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## Variation and stability in variants of heritage Dutch

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This chapter provides an overview of linguistic variation and stability of heritage Dutch in seven parts of the world. In the context of research on first and second language acquisition strategies in Dutch as well as on other heritage languages, we contextualize and interpret observations taken from existing research gathered using diverse methods such as the analysis of letters, recordings, and standardized tests. The chapter ends by discussing the implications of the results for the study of contact linguistics in general and for Dutch in particular and by identifying loose ends and directions for future research.

**Keywords:** heritage Dutch, variation, stability, cross-linguistic influence, reduced input

### 1. Introduction

The goal of this chapter is to give insight into linguistic change and stability in seven forms of heritage Dutch, particularly focusing on the following questions: which linguistic features are reported to change; which linguistic features are robust, and how can we understand areas of robustness and change in connection to the heritage scenario? Before diving into the linguistic characteristics of variants of heritage Dutch, we first define what we mean by heritage speakers in Section 2. We then provide some background information on the studies of varieties of heritage Dutch, from which our observations are drawn, in Section 3. Section 4 contains the heart of the chapter and discusses variation and stability in heritage Dutch in the domains of phonology, morphology, (morpho)syntax, and semantics. The reported forms of change and stability are connected on the one hand to change and stability in first and second language acquisition of Dutch and on the other to change and stability in heritage languages other than Dutch. Section 5 discusses how the circumstances of the language contact scenario affect

the outcome observed in the heritage languages. The chapter ends by discussing the implications of the results for the study of contact linguistics in general and for heritage Dutch in particular and by identifying loose ends and directions for future research.

## 2. Defining heritage languages

Before discussing heritage languages, let us first define what is meant by the term. The first to use the label *heritage language* was the Canadian government, who coined the term *heritage languages* in the 1970s for minority languages that were non-indigenous, hence for immigrant languages. The term began to be used by American language policy makers in the 1990s (Cummins 2005:585) and started to gain currency with theoretically-oriented linguists in the beginning of this century (Van Deusen-Scholl 2003:212). The nice part about the term *heritage language* is that the label connects the language to something positive: it is a language related to the heritage of the speaker rather than focusing, for example, on the minoritized status of the language.

Authors who refer to heritage languages almost always use this term to refer to a language without an official status in the country where it is spoken. The term is often used for languages that are connected to the ancestry of the speaker. Fishman (2006:12) writes “millions upon millions of refugees and immigrants have arrived on America’s shores with strong hopes of maintaining the ethnolinguistic traditions that defined them to themselves, to their neighbors, and to their God.” We follow the idea that heritage languages are part of what defines the identity of the speaker. Fishman (2006:12) later states that heritage languages have a particular family relevance to learners. The family relevance is implicitly or explicitly assumed to be a part of what defines heritage languages, but this is not true for all authors who define heritage speakers. Rothman (2009), for example, includes all speakers who naturalistically learn languages that are not official languages of the country where they live as heritage language speakers. Following this definition, a child in the US who plays with Dutch-speaking children and acquires the language via play would also be a speaker of heritage Dutch, independent of the ancestry of this child. In this chapter, we assume that a heritage language is mainly spoken by people who learned this language as part of their identity and connection to the homeland of their ancestors; they may have learned the language naturalistically, but this does not have to be case.

Fishman (2006:12) distinguishes three types of heritage languages: indigenous, colonial and immigrant. This expands the original Canadian definition, which only refers to the last type, namely immigrant languages, and explicitly

excludes indigenous languages as types of heritage languages. In this chapter, we use the term *heritage languages* in a restricted sense, specifically for immigrant languages and not for indigenous languages or colonial languages such as for Surinamese Dutch or Berbice Dutch. Note, however, that the distinction between immigrants and colonizers is not always easy to make. In Fishman's framework, Dutch in the US would technically be a colonial language because it was one of the languages of the colonizers of the United States: Van der Sijs (2009: 29) reports that Dutch was the official language on the east coast of the United States from 1624 until 1664. We would not consider Dutch as a heritage community language in this period because the number of people who spoke the language because of their family background was outnumbered by second language speakers due to its official status. The type of Dutch that was spoken during this period could, however, have influenced later heritage Dutch in the US. We chose to restrict the term *heritage languages* to migrant languages because they serve specific identity purposes that affect use (Carreira 2004) and because the existence of a home language variety and possible contact with the homeland creates different dynamics than in indigenous minority languages.

Authors like Polinsky (2011) and Valdés (2000) only refer to a language as a heritage language when speakers shift dominance: the heritage language is the language that was a speaker's dominant language in early youth but that is no longer the dominant language due to exposure to the majority language in, for example, school. Many variants of heritage Dutch described in this overview fit with this idea of dominant language shift toward the majority language, but some language varieties were maintained for a long period of time and were also taught in school, and were used for newspapers and in church. This chapter does not consider dominant language shift from the heritage to the majority language as a fundamental part of being a heritage speaker. This is in line with Kupisch (2013), who presents heritage speakers who are schooled in their heritage language and are as proficient as monolingual speakers of the homeland language.

Some definitions of heritage languages also include early age of onset as a part of the definition for being a heritage speaker, for example, Rothman (2009). Most of the research presented in this chapter concerns speakers who acquired Dutch from birth, but this is not true for all speakers in the studies presented in this chapter. For example, Daan (1987) includes speakers who learned Frisian in the home environment and accessed Dutch via church and school. Because Dutch is used within the new immigrant community as a way to connect to the homeland, we do consider these to be speakers of heritage Dutch (as well as of heritage Frisian). Being a community language, however, is not central to the definition for heritage speakers. Individuals who use Dutch at home even though there is not a wider Dutch-speaking community are also considered heritage speakers in this

chapter as is the case for the speaker of heritage Dutch in Indonesia presented in Giesbers (1997).

We considered including language islands in the definition of heritage languages because heritage languages and language islands are sometimes presented under the umbrella term of Dutch in the USA (for example, see van der Sijs 2009). Rosenberg (2005: 221) describes language islands as “internally structured settlements of a linguistic minority on a limited geographical area in the midst of a linguistically different majority.” We, however, decided to exclude these contexts in the chapter because the main source of divergent language development in language islands is dialect convergence rather than contact with the majority language as there is often no contact with surrounding languages. Although dialect convergence is common in heritage languages communities, we consider contact with the larger majority language a crucial factor for heritage languages. The criterion of language contact is usually not explicitly expressed in the literature as being part of the features that define heritage languages, but phenomena discussed in relation to heritage languages such as language shift and crosslinguistic influence are only possible given contact with the more powerful and dominant majority language. Table 1 presents and compares features of heritage languages as defined in the literature. The symbol ✓ means that a criterion is explicitly mentioned by the author. The symbol (✓) means that the criterion is implicitly part of the author’s definition. The symbol x means that the criterion is explicitly not part of the core definition (i.e., that it does not matter whether a speaker meets the criterion or not to be considered a heritage speaker), and a question mark means the status is not clear.

In short, we define heritage languages as immigrant languages that are connected to the place of origin of the ancestors of the immigrants and that are not the main and/or official language of the wider society where the immigrants moved. Language contact with the majority language is a crucial factor in being a heritage language. It is assumed that most speakers, but not necessarily all, acquire the heritage language naturalistically from birth; in addition, a few may also get some formal training in the heritage language, for instance, at a heritage language school, but this is not necessarily (and often not) the case. The heritage language may be a community language but does not have to be. This definition of heritage languages excludes some contact varieties of Dutch such as language islands and creoles, but it is still quite broad. The next section provides some brief information on the variants of heritage Dutch under discussion.

**Table 1.** Criteria for heritage language status

	Fishman (2006)	Valdés (2000)	Polinsky (2011); Polinsky and Kagan (2007)	Carreira (2004)	Rothman (2009)	Kupisch (2013)	Current chapter
No official status	✓	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	✓	(✓)	✓
Personal and ethnic or ancestral ties to the language	✓	(✓)	(✓)	✓	x	?	✓
No access to the standard language	?	?	?	?	?	x	x
In contact with the majority language	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	(✓)	✓
Dialect contact	?	?	?	?	?	?	x
Community language	?	✓	✓	?	?	?	x
Dominant language shift	(✓)	✓	✓	(✓)	(✓)	?	x
Early age of acquisition	?	✓	✓	(✓)	✓	✓	x

### 3. Background on selected variants of heritage Dutch

This chapter reports on previous work on variants of heritage Dutch spoken in the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Indonesia. This selection was based on the availability of research and also largely reflects the areas that welcomed the most Dutch migrants. We are indebted to Klatter-Folmer and Kroon (1997) who inspired many of these studies and brought them together in an edited volume. In this section, we will provide the context of these studies by providing some information on the migration numbers and periods in Section 3.1, giving some details on the type of linguistic research presented in this chapter in 3.2 and by explaining how we use data from first and second language acquisition of Dutch and some information on heritage languages other than Dutch are used to make sense of the data presented and to provide avenues for future research.

### 3.1 Migration numbers

Between 1840 and 1940, about 250,000 people emigrated from the Netherlands (Broeze 1988 in Elferink and Smits 1997: 22). This number is quite low compared to emigrants from other European countries: the same period showed emigration of 18 million people from the British Isles and 10 million from Italy. Pre-war emigration from the Netherlands consisted mostly of rural farmers seeking cheap land (Swierenga 1993). After the Second World War, the emigration situation in the Netherlands changed briefly as there was a large desire to emigrate, which reached a peak in 1948 when over 30 percent of the Dutch population was found “favourable to emigration” (Elferink and Smits 1997: 22). In 1952, a new emigration law was passed, resulting in more than 300 emigration offices spread throughout the country and yielding an emigration peak in 1952, when more than 48,000 emigrants left the Netherlands (Elferink and Smits 1997: 25). In the period between 1950–1954, 180,350 emigrants left the Netherlands. Of these emigrants, 82,244 moved to Canada, 54,309 to Australia, 14,625 to South Africa, 13,330 to the USA, 11,608 to New Zealand, 1,961 to Brazil and 2,273 to other nations. This chapter includes information of the language situation of emigrants who moved to these popular emigration countries as well as one study on a Dutch emigrant in Indonesia to show how the range of variation in heritage Dutch may be affected by the language contact context. Many of the countries where Dutch emigrants moved were Anglophone countries. Among the studies that we present, Brazil and Indonesia are the only two countries where a language other than English is the dominant language of the country.

### 3.2 Type of research

The data provided in Section 4 are based on previously published works. In this subsection, we present some background on these studies.

#### *Canada*

The data presented on Canada are based on Vermeer (1997), who in 1991 administered the *Taaltoets allochtone kinderen* ‘language test for non-Dutch children’, a standardized oral proficiency test that includes auditory discrimination and the formation of plurals of nouns, to 15 children aged 5–12 in Ontario in Canada. The children he tested took part in a heritage Dutch class, but most children used mostly or only English at home; only two of the children he tested spoke Dutch at home. Eleven of the children were Canadian-born, and four arrived in Canada at a very young age. Seven children had two Dutch parents, and eight had one Dutch and one Canadian parent. The mean age of the children was 9.8 years old,

and on average, they had been attending the heritage Dutch language school for two and a half years.

### *Australia*

The data on heritage Dutch in Australia are based on Clyne (1977; 1991), Clyne and Pauwels (1997), de Bot and Clyne (1989), and Ammerlaan (1997). Clyne conducted and recorded interviews with 200 postwar Dutch-speaking migrants and their children in 1971–1972. His participants were asked to talk in Dutch about their impressions of Australia and/or their life in Australia as well as their language and reading habits and to describe pictures of a typically Dutch and a typically Australian scene. A short segment of speech was also recorded in English, including the description of a picture (Clyne 1977; de Bot and Clyne 1989). Ammerlaan performed a picture-naming and recognition experiment with 76 participants who were Dutch-Australian immigrants and who did not use Dutch and felt that they had lost their Dutch (Ammerlaan 1997: 75–79).

### *South Africa*

The data on heritage Dutch in South Africa are based Raidt (1997), who sent out 1,300 questionnaires to Dutch migrants in Johannesburg and the PWV area (Pretoria, Witwatersrand, Vereeniging) plus a request to write a short letter in Dutch about factors influencing their personal use of Dutch. She received 300 questionnaires, and 285 were accompanied by a letter. Of her respondents, 260 were born in the Netherlands, 32 migrated before the age of 12, and eight were born in South Africa. The informants lived in urban environments in both English- and Afrikaans-speaking suburbs and towns (219).

### *United States*

The data on heritage Dutch in the United States are based on Daan (1987), van Marle and Smits (1997), and Smits and van Marle (2015). Daan gathered data on heritage Dutch in Pella, Iowa; Holland, Michigan, and Sheboygan (Reformed denomination) and Little Chute (Roman Catholics) in Wisconsin from August to October 1966. She recorded 285 informants over 122 sessions totaling 75 hours. The recordings included Dutch, Frisian and Dutch dialect data. Daan (1987: 238) noted personal information based on a questionnaire she had developed earlier. The respondents who were interviewed by Daan mostly belonged to the second immigration wave. They themselves or their (great) (grand) parents moved away from the Netherlands between 1830 and 1940. 157 participants belonged to the first generation and 128 to the second, third or fourth generation (Daan 1987: 107). Van Marle and Smits built on the corpus by Daan and added new interviews with some of the same participants from Pella, Iowa. Apart from recording spontaneous

speech, van Marle and Smits also administered an accessibility judgement test of about 25 sentences to 14 informants, who together judged a total of 375 sentences.

### *New Zealand*

The data on heritage Dutch in New Zealand are based on Klatter-Folmer (1997), who combined various research methods to investigate three generations of speakers of heritage Dutch. She had one informant for the first generation, five for the second generation, and two for the third generation. She conducted interviews on the personal linguistic history and on the language attitudes of all three generations of informants, and she analyzed letters in Dutch and language proficiency tests by the first two generations. Her corpus of letters consisted of a total of 45 letters: 40 written between 1973–1990 by the female subject of the first generation, four written between 1984–1990 by a participant of the second generation and one letter written in 1990 by another participant of the second generation.

### *Brazil*

The data on heritage Dutch in Brazil are based on Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997). Her corpus consists of 176 letters written over the period 1974–1992 by two female participants in Brazil to their family in the Netherlands. The length per letter is 1–4 pages. The letters of one informant consist of a total of 55,600 words, and the letters of the other consist of 27,900 words (Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek 1997: 104). Migration to Brazil consisted mainly of full family migration. Relatively homogenous groups of Dutch farmers went to new Dutch communities and continued working as they did in the Netherlands. For the first-generation Dutch speakers, contact with Brazilians was often limited to work where the boss was Dutch and some of the workers Brazilian. Going back to the Netherlands was not common before the 1970s (Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek 1997: 100).

### *Indonesia*

The data on heritage Dutch in Indonesia are based on work by Giesbers (1997). Giesbers described data from a 55-minute interview with one 45-year-old man who moved to Indonesia at the age of 13. There is no support for his Dutch in a wider Dutch-speaking community, but the informant comes into contact with Dutch via Dutch tourists who visit his hometown, reading Dutch newspapers, and writing letters in Dutch. The informant works in Malang in East Java, and he has a Dutch mother and an Indonesian father. The informant works in a restaurant and in the tourist office. Apart from the interview, he also completed a retelling task for a news item in a newspaper. During the interview, the informant talked about the history of his restaurant and the tourist office.

#### 4. Variation and stability in heritage languages per linguistic domain

This section presents an overview of reported variation and stability in heritage Dutch for the domains of phonology (4.1), inflectional morphology on verbs and nouns (4.2), gender assignment and gender agreement (4.3), verb placement (4.4) and semantics (4.5). As shown above, there are many rich sources available on heritage Dutch ranging from a corpus of letters of two speakers of heritage Dutch in Brazil to the homeland over a timespan of sixteen years (see Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek 1997) to linguistic experiments and tests to recordings of 285 participants in the United States. It would be advantageous if all these sources of data were available in one location (cf. van der Sijs 2014).

To make sense of the varied outcomes reported, it is useful to think about what might have caused these outcomes. Some changes are expected to be more generic than others. Important characteristics of the heritage scenario are that speakers often have little or no access to the norm, that they might not all be schooled or literate in the heritage language (Pires and Rothman 2009; Kupisch and Rothman 2018), that there might be less input, that speakers might be dominant in another language and that speakers might feel the urge to mark their heritage identity and sometimes exaggerate differences between their heritage and dominant languages for this purpose of identity marking (see Kühl and Braunmüller 2014). To contextualize the reported variation, we will briefly discuss what we know about the linguistic domain discussed in heritage languages in general and because order of acquisition plays a role in the robustness of a phenomenon, we will also sometimes link to studies on first and second language acquisition of Dutch. We provide a table for each linguistic subdomain in heritage Dutch: a ✓ indicates that a feature is reported for a particular variant; a X indicates that a feature is reported as non-existent in a particular variant; a – indicates that no information is reported for a feature in a particular variant.

##### 4.1 Phonology

Handbooks on heritage languages (see for example Montrul 2015; Polinsky 2018; Aalberse, Backus, and Muysken 2019) often report that heritage sound systems are relatively robust. This robustness is sometimes related to the very early acquisition of phonology; not arriving at certain acquisitional stages due to less input is not expected. Lloyd-Smith, Einfeldt, and Kupisch (2020: 290), however, shows that this stance on robustness is countered by “widely-reported instances of crosslinguistic influence (CLI) in child bilinguals and the fact that many heritage speakers end up sounding foreign in their native, heritage language.” They carried out two accent-rating experiments in German-Italian bilinguals, comparing the bilingual

speech samples to those of monolingual and second language (L2) control groups. The samples were rated by monolingual native German- and Italian-speaking judges for foreign accent (*yes* or *no*) and for degree of certainty (*certain*, *semi-certain*, or *uncertain*). Lloyd-Smith, Einfeldt, and Kupisch found that the heritage speakers score between first and second language speakers, which suggests there is variation in accent between heritage speakers and homeland speakers but less so than in second-language speakers. Daan (1997:248) writes about her heritage Dutch informants that “there were very few exceptions to the general rule that the informants’ articulation and intonation sufficed for the investigators to determine which region they or their ancestors came from in the Netherlands”: this observation that regional background can be detected in their speech is in line with the idea that global<sup>1</sup> accents are relatively stable.

The studies on heritage Dutch that we present in this chapter do not all discuss phonology, which may be related to various factors including the interest of the researcher, the relative robustness of this domain, and/or the methods used. Differences in global accent, for example, cannot be examined in a corpus of letters or a grammaticality judgment task. Those studies that do mention phonology reported phonological variability in heritage Dutch involving the reduction of consonant clusters, loss of the distinction between long and short vowels and shifts in lexical stress.

Deletion of dentals in word-final consonant clusters is reported in heritage Dutch in Indonesia for words such as *dienst* ‘service’ and *maand* ‘month’ as well as in finite verbs where second/third person singular present is encoded with *-t* (Giesbers 1997:146). The dental *-t* to encode second/third person singular present and on past participles is also left out by some speakers of heritage Dutch in South Africa in their Dutch letters (Raidt 1997: 226–227). Giesbers (1997:166) also reports deviating stress patterns on the lexical level, mostly a stress shift to the first syllable, for example, pronouncing the word *ongeveer* ‘approximately’ with stress on the first rather than on the last syllable, and one instance of the reverse in the word *transit* ‘transit’ with stress on the final rather than the first syllable as found in homeland Dutch. Lastly, vowel length distinctions are reported as being variable in two studies: Vermeer (1997:146) finds that speakers of heritage Dutch in Canada do not always perceive differences between lax and tense vowels, and Giesbers (1997:167) reports the replacement of a lax for a tense vowel four times and the opposite twice in heritage Dutch in Indonesia. Table 2 summarizes the variability in phonology that is reported in the studies on heritage Dutch.

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1. Lloyd-Smith et al. use the term global accent to contrast it with specific aspects of an accent such as voice onset time. Global thus refers to overall accent in this context.

**Table 2.** Reported changes in heritage Dutch phonology

Land	USA	CAN	AUS	NZL	IDN	BRA	ZAF
Consonant cluster reduction	-	-	-	-	✓	-	✓
Loss of vowel length distinctions	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-
Change in lexical stress	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-

#### 4.2 Inflectional morphology on verbs and nouns

This subsection focuses on inflectional morphology of nouns and verbs in variants of heritage Dutch because this area of morphology is well described in the literature on heritage languages. Polinsky and Scontras (2020: 9) list various reasons why inflectional morphology is among the better described parts of heritage languages. Because many studies focus on variation rather than on stability, morphology is an interesting domain: it is very susceptible to change in language contact situations (Kusters 2003; Trudgill 2011) because “a significant component of morphology serves to encode dependency relations, where the features or position of one constituent determine the shape of another constituent. Such relations, established at a distance are vulnerable to change.” Deflection in heritage languages may be a generic effect of language contact regardless of the morphological complexity of the dominant language or it may be an effect of crosslinguistic influence due to contact with a dominant language with less inflectional morphology than the homeland language. Many researched heritage languages, like most variants of heritage Dutch, are in contact with English, which has a modest amount of morphology, so it is likely that the two reinforce one another in heritage languages in Anglophone contexts.

Although inflectional morphology is described in much more detail in the literature, it would be interesting to investigate derivational morphology in heritage languages as well. Anecdotal evidence for the possibility of crosslinguistic influence on derivational morphology exists from student papers written by native Dutch speakers in the Netherlands who very frequently use English in their daily lives and whose Dutch derivational morphology is affected by their knowledge of English, especially via correspondence rules (Thomason 2001). For example, the Latin suffix *-tie* in Dutch often corresponds to its English counterpart *-tion*, for instance, in words like *formatie* ‘formation’, *creatie* ‘creation’, and *irritatie* ‘irritation’. The correspondence between *-tie* and *-tion* is then overgeneralized to words like *abortus* ‘abortion’, where the innovation *abortie* has been created by some speakers using *-tie*, corresponding to the form *abortion* of the English word. In the studies we present, one example of a part of speech confusion is mentioned namely the use of the noun *calculatie* ‘calculation’ in a context where the verb

*calculeren* ‘to calculate’ is intended Giesbers (1997: 168–169). Such confusions are more expected if heritage Dutch is in contact with languages that do not overtly encode differences between nouns and verbs. Whereas core grammar in first language acquisition tends to be in place around the age of four, the productive use and interpretation of derivational affixes is still in process of being acquired at the age of 12 (Tyler & Nagy 1989). Following the idea that what is learned late in first language acquisition is vulnerable to loss in contact situations (Montrul 2008) we expect derivational morphology to be vulnerable. Because derivational morphology in children and adolescents acquiring homeland Dutch is an under-researched area, we will leave this area for future research and move to Dutch inflection, which has been investigated quite thoroughly.

In this section, we focus on person and number in verbs and number marking on nouns. Homeland Dutch finite singular verbs in the present tense encode first person with the bare stem and second and third persons with the suffix *-t*. Both the plural forms and the infinitive are encoded with the suffix *-en*.

If we consider language acquisition of verbal forms as a source of innovation, we see that both the bare stem and the *-t* form are potential candidates for overgeneralization: the *-t* form is the most frequent finite form, and the bare form is phonologically the most attractive. In young children acquiring Dutch, both the bare and the *-t* forms are overgeneralized to all persons and to the plural, but the plural *-en* form is never overgeneralized to the singular (Polišenská 2010). Moreover, the bare stem overlaps with English and could thus also occur and perhaps be reinforced due to crosslinguistic influence in Anglophone contexts – this would also be the case for Afrikaans and Indonesian. Alternatively, speakers of heritage Dutch in Anglophone contexts could potentially overuse the *-t* and *-en* forms as a form of hypercorrection to emphasize differences between their heritage language and the majority language using a correspondence rule where an English bare verb stem corresponds to a heritage Dutch verb form with *-t* or *-en* (cf. Thomason 2001). If we look at Table 3, we can see that loss of *-t* on the finite verb is reported in four variants of heritage Dutch, namely in the US, New Zealand, Indonesia, and South Africa. The opposite, namely overgeneralizing the suffix *-t* to first person singular present, is reported in three variants: the US, Indonesia, and South Africa. Klatter-Folmer (1997: 206) describes a second-generation speaker in New Zealand who consistently uses bare forms rather than using the suffix *-t* for second and third persons. Absence of number marking on verbs is also reported in four variants of heritage Dutch: the US, Australia, Brazil, and South Africa. Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997: 113) also describes the use of plural marking in the singular. Absence of the suffix *-en* for infinitives is reported in two variants of heritage Dutch: Australia and South Africa.

Nouns in homeland Dutch encode the plural with either the suffix *-s* or the suffix *-en* primarily based on phonological properties of the noun. Using the bare form of nouns for plural is reported in two studies: Giesbers (1997:168) for Indonesia and Smits and van Marle (2015:393) for the US. Overgeneralization of the plural allomorph *-s* to contexts where the plural marker *-en* is expected is described for variants in the US, Australia, and South Africa. Overgeneralizing *-en* to contexts where the allomorph *-s* is expected is not reported. Clyne and Pauwels (1997:45) describe the overgeneralization of *-s* and connect it to the similarity to the English plural morpheme *-s*, which we take to mean that they did not find instances of *-en* overgeneralization.

**Table 3.** Reported changes in heritage Dutch morphology

	USA	CAN	AUS	NZL	IDN	BRA	ZAF
Overgeneralization of bare form to 2/3S	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓
Overgeneralization of suffix <i>-t</i> to 1S	✓	-	-	x	✓	-	✓
Weak verbs replace strong verbs	-	-	-	✓	-	-	✓
Loss of number marking on verbs	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓
Loss of suffix in infinitive	-	-	✓	-	-	-	✓
Overgeneralization of plural marker <i>-s</i>	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	✓
Overgeneralization of plural marker <i>-en</i>	-	-	x	-	-	-	-

### 4.3 Gender assignment and gender agreement

Gender is a domain that is susceptible to variation. Blom, Poliženská, and Weerman (2008) show that gender assignment, that is knowing whether a noun is assigned to the common or neuter gender, takes until the age of seven for monolingual homeland Dutch children. Young children, both monolingual and bilingual, overgeneralize the forms associated with the more frequent common gender, such as the common gender definite article *de*. Gender agreement combines with definiteness with respect to attributive adjective inflection: in homeland Dutch, most attributive adjectives are inflected with the suffix *-e* (pronounced as schwa), for example, the adjective *mooi* ‘beautiful’ becomes *mooie* when modifying most nouns as in common gender *een mooie dag* ‘a beautiful day’, definite neuter gender *het mooie boek* ‘the beautiful book’, and plural (*de*) *mooie boeken* ‘(the) beautiful books’. The uninflected attribute adjective is restricted to only one context, namely if a neuter singular noun is used in an indefinite context as in *een mooi boek* ‘a beautiful book’. This rule for the use of the uninflected form of attributive adjectives is not acquired by sequential bilinguals, thereby resulting in overgener-

alization of the inflected form (Blom, Polišenská, and Weerman 2008). Based on these observations from child language acquisition, one would expect the neuter definite article *het* and the uninflected attributive adjective to be vulnerable to loss among speakers of heritage Dutch.

If we consider potential crosslinguistic influence from English, we can observe two possibilities. With respect to definite articles, the Dutch common gender *de* is phonetically (and functionally) similar to the English definite article *the* (Klatter-Folmer 1997: 206; Clyne and Pauwels 1997: 45); this similarity could reinforce the tendency of overgeneralizing common gender *de* observed in language acquisition among homeland Dutch children. With respect to attributive adjective inflection, English never inflects adjectives, so the uninflected attributive adjective, which is underused among homeland Dutch children, could receive a boost in Anglophone contexts, competing against the tendency of overgeneralizing the inflected attributive adjective observed in language acquisition among homeland Dutch children.

If we look at Table 4 below we see that the expected overgeneralization of the common gender *de* is borne out and is reported for heritage Dutch in Australia (Clyne and Pauwels 1997: 45), Indonesia (Giesbers 1997: 168), New Zealand (Klatter-Folmer 1997: 205), and South Africa (Raidt 1997: 228). Daan (1987: 55, 71) reports that older variants of Dutch spoken in the United States have lost the neuter gender though Smits and van Marle (2015), despite not explicitly mentioning gender assignment, observe more frequent use of uninflected attributive adjectives for neuter nouns, which suggests that the gender distinction has not completely been lost in heritage Dutch in the United States. The studies in Canada and Brazil do not report on article or attributive adjective use. Giesbers (1997: 168) explicitly mentions that he did not find overgeneralizations of the neuter article. Raidt (1997: 228) only observes overgeneralization of the common gender to the neuter and related this to interference from English and/or Afrikaans. Pauwels and Klein also only mention overgeneralization of the common gender to the neuter. Klatter-Folmer (1997: 205) observes the same pattern of unidirectional overgeneralization for first-generation participants but finds overgeneralization in both directions in second-generation speakers. Raidt does not observe overgeneralization of the neuter article (228); however, she does find overgeneralization of the demonstrative pronoun in both directions (229), so the common gender demonstrative pronoun is used in neuter context and vice versa. Possibly the formal similarity between the English demonstrative *this* and the Dutch neuter demonstrative *dit* stimulated the overgeneralization of the neuter form to common gender contexts. Raidt (1997: 329) only reports on the overgeneralization of the common gender demonstrative *die* in contexts where the neuter is expected and not vice versa.

Smits and van Marle (2015: 397) find overgeneralizations of both the inflected and uninflected forms of attributive adjectives in their spontaneous data: in the grammaticality judgment test, participants accepted both inflected and uninflected forms as correct. Raidt (1997: 230) reports on the overgeneralization of inflected adjectives in attributive position, and she does not report on overgeneralizations in the other directions explicitly; however, she gives examples of uninflected possessive personal pronouns instead of inflected ones, such as *ons kinderen* ‘our children’ instead of homeland Dutch *onze kinderen* (229), suggesting overgeneralization of the bare form, probably due to crosslinguistic influence from Afrikaans and English. Giesbers (1997: 168) reports on the overgeneralization of inflected attributive adjective forms only, finding no evidence for uninflected attributive adjectives. The other studies do not report on adjectival inflection.

**Table 4.** Reported adnominal gender assignment and agreement in heritage Dutch

Overgeneralization of	USA	CAN	AUS	NZL	IDN	BRA	ZAF
common gender definite article <i>de</i>	–	–	✓	✓	✓	–	✓
neuter gender definite article <i>het</i>	–	–	x	✓	x	–	x
common gender demonstratives <i>deze</i> and <i>die</i>	–	–	–	–	–	–	✓
neuter gender demonstrative <i>dit</i>	–	–	–	✓	–	–	–
inflected attributive adjective	✓	–	–	–	✓	–	✓
uninflected attributive adjective	✓	–	–	–	x	–	?

Most of the reported data are as expected: the common gender definite article *de* is overgeneralized, which can be related to a combination of the observed tendency among monolingual and bilingual acquisition of homeland Dutch as well as crosslinguistic influence from English *the*, and we find evidence for the overuse of the bare form, which can be related to crosslinguistic influence, because the majority languages English and Afrikaans do not inflect adjectives. There is also evidence for the overgeneralization of the inflected form, which is by far the most frequently used attributive adjective form in homeland Dutch, in Indonesia, where the majority language, like English and Afrikaans, does not inflect adjectives.

The most surprising result is the presence of *het*-overgeneralization in second generation speakers in New Zealand as described by Klatter-Folmer (1997: 206). How can we understand this pattern? On a somewhat related phenomenon, Doreleijers, Mourigh, and Swanenberg (2023) show that whereas Dutch ethnolects were first associated with the overgeneralization of common to neuter gender only, now ethnolectal speakers also overgeneralize the neuter gender to

common gender nouns in order to create a more academic persona. Apart from this socially motivated hypercorrection, the overgeneralization of neuter gender could also have a language internal motivation. It could be the case that some speakers use semantic features to reorganize parts of the gender system. The role of semantics in the Dutch gender system was first described in pronominal reference in Audring (2009) and Kraaikamp (2017), who both show that high individuation/animacy is associated with common gender in pronominal reference and low individuation/animacy with neuter gender. Cornips et al. (2012) suggest that this association of low individuation with neuter gender not only plays a role in pronominal reference but also in the acquisition of nominal gender: they report that children acquire the gender of neuter mass nouns such as *gras* ‘grass’ faster than of neuter count nouns such as *boek* ‘book’. The role of animacy in gender assignment is also evidenced in Hinskens et al. (2021: 92), who report that in the speech of Moroccan and Turkish Dutch speakers, “in nouns referring to animate entities, biological gender seems to outweigh grammatical gender (genus), as in e.g., *de meisje*; *de wijf*; *de jongetje*; *de dier* (‘the girl’, ‘the woman’, ‘the boyDIM’, ‘the animal’); in standard Dutch these nouns have neuter gender (and thus select the definite article *het*).” Given these associations of the neuter gender with the feature mass, it is possible that semantics plays a role in the (non-)retention of neuter nouns in first-generation immigrants. One would expect retention of the neuter gender longest in mass nouns.

If it is indeed the case that mass nouns retain their neuter gender longer whereas common gender is more quickly overgeneralized to animate nouns, the semantic association of low individuation with neuter gender could become stronger in the input for second-generation speakers and hence become even stronger for a third generation. One would expect these cascade effects in scenarios where intergenerational transmission plays an important role. Socially motivated overgeneralizations are also expected during intergenerational transmission and are enhanced by the presence of normative comments either during teaching the heritage language or via the arrival of a new wave of immigrants commenting on overgeneralization of the common gender *de* in the previous generation.

For future research, it would also be interesting to see what happens when Dutch is in contact with a language that has neuter gender as a default gender. Egger, Hulk, and Tsimpli (2018) report on Greek-Dutch bilingual children who overgeneralize neuter gender in Dutch under the influence of the default status of neuter gender in Greek.

#### 4.4 Word order and conjunctions

Dutch sentential word order can be characterized by the following two properties: object-verb (OV), meaning that all verbs apart from the finite verb in a main clause appear in sentence-final position following the object, and verb-second (V<sub>2</sub>), meaning the finite verb in a main clause always appears as the second constituent. We can observe OV word order in root infinitives as in (1), with respect to the main verb in complex predicates as in (2), and subordinate clauses as in (3).

- (1) *Een boek lezen*  
A book read  
'to read a book'
- (2) *Ik wil een boek lezen*  
I want a book read  
'I want to read a book'
- (3) *Hij zegt dat ik een boek wil lezen*  
He says that I a book want read  
'He says that I want to read a book'

The V<sub>2</sub> property, which requires the finite verb in a main clause to be the second constituent in the clause, means that if a main clause starts with a constituent other than the subject, the subject will follow the finite verb, i.e., subject-verb inversion will take place, as shown in (4) (cf (2) above where the finite verb follows the subject).

- (4) *Morgen ga ik een boek lezen*  
Tomorrow go I a book read  
'Tomorrow I will read a book'

With respect to the presence of conjunctions in subordinate clauses, uninflected subordinate clauses in Dutch appear without a conjunction as shown in (5) whereas finite subordinate clauses always begin with a conjunction as shown in (6). The required presence of subordinating conjunctions contrasts with English where the subordinating conjunction of the sentence in (6) can be left out.

- (5) *Ik hoop hem te zien*  
I hope him to see  
'I hope to see him'
- (6) *Ik hoop dat ik hem zal zien*  
I hope that I him shall see  
'I hope (that) I will see him'

If we look at the order of acquisition of word order, homeland Dutch children begin by producing root infinitives like in (1) above (Blom and de Korte 2011 and references therein). After a stage when only root infinitives are produced, monolingual and bilingual children of homeland Dutch either continue to produce root infinitives in sentence-final position, adhering to the OV word order in Dutch, or produce a finite verb in second position; this contrasts with adult learners of Dutch, showing that children have no problem with inversion contexts. Moreover, Blom and de Korte (2011) show that children overgeneralize the use of finite auxiliary and semantically empty verbs like *doen* and *maken* to fill the second position. These verbs, referred to as *dummies*, do not always have a semantic function but seem to fill the V2 position, further demonstrating the robustness of V2 syntax in the acquisition of homeland Dutch. If the effects of reduced input in heritage speakers are present, then one would expect the overuse of auxiliaries in second position to maintain the robustness of V2 word order. If we examine the differences and similarities between Dutch and the contact languages, we can observe that despite having underlying OV syntax, the most frequently used order in Dutch (cf. Clahsen and Muysken 1986) is SVO, and this matches the word order in the contact languages of the variants of heritage Dutch described here, though none of the contact languages except for Afrikaans have OV and V2 syntax to the extent found in homeland Dutch. The majority contact languages are also freer in their usage of conjunctions.

If we look at the descriptions of the heritage languages, none of the studies report on the overuse of auxiliaries, which could be either because it does not happen or because the overuse is not an obvious deviation from homeland Dutch. Overusing auxiliaries would still create grammatical sentences and hence not be an obvious form of variation, potentially disguising underlying changes. Backus, Doğruöz, and Heine (2011) refer to a change that fits within the existing grammar as a *system preserving change*. These types of changes can be detected by comparing frequencies of occurrence (see for example Bao 2010).

The omission of conjunctions is mentioned for heritage Dutch in New Zealand by Klatter-Folmer (1997: 206) as shown in (7). None of the other studies report on conjunction use.

- (7) *En hoop bij jullie alles oké is*  
*(en hoop dat bij jullie alles oké is)*  
 (and hope that with you everything okay is)  
 ‘And hope (that) everything is okay with you’

Clyne and Pauwels (1997: 46) show that V2 syntax is not always adhered to in heritage Dutch despite the fact that finite verbs always form the second constituent of a main clause in homeland Dutch, resulting in subject-verb inversion if the

first constituent is not the subject of a sentence. They report, for example, the following:

- (8) *Gisteren ik ben ziek geweest*  
 yesterday I am sick been  
 ‘Yesterday I was sick’

In homeland Dutch, the constituent *gisteren* ‘yesterday’ would be directly followed by the finite verb *ben* ‘am’ because of the V2 rule. Absence of subject-verb inversion is not reported for child acquisition of homeland Dutch though the lack of subject-verb inversion and OV orders are reported to occur in adult second language acquisition of Dutch (Blom and de Korte 2011). Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997: 113) does not explicitly report on subject-verb inversion but does present examples of utterances beginning with adverbials that are directly followed by a finite verb hence showing subject-verb inversion and implicitly suggesting stability – the robustness of this rule in the acquisition of homeland Dutch could have been reinforced by its application in Afrikaans. The other studies do not report on subject-verb inversion.

Clyne and Pauwels (1997: 46) and Klatter-Folmer (1997: 206) report on deviation from OV order. Clyne and Pauwels show the finite plural verb *praten* ‘speak’ preceding the specification *in het Hollands* ‘in Dutch’ in a subordinate clause in (9). Though prepositional phrases are more flexible in their word order (Koster 1974), homeland Dutch would have a preference for the constituent *in het Hollands* ‘in Dutch’ to precede the verb in this context. Additionally note the absence of subject-verb inversion between *ze* ‘they’ and *verstaan* ‘understand’ as well as the absence of an overt object with the verb *verstaan* ‘understand’, both of which would be required in homeland Dutch.

- (9) *Maar als wij praten in het Hollands, ze verstaan drommels goed.*  
 but if we talk in the Dutch, they understand damn well  
 ‘But if we talk in Dutch, they understand damn well’

(Clyne and Pauwels 1997: 46)

Klatter-Folmer (1997: 206) provides examples of adverbs following the main verb whereas the verb is expected to follow the adverb in homeland Dutch, for example in (10).

- (10) *totdat ik ga echt* (Klatter-Folmer 1997: 206)  
 Until I go really  
 ‘Until I really go’

Homeland Dutch would use the order *echt ga* ‘really go’. Children acquiring homeland Dutch never use these orders. Although this order is not a direct trans-

lation from English, the verb being less sentence-final might be influenced by the majority language English. Table 5 summarizes the outcomes we found on changes in syntax in Dutch heritage languages. The reported changes are not many, leaving this domain open for future research.

**Table 5.** Reported changes in heritage Dutch syntax

	USA	CAN	AUS	NZL	IDN	BRA	ZAF
Conjunction omission	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-
No subject-verb inversion	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
Complex predicate with multiple verbs preceding the object	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Subordinate clause with verb-subject order	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
Overuse of auxiliaries	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

#### 4.5 Semantics

An expected generic effect of the heritage context is that subtle differences in meanings can be lost, especially if these subtle meanings are not reinforced by the majority language. Subtle meaning differences require frequent input, which is what heritage speakers often lack. Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997) hypothesizes that the conceptualization of events in the heritage language is affected by conceptualization in the majority language. For example, the Dutch verb *pakken* ‘take’ implies an intention by the subject and control over the situation so *de trein pakken* ‘to take the train’ is fine, but *een ziekte pakken* ‘to contract/catch an illness’ (literally ‘to take a disease’) is ungrammatical since becoming ill is an unintentional process. Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997) reports that speakers of heritage Dutch in Brazil use the expression *een ziekte pakken* under influence of Brazilian-Portuguese *pegar* ‘take’, which is not sensitive to the features intention and control.

Flecken (2010) shows that conceptualization affects not only the lexicon but also grammatical features. Grammatical aspect marking, for example, is linked to particular perceptions of reality. The Conceptualization Hypothesis then predicts that those structures that are conceptualized differently in the heritage language and in the dominant language will be vulnerable to change.

A frequent loss of subtle meaning differences that is described in heritage Dutch is the collapse of the two auxiliaries that encode perfect tense, namely *zijn* ‘to be’ and *hebben* ‘to have’ (see *Algemene Nederlandse Spraakkunst* (‘General Dutch grammar’) | 2.3.2.8.iv.a Het gebruik van zijn: algemene regels (ivdnt.org)).

The verb *zijn* ‘to be’ is used with intransitive verbs that describe a change of state in the subject such as *groeien* ‘to grow’ and *sterven* ‘to die’ or when a direction with an (implied) endpoint is expressed. Variants of heritage Dutch sometimes show loss of the verb *zijn* ‘to be’ as a perfective marker. This is described for heritage Dutch in Anglophone contexts such as Australia (Clyne and Pauwels 1997: 44–45) and South Africa (Raidt 1997: 230) as well as in non-Anglophone Brazil (Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek 1997: 104–105). We can interpret the loss of the auxiliary as the result of a generic effect of meaning loss but also as the result of conceptualization. The semantic difference governing perfective auxiliary selection in homeland Dutch is not conceptualized in the same way as the majority languages English, Afrikaans, and Portuguese.

Changes in semantics (e.g. extensions of meanings, expansion of uses to informal registers) can also be motivated by form similarities between a word from the heritage language and a word in the majority language. For example, Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997: 112) finds the utterance *wat gepasseerd is* (‘what happened’) in the corpus of letters of Dutch Brazilians. This utterance is marked and the more neutral Dutch version would be *wat gebeurd is* (‘What happened’). It could be the case that form similarity with Brazilian *passar* motivated the selection of the verb *passeren* rather than the verb *gebeuren*. Clyne and Pauwels (1997: 44) report the use of the Dutch word *smal* ‘narrow’ with the meaning of the phonetically similar English word *small*.

Meanings also get expanded via the route of calques. In a speaker of heritage Dutch in Indonesia, Giesbers (1997: 173) reports the use of the question word *waarom* ‘why’ to mean ‘what’s going on’ based on Indonesian *kenapa* ‘why’, as well as the use of the word *al* ‘already’ in numerous contexts as a perfective marker, functioning similarly to Indonesian *sudah* ‘already’. Both these semantic extensions can be directly traced back to Indonesian. Moro (2018) hypothesizes that heritage language speakers will find translational equivalents for grammatical categories that are obligatorily encoded in the majority language. Future research in heritage languages could look more deeply into obligatory markings in the majority languages and find out if there are proxies for these categories in the heritage language.

Another domain that is very open to cross-linguistic influence is collocations. Preposition use is very susceptible to contact-induced change. Klatter-Folmer (1997) shows how speakers of heritage Dutch in New Zealand select prepositions in collocations that seem motivated by the majority language English, for example, the use of the preposition *met* ‘with’ rather than the preposition *tegen* ‘against’ in the collocation *oneerlijk met* ‘dishonest with’ as opposed to homeland Dutch *oneerlijk tegen*, or the use of the preposition *van* ‘from’ rather than *uit* ‘out’ when describing a person’s origin, for instance, in the utterance *een meneer van Zwit-*

*serland* ‘a man from Switzerland’ as opposed to homeland Dutch *een meneer uit Zwitserland*. These uses match with a convergence scenario. Giesbers (1997: 173) reports similar forms of convergence in the speaker of heritage Dutch in Indonesia, who says *bang zijn tegen* ‘being afraid against’ rather than the homeland Dutch *bang zijn voor* ‘being afraid for’.

Innovative use of prepositions is also observed in heritage Dutch in Brazil, where Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997: 108) reports the use of *denken op* rather than *denken aan* ‘to think of’ and the use of *op de eerste klas komen* rather than *in de eerste klas komen* ‘to enter first grade’. The uses of *op* seem to be influenced by the Portuguese preposition *em* as the distinction between the Dutch prepositions *aan* and *op* (both translate to ‘on’ in English) is crosslinguistically rare. Table 6 summarizes the reported changes in semantics in heritage Dutch. Collocations are frequently imported into the heritage language and loss of the perfective auxiliary *zijn* (‘to be’) is observed in three contexts of heritage Dutch.

**Table 6.** Reported variation in semantics in heritage Dutch

	USA	CAN	AUS	NZL	IDN	BRA	ZAF
Loss of the perfective auxiliary <i>zijn</i> ‘to be’	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓
Semantic extension based on form similarity	-	-	✓	-	-	✓	-
Calques	-	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Collocations	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	-

## 5. Heritage languages and the contact scenario

The previous section described what linguistic features were attested in a set of studies of variants of heritage Dutch. We saw that the majority language is a factor in the outcome of language contact, but even if the language contact pair are identical, language outcomes can differ depending on the contact situation. Muysken (2013: 270) argues that “languages do not interact in a single way, but rather in many different ways, depending on the social setting of the contact” (cf Thomason and Kaufman 1988; van Coetsem 1988) and continues: “In other words, it does not suffice to say: when two languages A and B come into contact, X happens, but we need to specify the circumstances” (710). This section describes some of the aspects of the situation of the heritage language which can be taken into account when looking at outcomes.

### Investigating contact with more varied contact languages

Most of the reported variants of heritage Dutch have been in contact with English. Giesbers (1997) on heritage Dutch in Indonesia and Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997) on heritage Dutch in Brazil illustrate the potential effects of crosslinguistic influence in contact situations with languages other than English. For example, Giesbers shows that the adverb *al* ‘already’ fulfills more grammatical functions in heritage Dutch in Indonesia than in homeland Dutch. It would be interesting to see what Dutch words are selected to encode grammatical categories that are present in the majority language but not in homeland Dutch. Research on World Englishes shows that the use of the English word *already* as an aspect marker is prolific as a result of contact with a variety of Asian and African languages (Bao 2010; Siemund 2018). It would also be informative to investigate heritage Dutch in contact with a language such as Greek where neuter gender is the default gender. We know from language acquisition studies that Dutch-Greek bilingual children have a preference for the neuter gender (Egger, Hulk, and Tsimpli 2018), and we know from first language acquisition studies that semantic features play a role in the robustness of neuter gender.

### Language usage patterns and levels of stability

The effect of language use patterns on the development of the heritage languages is described by Daan (1987: 103), among others, who writes about situations of triglossia where Frisian is spoken at home, Dutch in church and in the heritage community, and English in the wider community. The Dutch dialects have changed considerably due to use in the heritage community as a result of convergence with other dialects whereas Frisian, which is only used in the home context, is much more stable. Network ties also affect the language contact outcome.

Both Schmid (2011) and Moro (2018) show that the heritage language speakers in their respective samples who are most innovative, namely those who show the most contact-induced innovations, are speakers who use both the heritage and majority language in the same context(s) and with the same people. Under these circumstances, both languages are activated in the brain. By making the languages more similar to one another, the processing load of switching is reduced. It is also interesting to note that highly innovative speakers are often fluent speakers, as evidenced, for example, by their high rate of words per minute (Moro 2018). Unlike what is sometimes assumed in second language literature, deviations from the norm do not necessarily correlate with a lack in fluency. Frequent use makes speakers fluent; co-activation causes contact-induced innovations. Speakers who

do not use their heritage language frequently tend to be closer to the homeland language norm but are sometimes also less fluent.

### Longitudinal corpora and the lifespan perspective

Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek (1997) and Klatter-Folmer (1997) have corpora of letters written over substantial timespans. These and possibly other letters can provide insight into the stability and change over a speaker's lifetime. Sanz-Sánchez (2024) shows the relevance of a lifespan perspective on contact-induced change. Longitudinal data can inform us about what parts of the language remain stable across the lifespan, what parts of the language fluctuate, and what parts of the language are stable with respect to an innovation once it has been introduced. Openness to innovation is also affected by the people we speak to, and different stages in life can yield a different network of speech partners among speakers of heritage languages. The younger we are, the more likely exchanges in the heritage language take place with (grand) parents and other people from older generations, and the older we get, the more likely it becomes that our speech partners are younger and more open to innovation. After retirement, exchanges with colleagues might decrease, and exchanges with family members, friends, and neighbors might increase.

### Social networks, settlement patterns and horizontal versus vertical patterns of interaction

Of the studies we examined, some heritage speakers are part of a community of Dutch speakers whereas others do not have the support of a Dutch-speaking community. Language maintenance is more likely if a Dutch speech community exists, but even if the smaller community consists of many fellow heritage speakers, language maintenance is not a given. Brown and Salmons (2022: 18) propose the following hypothesis: "If communities give up horizontal patterns in favor of vertical ones, shift follows"; the notion of horizontal and vertical patterns comes from the sociologist Warren (1978), who distinguishes two key patterns of interactions within communities, namely horizontal interactions, which concern the relationships that local units share with each other on the local level, and vertical interactions, which concern the relationships through which local units are oriented to the larger society beyond the community. When heritage Dutch was still used in newspapers, schools and churches and when speakers all had jobs in their community, the possibilities for using Dutch were extensive. By upscaling the publication of newspapers to a larger public and by looking for jobs outside the community, the heritage language was less likely to be used. Less use means less activation

of the language, potentially leading to retrieval problems and the loss of less frequently used patterns. Future research could investigate domains of use of the heritage languages from newspapers, jobs, church sermons, social activities like dancing and playing cards to social media. Note that van der Sijs and Doreleijers (2019) show that Dutch migrants in the 21st century maintain Dutch more than the Dutch migrants from the 20th century that we have presented. In an online survey among 7,000 Dutch migrants in 130 countries outside the Netherlands, they found that 97% of their participants speak Dutch weekly, and of those, 64.6% use the language more than eight hours a week, especially at home and on social media. Almost all participants (97%) also read Dutch newspapers online.

For the older Dutch heritage communities, both Daan (1987) and Crombez (forthcoming) show how usage patterns vary across different religious communities. Apart from the fact that communities attach a different value to home languages, communities also differ with regards to language behavior, for example, the acceptability of using loanwords or mixing languages. Crombez, Vandenbussche, and Vosters (2024) argue that not only the language ideology in the new country but also the ideology in the homeland is an important factor to consider. They investigate “the tumultuous Belgian language history and the crucial opposition between French and Dutch throughout the centuries” (284) and its effects on language choices and language use among Belgians in the USA, building on Kasstan, Auer, and Salmons (2018: 388), who “stress that the prestige of the (heritage) language variety as well as the role of the standard language ideology ‘back home’ are important to consider” as well as Arnbjörnsdóttir (2015), who finds effects of linguistic purism in the homeland on attitudes towards Icelandic as a heritage language. Crombez, Vandenbussche, and Vosters (2024) also show that language contact can occur before migration. For example, Flemish was already in contact with French in the homeland, and too they show evidence from a diary of a Flemish migrant in the United States who uses both English and French loanwords in his Dutch.

### Literacy and schooling in the heritage language

Daan (1987: 132) reports on a participant who was educated as a minister in Grand Rapids in the Dutch language. His Dutch is characterized by Daan (1987: 133) as ‘good’ by which she means that he uses few loanwords and calques, has no/little grammatical interference and does not switch to another language without notifying the listener about the switch in language behavior. Another factor that shows some connection to language ideology is literacy. Literacy in the heritage language provides access to the norm; it affects how language is processed and in general halts change. Kupisch (2013) finds no significant differences between heritage lan-

guage users and their monolingual native homeland peers if the heritage speakers are literate and schooled in the heritage language. Future research could investigate the role of literacy in heritage Dutch more systematically.

### Length of contact and intergenerational transmission

Much research presented here is based on data produced by first- and second-generation speakers, but Klatter-Folmer (1997) includes interviews with the third generation, and Daan (1987) includes speech by the third and fourth generations. The type of change that occurs in heritage languages is greatly affected by the time depth of the heritage language situation. Intergenerational transmission creates the opportunity for reanalysis and the move from incipient to established change. Backus, Doğruöz, and Heine (2011) show how forms of contact-induced change such as the use of the numeral *one* as a proxy for an indefinite article in contact languages expands to more linguistic contexts over time. Weerman (2002) shows how the acquisitional patterns of one generation can feed new patterns in the next generation. The interaction of strategies of different types of learners across generations is referred to as a *cascade effect* by DeGraff (2009) and Aboh (2015), comparing stages in language transmission to a waterfall, where changes to the input enacted by one generation triggers changes in how that input is processed and acquired by younger learners. If the heritage community supports both horizontal (interacting in the heritage language with peers) and vertical transmission (interacting in the heritage language with different generations), the likelihood of crosslinguistic influence and divergence becomes higher.

### Circles of homeland identification

Which individual is considered to share linguistic, cultural and geographic ancestry with another is situation dependent. Speakers who might not identify as having similar backgrounds in the home country might identify as having similar backgrounds in the land of migration because of more closeness to each other than to the people in the land of migration. Daan (1987) already shows that speakers from different dialect backgrounds formed new communities with a new heritage language variant that showed convergence between different dialects of Dutch. Identifying as being linguistically, culturally and geographically similar can also transcend national boundaries. Crombez (forthcoming) shows evidence for the rise of a merged low countries identity in Catholic Dutch and Flemish migrants in the Midwest of the United States. She describes the newspaper *De Volksstem* from DePere, Wisconsin, which had both Flemish and Dutch Catholics as its targeted readers. She shows that plays were held in Dutch for both Flemish

and Dutch migrants in Chicago, and she adds that both groups of migrants refer to fellow migrants as *taalgenoten* ‘language companions’, suggesting a shared Low Countries identity among Flemish and Dutch migrants. We did not find evidence for convergence with languages related to Dutch such as (Low) German, but that linguistic boundaries can be fluid is exemplified by the way immigrants from different Scandinavian countries interact with each other (Kinn, Hjelde, and Lund Stokka, forthcoming), which has yielded a pan-Scandinavian heritage language use that transcends national borders. Kinn and Lund Stokka (personal communication) shared quotes from their transcribed corpus of heritage Norwegian in Argentina that illustrate language mixing beyond national boundaries. In (11), the speaker refers to his language as *Svorsk*, a blend of Swedish and Norwegian, and in (12), the participant refers to their language as ‘home-baked Scandinavian.’

- (11) *Men det ble til slutt en som jeg sier til mine arbeidskamerater det ble*  
 but it became to end a like I say to my colleagues it became  
*ikke norsk # det ble svorsk*  
 not Norwegian # it became Svorsk  
 ‘But it became, in the end, like I say to my colleagues, it did not become Norwegian, it became Svorsk.’
- (12) *jeg sier alltid at det var # et hjemmebakket skandinavisk språk for det var*  
 I say always that it was # a home-baked Scandinavian language for it was  
*jo mor med norsk og far med dansk*  
 MOD.PART mother with Norwegian and father with Danish  
 ‘I always say that it was a home-baked Scandinavian language, because we had a mother who spoke Norwegian and a father who spoke Danish’

## 6. Conclusion

This chapter defined heritage languages as immigrant languages that are connected to the place of origin of the ancestors of the immigrants and that are not the main and/or official language of the wider community where the immigrants moved. It is assumed that most speakers acquire the language naturalistically at a young age, though this may not always be the case, and that heritage languages are used alongside the majority language of the new country. The two main effects of contact that we find are reduction due to lack of input and crosslinguistic influence from the majority language. Most speakers described are first- and second-generation speakers. Only Daan (1987) and Smits and van Marle (1997) include third- and fourth-generation speakers. Klatter-Folmer (1997) interviewed third-generation participants, but because of their young age, they were not able to

complete the language tasks (letter writing and language tests). Other studies did not mention third- or fourth-generation speakers, but their absence is in line with the idea that Dutch speakers tend to shift to the majority language easily. If Dutch is maintained in speakers who migrated before the 21st century, this is often for religious reasons. Note, however, that van der Sijs and Doreleijers (2019) find more language maintenance in migrants from the 21st century, who read Dutch newspapers online and use social media. It would be interesting to see intergenerational transmission in these new migrants.

The study of heritage languages also offers ways to examine social practices and social contacts. In trilingual speakers, one can investigate the semantic domains a speaker borrows and from which language. We also reported on circles of identity: who belongs and does not belong to the in-group changes after migration. For example, we presented Daan (1987), who described people from different dialect backgrounds coming together and linguistically converging, and Crombez (forthcoming), who describes how Flemish and Dutch Catholics see themselves as one group.

The central question in this chapter was to identify the features of Dutch that are more stable and therefore more resistant to change and those that are more vulnerable to change as a result of the effects of reduced input and/or crosslinguistic influence. A feature that is quite robust, for example, is the common gender definite article *de*, which is retained in all variants of heritage Dutch, whereas the neuter definite article *het* seems more susceptible to loss. However, note that Klatter-Folmer (1997) reports on the overgeneralization of neuter *het* in second-generation speakers in addition to overgeneralization of common gender *de*. Raidt (1997) reports on the overgeneralization of the common article *de* as well as the neuter demonstrative *dit*. In Anglophone contexts, the overgeneralization of common gender *de* and of the neuter demonstrative *dit* could be influenced by the phonetic similarity to the English words *the* and *this*, respectively. Overgeneralization of the neuter *het*, on the other hand, could also be a form of hypercorrection – it would be interesting to see if such hypercorrections can be transmitted to a new generation and if so, how neuter gender is conditioned as one could imagine formal and semantic factors playing a role. Lastly, it would be interesting to observe heritage Dutch in a context where the majority language encodes gender very transparently, such as Greek; acquisition studies on bilingual children suggest a more robust use of gender in these situations.

If we look at stability and variation in the domain of word order, it seems like the subject-verb-object (SVO) order is robust: it is reported for all variants of heritage Dutch observed. Note, however, that this order is not only very frequent in Dutch but also the most frequent order in the majority languages, which could reinforce the robustness of this word order pattern, and it would be interesting

to observe what happens with this order in contact with a majority language that does not itself exhibit this order. Subject-verb inversion and object-verb orders seem quite vulnerable word order patterns despite their robustness in homeland Dutch; language acquisition studies show that child learners of homeland Dutch start with root infinitives with OV order and later exhibit a period where they overgeneralize semantically empty verbs in second position. Though such overuse of dummy auxiliaries to maintain V2 order is grammatical, it would be interesting to test whether some heritage speakers make use of and maintain this strategy. If this were the case, one would expect their occurrence to be more frequent than in homeland Dutch. Such structure preserving changes are less noticeable and require larger amounts of data to be identified.

Within the domain of phonology, we looked at the reduction of word-final consonant clusters and a shift in stress patterns, which are reported more than loss of changes in vowel length. Only the speakers of heritage Dutch in Canada, who more often acquire Dutch in a heritage school than at home, and one speaker of heritage Dutch in Indonesia seem to be less sensitive to vowel length differences.

Inflectional morphology has received much attention in the study of heritage Dutch. The distinction between inflected and uninflected attributive adjectives is vulnerable in all variants. Overgeneralization of the second and third person singular *-t* marker to first person singular and overgeneralization of the first person bare form to second and third person are likewise observed relatively frequently. The plural and infinitival *-en* marker is less often dropped but still vulnerable. In nominal plural marking, instances of overgeneralizing the suffix *-s* to *-en* contexts have been reported. Information on derivational morphology is scarce and an interesting avenue for future research. The only reported difference between homeland and heritage Dutch comes from the speaker of heritage Dutch in Indonesia who had one instance of using a noun in the position of a verb.

In the domain of semantics, a vulnerable feature is the distinction between the perfective auxiliaries *hebben* 'to have' and *zijn* 'to be', the use of which is determined by the semantics of the lexical verb. Many variants of heritage Dutch show the loss of the perfect auxiliary *zijn* 'to be' at the expense of *hebben* 'to have'. This is in line with the English, Afrikaans, and Portuguese verbal systems, which could suggest crosslinguistic influence, but loss of subtle semantic distinctions is also expected in the case of reduced input. The overgeneralization of *hebben* 'to have' for the perfect reported for heritage Dutch in Indonesia, where this change cannot be attributed to the majority language, supports the hypothesis that reduced input is an important factor in the loss of this distinction. We also observed evidence for Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek's (1997) conceptualization hypothesis, meaning that heritage speakers conceptualize an event via the majority language. We also saw that collocations are affected by the majority language and if a word

from Dutch and the majority language are similar in form, the Dutch word can take on the meaning from the majority language.

This chapter focused on linguistic variation and stability and discussed generic effects versus the specific effects of crosslinguistic influence. Muysken (2013) shows that knowing which two languages are in contact is not enough to explain the outcome of language contact; factors such as the time depth of the contact situation and community norms also affect the outcome of the heritage scenario. We relied on existing studies, each of which had its own focus and used its own methods. Studying different variants of heritage Dutch with the same set of linguistic and sociolinguistic research methods would enhance our insights into what conditions affect the (non-)occurrence of a certain linguistic feature. Triangulation of methods would also help to gain a better insight in how types of outcomes relate to one another (cf van Osch et al. 2018).

Such an exercise would be greatly helped by a digitally available corpus of variants of heritage Dutch (cf van der Sijs 2014). We looked at factors affecting the scenario, and we hope the overview of factors in the scenario alongside the overview of linguistic features will open avenues to investigate stability and change in heritage Dutch.

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