

Lecture 10. Dutch sociolinguistics

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Last time

- ▶ Dutch-based creole languages
- ▶ Afrikaans

Aims for today

- ▶ exam stuff
- ▶ brief review of topics covered
- ▶ Dutch sociolinguistics
 - ▶ *Poldernederlands*
 - ▶ *Tussentaal/Verkavelingsvlaams*

Exam stuff

there's something you should keep in mind during an open-book exam

- ▶ **DOs**

- ▶ use your own language
- ▶ write in full sentences

- ▶ **DON'Ts**

- ▶ don't spend too much time browsing the auxiliary materials, you only have 2 hours

Overview of topics covered: Do be impressed!

- 11/02/2016 Introduction: the languages of the Netherlands and Belgium
- 18/02/2016 Essentials of the Dutch language
- 25/02/2016 continued from 18th February
- 03/03/2016 The history of Dutch
- 10/03/2016 continued from 3rd March
- 17/03/2016 Dutch orthography
- 14/04/2016 Purism and school grammar
- 21/04/2016 Dialects of Dutch; Frisian
- 28/04/2016 Dutch-based creole languages; Afrikaans

Dutch sociolinguistics

Sociolinguistics is the descriptive study of

- ▶ the effect of any and all aspects of society on the way language is used
 - ▶ cultural norms,
 - ▶ expectations,
 - ▶ and context,
- ▶ and the effects of language use on society

Dutch sociolinguistics: Polder Dutch

- ▶ a variety of Dutch to have emerged in 1970s
- ▶ the term **Poldernederlands** (Polder Dutch) coined by the Dutch linguist Jan Stroop
- ▶ nothing to do with the geographical notion of a polder



Figure 1: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9f/2012-05-13_Nordsee-Luftbilder_DSCF8784.jpg

Polder Dutch in a nutshell

1. Polder Dutch is a variant of Dutch speech that differs from Standard Dutch because the diphthongs *ei* /ɛi/, *ui* /œy/ and *ou* /ɔu/, are pronounced with a wider mouth opening, which makes them sound more or less like [ai], [ɔy] and [au].
2. The fact that Standard Dutch still has [ɛi], [œy] and [ɔu], is the result of language culture and language construction. It was the choice of 17th century linguists and writers.
3. Lowering of the diphthongs is a universal phenomenon.

Why talk about sociolinguistics?

- ▶ Polder Dutch is not a Dutch dialect, nor has it emerged from one.
- ▶ Its speakers intend to speak standard Dutch, but as for the diphthongs they do not conform to the norm, even though they are not aware of this.
- ▶ Taking into account that the current speakers are middle-aged (educated) women, Polder Dutch must have started in the 1970's. It has been a result of women's emancipation.

- ▶ Women's emancipation has brought along a looser attitude towards language norms, and has thus lead to the lowering of the diphthongs.
- ▶ From a sociolinguistic point of view, Polder Dutch is a very interesting phenomenon: for the first time, women lead the way in a language change that drifts away from the language variant that was the norm.
- ▶ the number of Polder Dutch speakers grows very rapidly every generation
→ Polder Dutch will become the norm instead of standard Dutch.

Polder Dutch: why that name?

The name *Polder Dutch* refers to the Dutch political term **poldermodel** (meaning consensus politics), which has spurred economic growth.

Tussentaal

- ▶ supradialectal variety of colloquial Belgian Dutch
- ▶ ask me about attitudes

Course evaluations

- ▶ please fill in the online evaluation form