An early sociolinguistic approach towards standardization and dialect variation

G. G. Kloeke’s theory of Hollandish expansion

Camiel Hamans
European Parliament, Brussels/Strasbourg

With the publication of Kloeke’s De Hollandsche Expansie in de 16e en 17e eeuw en haar weerspiegeling in de hedendaagse Nederlandse dialecten (1927) a long and harsh debate started in Dutch historical linguistics. This debate, which still goes on, concentrates on the history of ‘Dutch diphthongization’. By pointing to prestige as an important factor in language change, Kloeke actually showed himself to be an ‘avant-la lettre’ sociolinguist. Unfortunately scholars from different backgrounds were able to prove that the historical data Kloeke used for his theory were not as solid as he thought. Nevertheless, his idea that social factors are as important as structural arguments still remains valid.

1. Introduction

As early as 1927 Gesinus G. Kloeke (1887–1963) published his study De Hollandsche Expansie in de 16e en 17e eeuw en haar weerspiegeling in de hedendaagse Nederlandse dialecten [the Hollandish expansion in the 16th and 17th century and its reflexes in modern Dutch dialects] in which he defended the role of prestige as the main factor in the spreading of a linguistic innovation over an area. In this study Kloeke discussed the reflexes of Wgm. ū in Dutch, which are still found in Dutch dialects as ū, or as a ‘palatalized’ form [y:] or as a diphthongized reflex [oey].

2. Bloomfield

By pointing to prestige as a factor in language change, Kloeke actually became a sociolinguist forty years before the word and the discipline was established by
William Labov (b. 1927), but Kloeke did not have to wait until the sixties before he received international recognition. Already in 1928 Leonhard Bloomfield (1887–1949) published a review in *Language* of this Dutch monograph, which was in fact Kloeke’s ‘Habilitationsschrift’ (professorial dissertation) for the University of Hamburg. A few years later, in 1933, Bloomfield discussed and quoted Kloeke’s work at length in Chapter 19 on dialect geography in his famous handbook *Language* (328–331).

When discussing the role of isoglosses Bloomfield says:

> Isoglosses for different forms rarely coincide along their whole extent. Almost every feature of phonetics, lexicon, or grammar has its own area of prevalence – it is bounded by its own isogloss. The obvious conclusion has been well stated in the form of a maxim: *Every word has its own history.* The words *mouse* and *house* had in early Germanic the same vowel phoneme, a long [u:]. Some modern dialects – for instance some Scotch dialects of English – preserve this sound apparently unchanged. Others have changed it, but keep the ancient structure, in the sense that these two words still have the same syllable phoneme; this is the case […] in standard Dutch where both have [oey]. […] Kloeke (1927) traces the syllabics of these two words through the present-day (italics CH) local dialects of Belgium and the Netherlands.

(Bloomfield 1933: 328/9)

Actually Kloeke gives here

> an avant-la letter demonstration of the working of the sociolinguistic ‘uniformitarian principle’, [formulated by William Labov half a century later], stating that language change in the past can be explained by language patterns in the present.

(Hagen 1992: 339)

3. **Map of hoes-moes**

On the Dutch dialect map one may distinguish four interesting areas as far as the reflexes of Wgm. ‘hûs’ and ‘mûs’ are concerned (the fifth part *meus, heus* [móes], [höös] does not play a role in this discussion):

1. a western – central area where both words have a diphthong (*muis/huis* [möys]/[hoeys])
2. an eastern area where both forms still show the original Wgm. û (*moes, hoes*)
3. a central part where both forms have a so called palatalized [y:] (*muus, huus*)
4. an intermediate area in the eastern part of the country where it still is *moes*, with an unshifted Wgm. û, but where *huus* has been palatalized to [y:].

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In this last region, and in two smaller districts also in the eastern part, “the structural relation of the two words has undergone a change […]. We see, then, that the isogloss which separates [mu:s] from [my:s] does not coincide with the isogloss which separates [hu:s] from [hy:s]. Of the two words, mouse has preserved the ancient vowel over a larger territory than house” (Bloomfield 1933: 329).

4. Gesunkenes Kulturgut

Kloeke, with Bloomfield following his lead, opts for a sociological explanation of these changes and not – as the Neogrammarians would have done – for a phonetic rule, eventually completed by analogy processes to explain the exceptions.

At some time in the Middle Ages, the habit of pronouncing [y:] instead of hitherto prevalent [u:] must have originated in some cultural centre – perhaps in Flanders – and spread from there over a large part of the area of the map, including the central district which today speaks a diphthong. […] The [y:] pronunciation spread abroad with the cultural prestige of the great coastal cities of Holland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This wave of cultural expansion was checked in the eastern part […] where it conflicted with the expansion
of another and similar cultural area, that of North German Hanseatic cities. [...] Whoever was impressed by the Hollandish official or merchant, learned to speak [yː]; whoever saw his superiors in the Hanseatic upper class, retained the old [uː]. The part of the population which made no pretensions to elegance, must also have long retained the [uː], but in the course of time the [yː] filtered down even to this class. (Bloomfield 1933: 330)

Kloeke calls this phenomenon ‘gesunkenes Kulturgut’.

The word house will occur much oftener than the word mouse in official speech and in conversation with persons who represent the cultural centre; mouse is more confined to homely and familiar situations. Accordingly, we find that the word house in the upper class and central form with [yː] spread into districts where the word mouse has persisted in the old-fashioned form with [uː]. (Bloomfield 1933: 330)

In the 16th and 17th centuries, even while the [yː]-pronunciation was making its conquests, there arose, it would seem in Antwerp, a still newer pronunciation with [oey] instead of the hitherto elegant [yː]. This new style spread to the Holland cities and with this its fortune was made. The [oey]-pronunciation as in standard Dutch huis [hoeys], muis [moeys], is today the only urbane form. [...] It is characteristic [...] that the more remote local dialects are taking up a feature, the [yː] pronunciation, which in more central districts and in the more privileged class of speakers, has long ago been superseded by a still newer fashion. (Bloomfield 1933: 331)

5. Two expansions

What the map shows, according to Kloeke and Bloomfield, is a result of two western expansions, coming from Holland, or to be more precise, from Amsterdam (especially the second expansion). These expansions, although operating on sounds, are not caused by phonological mechanisms but by a social factor: borrowing because of prestige.

As the map shows, one finds next to each other what happened consecutively in the history, or to paraphrase it with a well known German linguistic proverb ‘geographisches Nebeneinander des historischen Nacheinander’. Or in Kloeke's words: “at the periphery of the radiation (expansion) area, quite often phenomena are found which, from the point of view of the cultural centre, should be considered as instances of an older stage of the radiating language” (Kloeke 1927: 9).

It is important to notice that Kloeke distinguishes between two expansions, the first a so-called ‘spontaneous palatalization’ brought to the central-eastern part by sailors from the western provinces of the country, especially from
Holland, not necessarily from Amsterdam. Although these sailors and sailing traders cannot be equated with the rich merchants and early capitalists of Holland and especially Amsterdam, they had some prestige in the places at the other side of the Zuyder Zee, now the inland sea of the IJsselmeer, and that is why, according to Kloeke, features of their language were taken over.

This first expansion did not affect the whole area in the same way. In the eastern part, the ‘huus/hoes’ isogloss does not coincide with the ‘muus/moes’ isogloss, leaving a region where the dialects have ‘moes’ along ‘huus’. This phenomenon, called the dissociation problem by Postma (2007: 308), is a consequence of the lexically diffused way the expansion proceeded.

By using this concept of lexical diffusion, without naming it this way, Kloeke again was far ahead of other linguists’ theories of his days (cf. Stroop 1981: 4 and Hagen 1992: 339)

This first prestigious group should not be confused with the very rich upper class merchants who came from Antwerp after the fall of Antwerp in 1585, one of the major events in the Dutch-Spanish war of independence. Kloeke refers to studies by the social historian Van Dillen, who found out that 50% of the Amsterdam immigrants in the period between 1585 and 1600 came from Antwerp. Quite a few of them belonged to the very well-to-do class of shipowners, international traders, bankers, publishers-printers etc. In their language ‘spontaneous diphthongization’ of Wgm. û and i was already normal.

Since this group of speakers of a Brabantine dialect was so prestigious, the diphthongization spread from their language to that of their new compatriots, the people of Amsterdam. After the fall of Antwerp, Amsterdam became the most populous, most important and most powerful city of Holland. So the language of Holland expanded again and radiated waves of diphthongs over the country.

It may be clear from what has been said about Kloeke’s theory of expansion that his ideas depart from a top-down view on language change.

For the sake of completeness: Kloeke himself does not speak about prestige, for him it is a matter of aiming at superiority. In his introduction he refers to Antoine Meillet (1866–1936) and his idea of ‘parlers dominants qui sont imités’ in this respect.

6. Schuchardt

Kloeke was an early sociolinguist, as his 1927 study and his later work show. Of course he himself did not use this name yet, because linguistics had to wait until 1965 and later when William Labov and Peter Trudgill founded this discipline.
Kloeke saw himself as a dialectologist, working in the tradition of the Marburg School of Georg Wenker (1852–1911), Ferdinand Wrede (1863–1934) and Theodor Frings (1886–1968). Although he had been educated at German universities where he studied German, he was not a Neogrammarian. In an earlier study (1921) on ‘dialects and sound laws’ he claimed “that the pressure of the sound laws plays the principal part’, but there are exceptions and restrictions too” (Hagen 1992:341). His interest in social and psychological causes of sound changes is more in line with Hugo Schuchardt (1842–1927), from whom he even takes a quote as a motto for the introduction of his 1927 monograph. In this introduction Koeke gives all credit to Schuchardt “who more than anyone else influenced the ideas of younger linguists” (Kloeke 1927:3), and also refers to Schuchardt’s well-known Über die Lautgesetze: Gegen die Junggrammattiker (1885). On the other hand he was not a strict Schuhardtian: “certainly [he was] not […] an uncritical supporter of the adage ‘each word has a history of its own, as has been suggested by Bloomfield” (Hagen 1992:341).

7. Before Kloeke

Kloeke was not the first to describe Dutch diphthongization. Jan te Winkel (1847–1927) was the first to draw a map of the distribution of a Wgm. vowel over the Dutch territory, the map of Wgm. i (1901 and 1904). He showed that Wgm. i developed into a diphthong [ει] in standard Dutch, into a lower diphthong such as [aι] in a few western dialects and remained [i] in most of the southern and eastern dialects. Unlike Wgm. Ü, Wgm. i did not result in a third option.

In 1879 the Dutch Geographical Society managed to organize a dialect survey, (Hagen 1992:332), from which material Te Winkel was able to produce a map of the main Dutch dialects in his contribution to Hermann Paul’s Grundriss der Germanischen Philologie (1889). This contribution was later published separately in Dutch as Te Winkel (1904). (Hagen 1992:332)

Te Winkel planned to publish a series of maps in which he wanted to deal with all Wgm. vowels and their reflexes in Dutch. Unfortunately he only managed to publish the first two maps, of Wgm. i and ae respectively. The i-map was first published in 1901.

Te Winkel compared the situation of the Dutch dialects to Old High German and offered an exhaustive description of the different dialect data and a sketch of the possible phonetic developments from [i:] to [ει]. Nevertheless he had to come to the conclusion that this description could not answer the question where and how the diphthongization process had started.
The answer he presents is rather curious after this extensive exploration of the different phonetic possibilities. The diphthong must have been imported to Brabant, he suggests, as a matter of fact to the Court of Brussels, where in the second half of the 14th century a German-speaking duke ruled. Since Germany, or at least Bavaria, already showed a diphthong in that period, Duke Wenzel of Bohemia and Luxembourg must be held responsible for the introduction of a diphthong in the southern cultural center of the Low Countries.

For the diffusion of the diphthong to the North and over the rest of the country Te Winkel (1904) saw an important role for the migration streams of the later centuries.

Schönfeld (1921 & 1980 (8th edition) §62ff.) does not accept Te Winkel’s explanation. First, he objects to Te Winkel’s top-down approach: In his opinion diphthongization is a feature of the vernacular. Second, he does not see any causal relationship between the English, Bavarian and Dutch diphthongization. There are regions in between where there is no diphthongization at all, and furthermore these diphthongization processes did not take place at the same time or even in the same period.

Schönfeld therefore concludes that there was a phonetic conditioning of the diphthongization of i (and the reflex of ū) which was settled before or around the end of the 15th century in Antwerp.

Earlier ū had become [yː] under French influence, where [uː] had changed to [yː] e.g. ‘murus’ > ‘mur’, [muːrus] > [myːr].

From this Van Wijk (1950: 162) correctly concludes a presupposed double expansion: one from French or Romance to Franconian ([uː] > [yː]) and secondly after the palatalized [yː] had become diphthongized, an expansion from Franconian to Ingwaenic, the coastal dialects of the Low Countries. Together with Kloeke’s two waves of Hollandish expansion this leads to a whole sum of expansions.

8. Reception

Kloeke’s expansion theory did not go unnoticed. *De Hollandsche Expansie* caused so much discussion and opened so many new points of view that almost from the moment of publication on there was a continuous flow of articles, studies and research on Dutch diphthongization and theories of expansion.

The publication of Kloeke’s *Expansie* is generally seen as a milestone in the young history of the study of the Dutch language. On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Kloeke’s *Hollandsche Expansie* Van den Toorn (1977) published a commemoration and evaluation of Kloeke’s theory. Two years later in 1979 Marinel Gerritsen and Frank Jansen did a replica study of Kloeke’s ū-survey. They
did not restrict themselves to the two words ‘house’ and ‘mouse’, but checked 18 ‘ui’ [oey]-forms. Their conclusion did not differ essentially from Kloeke’s.

In 1983 Jan Stroop published an anthology of important contributions to Dutch dialectology. The volume starts with 1927, the year of Kloeke’s magnum opus, and opens with the Introduction to the *Hollandsche Expansie*. In 2005 a special volume of the Dutch journal *TNTL* (Van Bree et al. 2005) was published dedicated to Kloeke and the *Hollandsche Expansie*, in which the authors examined the topicality and validity of Kloeke’s views.

Piet van Reenen published several articles between 1990 and 2006 on Kloeke’s expansion theory, mostly computer interpretations of new historical data and spellings by which he managed to refine Kloeke’s theory. Some of these studies have been collected in his 2006 book *In Holland staat een ‘Huis’*. Here Van Reenen defends a social distinction between [uː] and [yː] pronunciations on the basis of a difference in religion. Roman Catholics in the northeastern province of Overijssel still produced [uː] whereas Protestants in that same region moved to the modern form [yː] in the first quarter of the 17th century.

Unlike some discussions in modern linguistics where the same data are discussed over and over again to show the validity or invalidity of a theory, the discussion and the arguments on the Dutch expansion concentrate mainly on new data. So the tenability of Kloeke’s theory has been discussed continuously on the basis of these data.

9. Reactions from philology

Not everybody was immediately convinced by Kloeke’s hypothesis of a Brabantine origin of Dutch diphthongization. Philologists questioned Kloeke’s data. While Kloeke implicitly suggested that diphthongization is one of the characteristic phonetic differences in the transition of Middle Dutch to early New Dutch, the philologists tried to show that the diphthongization was much older and had been attested already for late Middle Dutch, especially for the dialects of Holland. The philologists mainly concentrated on the other Dutch diphthong [ɛɪ], which stems from Wgm. i.

One of his strongest critics turned out to be Wytze Gerbens Hellinga (1908–1985), particularly in his dissertation *De opbouw van het algemeen beschaafde Nederlands* [*The building of the received standard Dutch*] published in 1938. In this study he showed that numerous diphthongs had been attested in the dialects of the cities of Holland long before the refugees from Antwerp arrived in the North. He did this by using testimonies of grammarians and literary authors of the 16th and 17th century. So there must have been an ongoing independent
autochthonous process of diphthongization in the two provinces of Holland, the western part of the Netherlands, alongside a Brabantine process of diphthongization. Furthermore, diphthongization is a phenomenon which has its place in the lower social classes, according to Hellinga. Again he produced ample testimonies from poets, schoolteachers and grammarians to prove his point. From this he came to the conclusion that there is no such thing as a process of borrowing from superior or more prestigious circles. On the contrary, instead of a top-down expansion it was just the other way round: a feature which extends steadily and from the bottom upwards. Educated circles tried to resist this new development. In one respect they were successful: The diphthong which did not stop at [εɪ] but moved further towards [aɪ] was redirected to [εɪ]. Via pressure of the orthography and via propagation of a spelling pronunciation, schoolmasters and grammarians managed to stop the change and could redirect the diphthong towards [εɪ], which finally became the received pronunciation.

Hellinga did not discuss the ‘hoes/huus’ – ‘moes/muus’ isogloss problems in the eastern provinces, since he was less concerned with dialect data than with the development of the standard language. Moreover since he refuted Kloeke's argument of prestigious borrowing in Amsterdam already, he did not care about prestigious borrowing in other parts of the language area (expansion).

Hendrik Vangassen (1896–1968) (1965) supported Hellinga's claim. He discovered diphthongs from Wgm. i in Amsterdam from the 14th century onwards.

Hellinga and Vangassen were not the only philologists who did not accept Kloeke's basic data. Johan Hendrik Caspar Kern (1833–1917), Jean-Jacques Salverda de Grave (1863–1946) and Wobbe de Vries (1863–1942), who belonged to an older generation, also criticized Kloeke's historical facts and data seriously.

A special case is Willem J. H. Caron (1901–1988) (1947 and 1971). He was also a philologist and was mainly interested in the testimonies of scholars, such as Erasmus (1465/1469–1536), and of such grammarians and poets as Jan (1649–1712) and Caspar Luyken (1672–1708). Caron took an intermediate position. He agreed with Kloeke that Dutch diphthongization is a rather recent process. From the end of the 17th century diphthongization became the norm, but already in the 16th century, in the days of Erasmus, there had been an autochthonous, slight diphthong in Holland, which disappeared afterwards, as Caron concludes on the basis of a testimony by the brilliant early Dutch phonetician Petrus Montanus (1594/95–1638). However, later on new diphthongs came up from lower social classes and these new diphthongs finally became received through social factors and because of the orthography, which had already shown a digraph for some time. Caron agrees with Kloeke that the spread of these late diphthongs over the provinces of Holland and Utrecht must have been a matter of influence of the cultural center.
Klaas H. Heeroma (1909–1972) (1938) was not convinced by Kloeke either, but he suggested an expansion starting from Utrecht, which is in the center of the country but does not belong to the provinces of Holland. So he supposed that Utrecht was influenced by Brabant at an earlier stage.

10. Counterarguments from dialectology

Kloeke was not only criticized by philologists, but also attacked by his fellow dialectologists, especially from the Nijmegen school of Jacobus Johannes Antonius van Ginniken (1877–1945). W. A. F. Janssen (1941) studied the distribution of Wgm. û forms in the southeastern part of the Netherlands and found out that the most frequent forms especially resisted a change in pronunciation, whereas Kloeke claimed that it was frequency which facilitated expansion. According to Kloeke, the ‘huus/hoes’ isogloss runs further to the east than the ‘muus/moes’ isogloss, since the word ‘house’ occurs far more frequently in civilized or official speech than ‘mouse’.

Endepols (1948) and Dols (1953) challenged Kloeke’s theory of diphthongization by attesting diphthongs in the southeastern province of Limburg and proved that this diphthongization surely had a phonetic background.

All this led Weijnen (1966: 381) to the conclusion that – if there had been a desire to imitate the language of Brabant – it probably existed only on paper, which means in the written language.

Later Ryckeboer (1973) investigated the dialect forms for ‘uit’ (out) over the whole Dutch speaking territory and found out that there must have been more than one center of diphthongization. He concluded that the first center should be situated in the south where a velar diphthong must have been realized. Another and later center was in Holland where the speakers realized a palatal diphthong. Moreover, a third completely distinct area of diphthongization should be distinguished. This is Limburg in the southeastern part of the country. Furthermore, the diphthongization in the southern region must have been accomplished at the end of the 16th century, whereas the palatal diphthong in Holland had already expanded from the late Middle Ages.

Awedyk and Hamans (1993 and 1997) investigated names in the central provinces of Utrecht and Gelderland. Using a theory of the Polish linguist Ludwik Zabrocki (1907–1977), they pointed to a larger and more central area of expansion than Amsterdam only.

Hoppenbrouwers (1971 and 1981) studied a few dialects in the Brabant-Limburg border region, where he found a few enclaves with [y:]. Borrowing turned out to be impossible here, and the same process seems to have operated
in quite distinct places. That is why Hoppenbrouwers concludes that a phonetic process must have taken place. Also Van Leuvensteijn (1997) argues in favor of a phonetic process.

Goossens (1962), Heeroma (1965) and Morciniec (1970) opt for phonetic conditioning. They question why the expansion of \[y: \] stopped where it did in the eastern Dutch dialects. According to Goossens and Postma (2007) this is a matter of complementary distribution of secondary umlaut and spontaneous palatalization, which is again a structural phonetic explanation.

The same can be said about Awedyk and Hamans (1989), although it is not a dialectological study. In their article the English and Norwegian vowel shifts are compared to the Dutch diphthongization. Awedyk and Hamans argue in favor of independent structural phonetic processes, just as Hamans (1979b) who studied the relation of stress and diphthongization. Awedyk and Hamans (2003) discuss the phonetic aspects of imperfect borrowing from foreign languages.

Louise van Wijk (1950), who compares the development of Wgm. ü in Swedish and in Dutch, comes to a similar structural phonetic conclusion, although she also asks the theoretical question whether anyone studied a possible eastern influence. This sounds like an invitation which was only to be accepted half a century later.

Van Wijk’s article does not start from a dialectological point of view; she studied the testimonies of early linguists and combined these with a structural formal approach.

Frank Jansen (1977) studied the diphthongs of the dialect of the Zaan region to the north of Amsterdam following the theory of language change proposed by Labov, Yager and Steiner (1972), who claim ‘natural’ directions for the changes of vowels and diphthongs. Indeed, most of the recent changes in the dialects of this small region followed the pattern predicted by Labov et al, except for one where Jansen had to accept an influence of standard Dutch.

11. Madison School

While the Dutch linguistic world still went on discussing new dialect data to prove or to discard Kloeké’s expansion theory, Robert B. Howell founded a completely new school in Madison (Wisconsin, USA) that studied the construction of the Dutch standard language in terms of mass migration and subsequently dialect levelling and koineization. Howell and his students (Hanson, Holtman & Howell 1990) work in the modern sociolinguistic tradition of urbanization studies by Kerswill and Williams.
The idea behind this theory is that in cases where languages or dialects are in contact, not always the more prestigious or complex variant will prevail; quite often reanalysis produces a simpler form which will become dominant. Referring to Roman Jakobson (1896–1982) (1929), Andersen (2006: 73) concludes: “The result of such simplifications is koinéization. The simpler pattern may subsequently spread geographically without being propagated.”

The main idea of the Madison school, in which the names of Goss (2002) and Hendriks (1998) are prominent along with that of Howell himself (1991, 1992 and 2006; Goss and Howell 2006; Hendriks and Howell 1996 and 2000), is that the rapid urbanization of Holland in the 17th century brought speakers of a myriad of dialects into intensive contact, which resulted in a koinéization process similar to that described in modern English new towns, as done by Kreswill and Williams.

Like Kloeke, the Madison School goes back to social history, especially the history of the Dutch migration in the 17th century. While Kloeke used figures by Van Dillen about the number of Antwerp citizens coming to Amsterdam in the short period after the fall of Antwerp (1585), Howell and his school used figures from a longer period, (1550 to 1650) in which Amsterdam grew from a town with 30,000 inhabitants to a city with 175,000. Studies by Simon Hart and Jan de Vries showed that most of the newcomers did not come from Antwerp or not even from the South, but from the eastern or northeastern provinces and, in fact, from Germany. A considerable number of these refugees from the South came to Amsterdam, and Leyden or Haarlem after a shorter or usually longer stay in the German Rhineland.

So in terms of mass migration, a southern influence on the dialect of Amsterdam and consequently on the new standard language appears most unlikely. Furthermore, the rich Antwerp merchants isolated themselves, since they expected to stay in the Netherlands only for a short period before they could return to their hometown. Moreover, the literature, poems and drama of the 17th century offer ample proof of satirical and critical commentaries on the language and the (linguistic) behavior of these immigrants from Brabant. All this makes it really improbable that the autochthonous population of Amsterdam would have tried to imitate the pronunciation of the Antwerp refugees.

Furthermore, it is rather strange that only two diphthongal features should have been taken over from a southern accent. After all, other innovations of this period cannot be explained by a supposed Antwerp descent. For example the new Dutch reflexive ‘zich’ does not originate from the South but comes from eastern dialects or even from Low German or German. Standard Dutch has a ‘ge’-prefix in past participles, e.g. *lopen* – *gelopen*, *walk* – *walked*. However, this prefix became reduced to [ә] in the dialects of Amsterdam and West-Flanders,
but “remained ‘ge’ – in the dialects of most immigrants to the urban centres of Holland” (Howell 2006: 220).

All of this points in the direction of a process of koineization as a consequence of mass migration. One should not forget that around the year 1500 the percentage of urban population in Holland was already as high as 45%, whereas at the same time in Germany it was only 3.2% and in France 4.2%. An enormous percentage of these Dutch urban populations consisted of immigrants. These immigrants induced linguistic, including phonological, changes. But as opposed to Kloeke modern sociolinguists do not think that language change mostly starts at the top and then trickles down to the masses, but, following James Milroy and others, they are convinced that linguistic changes originate in the lower socioeconomic classes.

The driving force behind the development of the […] Dutch urban vernacular was not incorporation of features from immigrant dialects viewed as more prestigious but was the large-scale demographic movement of speakers of a wide variety of dialects on the Continental West Germanic continuum to the thriving cities of Holland. This massive immigration resulted in countless instances of dialect contact, which in turn initiated a process of koineisation that lasted several generations. This 'bottom-up' approach abandons the notion that each feature of a given urban vernacular must have come from a specific source dialect – from an expansie, to use Kloeke's term. (Howell 2006: 223)

So it is the language system of all speakers which contributes to the final result. Goss and Howell (2006) discuss the development of Wgm. i together with Wgm. ai in umlaut position, since this last sound results in Dutch in a same diphthong [εi] as Wgm. i. What Goss and Howell claim is that the outcome of the process is the result of contact between speakers of three groups of dialects: Ingwaeonic dialects, eastern Dutch or Low German dialects and Brabantine dialects. In western Ingwaeonic dialects there still was, and is, a difference between the reflexes of Wgm. i and Wgm. ai, such as [εi] and [ai]. Speakers of eastern Dutch or Low German dialects still realize [i:] and [εi] respectively or [i:] and [e:]. Speakers from Brabant, just as immigrants did from parts of Germany, only used one phoneme since both forms had already coincided to a differentiated diphthong [ai] in their speech. None of these systems have been chosen, but following a basic principle of koineization a simpler feature developed instead of a more complex one. The result resembles the system of Brabant with only one reflex but shows a less differentiated diphthong, [εi] instead of [ai].

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12. Eastern influence

Van der Sijs (2004), who published a voluminous survey on the origin of the Dutch standard language, follows the line of research pursued by Howell and especially by Hendriks (1998), (whom Van der Sijs calls incorrectly Boyce Hendriks, interpreting her middle name as part of her family name). But unlike Howell et al., Van der Sijs still wants to prove that each feature of the standard language originates from a specific source dialect.

Van der Sijs concentrates on the Modern Dutch reflexive ‘zich’. In Middle Dutch it was still ‘hem/haar’. For her, the introduction of ‘zich’ proves the influence of the eastern immigrants of lower socioeconomic classes. However, they were quite often craftsmen, according to Van der Sijs and therefore had some prestige.

Traditionally the reflexive ‘zich’ has been explained as a proof of the influence of the language of the Dutch Protestant translation of the Bible, Statenvertaling (1637), in which one finds not only the ‘German’ ‘zich’, but also ‘zichzelf’ and ‘ieder’, again forms with a German background. Although Van der Sijs is in favor of German or eastern borrowing, she rejects the influence of the Statenvertaling. She shows extensively that, unlike what the Dutch historiographic tradition assumes, there has been almost no direct borrowing from this translation.

Since she does not accept dialect levelling as suggested by Howell et al. ‘zich’ must have been introduced directly by eastern immigrants. For a similar point of view, see Bennis (2005).

Van der Sijs sketches an almost analogous pattern for the introduction of the two diphthongs. A Brabantine influence is impossible because there was an autochthonous diphthongization in Holland already before the arrival of the refugees from Brabant, as has been attested. Moreover, the resulting [ει] diphthong has been found only in a few towns of Brabant, for instance Breda, ’s-Hertogenbosch, Diest and Tienen. In the dialect of Antwerp the diphthong was lowered to [ai], which means that this sound cannot have formed the basis for the more raised standard Dutch diphthong.

Van der Sijs defends an autochthonous Amsterdam diphthong which might have been reinforced by speakers from the diphthongization areas of Germany and England and from the South. However, the spread of the finally resulting diphthongs over the Dutch territory is a matter of influence of the cultural center Holland – thus, in fact a process of ‘expansie’.
13. Van Reenen

Peter van Reenen (b. 1941), who defends a mild expansionistic view on the Dutch diphthongization processes, refined Kloeke’s theory of expansion. For instance, he managed to answer W. A. F. Janssen’s (1941) criticism by showing that frequency has to be combined with prestige (only most prestigious and frequent word forms go through new influences), (Van Reenen and Wijnands 1993 also in Van Reenen 2006).

He studied especially the forms in the area where one finds [hy:s] and [mu:s] next to each other and the dialect data in the most eastern region where [hy:s] borders on [hu:s]. He claimed to have found a social explanation for a few [y:] and [u:] enclaves. On the basis of old archives, the old [u:] pronunciation turns out to be a Roman Catholic relic, whereas the [y:] pronunciation proves to be a modern, Protestant and westward orientation.

Gertjan Postma (2007) disputes Van Reenen’s conclusions. Postma (2004), who also published on the reflexive ‘zich’ in medieval dialects of an eastern region and for the rise of which reflexive he found a internal structural explanation, argues in favor of the theory of Goossens that there is a complementary distribution for ‘spontaneous’ palatalization and secondary umlaut. This discussion is still undecided.

14. Conclusion

From what has been summarized so far it must be clear that Kloeke’s theory of expansion cannot remain unchanged. In 1927 Kloeke could not dispose of much dialect data and of enough data from older language periods.

Even though Kloeke might have been mistaken in his explanation of the Dutch diphthongization, he nevertheless already had a sound grasp of processes of language change and of social factors which play a prominent role in linguistic changes and which only became widely accepted fifty years later.

Although his idea of changes that start at the top and trickle down to the bottom only works in special cases, e.g. with prestige, and although he misunderstood the nature of the mass migration to the cities of Holland, his idea that social factors are as important as structural arguments is still valid.

Furthermore, Kloeke was the first or one of the first to use the uniformitarian principle in linguistics, though he seems to have done this implicitly.

But what is also interesting is to see how a historiography of the study of the Dutch diphthongization can be interpreted as a mirror of a century of practical linguistic research, especially in the Netherlands.
Kloeke’s inspiration came from Schuchardt and from dialectology. In his work Kloeke showed himself to be a linguist of a not so formal nature. Despite this he had to defend the autonomy of his linguistic approach against schools of philologists.

Some time later he was attacked by purely taxonomic dialectologists. It then took quite long before the issue was questioned on a formal, structural level. Finally, a modern historical-sociolinguistic approach was chosen, originating in Madison and arriving only recently in the Netherlands.

What is noticeable is that the theoretical points of view that were discussed in depth in the (Dutch) linguistic world in these eighty years hardly left any marks in this debate.

References


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