13. CONCLUSIONS

13.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation has defined Standard Dutch and described its pronunciation. The first of these themes approaches Standard Dutch as a social phenomenon rather than as a set of linguistic features. The second theme focuses on phonetic characteristics, namely the realisation of vowels and consonants. The starting point of the research was finding the agreement on what Standard Dutch speech is. This part in itself provided insights into the degree and nature of agreement on the linguistic norm in the Netherlands, and therefore the evaluation of speech is discussed as a separate theme in this chapter. The results also brought forward a fourth theme to discuss in the present chapter, namely the question of authority: who decide on the definition of Standard Dutch?

Chapter overview

Section 13.2 gives a characterisation of Standard Dutch. Respondent definitions of this language are used for this. First, an explanation is given of the two main ways Standard Dutch may be characterised, namely by taking as the point of departure either its intrinsic characteristics or its user characteristics. Intrinsic characteristics refer to the nature of the language itself, and this type of definition can be captured mostly by adjectives, for instance 'correct', 'non-regional', and 'formal'. In some cases, intrinsic characteristics also included linguistic features. User characteristics refer to the people who typically speak this language variety; where they live, what they do, and so forth.

In Section 13.3, the pronunciation of Standard Dutch is dealt with. First, this section discusses pronunciation variation within Standard Dutch, and after that the descriptive results related to the consonants and vowels of Standard Dutch are presented. The final part of this section gives hints as to speech features other than segmental that may determine degree of standardness. The evaluation of speech, and particularly the effects of listener and respondent characteristics, is discussed in Section 13.4. A discussion on authority is in Section 13.5. This section also touches on the respective roles of laymen and experts in the present research. Section 13.6 concludes the chapter by hypothesising on the processes that establish and prolong a language norm. This final section predicts the future shape and position of Standard Dutch in the Netherlands.

13.2 STANDARD DUTCH: DEFINITION

Section 1.2 asked the question whether Standard Dutch exists. It certainly exists in the literature, and various writers have directly indicated that in some shape or form Standard Dutch is real. The amount of descriptive literature on this language variety speaks for itself. The willingness of respondents and listeners to answer questions on

Standard Dutch in our research confirms that it exists in Dutch society as well. Participants in the various researches generally did not question the existence of this language variety, and they were generally able to describe it. These descriptions even revealed considerable agreement, and this shows that Standard Dutch does not only exist but also that its shape has to some degree been established. Especially after recategorising characteristics put forward by respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Section 6.3), it appeared that the named agreement is considerable. The characteristics mentioned oftentimes referred directly to actual speakers and audible qualities, which again confirms that an existing entity is described. The New-Zealand results in the International Survey indicate that this ability to describe the standard language depends on the actual existence. Standard New-Zealand English exists mainly in linguistic spheres and not so much in the minds of ordinary speakers, so it appears. Descriptions of New-Zealand English were as a result relatively irregular.

So, it seems that those writers who considered Standard Dutch too elusive and unrealistic to be considered a tangible reality (for instance Overdiep 1949:8-17, Kloeke 1951:43, Goossens 1974:12, De Vries 1980:224-225, 1987:128-129, Geerts 1987:165) are wrong. An explanation for the alleged elusiveness of Standard Dutch lies in the parallel existence of two distinct interpretations, as is argued in this section, rather than a single one. These two interpretations, however, are not mutually exclusive, so it will be argued.

After ordering the characteristics put forward by respondents, a two-way division appeared. Chapters 6 and 7 reflect this division between intrinsic (Chapter 6) and user characteristics (Chapter 7). Respondents themselves do not usually distinguish between these two types, using both interchangeably when asked to define Standard Dutch.

Intrinsic characteristics

The difficulty in describing the intrinsic characteristics of a language is that various types of such characteristics will arise from the research, as the results of the Sociolinguistic Survey show (Section 6.3). The comments by respondents can be ordered in various ways. In reporting on the intrinsic characteristics put forward by respondents, subtle distinctions can be maintained (for instance between responses such as 'the language we all understand' and 'the language that we all have in common'). Most intrinsic characteristics that respondents mentioned, however, point towards more generic intrinsic characteristics (in this case, 'lingua francaness') and permit a broader characterisation. The results of the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Table 6.2) thus brought forward numerous characteristics, which showed that correctness, non-regionality, and lingua francaness are perceived to be the most distinctive intrinsic characteristics of Standard Dutch.

Some of the characteristics still referred to one and the same underlying idea and could be recategorised even further. One could, for instance, argue that the characteristics 'non-regionality' and 'lingua francaness' refer to similar notions, as both express the urge for mutual sameness (which could be named 'generalness').

Looking at the wide variety of characteristics in this more generalistic manner (Table 6.3) showed that the respondents referred to generalness and culturedness as the most important intrinsic characteristics of Standard Dutch. This is mainly due to the fact that non-regionality (as part of generalness) and unnaturalness (as a part of culturedness) surfaced so often in the descriptions by respondents.

Generalness

Section 6.3 presented categories of intrinsic characteristics used by the respondents to describe Standard Dutch. The most dominant group of characteristics was called the 'general' category. Two main members of this category were the non-regionality and lingua franca characteristics. The generalness of the standard language most strongly surfaces in the results through references to non-regionality. In the Dutch literature (Section 6.3), non-regionality is put forward as a requirement of the standard language. Our respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Table 6.1a and Table 6.1b) also applied this characteristic regularly. So, this is a popular view that is shared by Dutch professionals and laymen. It appears (Section 8.3, Table 8.1) that the Dutch put relatively much emphasis on non-regionality.

Section 2.4 indicated that in the 13th Century documents in the Low Countries were adjusted on the basis of the awareness of the existence of non-regional items. The wide variety of dialects in the Netherlands in the late Middle Ages made it useful to resort to such non-regional terminology in documents aimed at large audiences, if such terminology existed. After the Netherlands entered a period of unity and independence in the 16th Century (Section 2.5), this need for non-regionality remained. It can be assumed that today's need for non-regionality is different from that in previous centuries. Also, non-regionality nowadays is most of all relevant in pronunciation, as written Dutch has standardised to a high degree (Section 2.1, 2.10, and 3.7).

Non-regionality is partly an effect and partly a point of focus, so it appears. It arises naturally as people move outside their local speech community and adjust their language so as to communicate effectively and neutrally with other people. It is only over time that striving for a non-regional accent has become an explicit point of interest in the Netherlands. In earlier times, the focus was more on characteristics other than pronunciation. Non-regionality was necessary in those cases where different language varieties met, whereas today this intelligibility function of non-regionality is disappearing. Today, speakers who are perfectly mutually understandable may strive towards non-regionality anyway, i.e. without any practical need. In this case, non-regionality becomes symbolic rather than practical.

An explanation for today's outstanding focus on non-regionality in the Netherlands is that the geographical focus of Dutch speakers has broadened in recent centuries, and in recent decades in particular (Section 2.8). In earlier days, people's scope of attention would almost exclusively be on the own village and the neighbouring ones. Making a neutral impression would not require a pronunciation that was neutral from a regional or national point of view. There seems to be the need in the Netherlands to adapt to the linguistic norms of the larger group and not

to stand out. The fact that poshness is hardly at all associated with Standard Dutch (Table 6.3) corroborates this suggestion. Apparently, poshness is a characteristic that serves to distinguish and is therefore not part of the standard language. It seems that amongst Standard Dutch speakers the aim is to produce clear language that is unmarked and inoffensive.

Parallel to the strict view, in which traces of regionality are not present in Standard Dutch, there is the view in which some traces are acceptable. When asked to indicate whether regional traces are audible in Standard Dutch, a considerable majority of the respondents in the Telephone Survey (Figure 6.4) indicated that this is the case. Only about a third believed that this is not so. The results of the same survey (Figure 6.4) showed that western features are more acceptable than other regional features. The results of the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Figure 7.1) showed that Haarlem, the *Randstad*, and the west are widely considered the places where Standard Dutch is spoken most. To a degree, therefore, regionality seems synonymous with a non-western accent (Section 6.3, Section 7.2), at least within such a lenient interpretation of Standard Dutch.

The results of the Speech Evaluation Experiment showed that evaluations of regional speech are less structured than those of non-regional speech (Section 9.4). The evaluation of highly standard speech evokes similar reactions across respondents and seems less dependent on where they come from, their age, sex, and level of education. Evaluations of obvious deviations from the standard language may be steered more strongly by such respondent characteristics. In future decades, western accents may either become associated increasingly with the standard language, or it may be that any kind of accent, including western, becomes less acceptable and that the importance of non-regionalness grows.

Lingua francaness is another characteristic of Standard Dutch that helps to make this language variety general. A lingua franca is a means of communication for those who do not necessarily have this language as their first or native language. The standard language is not a lingua franca in the traditional sense, as it is not usually the language used to achieve a basic form of communication but to understand each other better, to avoid confusion. The respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey oftentimes in some descriptive form or other put forward the practical/communicative function of Standard Dutch (Section 6.3). This function of Standard Dutch is in the literature not usually emphasised as a core characteristic. Lingua francaness is related to non-regionalness in the sense that non-regionalness makes language varieties more mutually comprehensible. The International Survey results (Section 8.3) suggested that lingua francaness is the only characteristic that is internationally recognised as required in the standard language.

Intrinsic characteristics other than lingua francaness are alive in the countries investigated outside the Netherlands, but their relative dominance varies. This shows that the lingua francaness of the Dutch standard language is in line with broader sociolinguistic tendencies, whereas a characteristic such as the specific need for non-regionality seems typical of an old standard language like Dutch. The most important early proponent of the non-regionality characteristic was Jespersen (1925), a Dane. Danish is another established language.

CHAPTER 13

Culturedness

The results of the Speech Evaluation Experiment (Section 6.3) showed that standardness correlates positively with polishedness, and the results of the Sociolinguistic Description Survey (Table 6.2) showed that correctness is an important characteristic of the standard language in the Netherlands as well. Correctness was the most important general characteristic of Standard Dutch according to the respondents in the Sociolinguistic Survey (Section 6.3), and this suggests that truly standard Dutch is bound by rules and regulations. The term 'culturedness' was used to refer to such characteristics. Culturedness suggests that the standard language requires considerable effort, which may make it a less than natural language. Section 6.3 showed several other indications that Standard Dutch is to some degree subject to unnaturalness and suggested that this characteristic is embraced by its users and even by those who do not necessarily speak it. The suggested reasons for this were the conservative force and prescriptivism that Standard Dutch seems to be subject to, the fact that it is not always the mother tongue of speakers, the written tradition of the standard language, the formal communicative function of the standard language, and, finally, the articulated speech that is often heard in the media. It is safe to say that a relatively high degree of unnaturalness of the standard language is accepted; it even seems to enjoy a certain status. Naturalness is not a popular explicit point of debate. In fact, a loose and carefree style of speaking the standard language is likely to be viewed more critically than an exaggerated standard articulation.

User characteristics

User characteristics are the second kind of means to approach Standard Dutch. The results of the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Section 6.1) showed how these characteristics can be subdivided into by whom the language is typically used, when it was spoken in particular, and how many people speak it.

Who

It is not easy to describe a prototypical speaker of Standard Dutch in any detail, as the nature of the standard language itself does not allow such a narrow description. This language could never be exclusively typical of a highly specific group of speakers but will logically be the tongue of several groups of speakers. Therefore, only a set of hints can be given to describe typical Standard Dutch speakers.

The broadest subdivision possible, namely between men and women, is unsuccessful in the sense that both seem more or less equally likely to speak the standard language. Both men and women were put forward by the respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey as famous speakers of Standard Dutch, and the two sexes were considered equally likely to speak it by the respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Section 7.4). A light bias for women was found,

but this was not the case across the countries studied in the International Survey (Section 8.3).

It was suggested (Section 6.3) that radio to a higher degree than television represents a theoretical norm, as radio is an older medium in which - logically and stereotypically - special attention is paid to speech and content. This possibility was not contradicted by the Dutch or international results, but it wasn't confirmed either. In fact, the role allocated to television was perhaps even stronger. There was no majority of respondents in any country in the International Survey (Section 8.3) that strongly believed that either radio or television broadcast standard speech most. In all the countries investigated, the group of respondents who chose either medium was considerable, and so was the group who considered both to be equally likely to be broadcasting standard speech.

Newscasters in particular were associated with the standard language and to a lesser degree highly educated people as well (Section 7.4). (These two groups are not mutually exclusive, of course: newsreaders may be presumed to be educated.) Many respondents put forward famous newsreaders as prototypical Standard Dutch speakers (Figure 7.7, Table 7.2, and Figure 7.8). Although newsreaders were found to be associated with the standard language across the countries investigated in the International Survey (Section 8.3), this group of speakers is not universally considered to represent the standard language. On the other hand, the only country where newsreaders were not put forward by a majority of the respondents was New-Zealand, where the issue of standardness is confusing to respondents, due to a lack of an elaborate historical context. So, there are indications that in countries with an old standard language newsreaders are linguistic role models. The respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Section 7.4) were undecided between considering radio and television equally likely to broadcast standard speech or considering radio most likely, but the fact that famous television newsreaders were put forward as example speakers suggests that perhaps television is more influential in the coming to existence of the linguistic norm.

Not all of the respondents in the countries that were investigated through the International Survey (Section 8.3) knew of individuals whose speech they considered representative of standard speech. New-Zealand did not have such exemplary speakers. So, again it seems that in countries where there is an old established standard language there are famous speakers whose speech is representative of standard speech. In countries where the standard language has never fully fledged, agreement on such famous speakers as a result does not exist.

As could be expected, the west of the Netherlands was associated strongly with Standard Dutch by the respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Figure 7.1). The results of the Telephone Survey (Figure 6.4) showed that deviations from the standard language that have a western ring to them are considered more acceptable than features non-western. The Telephone Survey results (Figure 6.4) showed that western respondents feel this most strongly, so it is to some degree dependent on the regional origin of the respondent. As not all newsreaders in the Netherlands are from the west of the country, and therefore do not necessarily have a western Dutch ring to their speech, the connection between the western Dutch

cities and the standard language to a degree seems historical rather than practical. 'Standardised speech that has its historical roots in the west' rather than 'today's western speech' may function as the language norm. Dutchmen are obviously aware of the historical ties between Standard Dutch and Dutch from the western cities.

The International Survey revealed that the capital city is often considered to be the place of origin of the standard language (Table 8.1). This, however, is always due to a specific reason, for instance because the capital city seats the most prestigious university. In the Netherlands, the capital city (Amsterdam) is not specifically associated with Standard Dutch. Urban areas are more often associated with the standard language than rural areas. When areas were named in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Figure 7.1) and the International Survey (Table 8.1), it seems that urban centres were referred to specifically. The results of the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey suggested that 'the urban area in the west of the Netherlands' and 'the west' are synonymous, as no rural areas or small towns were referred to specifically in those cases where a specific place was asked.

An expected but nevertheless striking result was the popularity of the city of Haarlem as the place where Standard Dutch is most likely to be spoken. It has been suggested that no compelling reasons can be invented to support this idea. The fact that this city has no widely recognisable city dialect - unlike other large western cities - is a possible reason why this response is still popular. No reasons have arisen to contradict this idea, and the relative obscurity and anonymity of Haarlem may thus have kept this notion alive.

When

The results of the Speech Evaluation Experiment showed that the evaluation of 1950s speech was significantly different from that of later decades. Speech from the 1950s was considered to be less standard (Figure 7.3 and Figure 7.4) when evaluated subconsciously (without the listener knowing how old the speech was). When 1950s speech was consciously evaluated (when respondents thought they knew the age) (Figure 7.3 and Figure 7.4), no significant differences appeared between the speech perceived to be from the 1950s and that from the other decades. The knowledge of the age of the speech has possibly caused higher standardness ratings for 1950s speech. It seems that while, generally, the speech from this era has a high, almost sentimental, status, the actual speech features from this period is subconsciously evaluated as less fit to function as a modern standard language.

This period was the early stage of widespread television broadcasting. It therefore may have set part of the norm. The exposure of Dutchmen to 1950s speech is limited today, and this speech could therefore never function as a norm. Old (pre-1960s) speech therefore seems to function as a theoretical norm to hold on to. There was no clear indication that speech from the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s was evaluated mutually differently. The evaluation of speech from these decades was unstructured. There were nevertheless indications of a small bias towards considering 1990s speech most standard (Table 7.1, Figure 7.3), and all in all it is clear that the modern

standard language evolves with time and may remain 'fresh' for, say, two or three decades.

How many

One way of counting speakers of Standard Dutch is by asking respondents about their own ability to speak it. A majority of the respondents in the Telephone Survey believed in this ability. They even claimed to speak it regularly (Figure 7.15). In all the countries investigated in the International Survey (Section 8.3), more than 80% of the respondents considered themselves able to speak the standard language. However, after listening to the speech of half of respondents in the Telephone Survey (whose speech was recorded) it turned out that those who considered themselves speakers of Standard Dutch did not speak Standard Dutch to a significantly different degree than those who believed that they never spoke it (Section 7.3). Obviously, these respondents (Section 8.3) applied a broad interpretation of the standard language when it came to the ability to speak it. They can be assumed not to suggest being able to speak the standard language with no trace of a regional accent or other kind of variation. In the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey, as many as 86% of the respondents somehow characterised Standard Dutch by referring to its generalness (Table 6.2). This group of respondents referred to lingua francaness, non-regionality, and other characteristics pointing to the accessibility of Standard Dutch to most speakers. This would again mean that the language has many speakers.

The literature (Section 2.8 and Section 3.3) suggests that besides this approach there is another dominant one, namely one that strongly limits the number of speakers and restricts variation. With the coming to existence of Standard Dutch, the idea developed that there was a version of the standard language that was homogenous and used only by the elite. The literature (Section 3.6) shows that today this idea of an exclusivist standard language is still alive. Table 6.2 reveals that a considerable number of respondents of the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey associated Standard Dutch with culturedness, which suggests that this language is accessible to a limited group of speakers only. At least a third, and in most cases half, of the respondents in the International Survey living in a country with an established standard language referred to the culturedness of the standard language (Table 8.2). It thus seems that established standard languages are 'shadowed' by a homogenous linguistic model, or at least the idea thereof.

So, the respondents appeared to be in two minds about Standard Dutch, adhering to both or one of these two views. The results of the Telephone Survey showed this most directly. The respondents (Section 7.6) were asked to indicate how many people speak Standard Dutch. Two responses stood out, namely '50% of the Dutch population' and 'between 0 and 5% of the Dutch population'. Although five percent of the population of the Netherlands is a large group of people, it is still a low percentage, and so they can be associated with an elite language. 'Half of the Dutch population' represents a broad view.

These two approaches have been current since the middle of the 19th Century according to Kroon and Vallen (2004:6). Hagen and Vallen (1974) indicated that those who put the emphasis on homogeneity are strict and accept no variation, whereas those who consider heterogeneity to be a natural phenomenon embrace variation. Paardekooper (1969:30) believed that the lenient approach is a compromise used by those whose own language is in accordance with this and not the strict interpretation, but Kroon and Vallen (2004:6-7) believed that Paardekooper's view has encountered little support. The strict view of active advocates of the homogenous nature of the standard language is the one that has found its way into schoolbooks and language handbooks, and the data that have shown the heterogeneity of Dutch have failed to have much impact, so it seems. Hagen and Vallen (1975) indicated that this started to change in the 1970s.

Two types of standard languages

So, Standard Dutch seems subject to - what can be named - an 'inclusive' and an 'exclusive' interpretation. In the inclusive view, Standard Dutch binds speakers of Dutch. It is the language that many people know how to speak, and that most can and will achieve as a first or second language. This is a language with variation to the extent that it does not interfere with intelligibility. It is thus equal to 'understandable Dutch', the type of Dutch that avoids certain marked articulatory, lexical, and grammatical structures. It is spoken in situations where people with various backgrounds come together and need to communicate effectively and impartially (shops, schools, in the professional world, and so on). This inclusive type of Standard Dutch contains both regional and non-regional traces but no dialect features, most importantly those that impair comprehension. Non-standard Dutch in this inclusive view is Dutch that consistently shows features that are understandable to only a subset of speakers.

The exclusive distinguishes standard language speakers from others. It is the language of the happy few. It is the strictly homogenous language in which variation is limited and deviations highly conspicuous, including at the pronunciation level. Variation is allowed only within strict boundaries, providing it is not of the social type. The great majority of Dutchmen speak non-standard Dutch in this view or have non-standard features in their daily speech.

Looking at the international results (Table 8.1 and Table 8.2), it seems that the exclusivist standard language has as a prerequisite that it has had some centuries to develop. Considerable groups of respondents from the Netherlands, Flanders, Poland, and Japan somehow referred to the 'culturedness' of the standard language (Table 8.2). In New-Zealand society, on the other hand, there has been relatively little tradition with respect to a national standard language. As a possible consequence, the exclusivist ('cultured') aspect of the standard language was strikingly less present than in the four other societies dealt with in the International Survey. Correctness (part of culturedness) was not referred to at all by the New-Zealanders, while the respondents from the other countries named this characteristic regularly. Respondents from New-Zealand (Table 8.1) frequently equated 'Standard

New-Zealand English' straightforwardly with 'understandable and accessible New-Zealand English', and one of the main intrinsic characteristics of the standard language in New-Zealand is its informal character, so the respondents indicated. Many New-Zealanders referred to Standard New-Zealand English with qualifications such as 'slangy', and all of this is reminiscent of generalness and heterogeneity, and thus of the inclusive view. The need for an invariable (exclusivist) norm in New-Zealand only indirectly surfaces, namely through the tendency of New-Zealand respondents to refer to British English, which is apparently their alternative to an exclusive standard language. Few New-Zealanders actually meet this norm or try to. This would suggest that the exclusive standard language is a remnant of the past that lingers persistently, rather than something that in modern-day society would come to existence. The exclusive standard language may act as a kind of guard for the language norm, to suppress change and quick adoptions to fashions.

If there are two standard languages, then the question is what their respective roles are and how they relate to each other. Both languages in their own way do not meet the stereotypical standard-language requirements. Although Exclusive Standard Dutch is highly homogenous, it is shared by few people, so that it is not standard in the sense of widely accepted and/or adopted. Inclusive Standard Dutch, on the other hand, is standard in the sense that many people speak it, but it is far from homogenous. Lingua francaness (typical of Inclusive Standard Dutch) and homogeneity (typical of Exclusive Standard Dutch) can be reconciled by regarding variation that causes no breach in communication as optional. Freedom of variation is thus naturally restricted by comprehension. Inclusive Standard Dutch, then, contains optional variation, which makes it non-homogenous, but the named variation is irrelevant as it is within certain bounds. This way, Inclusive Standard Dutch is the real standard language and simply has Exclusive Standard Dutch as one of its variants. Exclusive Standard Dutch is in this approach unnecessarily homogenous but not - on the basis of that homogeneity - more standard or less standard. The two types of Standard Dutch have in common the fact that they are maximally comprehensible.

Looking at the general definition of Standard Dutch (Table 6.2) and the literature on this topic (Section 6.3), we see that generalness surfaces as the main intrinsic characteristic of the standard language and exclusivity only to a lesser extent. This suggests that there is a stronger tendency to include variation than to exclude it, meaning that Inclusive Standard Dutch is the most widely embraced interpretation, whereas the strict view is mostly a convenient theoretical reference point.

13.3 STANDARD DUTCH: PRONUNCIATION

Pronunciation in particular plays a role in degree of standardness, so the respondents in the Telephone Survey indicated (Figure 6.5). Pronunciation is also one of the main topics discussed in the literature (Section 6.3) in relation to standardness. An explanation for this special interest in this aspect of language is that the Dutch

language has standardised to such an extent that pronunciation is the main remaining source of variation. As pronunciation is the more subtle of language features, it has become the main area of variation as well as the primary focus of attention in the standardness discussion. Grammatical, lexical, syntactic, and other types of variation are relatively minor, and producing completely standardised language in these fields has appeared to be feasible for most educated Dutchmen. As far as these aspects are concerned, they can achieve Exclusive Standard Dutch. In their pronunciation, however, achieving this type of Standard Dutch is more difficult, because the rules are strict.

The pronunciation variation discussed in the literature and here is in the realm of Exclusive Standard Dutch. For comprehension purposes, this variation is more or less irrelevant. The type of Dutch discussed here can be found in the so-called speech-making community[1] - i.e. the group of speakers whose speech is decisive in the coming to existence of the language norm. Within this domain of subtle variation, there is still debate on what is standard (or correct) pronunciation-wise. This again shows the need for an example pronunciation, one that may be referred to as an absolute and indubitable model. Those referring to this model nevertheless do not necessarily aspire to speak it.

Selection procedure

By taking into consideration theoretical issues and evaluations, speakers were selected whose speech can be considered highly standard. The theoretical standard language was found through assumptions (Section 1.6), the literature (Chapter 2 and 3), the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Table 7.2, Section 7.2, and Section 7.4), and the First Newsreader Survey (Table 7.3). A further selection was made through the Speech Evaluation Experiment (Figure 9.1 and Figure 9.2). The outcome were seven news presenters, whose speech was described both perceptually (Chapter 11) and acoustically (Chapter 12). It is safe to say that these speakers met the highest possible standardness norms, even within the Exclusive Standard Dutch sphere. The speakers in question received high standardness scores (Figure 9.1), but nevertheless not all listeners agreed on the high standardness of their speech (Table 9.2). Even when taking into consideration that some listeners and respondents for some reason or other failed to bring across a realistic evaluation and/or agree with the majority (Section 9.3), it is still clear that our speakers were not by everyone considered fit as Standard Dutch speakers, only a large majority. As our speakers were selected carefully, it may be assumed that agreement does not exist. Most likely, the agreement found regarding our speakers is the highest possible and gives an idea of the scope of variation within the language norm.

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1   Dutch term: *spraakmakende gemeente.*

(v) and (z)

The literature of Section 10.3 showed how voiceless lax and to a lesser degree voiced lax and voiceless tense realisations of (v) and (z) are considered most typical of Standard Dutch. The voice in fricatives (v) and (z) is most usually viewed binarily; occurrences contain voice or they do not. Voice is perhaps better looked at in a more continuous manner, by viewing it from a perceptual point of view. While there is an absolute difference between voiced and voiceless, this difference is obscured perceptually. The lax articulation of voiceless fricatives creates a seemingly transitional realisation, one that is articulatorily close to (f) or (s) but perceptually still recognisable as the 'old' fricative (v) or (z). These transitional realisations are not clearly perceptually voiced or voiceless. Entering (v)'s and (z)'s in Praat and generating spectrograms revealed unambiguously whether there was voice but this finding says little about how people will perceive it.

Our transcription results (Section 11.3) show that both (v) and (z) are subject to devoicing but that (v) has a stronger tendency to devoice than (z). The realisations of these two phonemes do not coincide with (f) and (s). It can only be assumed that (v) and (z) will be stable in their realisation in the future, as a merger with (f) and (s) could cause ambiguity.

The transcription results also showed an overall preference for the fully voiced lax realisation for both fricatives, although in the case of (v) this tendency was less obvious than for (z). There was considerable intra- and interspeaker variation, especially for (v). Voice was not always obvious, but the representation in Praat showed that it was there often anyway. Strongly voiced realisations were exceptional.

(g)

The literature (Section 10.4) suggests that today there are various realisations of (g) in Standard Dutch: voiceless and voiced, and both velar and uvular. The most dominant one is the voiceless uvular realisation, and our transcription results (Section 11.4) confirm this. Over the years this phoneme has increasingly come to be pronounced in the back of the mouth. Our transcription results show that (g) is almost exclusively realised as a uvular fricative, and in many cases it is even produced with rasp. Realisations other than a uvular fricative (with or without rasp) occur accidentally across contexts and speakers.

(r)

For (r), the uvular and alveolar trills and taps are most common according to the literature (Section 10.5). The literature also indicates that approximant and reduced realisations of (r) occur in the coda and that this may even be a range of realisations.

The transcription results showed a striking variation in the production of (r) across speakers (Section 11.5). No less than 24 different realisations were found. Not surprisingly, the large majority of the variation was found in coda position,

where the realisations were generally articulatorily weak and not always easy to qualify. Onset realisations were clear and easy to identify, and our data suggest that both front (alveolar) and back (uvular) realisations are acceptable in Standard Dutch. There is an acceptance of variation in this respect. This may be due to the fact that the frontness or backness of (r) is a speech habit that is hard to change in later life, and that neither (r) evokes strong connotations connected to a region within the Netherlands. For these reasons, this variation is likely to stay and remain largely unnoticed by lay Dutchmen. The distribution of coda realisations of (r) could not be predicted on the basis of the way onset occurrences were realised or vice versa.

For the various realisations of (r), writers tend to focus mainly on place of articulation, manner of articulation, and voice (Section 10.5). The transcriptions of coda (r) were affected by the degree of difficulty to determine the place and manner of articulation of the tokens and the presence of voice. Multiple reruns of the sound files were required to come to a plausible transcription for coda (r) realisation. These listening sessions yielded the impression that these three features are not in all cases the sole, or main, sources of contention for coda realisations but that the force of articulation of coda (r) is an important factor in the degree of standardness.

Articulatorily emphatic realisations of coda (r) were rare in our corpus, and at the same time the segmental variation within (r) was considerable. It may well be that forceful coda-(r) realisations constitute a deviation from the articulatory norm, irrespective of place and manner of articulation and of voice. It may, for instance be that for alveolar realisations the single tap is preferred over a salient trill. All of this would mean that to some degree the standard pronunciation of coda (r) is any place and manner of articulation (looking at the wide range of realisations in Table 11.5), as long as it contains little audible force of articulation. This would account for the amount of segmental variation in coda (r) that we found. It seems unrealistic to consider the variation in place and manner of articulation in coda (r) as equally relevant as that in onset (r).

The vowels

For the present research, transcriptions and acoustic measurements were performed on a set of vowels. The acoustic part of the phonetic description quantified vowels in Hertz, representing the open/close and front/back dimensions, and index numbers were used relative to the most open and most closed realisations. With such a representation, the vowel transcriptions could be put into perspective.

The phonetic results serve as objective data that may function as comparative material for future measurements of Standard Dutch vowels. As our speakers have been selected strictly, the results represent a kind of provisional contemporary yardstick for Standard Dutch vowels. New measurements, of equally carefully selected speakers, will improve the precision of this yardstick. The low number of speakers in our study is a certain weakness. A larger study would have revealed in a more convincing manner than our data what the variation is in Standard Dutch vowel realisations.

CHAPTER 13

Vowel measurements from the 1970s and 1990s were available (Section 12.1) as contrastive material. Unfortunately, the 1970s data were not fully comparable with ours. The contrastive speech data from the same period as ours (the 1990s: Adank, Van Hout & Smits 2004) was technically closer to ours and constituted highly standardised Dutch. They were teachers of Dutch from the west of the Netherlands. The measuring tool was more or less identical to ours.

(ee), (eu), and (oo)

Until recently, the literature (Section 10.6) painted a picture of a set of vowels that is in a process of change from monophthongs to semi-diphthongs. It seems, however, that this light diphthongisation has been relatively stable, perhaps even longer already than is often suggested. Today, the long midvowels are generally acknowledged as semi-diphthongal phonemes. Our transcriptions (Section 11.6) also revealed one basic kind of realisation for these three midvowels, namely a semi-diphthong.

Plotting the average F_1's and F_2's of the long midvowels (Figure 12.1), and normalising them through z-scores, yields a traditional vowel diagram (Figure 12.2), which confirms the effectiveness of our measurement technique. The results (Section 12.4) resemble Adank *et al.*'s (2004) measurements, which are on standardised Dutch as well. The measurements showed that our speakers diphthongised their midvowels less than Adank *et al.*'s speakers. This agrees with what one might expect, as Adank *et al.*'s speakers were more likely to have western accents and these accents tend to diphthongise more. The women measured by Adank *et al.* diphthongised less than their males, and they started their midvowels in a less open position. Our females' midvowels were similar to Adank's women's diphthongs, and our men and women produced mutually similar midvowels. This means that Adank *et al.*'s western men diphthongised their midvowels relatively strongly, which is unexpected as men are not known to be forerunners in language change (Section 7.4).

(ei), (ui), and (ou)

The literature on the three Dutch diphthongs suggests that until relatively recently these three diphthongs were stable. In the last few decades, the lowering of the first element of diphthongs has started to appear in the literature (Section 10.7), but it is unclear whether this tendency also holds for Standard Dutch. The expected distinction between the degree of diphthongisation of semi-diphthongs and diphthongs is visible in our transcription results (Section 11.6). There seems no relationship between the tendency to lower the first element of diphthongs and the tendency to diphthongise (Section 11.6).

The measurements showed that Adank' *et al.*'s men (Section 12.4) had more 'modern' diphthongs than ours, in the sense that their first elements were more open than our men's diphthongs. As a consequence, Adank's male speakers diphthongised more than ours. The same went for the women. None of the speakers

in our corpus produced strongly lowered first elements. Six of the seven speakers produced lightly lowered first elements (Section 11.6). Lowering in our corpus (Section 12.5) on average amounted to a ten-percent additional openness (on the open/close dimension), but the differences between speakers were considerable and ran from 7% to 31%. Diphthong phoneme (ui) seemed to diphthongise most and (ei) the least. Three speakers produced enough lowered and unlowered diphthongs to compare the difference between open and closed occurrences. The lowered and unlowered realisations of diphthong (ou) did not differ significantly for any of the three speakers.

To qualify 'light diphthongisation', we used comparative material by Edelman (2002), who measured the first elements of women who spoke Polder Dutch and lowered the first element of their diphthongs strongly. It turned out that Edelman's women who spoke strong Polder Dutch on average produced diphthongs with first elements that were considerably lower than our speakers (lowered and unlowered realisations together).

Conclusion

It has become clear that few comprehensive rules can be given as to the acceptable degree of phonetic variation within Standard Dutch. It depends on the phoneme in question and on phonological position. Certain phonemes in certain positions are subject to variation. Phoneme (r), for instance, is subject to considerable variation in postvocalic position (which is not perceptually prominent), whereas the number of acceptable realisations in onset position is restricted to two basic ones. The phoneme (g), on the other hand, seems to have one basic realisation, irrespective of its place in the syllable.

The degree of realisational variation within certain Standard Dutch phonemes oftentimes looks to be exaggerated. Disagreement on certain variation has more or less disappeared, but the literature keeps questioning it. The light diphthongisation of midvowels, for instance, is often presented as a change in motion, whereas this phenomenon has been mentioned in the literature for many years already (Section 10.6). It may be that writers are copying each others' observations and are themselves not accepting of such phenomena. Moreover, comments on variation concern a limited set of consonants only, and this hides the fact that for most phonemes agreement is as complete as can be.

After looking at the phonemes of Dutch from a segmental point of view, one suspects that features other than segmental ones determine degree of standardness also. It has already been indicated that force of articulation may be a factor. Non-segmental features that may be of influence on degree of standardness of speech are speech rate and pitch. There may be a standard pace and pitch. A slow and low speech style, for instance, may be considered more standard than a fast highly-pitched style. There may also be a standard intonation pattern (Gooskens 1997). It even seems likely that certain voice qualities are associated with the standard language. Creak, nasality, and breathiness may affect the degree of standardness, as

for instance. Future research into the pronunciation of Dutch should pay attention to this.

A weakness of our speech data is that the speakers are all news presenters. Perhaps this is merely a selected type of Standard Dutch. Although it is by now obvious that our group of speakers is influential, it is not certain that the linguistic norm in the Netherlands is reflected in all its width in the speech of this highly limited group of speakers. Presumably, watching television and listening to the radio are not the sole factors in the establishment of norms. The role of the speech in formal education, the peer group, and the home is underexposed. If the standard language is most of all considered 'correct', then school language deserves more attention, for instance.

13.4 EVALUATION

The Speech Evaluation Experiment brought forward considerable agreement on the high degree of standardnesss of the speech of three speakers (Figure 9.1 and Figure 9.2). This agreement was based mainly on actual speech qualities rather than their position as newsreaders. The results of this experiment (Figure 9.3, Table 9.1) showed that the agreement between listeners on the high degree of standardness of speakers is relative. There was a subgroup (6% of the total group of listeners) who did not react negatively to regional speech. This group of listeners was older and less educated. Besides the difficulty of the listener tasks, actual deviant attitudes may have been the cause of this. It is likely that absolute agreement on the standardness of speech generally does not exist but that instead a deviant subgroup will exist. This group may be as small as 6%. This may be true in the evaluation of highly standard speech like ours only.

Listener and respondent characteristics may explain evaluative behaviour to a degree. Men and women are known to speak differently and this may affect the way they view degree of standardness. The same suggestion is true for people from within the area that is the historical origin of the standard language and those not from this area. Age and level of education may also affect evaluation.

Sex

With some exceptions, women have in the past been found to be more likely to produce standard speech than men (Section 7.4). The two women and the five men whose vowels and consonants we transcribed did not have mutually distinct pronunciation patterns in any way (Section 11.3). There was no way in which the men and the women could be distinguished on the basis of speech habits, which may also be due to the group being too small for any tendencies to appear. Another reason may be the limited opportunity for variation within a group of people who have been subjected to such a strict selection; these people are evaluated as being close to each other accent-wise and male or female deviations may not fit in in that case.

The way women and men are suggested to evaluate speech is contradictory (Section 9.2). On the one hand, there is the suggestion that men are evaluatively less strict and less aware of variation than women. Men, then, are more willing to give high standardness ratings to a wider range of speech. Women, in this view, punish deviations from the norm, as they are more sensitive to that norm. This enhanced sensitivity to speech style was found by several writers as well. The other view is one of women being evaluatively kind and rewarding a wide range of speech with a high standardness rating, while men strictly point out deviations from the norm that they observe. In our research, this would mean overall higher standardness ratings by women. In other words, the effects of sex are unpredictable.

So, productively women are stereotypically assumed to be somewhat more likely to speak the standard language than men and/or to a higher degree. We found some proof of this belief too. The Sociolinguistic Definition Survey results (Section 7.4) showed that in the Netherlands this thought exists to a small degree. Across the four additional countries investigated in the International Survey (Section 8.3), there was considerable agreement on men and women typically speaking the standard language to an equal extent. It was striking, however, how about a quarter of the respondents in each of the countries believed that either of the sexes was most likely to speak the standard language, and usually the women were favoured in this respect. The fact that a majority of the respondents across the countries considered both men and women to be equally likely to speak the standard language shows that this notion is weak only.

In line with the literature and previous research, our women and men evaluated speech in unpredictable ways. The women in the Speech Evaluation Experiment (Section 9.4) gave significantly higher ratings to the newsreader speech than the men did. This results points to an approach by women in which the use of Standard Dutch is supported. The male and female listeners in the Speech Evaluation Experiment gave similarly high standardness ratings to regional speech (Section 9.4).

In the evaluation of the degree of standardness of speech, it seems that speaker characteristics other than sex play a more important part. For instance, level of education and the question whether women are authoritative speakers (Section 9.2) may count more strongly than sex. As for instance, in the Speech Evaluation Experiment (Section 9.4), women from the authoritative area in the Netherlands (the west) gave particularly high standardness ratings to non-regional speech, significantly higher than female peripheral listeners. It may be hypothesised that highly educated women in the prime of their lives from the west of the Netherlands are strict in their views, while lowly educated women with no jobs and from outside this area are more accepting towards (or less concerned about, rather) variation.

Regional origin

Logically speaking, speakers from the area of the historical origin of Standard Dutch would speak a variety of Dutch that is closer to Standard Dutch than speakers who are not from this area (Section 9.2). The results of the Sociolinguistic Survey (Figure

7.1) indeed show that this notion lives, as speakers from the western cities are in particular associated with Standard Dutch. However, it was not possible to allocate our seven speakers to either of these groups, as some of them had grown up in places across the Netherlands. Perhaps this mobility during childhood was a factor in the tendency to speak the standard language. In that view, a third type of regional origin seems relevant, namely one where the speaker has moved around considerably during their childhood, to various parts of the country. This mobile group may be particularly susceptible to the standard language, maybe even more so than people from the area of the historical origin. Harmen Siezen - who was perhaps the most exemplary speaker of Standard Dutch in the 1990s - was a vicar's son who had travelled around considerably during his youth. Perhaps this group of speakers should be looked at specifically in future research.

The history of Standard Dutch (Chapter 2 and 3) suggests that those from the area of the historical origin of a language may view language differently from those who are not from this area. However, previous research (Section 9.2) has suggested that when it comes to the standard language those from the authoritative area and those not from this area tend to evaluate similarly. Our data confirm this to a degree. The listeners in the Speech Evaluation Experiment from the authoritative area in the Netherlands (west) and those not from this area did not evaluate regional or non-regional (Section 9.4) speech differently

Some effects of regional origin of respondents were nevertheless found in our data. The western respondents in the Telephone Survey (Figure 6.3) were significantly less tolerant towards regional traces in Standard Dutch. In the same survey (Figure 6.4), westerners considered the presence of a western Dutch accent in Standard Dutch significantly more acceptable than non-westerners did. The western respondents in the Telephone Survey were in a higher number of cases convinced that they spoke Standard Dutch (Figure 7.15). Western women in the Speech Evaluation Experiment gave particularly high standardness ratings to non-regional speech, significantly higher than female peripheral listeners did (Section 9.4). It seems that regional origin most strongly plays a role in combination with other listener/respondent characteristics.

Level of education

What the effects would be of level of education on the evaluation of the standardness of speech is hard to predict, as literature on this topic is not widely available. People with lower educational levels are less likely to speak the standard language. In our research, the speech of lowly educated versus highly educated speakers was not described elaborately.

Level of education generally did not play a significant role in the evaluation of regional or non-regional speech (Section 9.4) in the Speech Evaluation Experiment. There was, however, a subgroup of listeners who were not highly educated and did not distinguish strongly between regional and non-regional speech, giving both similar standardness ratings. This subgroup was too small to draw any conclusions

from though (Section 9.3), and it is likely that the tasks were confusing to the respondents.

Age

It has been suggested that respondents would give the highest standardness ratings to speech from the period when they grew up (Section 9.4). Also, it was suggested that older listeners would be less critical towards language variation. These suggestions were not borne out in our results from the Speech Evaluation Experiment (Table 9.3). There was a subgroup of older listeners who did not distinguish strongly between regional and non-regional speech, giving both similarly high standardness ratings. This subgroup was too small to draw any conclusions from (Section 9.3). The younger listeners in the Speech Evaluation Experiment gave significantly lower standardness ratings to regional speech (Section 9.4), and this would suggest that the tolerance towards variation is decreasing. However, our data on the respondent variable age are not too convincing.

13.5 LINGUISTIC AUTHORITY

The present research has described a language variety that strongly relates to authority. No one language is subject to controversy and continuous debate regarding authority to the degree that the standard language is. To describe such a language, one needs to know who carry the authority to fix such a description. There are numerous sources of authority, and the question is whether a certain approach towards describing Standard Dutch can be defended as being the most acceptable. Examples of authoritative sources of linguistic norms are: linguists, grammar books, ordinary speakers, school, and the media. The question which of these is most appropriate as the point of departure in a description cannot be answered objectively. The literature and the results of the Telephone Survey (Section 6.2) suggest that linguists and ordinary Dutchmen approach the authority issue almost oppositely. Ordinary users seem to feel that rules are not negotiable or variable. A popular feeling in fact seems to be that rules are determined by nature and by experts and are beyond the reach of the ordinary user. While ordinary speakers thus tend to play down the role of actual language users, the literature shows that linguists are increasingly depending on living language as it is used in everyday life. The respondents in the Telephone Survey allocated most of the responsibility to linguists (Figure 6.1) and seemed to indicate that speaker behaviour needs to be taken into consideration by linguists while the government has a say as well. Linguists, on the other hand, say that they look to ordinary speakers' speech habits, especially those with some authority (Section 6.2). So, both groups put most of the authority with the other.

It may be assumed that there is a synergy between ordinary speakers and experts in this process. The description of the norm that is based on the evaluations by ordinary language users and on the professional literature was considered the most realistic and was therefore taken in the present research.

CHAPTER 13

Kloeke's dilemma

Describing the standard language in the Netherlands and its pronunciation is an uncertain task. The descriptive part - as discussed in Section 13.2 - is straightforward, but it comes with an awareness of describing a theoretical rather than an actual linguistic norm. To some degree, respondents and experts may be expressing presupposed ideas. The fact that the city of Haarlem was chosen as the place where Standard Dutch is spoken in particular by the respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey (Figure 7.1) shows that lay people in surveys and evaluation experiments to an extent tend to pass on assumptions and popular beliefs rather than communicate actual personal observations or experiences. Kloeke put this dilemma regarding authority into words in the early 1950s, and these words are on the first page of this dissertation. They translate as follows:

> People are all too easily inclined to seek authority where experience dictates it to be. If need be, they are willing to admit that the authorities of old are lacking, but harshness is required to be able to arrive at the diagnosis that they are waning, and will ultimately decay and evaporate. For such is our relationship with authority that it is hardly imaginable without a certain degree of respect, appreciation, or if one so wishes, love. However, it is this very respect for authority that so often closes the eyes of those who have come under its spell to the symptoms of its weakening or decadence. The ruthless conclusion that "this is how it is" is unwittingly pushed aside by wishful thinking and becomes "this is how it should be." (Kloeke 1951:1)

Kloeke thus addressed the absolute nature of some authorities and the respect they enjoy, and he pointed out how this respect may silence criticism and hinder objective evaluation. It can be assumed that this does not only apply to ordinary speakers. Inevitably, in the choice of authoritative source, researcher intuitions play a role as well; intuitions that are personal and to a degree unfounded and biased. Like any ordinary speaker, the researcher has preferences for certain sources and prejudices about their reliability and suitability. It is safe to say that researchers, too, are steered by the charisma of sources.

Bearing in mind Kloeke's dilemma, the choice was made preliminarily to use the evaluations of ordinary people as the point of departure for the selection of speakers and the description of their speech, while remarks by linguists were used as comparative material. (The unrealistic alternative would have been to observe people in the wild, so to speak, in search of their spontaneous (in)direct evaluations of language.) To a degree, the results consist of things said about Standard Dutch by professionals and non-professionals. The challenge has been to distinguish continuously between results (evaluations, remarks, etc. by non-linguists and linguists' claims) that constitute 'how it is' and those that represent intuitions on

'how it should be'. The non-professionals in our research mainly had 'how it should be' in mind, while the linguists - with various degrees of success - have attempted to point to 'how it is'.

13.6 CONCLUSION

What has been found about authority so far in our research fails to explain the processes taking place in the continuous adjustment of the norm. Speakers are activated by a variety of factors in their adjustment to the norm and seem relatively unaware of these processes. According to Hellinga (1938:285), a complexity of factors that are hard to measure independently lies at the basis of the endeavour towards the civilised pronunciation, and these factors nevertheless reveal their influence by their absence in argumentation. Daan (1969:21) also wondered what some beliefs on language are based on. The origin of beliefs would help to discover how norms come to existence and spread.

The respondents in the Sociolinguistic Definition Survey were more or less unaware of the origins of their beliefs on the norm, but they did mention school and the home regularly (Section 6.2). References to school and home suggest that respondents felt that somehow norms on what is standard are given by others, by authorities. Indeed, norms seem to be imposed to a degree, but there may be other factors as well. Giles and Trudgill cooperated with each other and a number of others in a series of articles on this topic in the 1970s. Giles, Bourhis, Trudgill, and Lewis (1974:405) concentrated mainly on the phonetic/phonological level and came up with the Imposed Norm Hypothesis and the Inherent Value Hypothesis. The Imposed Norm Hypothesis suggests that the standard language is considered more pleasing to listen to because it is the cultural norm. The Imposed Norm Hypothesis has been supported by empirical evidence (Giles *et al.* 1974, Giles Bourhis & Davies 1975) and is also in line with Kloeke's (1951) comment on authority (Section 13.5). The references to school and home are also in line with this (Section 6.2). The Inherent Value Hypothesis suggests that aesthetic qualities are what make standard languages more pleasing to the ear. This would also account for the choice of speakers to adopt the standard language. However, this hypothesis has met with little support (Giles *et al.* 1975) and was put forward by only a small group of respondents in the Sociolinguistic Description Survey (Table 6.1b). These respondents referred to certain qualitative features of Standard Dutch. Later, Trudgill and Giles (1978) added the Social Connotations Hypothesis, thus including the lifestyle and environmental setting of speakers as determinants of attitudes. Although this hypothesis has also been confirmed indirectly by our research (Chapter 7 showed that the nature of speakers is an important factor that respondents look at), it did not surface as an explicit factor that our respondents and experts put forward. It fails to explain the popularity of the standard language.

The day-to-day mechanics of the norm may be approached more practically than through such hypotheses. The community of speakers is by both laymen and experts considered a likely determiner of the language norm (Section 6.2). Presumably, not everyone has an equal say in the matter, and is has been suggested

that authoritative figures in particular directly influence the norm of individuals. Three main types of authoritative - or influential - figures in individual speakers' lives have surfaced in our research. First of all, there are authoritative figures who directly and consciously influence the norm. These are mainly teachers and parents. They provide young speakers with both theoretical and practical input. Secondly, there are media speakers, with whom individuals do not communicate but who provide them with continuous daily exposure to speech that is considered the norm (trendy, standard, and so on). There are several indications of this (Section 7.4, Figure 7.7, Table 7.2, Figure 7.8). Besides school/parents and media, there are those who (mainly unintentionally and subconsciously) influence speakers. These are the speakers whose speech individuals expose themselves to on a daily basis and with whom they communicate regularly, i.e. the social environment (chosen (for instance friends) and not chosen (for instance classmates and colleagues)). This group provides opportunities to practice as well as general exposure, and they are therefore concrete and attainable models.

The question now is where these three sources of speech obtain their norms from, or rather their own (sample) speech. Parents and teachers pass on norms mainly from their parents and teachers. Teachers are educated at teachers colleges and generally professionally pass on norms, sometimes even stringent ones. Parents are mainly passing on what they consider to be correct, i.e. what teachers and their parents told them. The media provide input that in most cases meets the latest national norms and they get these norms from society, plus they themselves determine what the norm is. The day-to-day social environment of speakers is continuously present, playing with the language and the norm. They get much of their input from each other. Individual speakers in their language choices demonstrate the degree to which they adjust to the theoretical norm (mostly by teachers) and the practical norm (mostly by the social sphere and the media). Finally, individuals have preferences (the personal norm), which are guided by their personality.

Variation in degree of standardness in the speech of individuals may be explained by the fact that to some speakers the theoretical, social and personal norms coincide, whereas to others these three norms (or two of them) are distinct. The latter group deviates from the norm and contains speakers who take what is necessary from the theoretical norm to communicate and function effectively in daily life. The social norm is, furthermore - and by personal choice -, their main source of inspiration. On the other end of the standardness spectrum are those who personally aspire to meet the theoretical norm and whose social environment also motivates them to meet that norm.

The future shape of Standard Dutch

Standard Dutch is merely one of the many languages that function in Dutch society (Section 3.4). These languages influence each other, and they are steered by tendencies in society. Standard Dutch is a changing entity, but it is clear that it is here to stay in some form or other. Standard Dutch has proven to adjust to changes

in society quite willingly (Section 3.3 to Section 3.6), but it is uncertain to what extent changes are permanent. Examples of recent adaptations are the rapid spreading of vocalised (r)'s (Section 3.6 and Section 10.3), the lowering of the first element of diphthongs (Section 3.6), as well as the increasing Anglicisation of part of modern Dutch vocabulary (Section 3.5).

The question is whether Standard Dutch will in some way settle down or is stable as it is. Taking into consideration the increasing tendency for Dutch people to speak Standard Dutch, it seems most likely that variation in Inclusive Standard Dutch will progress. With the exclusive standard language as a reference point to fall back on, and to curb deviations and innovations, these new varieties will remain recognisable as being in the standardness sphere. Through the two definitions of Standard Dutch, the results paint a future picture of a traditional yet dynamic standard language. It is an image of an impartial - almost detached - language, unconditionally embraced by society, which reservedly adapts only to the most profound of societal tendencies, and which increasingly disassociates from its historical origins to become typical of speakers from across the country.

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