-je(n)*. Noordelijke grammatici oordeelden namelijk dat het velaire suffix een vorm van deftigheid uitdrukt, wat ze als argument gebruikten om *-ken* in het taalgebruik te behouden. Ook in het Zuiden van het taalgebied zien we dat grammatici nog tot in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw vasthouden aan het velaire suffix. Hier reflecteren die voorschriften wel gewoon het taalgebruik. In het Zuiden bleef het suffix *-ken* immers langer in gebruik. Voor dit taalkenmerk identificeerde ik vijf mogelijke opties van prescriptieve invloed. In slechts twee gevallen was een interventie van grammatici waarschijnlijk. Vooral in de tweede helft van de achttiende eeuw, wanneer taalnormen sterker werden geïnstitutionaliseerd, slaagde prescriptivisme er mogelijk in om de verandering naar het palatale suffix *-je(n)* te versnellen.

Het laatste taalkenmerk dat onderzocht wordt in dit proefschrift is het accusatief-datiefonderscheid tussen de persoonlijke voornaamwoorden in de derde persoon meervoud. Deze casus wordt besproken in hoofdstuk 9. De focus ligt op de voornaamwoorden *hen(l.)* en *hun(l.)*, maar ik analyseer ook de alternatieve varianten *ze* en *haar*. De alternatieve vormen zijn echter geen volwaardige equivalenten van *hen(l.)* en *hun(l.)*. Zo kan *ze* ook verwijzen naar niet-animate antecedenten, terwijl *haar* voornamelijk voorkomt bij vrouwelijke referenten. Het onderzochte accusatief-datiefonderscheid betreft dus in essentie twee hoofdvarianten: *hen(l.)* en *hun(l.)*. Om die reden behandel ik dit taalkenmerk als een binaire variabele, al is het belangrijk om te nuanceren dat dit feature een grote mate van complexiteit bevat. Niet in het minst door de verschillende voornaamwoorden die worden ingezet en voorgeschreven naargelang het genus van de referent en de syntactische context.

Het accusatief-datiefonderscheid tussen *hen(l.)* en *hun(l.)* werd voor het eerst geïntroduceerd in de zeventiende-eeuwse normen, met name door Van Heule (1625). De meeste Noordelijke grammatici namen dit onderscheid over, en legden het vaak vast in de vorm van een naamvalparadigma. Dit maakt het een zeer zichtbaar feature in normatieve werken. Het is daarom ook een grammaticale variabele die hoog scoort op metalinguïstische saillantie. Wat de concrete taalnormen betreft, valt op dat vooral Noordelijke grammatici *hen(l.)* als accusatiefvariant en *hun(l.)* als datiefvorm voorschrijven. In het Zuiden werd doorgaans geen casusonderscheid voorgeschreven in de achttiende eeuw. Meestal opteerden Zuidelijke grammatici voor het voornaamwoord *hen(l.)* in beide syntactische contexten. In het taalgebruik zien we dat enkele Hollandse taalgebruikers het casusonderscheid al snel overnemen na de eerste voorschriften. Naarmate het onderscheid vaker werd voorgeschreven, verspreidde het zich geleidelijk aan onder taalgebruikers van andere regio's. Het is opvallend dat vooral schrijvers van pamfletten, en dus gedrukte en geredigeerde genres, beïnvloed werden door die voorschriften. In handgeschreven en minder formele teksten, zoals egodocumenten, werd het voorgeschreven casusonderscheid minder consequent toegepast. Schrijvers van Zuidelijke pamfletten namen het casusonderscheid ook pas over wanneer het in het Zuiden werd voorgeschreven. Dit wijst erop dat prescriptivisme in dit geval vooral succesvol in genres die meer vatbaar zijn voor invloeden 'van bovenaf'.

Uit de empirische hoofdstukken blijkt dat prescriptivisme niet altijd even succesvol was. Toch zien we dat normen bij elk van de onderzochte taalkenmerken mogelijk een invloed hadden op het taalgebruik, zij het in uiteenlopende mate. Zelden introduceerden grammatici een volledig nieuwe variant, en vaker beïnvloedden ze een verandering die al op weg was. Meestal betekende dit dat ze een taalverandering versnelden of vertraagden.

In de empirische hoofdstukken ontdekte ik dus verschillende types van prescriptieve invloed, die telkens in meerdere casussen zichtbaar waren. Daarom onderzocht ik ook welke factoren een invloed van prescriptivisme mogelijk maakten. Hierbij baseerde ik me op eerdere studies, zoals die van Rutten & Vosters (2021), maar ook op inzichten uit het werk van Anderwald (e.g. 2016, 2019), Moschonas (2022) en McLelland (2014). Deze bevindingen komen samen in een overkoepelende discussie, waarin ik verschillende scenario's van prescriptieve invloed definieer. Vanuit een typologisch perspectief breng ik in kaart in welke contexten prescriptieve invloed mogelijk is, en bespreek ik de beperkingen van elk effect. Deze discussie wordt uiteengezet in hoofdstuk 10, waarin ik acht scenario's van prescriptieve invloed bespreek.

Hoofdstuk 11 vormt de conclusie van dit proefschrift. In dit hoofdstuk grijp ik terug naar de belangrijkste resultaten uit de empirische hoofdstukken en reflecteer ik over de bijdrage van dit onderzoek voor onze kennis over de relatie tussen taalnormen en taalgebruik, enerzijds, en het standaardisatieproces van het Nederlands, anderzijds. Zo laat dit proefschrift zien dat taalnormen en taalgebruik in een wederzijdse wisselwerking functioneren. Normen capteren vaak het taalgebruik, kunnen het ook beïnvloeden, maar worden daarin versterkt door het taalgebruik zelf. Daarnaast zijn er wel degelijk factoren die een rol spelen in het succes van taalvoorschriften. Het belang van die factoren komt tot uiting binnen scenario's van prescriptieve invloed. Met deze typologische benadering hoop ik comparatief onderzoek in andere talen en contexten te faciliteren.

Dit proefschrift draagt bij aan ons begrip van standaardisatie als een proces 'van bovenaf'. Hoewel de discursieve invloed, waarbij een standaardtaalideologie wordt verspreid naar de bredere bevolking (cf. Milroy & Milroy, 2012), het meest voor de hand liggende effect is, blijkt ook directe invloed van normen op taalgebruik niet uitgesloten. Dit onderzoek suggereert dat standaardisatie in

ieder geval deels 'van bovenaf' werd doorgevoerd. Dit proces werd mogelijk wel voorafgegaan door een proces van talige convergentie 'van onderop'. Verder onderzoek is uiteraard noodzakelijk om de precieze dynamiek tussen standaardisatie en processen van talige convergentie verder te verhelderen.

Curriculum Vitae

Eline Lismont was born on 17 June 1994 in Sint-Truiden, Belgium. After completing a professional bachelor's degree in secondary education (English – Dutch) in 2015, she began a bridging year in Linguistics and Literary Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel in 2016. In 2018, she graduated with greatest distinction, earning a master's degree in Linguistics and Literary Studies: Dutch. During her master's program, Eline worked as a student assistant in the team of prof. dr. Rik Vosters. In October 2018, she was appointed as a teaching assistant for Dutch linguistics. That same year, she collaborated with prof. dr. Rik Vosters on a successful grant application to the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) for the research project that would become her PhD. In January 2020, Eline officially started working on the project *Setting the Standard. Norms and usage in Early and Late Modern Dutch (1550-1850)*, under supervision of prof. dr. Rik Vosters. Due to the close collaboration with prof. dr. Gijsbert Rutten through which this project was established, the doctoral research was carried out as a joint doctorate (*co-tutelle*) between the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and Leiden University (Centre for Linguistics – LUCL), as of April 2021. The present dissertation is the result of Eline's doctoral research.