



## UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

### Inflectional economy and politeness : morphology-internal and morphology-external factors in the loss of second person marking in Dutch

Aalberse, S.P.

**Publication date**

2009

**Document Version**

Final published version

[Link to publication](#)

**Citation for published version (APA):**

Aalberse, S. P. (2009). *Inflectional economy and politeness : morphology-internal and morphology-external factors in the loss of second person marking in Dutch*. LOT.

**General rights**

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

**Disclaimer/Complaints regulations**

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

Suzanne Aalberse

## Inflectional Economy and Politeness

Morphology-internal and morphology-  
external factors in the loss of second  
person marking in Dutch

The second person singular pronoun in Middle Dutch was *du*. The pronoun *du* combined with finite verbs ending in the suffix *-s*. Both the pronoun *du* and the suffix *-s* are lost in Modern Dutch. The loss of the pronoun and the suffix is related: there is no variant of Dutch that has a suffix *-s* that does not also have the pronoun *du* or vice versa. The question is how we should understand this combined loss of the pronoun and the suffix.

The central claim in this book is that the decrease in the use of the pronoun *du* (combining with the suffix *-s*) is driven by politeness. The plural and polite pronoun *gi* (combining with the suffix *-t*) came to be used in an increasing number of contexts. Although we can understand the decrease of the pronoun *du* and the suffix *-s* as the result of politeness, the loss of both the pronoun and the suffix is driven by inflectional economy. The suffix that the pronoun *gi* combined with was more economical than the suffix that *du* combined with. This claim is supported by data on synchronic and diachronic variation in Dutch.

This study is of interest to scholars working in the field of historical linguistics, corpus linguistics, pragmatics and inflectional morphology.

—  
: LOT  
—  
Netherlands  
Graduate  
School of  
Linguistics

ISBN 978-90-78328-85-8

Suzanne Aalberse  
Inflectional Economy and Politeness

A C L C

AMSTERDAM CENTER  
FOR LANGUAGE AND  
COMMUNICATION

A C L C

—  
: LOT  
—  
Netherlands  
Graduate  
School of  
Linguistics

Landelijke Onderzoekschool Taalwetenschap

Suzanne Aalberse

## Inflectional Economy and Politeness

Morphology-internal and morphology-  
external factors in the loss of second  
person marking in Dutch

