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TESTING FRENCHIFICATION: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS OF FRENCH LOAN MORPHOLOGY IN SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DUTCH

1. INTRODUCTION

In any history of the Dutch language, one of the keywords, especially for the Early and Late Modern period, is Frenchification, an umbrella term which is used to make reference to the dominance of French in certain societal domains throughout the centuries, as well as referring to the impact of French on the Dutch language. In the first part of this paper, we will give a brief overview of Germanic-Romance encounters along the language border which cuts through the Low Countries, discussing the contact situation and the historical role which French played throughout history, not just as a language of cultural prestige in the eighteenth century, but with deep historical roots in the nowadays Dutch-dominant territories of the Netherlands and Flanders.

However, in stark contrast to the discursive importance given to French in histories of Dutch, stands a surprisingly limited amount of empirical research on the actual influence of French on Dutch. This study aims to contribute to the still limited but growing body of evidence on contact-induced changes in the morphological domain, by investigating the use of French loan suffixes. In particular, in the second part of this investigation, we will try to link the broad socio-historical context of Dutch-French cultural and linguistic contact to our empirical investigation by taking a sociolin-

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guistic perspective for the case study presented here. Building on more exploratory earlier work we did in this domain (Rutten, Vosters, & van der Wal, 2015), we will delve into which speaker- and text-related variables help predict loan suffix use in a corpus of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ego-documents, and discuss what these results tell us about the social and historical embedding of French loan suffixes within different communities of language users in the Dutch language area.

2. DUTCH-FRENCH CONTACT AND FRENCHIFICATION

The Germanic and Romance language areas meet at various places across Europe. One region where the Germanic-Romance border has shaped the linguistic landscape throughout history is the area referred to as the Low Countries. At present, the Dutch-French language border is of crucial importance in Belgian social and political life. Historically, we can assume cross-language border traffic from the early Middle Ages onwards as well as an early preference for French as the language of conversation at medieval courts in the Low Countries (van der Sijs, 2005, p. 175). French was also an important literary language throughout the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period, and alongside Latin, the main language from which translations into Dutch were produced (cf. for instance Schoenaers, 2021). At the linguistic level, the various contact situations have led to contact-induced changes. For example, present-day Dutch has many words that entered the language as loans from Old French (van der Sijs, 2009, p. 352). Likewise, present-day French has many words that were once borrowed from medieval varieties of Dutch. A well-known example of the latter is French *mannequin*, derived from Middle Dutch *mannekijn* ‘little man, little person’ hence also ‘drawing of a small puppet, model’. The word *mannequin* was later borrowed back into Dutch with the same fashion-related meaning it has in modern French and English.¹ Not only words traveled from one language to another: Trudgill (1974, pp. 218–221) famously argues that the spread of uvular /r/, presumably originating from French or even more specific from Paris, through western Europe may have been an example of city hopping, whereby a form disseminates from one urban center to another, depending, in this case, on the number of speakers of French. In the northern Low Countries, uvular /r/ characterizes the language of The Hague, which was an international diplomatic center throughout the Early and Late Modern period.

At various moments in history, parts of the Low Countries were under political control by French or predominantly French-speaking rulers. In the late Middle Ages,

¹ See the entries *mannekijn* and *mannequin* in the online historical dictionaries of Dutch, available at the Dutch Language Institute through <https://gtb.ivdnt.org>.

large parts of the northern Netherlands were ruled from Hainaut and Burgundy. In particular, the fifteenth-century Duke of Burgundy, Philip the Good (1396–1467) was the ruler of many provinces in the Low Countries, including the main areas of Flanders, Brabant, Holland and Zeeland. From 1482 onwards, the Low Countries came under Habsburg rule through the marriage of Mary of Burgundy (1457–1482) to Maximilian I of Austria (1459–1519). Their grandson Charles V (1500–1558) was born in Ghent and would keep close ties to the Low Countries throughout his life. His son and heir, Philips II of Spain (1527–1598), however, would lead the Habsburg Empire into war. The Dutch Revolt against the Spanish rule began in 1568, and was eventually settled with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Thus, the Dutch fifteenth and sixteenth centuries display political “Frenchification” under the Burgundian rule, and subsequently political “Hispanization” under the Habsburg rule (Willemys, 1994). This situation is referred to in the first fully fledged grammar of Dutch, anonymously published in 1584, when the recent domination by *vreemde Heren ende vreemdtongighe landvooghden* “foreign lords and governors who speak foreign languages” (*Twe-spraack* 1584, p. 6, ed. Dibbets, 1985) is held responsible for the contemporary decay of the Dutch language, particularly for it being contaminated with foreign elements.

The Dutch Revolt against the Spanish Habsburg rule led to a political split in the Low Countries. In 1581, with the Act of Abjuration, the northern parts of the traditional Seventeen Provinces of the Low Countries declared their independence from Spain. These northern parts would develop into the Dutch Republic, roughly corresponding to the present-day Netherlands. The southern Low Countries, that is present-day Belgium and Luxembourg, remained under foreign rule for most of the following two centuries. In the eighteenth century, the south was part of the Habsburg Empire again, now ruled from Austria. In the 1790s, the French army invaded first the southern Low Countries, then the northern Low Countries. Most of the territory of the Low Countries came under French influence in the years 1793–1795, and from 1810 onwards the entire territory was united again and incorporated into the French Empire. Within a few years, this came to an end with the fall of Napoleon in 1813. The period from the 1790s until 1813 is the second period of political Frenchification.

Thus, the first period of political Frenchification in the Low Countries is constituted by the fifteenth century, the second by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Across Europe, the centuries in between are traditionally considered the period of French cultural dominance, that is, of cultural Frenchification. In fact, the Early and Late Modern period represent the climax of the cultural dominance of France in Europe, when “the French language served within Europe as an international *lingua franca* ... [and] became the European language of diplomacy, aristocratic society, science, learning and literature” (Rjéoutski, Argent, & Offord, 2014, p. 1). Using

the diglossia framework, Burke (2014, p. 39) says it is “the most famous instance of the use of a foreign language as a High form in early modern Europe, especially in the second half of the period, 1650–1800”. Particularly in the eighteenth century, French developed into a marker of distinction for socio-economically privileged people, and into the favorite language of conversation and private writing for elites across the continent (Ruberg, 2005; van Strien-Chardonneau, 2014). Along with the cultural dominance of France, fear of Frenchification in various social and cultural fields spread across Europe. Many complaints can be found about the dominance of French manners, fashion, and books, and especially also about the importance of the French language (Frijhoff, 1989, 2015; Burke, 2004; Beal, 2012).

Dutch-French language contact was not limited to the supposed Frenchification of the elites. In addition, contact was fostered by various migration waves from French-speaking areas to the northern Low Countries, in particular. Labor migrants from all over Europe, including French-speaking regions, went to the Holland area in the Early and Late Modern periods, accelerating the population growth. Between 1514 and 1795, the population of Holland grew from 275,000 to 883,000 by the end of the seventeenth century, after which it slightly decreased to 783,000 in 1795 (Lucassen, 2002, p. 10). Lucassen (2002, p. 22) argues that in 1600 and in 1650, 15–18% of the population of the Holland area came from abroad. This percentage drops marginally to 12–14% in 1700, 1750 and 1800. In the cities and towns of Holland, the proportion of foreign immigrants was significantly higher: 29–33% in 1600 and 1650, after which it drops to 16–20% in 1700, 1750 and 1800. In a city such as Leiden, 55% of the bridegrooms marrying towards the end of the sixteenth century came from what we now consider Belgium and France. By 1650, this was still 34.3% (Lucassen & de Vries, 1996, p. 159). Most of the labor immigrants in Leiden worked in the textile industry or in related craft industries.

Lucassen (2002, p. 20) estimates that 450,000 labor migrants came to Holland between 1600 and 1800. Furthermore, approximately 150,000 ideological migrants settled in the Holland area. From the late sixteenth century onwards, Protestantism had been dominant in the northern Low Countries, which attracted ideological migrants from the predominantly Catholic southern Low Countries as well as so-called Huguenots from France after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. The second sizeable group of ideological migrants comprised Jews, mostly though not exclusively from German-speaking regions.

Thus, it is clear that various types of contact with French and French-speaking people existed in the Low Countries in the Early and Late Modern period: political, cultural, social, and economic. When we ask ourselves what the actual level of bilingualism was, there are not many sources at hand. Frijhoff (2015, pp. 129–130) argues that around 1800, “at most 5% of the population would have learned French

at school or from an established language teacher”. Nonetheless, from the Early and Late Modern period onwards, the idea of Frenchification has been a leitmotiv in historical and cultural analyses of the Low Countries. A strong anti-French complaint tradition (Milroy & Milroy, 2012) developed, a phenomenon that is of course not restricted to the Low Countries (see for similar complaints in the German, English, Italian and Spanish language areas: von Polenz, 1994, pp. 49–50; Nevalainen, 1999, pp. 359–360; Burke, 2004, pp. 151, 153, 158). An early example of the Dutch complaint tradition targeting supposed Frenchification can again be found in the first fully fledged grammar of Dutch, published in 1584. Commenting on the linguistic impact of political Frenchification, the introduction to the grammar says: “Because a few years ago (since we have been united with the French-speaking cities under a common ruler and court) our language became so mixed with foreign words that it is almost unusual among the people to speak only Dutch.”²

Many complaints about cultural Frenchification, including linguistic Frenchification, could be heard in subsequent periods, eventually resulting in the “hypothesis of the ‘frenchification’ of the early modern Dutch Republic” in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Dutch cultural history (Frijhoff, 2015, p. 115, cf. Frijhoff, 1989). According to this hypothesis, the “increase in the use of the French language and the introduction of French manners” were “responsible for Holland’s perceived decline as an independent power and a culturally innovative nation during the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries” (Frijhoff, 2015, p. 115). In some sense echoing Peter Burke’s older grievance that “[w]hat remain to be investigated are the occasions on which French was used — speaking to whom, where and about what, to return to Fishman’s formula” (Burke, 2005, p. 15), Frijhoff (2015), in a recent overview article, criticizes the idea of cultural Frenchification, and argues for a more differentiated approach. He states that analyses of the sociolinguistic situation should not be restricted to the binary opposition of the dominant French language on the one hand, and the supposedly endangered Dutch language on the other, as the Early and Late Modern Dutch society was actually multilingual in many respects. In addition, there is the need for a more empirical approach, moving away from claims about Frenchification towards empirical analyses of the actual influence of French on the Dutch situation, both socially in terms of language choice and shift (see e.g., Puttaert, Krogull, & Rutten, 2022), and linguistically in terms of contact-induced change.

² In the original: “Overmits onze spraack in korte Jaren herverts, (sedert dat wy met de Walsche steden onder een ghemeen Vórst ende hóf zyn gheweest) zó zeer met uytheemsche wóorden vermengt is, dattet schier onder t’vólck een onghewoonte zou zyn enkel Duits te spreken” (Twe-spraack 1584, p. 6; cf. Dibbets, 1985, pp. 511–513).

3. FRENCHIFICATION OF THE DUTCH LANGUAGE

From the sixteenth century onwards, the linguistic Frenchification of Dutch has been criticized. The aforementioned example from the first grammar of Dutch (1584) targeted the influence of French on the Dutch sociolinguistic situation during the Burgundian and Habsburg periods. Such complaints persisted well into the following centuries. In 1810, for example, towards the end of the French period, the well-known Leiden-based professor of Dutch, Matthijs Siegenbeek published his “Essay on the affluence and the excellence of the Dutch language, and statement of the means to counter its increasing corruption”.³ Siegenbeek lamented the general neglect of Dutch literature and the Dutch language among the Dutch, particularly among the upper ranks in contemporary society, who appropriated French manners and cultural products, and who preferred the French language, while considering Dutch to be *eene plompe en boersche spraak* “a rude and lumpish language” (cf. Rutten, 2018, p. 38).

Modern histories of the Dutch language often reiterate the idea of pervasive influence of French on Dutch (Janssens & Marynissen, 2008, pp. 129, 170), while sometimes also casting doubt on the actual influence and its endurance, even in the domain of the lexicon, particularly also when taking into account that Dutch borrowed French lexical items already in the Middle Ages (van den Toorn, 1997, p. 439). Nevertheless, it seems likely that the Early and Late Modern periods witnessed an increase in the use of French loans, including verbs such as *inviteren* ‘invite’ and *realiseren* ‘realise’, nouns such as *framboos* ‘raspberry’ and *koepel* ‘dome’, and even kinship terms such as *mama*, *papa* and *tante* ‘aunt’ (van der Sijs, 2002). In morphology, nominalizing suffixes such as *-aard*, *-erd* and *-age* were introduced (van der Sijs, 2005). Van der Sijs (2002, p. 214) shows that French has been the main donor language in the Low Countries, providing the largest number of lexical loans throughout history. This was already the case in the Middle Ages, and became even more pronounced from 1500 onwards. The remarkable increase in French loans between 1500 and 1900 is traditionally connected to the French political and cultural dominance in this period (van der Sijs, 2002, pp. 228–229).

Apart from contact-induced changes in the lexicon and the morphology, French was an important language in various social domains (see Rutten, Vosters, & van der Wal, 2015, pp. 144–147 for a concise overview). It seems that French was widely used and “very visible” (Frijhoff, 2015, p. 130) in specific social domains.

³ In Dutch: “Betoog van den rijkdom en de voortreffelijkheid der Nederduitsche taal, en eene opgave der middelen om de toenemende verbastering van dezelve tegen te gaan”.

French-speaking immigrants founded French and Walloon churches from the sixteenth century onwards, where they held services in French. Internationally, French was important in diplomacy and trade. The prominence of French in multilingual language guides testifies to its relevance for merchants. French and Dutch were the only two languages in the first edition of the famous *Vocabulaire* (1527) by Noël de Berlaimont, which saw approximately 150 reprints in the next two and half centuries, throughout Europe, and to which ever more languages were added, including Italian, German, English, Czech, Polish and many more. In the Low Countries, a system of so-called French schools developed, which was primarily targeted towards middle- and upper-middle ranked boys, preparing them for a career in trade. In the course of the Early and Late Modern periods, the French schools adopted broader educational programs, and developed into more general institutions for secondary education. Upper-class boys would generally not attend French schools but Latin schools instead, while learning French at home from a language teacher or governess. It is particularly in these circles that French developed into a marker of distinction in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and into a viable choice for private writing and conversation, that is, in the domain of intimacy (van Strien-Chardonneau & Kok Escalle, 2017).

In the vibrant discourse against Frenchification, both the status and the use of French were disputed. We already referred to the first grammar of Dutch (1584), which criticized language mixing, in particular, we assume, the use of French loans in predominantly Dutch utterances. In the same period, the first purist dictionaries were published, such as the *Tresoor der Duytsscher talen* (*Treasure of the Dutch language*), published in 1553, with a second edition in 1559, which offered Dutch equivalents for the many French and Latin terms used in legal discourse. Another example is the *Nederlandtsche Woorden-schat* (*Dutch lexicon*) (Hoffman, 1650), first published in 1650, with a twelfth edition in 1805 (Rutten, Vosters, & van der Wal, 2015, p. 148). The citation from Siegenbeek at the beginning of this section represents the widespread criticism targeting the status of French among certain social groups. Following Frijhoff's (1989, 2015) call for a more differentiated and empirical approach to the issue of Frenchification, we adopt a bottom-up approach, focusing on the use of French elements in a corpus of historical texts. In particular, we aim to find out whether we can identify the individuals and the social groups responsible for the influence of French on Dutch, that is, we are specifically interested in the social embedding of the contact-induced changes.

4. PREVIOUS STUDIES

To investigate the influence of French on Dutch in actual language use, we decided to focus on derivational morphology. In Rutten, Vosters, and van der Wal (2015, pp. 152–153), we explain why we preferred to investigate loan suffixes instead of loan words. One reason is that suffixes are less easily borrowed than lexical items, and thus indicative of a greater intensity of language contact. In addition, the list of suffixes borrowed from French is long, yet restricted, while loan words are manifold, and can in fact only be found in a corpus inductively (see Section 5 for the complete list of loan suffixes investigated).

Dutch has borrowed many suffixes from French throughout history. They can occur with French bases in loan words, as in the suffix *-age* in *voyage* ‘journey’, used for abstract and common nouns, and the suffix *-es* as in *patronesse* ‘patroness’ for feminine agent nouns. However, they can also be attached to Germanic bases, for example *plunderage* with the Germanic base *plunder* and the borrowed suffix *-age*, or *minnares* ‘mistress’ with the Germanic base *minnen* ‘love’, as a mixed equivalent for the completely borrowed *maitresse* (Booij & van Santen, 2015, pp. 56–58, 224–227).

The main aim of our previous study (Rutten, Vosters, & van der Wal, 2015) was to investigate the use of suffixes borrowed from French as part of a north-south comparison. Thus, the main aim was to determine whether there were differences between the northern and the southern Low Countries due to the different status and function of French, and the different types of multilingualism involved. In particular, frequent contact with French-speaking people was much more probable close to the language border than a couple of hundred kilometers north of it. In principle, this applied to all socioeconomic ranks, while in the northern Low Countries, where such contacts were less likely, by consequence a relatively higher proportion of the multilinguals concerned upper and upper-middle ranked individuals who had acquired French as a prestige language.

We investigated this by comparing two corpora with private letters: a northern Dutch corpus of 384 private letters written between 1777 and 1783, and a southern Dutch corpus of 317 letters dating back to 1799–1813. The northern corpus will be introduced in more detail below (Section 5), but it should be noted that most letters are linked to the coastal regions of North Holland, South Holland, and Zeeland. In addition, a sizeable number of letters are linked to the city of Amsterdam, located in North Holland, but kept apart from the rest of North Holland for demographic reasons. The southern corpus comprised 317 letters sent by 282 Flemish conscripts, who had been drafted into the French army, and who wrote home to their families. Most of these letters are linked to Flanders, in particular to the region of West Flanders.

We were surprised to find that the use of French loan suffixes occurred to similar degrees in both the northern and the southern Low Countries (Rutten, Vosters, & van der Wal, 2015, pp. 158–159). When moving away from the general north-south comparison, and focusing on the coastal regions involved, we found that the southern region of Flanders displayed a significantly higher degree of loan suffixes than the other regions, which are located in the northern Low Countries (pp. 159–160). One notable exception to this pattern was the city of Amsterdam, where the median suffix frequency was in fact even higher than in Flanders, which borders the French-speaking regions of the southern Low Countries. The unique position of the metropolitan city of Amsterdam in the Dutch sociolinguistic landscape calls for further research on the social embedding of loan morphology.

Furthermore, important social differences were found in the northern corpus (pp. 163–165). This corpus allows research on social characteristics such as social rank and gender (see Section 5). We found a clear social distribution in that writers allocated to the upper ranks used significantly more loan suffixes than people allocated to the upper-middle ranks, who in turn used more loan suffixes than the lower-middle ranks, who outperformed the lowest rank. In other words, we found a clear and steady rise of the median loan suffix frequency when moving up the social ladder. Moreover, this pattern was robust as it held across age groups and across gender. Within the three age groups, young (0–30), middle (30–50) and older (50+), and within the groups of male and female writers, we found the same social pattern. These results also suggest that it may be interesting to delve deeper into the social embedding of loan morphology, in an effort to empirically analyze the degree of linguistic Frenchification.

Since our initial study, two follow-up studies have been published. Stevens (2019) analyzes a small collection of private letters by the members of one nineteenth-century family. She inductively extracted all loan suffixes as well as loanwords from the dataset. An important result was that loanwords generally outnumber the frequency of loan suffixes. This is a reason to investigate loanwords in more detail.⁴ Assendelft, Rutten, and van der Wal (forthcoming a) investigate the frequency and distribution of French loan suffixes in the Language of Leiden Corpus (LOL Corpus), which comprises text samples from seven social domains important in the history of Leiden. The LOL Corpus spans the period between 1500 and 1900. The results indicate a gradual increase from the sixteenth century onwards until the first half of the eighteenth century, when the number of French-origin suffixes peaks. From the second half of

⁴ The PhD dissertation of Brenda Assendelft, defended in May 2023, focuses on loan suffixes as well as loan words, in addition to a case of possible contact-induced change concerning the relative pronouns *dewelke* and *hetwelk* (Assendelft, 2023). Cf. also Assendelft, Rutten, and van der Wal (forthcoming b).

the eighteenth century onwards, and particularly in the nineteenth century, a sharp decrease can be witnessed. In the late nineteenth century, the frequency is similar to the early sixteenth century. There are also clear differences between the social domains present in the corpus: texts related to the Academy and Charity, mostly of an administrative nature, display high proportions of loan suffixes, whereas low proportions are found in domains such as Literature and Private life. The diachronic trends differ also considerably across domains: Academic texts, for example, have mostly high numbers of loan suffixes, although also a decrease in the nineteenth century, whereas Charity is more in line with the overall trend of a general increase until the eighteenth century, and then a decrease.

5. METHODOLOGY

Building on our previous study, discussed in the previous section above, we were interested to delve deeper in the sociohistorical embedding of loan morphology, aiming to find out more about the broad diachronic development of French loan suffixes in Dutch at the turn of the culturally significant eighteenth century, and well as unraveling social correlates of the feature over time. To be able to achieve these aims, we made use of the *Letters as Loot* corpus (cf. Section 5.1 below) and opted for a statistical analysis of loan suffix frequency and relevant metadata in this collection of material (cf. Section 5.2 below).

5.1 MATERIAL

The material we used to investigate loan suffix frequency in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Dutch came from the *Letters as Loot* corpus compiled at the University of Leiden (Rutten and van der Wal, 2014). This corpus contains no less than 1032 letters, handwritten by 795 different writers, and totaling 437,787 words. These letters were in fact confiscated by English privateers from Dutch sailing vessels during the consecutive Anglo-Dutch Wars and have been preserved as part of the legal procedures in England following the capture of the ships. Of course, such handwritten material, including a large number of private letters, as ships often doubled as mail carriers between the Republic and its territories in the Caribbean or the East Indies, is highly interesting for historical-sociolinguistic research. The material we are working with here has been written by men and women from various social ranks — sailors and captains, but also kitchen aids and cabin boys, sailors' wives and all sorts of other family members, and even regular

Dutch men and women living in the Netherlands or in some distant outpost of the Republic. For most of the letters in the corpus, an authorship protocol based on textual and contextual information (cf. Nobels and van der Wal, 2009) pointed towards autograph material (78%), i.e. written by the actual sender of the letter, while about 9% of the material was probably or certainly written by another writer than the person signing the letter (non-autograph), in addition to about 13% of material having an uncertain autograph status.

The material originates to a similar degree from the seventeenth (51%) as from the eighteenth century (49%), with 40% of all material being written in the capital city of Amsterdam, while the remaining texts originate from different provinces across the Dutch Republic (53%) as well as some letters written from abroad (8%). Approximately 88% of all the tokens in the corpus come from private letters, with business letters as well as mixed private/business writing making up the remaining amount. The letters were written by men (63%) and women (37%) from different social ranks, with approximately 7% of the material written by the lower classes (LC) such as servants, sailors and soldiers, 21% by the lower middle class (LMS) such as small craftsmen and shopkeepers, 42% by the upper middle class (UMC) such as more prosperous farmers or larger shopkeepers, and finally 29% by the upper classes (UC), such as wealthy merchants or ship owners (cf. Rutten & van der Wal, 2014, p. 10).

5.2 DATA EXTRACTION

As we argued above, one of the distinct advantages of working with loan morphology rather than lexical borrowings is the possibility to deductively extract all or most relevant tokens based on existing lists of loan suffixes. For this study, we adopted the same approach as in our previous research (Rutten, Vosters, & van der Wal, 2015), starting from the list of French loan suffixes in van der Sijs (2005). Using the *exact.matches()* function (Gries, 2009) in R, we used regular expressions to extract all spelling variants of the suffixes listed in Table 1 (see appendix for the regular expressions used).

All extracted hits were manually verified using the etymological reference works integrated in Etymologiebank.nl (van der Sijs, 2010), removing a total of 7033 false positive matches to arrive at a total of 3,659 valid data points.

Table 1*Loan Suffixes (Based on van der Sijs, 2005)*

| Nouns | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| -aard | <i>lafaard</i> ‘coward’ | -cide | <i>genocide</i> ‘genocide’ |
| -erd | <i>leukerd</i> ‘jester’ | -ide | <i>operette</i> ‘operetta’ |
| -es/esse | <i>prinses</i> ‘princess’ | -ine | <i>cocaine</i> ‘cocaine’ |
| -e ⁵ | <i>studente</i> ‘female student’ | -isme | <i>calvinisme</i> ‘Calvinism’ |
| -ette | <i>misdienette</i> ‘female acolyte’ | -teit | <i>majesteit</i> ‘majesty’ |
| -ij | <i>kledij</i> ‘clothing’ | -lei | <i>allerlei</i> ‘miscellanea’ |
| -ier | <i>aalmoezener</i> ‘chaplain’ | -tiek | <i>boetiek</i> ‘boutique’ |
| -ist | <i>orangist</i> ‘Orangist’ | Adjectives | |
| -ant | <i>predikant</i> ‘minister’ | -aal | <i>amicaal</i> ‘friendly’ |
| -ein/ain/ijn | <i>republikein</i> ‘republican’ | -air | <i>elitair</i> ‘elitist’ |
| -ees | <i>Chinees</i> ‘Chinese person’ | -eel | <i>financieel</i> ‘financial’ |
| -ent | <i>producent</i> ‘producer’ | -esk | <i>soldatesk</i> ‘soldierly’ |
| -eur/teur | <i>ambassadeur</i> ‘ambassador’ | -eus | <i>complimenteus</i> ‘complimentary’ |
| -iaan | <i>Indiaan</i> ‘Indian’ | -iek | <i>politiek</i> ‘political’ |
| -iet | <i>islamiet</i> ‘Muslim’ | Verbs | |
| -ade | <i>blokkade</i> ‘blockade’ | -eren | <i>waarderen</i> ‘appreciate’ |
| -age | <i>lekkage</i> ‘leak’ | | |

5.3 ANALYSIS

The point of departure for our data analysis is an overview of absolute frequencies per loan suffix in the corpus. However, in order to correlate the loan suffix frequency with the different sociolinguistic dimensions in the corpus, we calculated the total absolute frequency of all loan suffixes involved per individual scribe, and weighing this total absolute frequency against the word count per scribe, we ended up with a normalized loan suffix frequency per 100,000 words. To estimate the influence of different sociolinguistic characteristics of these individual writers on this normalized loan suffix frequency, we then fitted a generalized linear regression model with quasi-Poisson errors, using normalized suffix frequency as an outcome variable and the following predictor variables:

- the TYPE of letters an individual wrote (only private letters v. mixed private and business);
- the GENDER of writer (male v. female);
- the social rank or CLASS background of the writer (LC, LMC, UMC, UC);
- the AGE of the writer (0–30, 30–50, 50+);

⁵ Due to the large number of false positive results for word-final *-e*, we restricted our search to word final *-nte* and *-inge*.

- the CENTURY in which the letters were written (seventeenth v. eighteenth century);
- the region or PLACE of writing (Amsterdam, Zeeland, Zuid-Holland, Noord-Holland, Abroad, Southern Netherlands, Friesland, Utrecht, Gelderland, Groningen, Noord-Brabant, Overijssel);
- and all possible two- and three-way interactions between all of these factors.

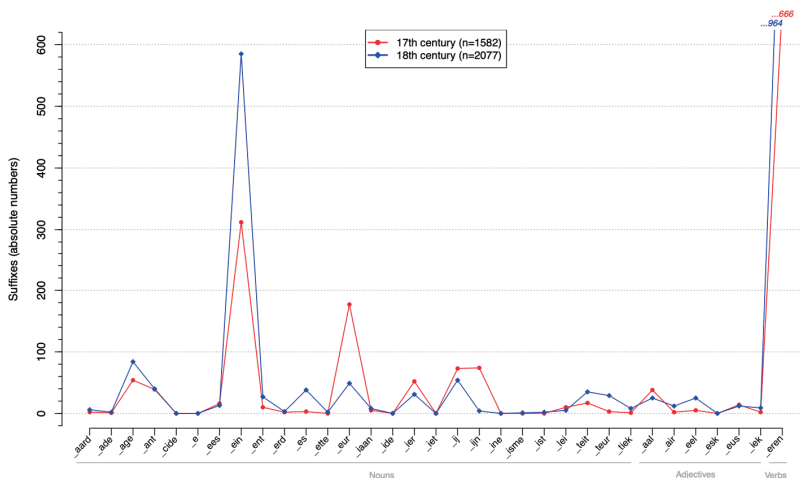
After several preliminary model fits and based on several exploratory conditional inference tree analyses, we decided to regroup the various regions represented in the corpus into a two-way division between the capital (Amsterdam) on the one hand, and all other regions on the other hand (Zeeland, Zuid-Holland, Noord-Holland, Abroad, Southern Netherlands, Friesland, Utrecht, Gelderland, Groningen, Noord-Brabant, Overijssel)—in order to overcome model fit problems related to an overly low number of data points for some of the more peripheral regions. Similarly, we grouped the two lowest social classes (LC, LMC) into one single category, as the differences between these two ranks were not significant. The status of the letter in the corpus based on its authorship (autograph, non-autograph, uncertain) was not taken up as a predictor in the model selection process due to convergence problems with possible three-way interactions, but a parallel analysis including status but limiting the model selection to two-way interactions yielded the same results as the final model presented below.

Starting out from a maximal model consisting of all of the above variables and interactions, we ran a manual backwards model selection process, removing terms from the model using a significance-based approach, starting with the highest-order interactions (cf. Crawley, 2013, p. 393; Gries, 2013, pp. 259–261), to arrive at the minimally adequate model which we will describe in the following section below.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

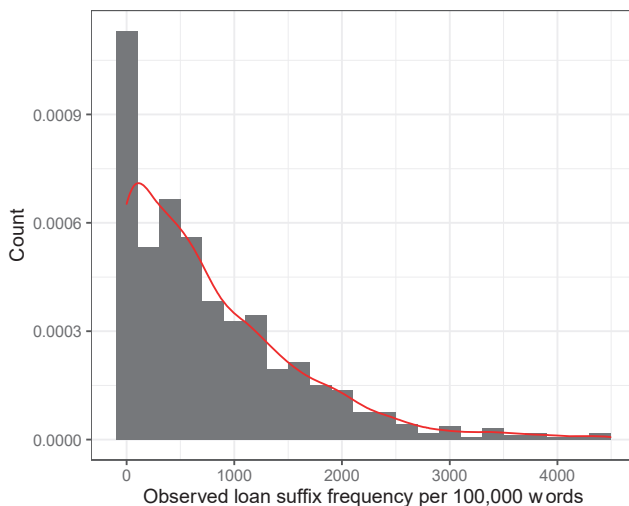
Our searches and manual verification led to a total of 3.659 loan suffixes in the entire corpus. Splitting up these results per individual loan suffix type and per century, as shown in Figure 1, we can observe that the frequency distribution across suffixes is very unbalanced, and especially the verbalizing suffix *-eren* stands out with a markedly higher frequency than any of the other suffix types. Likely, this pattern per suffix reflects lexical choices typical of the text type: the relatively high frequency of the *-ein* suffix, for instance, can clearly be related to the prevalence of the lexical borrowing *kapitein* ‘captain’, as is not surprising in the collection of sailing letters we are investigating. However, we can observe that the overall distribution is fairly similar when we compare the seventeenth and the eighteenth-century results.

Figure 1
Tokens per Suffix per Century



As explained in the methodology, we then calculated the normalized loan suffix frequency per 100,000 words for each individual scribe, leading to an interindividual distribution as shown in Figure 2. We can observe the full range of individual variation, with many writers never or hardly ever using loan suffixes in their writings, but also with some extreme cases who used up to three or four thousand loan suffixes per 100.000 words.

Figure 2
Loan Suffix Frequency Distribution



To get a better sense of what motivates this individual variation, we ran a regression model, as discussed in the previous section. The minimal adequate model arrived at is summarized in Table 2. This model showed a significant effect of the predictors TYPE of letter, GENDER of writer, social CLASS of writer, CENTURY of writing, PLACE of writing, and the two-way interaction between CENTURY and PLACE. The C-value indicating the overall predictive quality of the model, however, is not very high (0.70), suggesting, along with the Nagelkerke R^2 score (0.304), a relatively high amount of unexplained variance—which is not surprising, as we are only attempting to model the extralinguistic predictors for French loan suffix frequency, not taking linguistic factors (such as a possible random effect based on the actual suffix) into account. Furthermore, we verified that the variance inflation factors did not exceed the threshold ($t = 4$) to avoid multicollinearity between the predictor variables.

Table 2

Generalized Linear Regression With Quasi-Poisson Errors Model Outcome

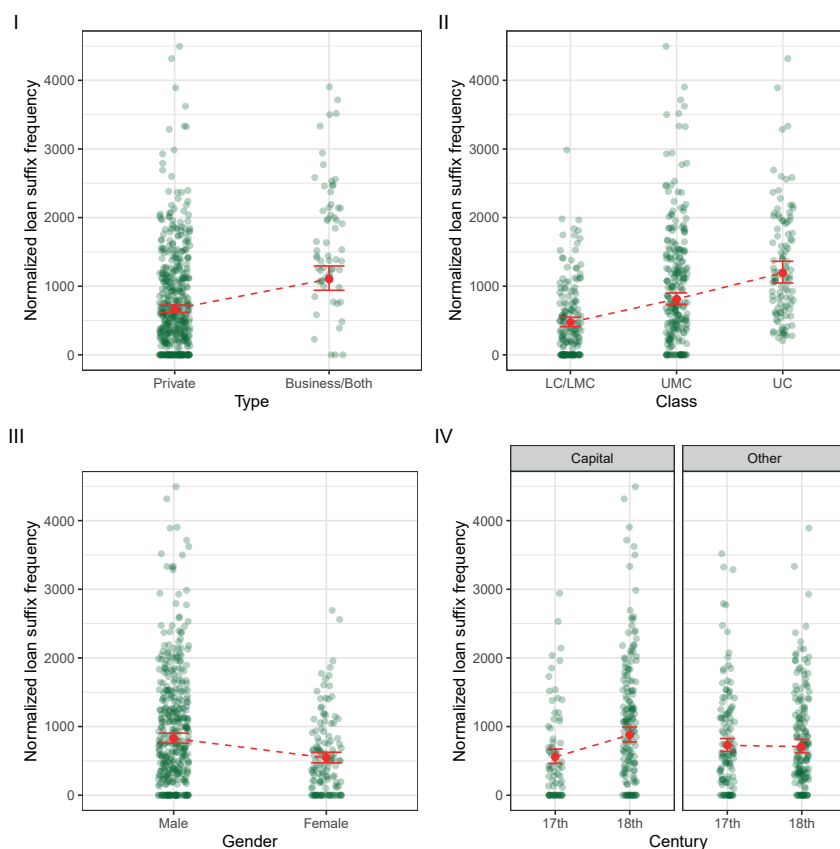
| Response variable: French loan suffix frequency per 100.000 words Fixed-effect predictors: TYPE of letter, GENDER of writer, Social CLASS of writer, CENTURY of writing, PLACE of writing, interaction CENTURY–PLACE Predictors not included in the model: AGE of writer, and all other possible two- and three-way INTERACTIONS Number of observations: 795 C-value: 0.70; Nagelkerke R^2 : 0.304 | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------------|
| Predictors | Levels of predictors | Estimates | Confidence intervals 2.5–97.5% | | p -values |
| Type of letter | (Intercept) | 6.02 | 5.78 | 6.25 | $p < 0.001$ |
| | Private | <i>reference level</i> | | | |
| | Business/Mixed | 0.50 | 0.33 | 0.67 | $p < 0.001$ |
| Gender of writer | Male | <i>reference level</i> | | | |
| | Female | –0.42 | –0.59 | –0.26 | $p < 0.001$ |
| Social class of writer | LC/LMC | <i>reference level</i> | | | |
| | UMC | 0.54 | 0.36 | 0.72 | $p < 0.001$ |
| | UC | 0.92 | 0.73 | 1.12 | $p < 0.001$ |
| Century of writing | 17th | <i>reference level</i> | | | |
| | 18th | 0.45 | 0.24 | 0.68 | $p < 0.001$ |
| Place of writing | Capital | <i>reference level</i> | | | |
| | Other | 0.26 | 0.04 | 0.49 | $p < 0.05$ |
| Interaction Century : Place | 17th : Capital | <i>reference level</i> | | | |
| | 18th : Other | –0.48 | –0.76 | –0.2 | $p < 0.001$ |

In addition, we inspected various model diagnostics to look for evidence of the standard normal deviates, curvature or non-normality of errors (Jones, Harden, & Crawley, 2022, pp. 502–506; Fox & Weisberg, 2019, Chapter 8).

In addition to the parameter estimates shown in the regression table in detail, we will visually explore our data in Figure 3, using effect plots of the predicted means per level of each predictor (shown as red dots with 95% confidence-interval whiskers; cf. Gries, 2013, Chapter 5), overlaying jittered scatterplots of the observed data, where each data point represents the normalized loan suffix score of one individual writer (shown as transparent and overlapping green circles).

The results in the regression table and the effect plots show us that the normalized loan suffix score of individuals who contributed business letters to the corpus is significantly higher than the loan suffix score of individuals who only wrote private letters (Figure 3: I). This likely reflects an underlying text-type effect, whereby the

Figure 3
Effect Plots (Red) for Significant Predictors, With Overlaid Jittered Scatterplots of the Observed Data (Green)



influence of French is less strong in private texts, at least as far as loan morphology is concerned. In fact, if we analyze the normalized frequency of French loan suffixes per letter, we arrive at an average of 739 loan suffixes per 100,000 words for private letters, versus an average of no less than 1799 loan suffixes per 100,000 words for business letters. This confirms the strong predisposition of loan morphology from French to appear in more formal texts, and suggests that French suffixes are a feature more typical of conceptual literacy than of conceptual orality (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1985).

Furthermore, the results also reveal a clear effect of gender and social rank (Figure 3: II, III). Although both variables interact to some degree in the sense that the social rank differences are more clear-cut for male writers than for female writers, this interaction just failed to reach the significance threshold ($p = 0.0557$) and therefore was not included in the final model and subsequent visualizations. Both variables separately did contribute significantly to the model, with female writers using significantly less French loan suffixes compared to male writers, alongside a clear social rank pattern where higher social ranks use significantly more French loan suffixes than the lowest ranks. In fact, one can observe how a significant proportion of LC/LMC (34%) as well as UMC writers (15%) *never* use any French loan suffixes in their letters. This is not the case among the UC writers (0%), where even the most French-averse writers do use loan suffixes at least to some degree in their writing. Similarly, the gender differences also seem very robust, and the normalized French loan suffix use of men supersedes that of women, on average, but also across social ranks. In fact, the mean suffix use of women seems to always be more similar to that of their male counterparts of one social rank below their own, than to that of the male social peers — as is clear from the mean frequencies in Table 3.

Table 3

Mean Normalized Loan Suffix Frequency per Gender and Social Rank

| | Male writers | Female writers |
|-----|--------------|----------------|
| LC | 429 | 264 |
| LMC | 536 | 389 |
| UMC | 1193 | 457 |
| UC | 1433 | 1075 |

As has been discussed at length in Rutten and van der Wal (2014), these gender and social ranks differences probably arose out of differences in terms of access to education, and thus literacy and writing experience, in the Dutch Republic, where, in spite of comparatively high degrees of signature literacy among men *and* women, such skills were still highly socially stratified. Both the gender and the social rank

effect reveals how French loan morphology was a feature more associated with formal and learned registers acquired as part of the schooling process, rather than reflections of more socially bottom-up contact phenomena in the spoken vernaculars.

Finally, our model also reveals a significant interaction between century of writing and place of writing (Figure 3: IV). Both variables have been split up into a binary distinction, with the data from the seventeenth century compared to the data from the eighteenth century, but also with a socio-geographic split between Amsterdam as the nation's capital on the one hand, versus all other localities in the corpus on the other hand. As can be seen from the effect plot, the direction of change from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century is different for both places. In Amsterdam, we see a clear and significant increase towards the eighteenth century, as the mean loan suffix frequency more than doubles from 536 in the seventeenth century to 1176 in the eighteenth century. In the rest of the Republic, however, there is a slight increase in means from the seventeenth (644) to the eighteenth century (848), but weighing over the other variables in the regression, our statistical model even predicts a slight decrease. French influence, at least as far as loan morphology is concerned, was on the rise towards the eighteenth century, when French gained cultural prestige all over Europe—but *only* in the more international and mundane capital of Amsterdam. In the smaller cities and in the provinces, the influence of French remained relatively stable from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century.

Taking all the results from the empirical analysis together, we can conclude that the use of French loan suffixes was very clearly socially stratified in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Netherlands. Mostly men and mostly people from the higher social ranks used significant amounts of French suffixes, in private writings but even more so in more formal business writings. The use of French loan morphology increased towards the eighteenth century, but only for writers from the capital. All of this hints at French loan suffixes as a feature which entered the language from the top down in social terms: rather than being a bottom-up contact feature most prevalent in the spoken everyday vernaculars, loan suffixes seem to have been acquired through literacy instruction, and as a feature which was probably more typical of more formal, written registers, we can assume it served as a mark of sociocultural prestige and a means of linguistic distinction among elite writers at the time.

7. CONCLUSION

While the use and influence of French is a common thread throughout Dutch language history, this study provides one of the few empirical analyses contributing to our understanding of linguistic borrowing from French into Dutch in the morphological domain. As became clear from our discussion of Dutch-French cultural and linguistic contact and the concept of Frenchification in Sections 2 and 3, we should be careful not to mistake complaints about cultural and linguistic French influence for empirical evidence of French influence on Dutch. In spite of a strong discourse of Frenchification, French in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was mostly dominant in a handful of restricted social domains, such as diplomacy and international trade, which also leads to the conclusion that linguistic influence of French will be subject to social and situational constraints.

In response to Frijhoff's (1989, 2015) plea for a more nuanced and evidence-based examination of Frenchification in practice, we used a sociolinguistically rich corpus of ego-documents from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch Republic to investigate where, on whom, and in which types of writing the actual influence of French on Dutch should be seen as most significant, at least as far as morphological borrowing is concerned. By thus aiming to uncover how socially situated the use of French loan morphology was, we managed to draw up a sociolinguistic profile of the most frequent users of loan suffixes from French.

The results revealed a clear pattern in terms of the type of letter written, the gender and social rank of the writer, and the interplay of when and where a letter was written, with French loan suffixes thus appearing most frequently in the business (rather than personal) writings of men from the higher social echelons and from the capital Amsterdam, especially in the eighteenth (rather than the seventeenth) century. Parallel to the restricted use of French across domains from a language sociological perspective, in terms of results of language contact, we see a similarly restricted profile of a small but influential societal elite using a large amount of French loan suffixes in more formal contexts. Crucial to note, however, is that this social elite corresponds precisely to the groups of language commentators who would have most frequently launched complaints against the malignant influence of French, which they observed among their social peers. Holding this observation against the light of a perspective on language history from below cautions us not to overestimate the impact of French on society at large based on the observations of a limited sample of society. More generally, it underlines the necessity for a rich and nuanced sociolinguistic perspective when evaluating claims about important elements of language contact, variation and change throughout language history.

APPENDIX

Regular expressions

| | |
|------|--|
| aard | <w lemma="\\w{3,}aard">.*?</w> |
| ade | <w lemma="\\w{3,}ade">.*?</w> |
| age | <w lemma="\\w{3,}age">.*?</w> |
| ant | <w lemma="\\w{3,}ant">.*?</w> |
| cide | <w lemma="\\w{3,}cide">.*?</w> |
| e | <w lemma="\\w{3,}(inge ente)">.*?</w> |
| ees | <w lemma="\\w{3,}ees">.*?</w> |
| ein | <w lemma="\\w{3,}e[ei]n">.*?</w> |
| ent | <w lemma="\\w{3,}ent">.*?</w> |
| erd | <w lemma="\\w{2,}[bcdfghjklmnpqrstvwxyz]erd">.*?</w> |
| es | <w lemma="\\w{2,}[bcdfghjklmnpqrstvwxyz]ess?e? ?">.*?</w> |
| | <w lemma="\\w{2,}[bcdfghjklmnpqrstvwxyz]es \'">.*?</w> |
| ette | <w lemma="\\w{3,}ette">.*?</w> |
| eur | <w lemma="\\w{2,}[bcdfghjklmnpqrstvwxyz]eur">.*?</w> |
| iaan | <w lemma="\\w{3,}iaan">.*?</w> |
| ide | <w lemma="\\w{3,}[ii]de">.*?</w> |
| ier | <w lemma="\\w{2,}[^h]ier">.*?</w> |
| iet | <w lemma="\\w{2,}[bcdfghjklmnpqrstvwxyz](iet ite)">.*?</w> |
| ij | <w lemma="\\w{2,}[bcdfghjklmnpqrstvwxyz]ij">.*?</w> |
| ijn | <w lemma="\\w{2,}[bcdfghjklmnpqrstvxyz]ijn">.*?</w> |
| ine | <w lemma="\\w{3,}[ii]ne">.*?</w> |
| isme | <w lemma="\\w{3,}isme">.*?</w> |
| ist | <w lemma="\\w{3,}ist">.*?</w> |
| lei | <w lemma="\\w{3,}lei">.*?</w> |
| teit | <w lemma="\\w{3,}teit">.*?</w> |
| teur | <w lemma="\\w{3,}(teur trice)">.*?</w> |
| tiek | <w lemma="\\w{3,}th?iek">.*?</w> |
| aal | <w lemma="\\w{3,}aal">.*?</w> |
| air | <w lemma="\\w{3,}air">.*?</w> |
| eel | <w lemma="\\w{3,}eel">.*?</w> |
| esk | <w lemma="\\w{3,}esk">.*?</w> |
| eus | <w lemma="\\w{3,}eus">.*?</w> |
| iek | <w lemma="\\w{3,}(iek ique)">.*?</w> |
| eren | <w lemma="\\w{3,}eren">.*?</w> |

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TESTING FRENCHIFICATION: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSIS
OF FRENCH LOAN MORPHOLOGY IN SEVENTEENTH-
AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY DUTCH

Summary

There is a long history of social, cultural and political contact between the Dutch and French language areas, which has also resulted in language contact. In the Dutch language area, the cultural and linguistic contact situation has resulted in an anti-French discourse of alleged Frenchification from the sixteenth century onwards. The peak of influence from French is traditionally located in the

eighteenth century. However, corpus-based research of the actual influence of French on Dutch in the Early and Late Modern periods is still scarce. We investigate the use of 31 French loan suffixes (e.g. the verbal suffix *-eren*, nominal suffixes such as *-age* and *-teit*, and adjectival suffixes such as *-aal*) in the Letters as Loot Corpus, which is a socially stratified corpus of private and business letters from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, written by men and women from various regions in the northern Low Countries. A regression analysis shows that the overall distribution of French loan suffixes is quite similar in the two periods, except for the capital Amsterdam, where there is a significant increase in the eighteenth century. Further significant effects are found for men and for the higher social ranks, and for business or mixed letters (as opposed to purely private letters). The results suggest that French-origin items entered the language of the northern Low Countries as relatively formal or conceptually written forms, mainly adopted by upper (middle) class men from the cosmopolitan city of Amsterdam.

Keywords: Dutch; French; historical sociolinguistics; language contact; loan morphology.

O FRANCUSKICH ŻRÓDŁACH ZAPOŻYCZEŃ LEKSYKALNYCH.
SOCJOLINGWISTYCZNA ANALIZA ZAPOŻYCZEŃ MORFOLOGICZNYCH
W SIEDEMNASTO- I OSIEMNASTOWIECZNYM JĘZYKU NIDERLANDZKIM

Streszczenie

Istnieje długa historia kontaktów społecznych, kulturowych i politycznych między niderlandzkimi i francuskimi obszarami językowymi, a zatem jest to także historia kontaktu językowego. Już w XVI wieku sytuacja kontaktu kulturowego i językowego w niderlandzkim obszarze językowym zaowocowała antyfrancuskim dyskursem na temat rzekomych wpływów francuszczyzny na język niderlandzki. Tradycyjnie uważa się, że szczyt francuskich wpływów językowych przypadł na wiek XVIII. Niemniej jednak badania korpusowe dotyczące rzeczywistego wpływu języka francuskiego na język niderlandzki we wczesnym i późnym okresie nowożytnym są nadal rzadkie. W omawianych tu badaniach analizujemy 31 francuskich przyrostków zapożyczonych (np. przyrostek czasownikowy *-eren*, sufiksy nominalne, takie, jak *-age* i *-teit*, oraz przyrostki przymiotnikowe, takie jak *-aal*), które można odnaleźć w korpusie Letters as Loot Corpus. Jest to społecznie zróżnicowany korpus stanowiący zbiór korespondencji prywatnej i handlowej z XVII i XVIII wieku, pisanej przez mężczyzn i kobiety z różnych regionów północnych Niderlandów. Analiza regresji pokazuje, że ogólna dystrybucja francuskich sufiksów zapożyczonych jest dość podobna na przestrzeni obydwu stuleci, z wyjątkiem stołecznego Amsterdamu, gdzie w XVIII wieku nastąpił znaczny wzrost zapożyczeń. Ponadto znaczące statystycznie skutki zapożyczeń stwierdzono w przypadku mężczyzn i przedstawicieli wyższych klas społecznych, a także w korespondencji handlowej lub mieszanej (w przeciwieństwie do listów czysto prywatnych). Wyniki sugerują, że elementy pochodzenia francuskiego weszły do języka północnych Niderlandów jako elementy stosunkowo formalnej warstwy komunikacji lub w warstwie pojęciowej tekstów pisanych, stosowanych głównie przez mężczyzn z klasy wyższej (średniej) z kosmopolitycznego Amsterdamu.

Słowa kluczowe: język niderlandzki; język francuski; socjolingwistyka historyczna; kontakt językowy; morfologia zapożyczeń.

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