Hanne Kloots, Steven Gillis

Vowel Shortening
in Flemish Pronunciation Guides (1860–2009)

ABSTRACT

This contribution studies how Flemish pronunciation guides, dating from 1860 to 2009, deal with the phenomenon of *vowel shortening* (Kager 1989, Booij 1995) in Dutch, that is, a lax realization of syllable-final /a/, /o/, /e/, /i/ and /y/ without primary stress, e.g. *m*[o]*del* > *m*[ɔ]*del* ('model'). Especially in Belgian Standard Dutch vowel shortening is quite frequent (Blancquaert 1936, Leenen 1965, Tops 2003, Kloots et al. 2014). In a collection of 19 Flemish pronunciation guides, we looked for descriptions and examples of syllable-final "laxed" vowels. Pronunciation guides are part of a language planning process. They were written for prescriptive — that is, didactical — purposes to show what language should sound like. Our study shows that Flemish pronunciation guides do not promote the lax realization. Only for /a/ the lax variant is occasionally accepted. Stress is mentioned as a relevant factor for /a/, /o/ and /e/.

1.   Introduction

For centuries, language teachers and authors of prescriptive language guides have faced the challenge of language variation. Teachers sometimes wonder which language or language variants they should teach (e.g., Sieloff Magnan/ Walz 2002: 15). Generally, written materials and fixed norms are only available for the standard language. Therefore, from a pedagogical perspective, most teachers prefer the standard language as a teaching target (e.g. Bardovi-Harlig/Gass 2002: 2). Authors of prescriptive guides, in their turn, wonder if a language can really be fixed in the way they are codifying it in their dictionaries or manuals (e.g., Hickey 2009: 27). After all, "authors of normative publications do not work in a vacuum" (Vosters et al. 2014: 94) and share the socio-linguistic context — including its variation — of the non-authoritative language users.

The publication of prescriptive language guides is part of a language planning process. Language planning can be defined as "deliberate, conscious, and future-oriented activities aimed at influencing the linguistic repertoire and behavior of speech communities" (Deumert 2001: 644). In this contribution, we

study the codification and the evaluation of one specific phonetic phenomenon in Belgian Dutch: *vowel shortening* (Kager 1989, Booij 1995). When vowels are "shortened", syllable-final tense vowels without primary stress are realized as their lax counterparts, e.g. *m*[o]*del* > *m*[ɔ]*del* ('model'). Vowel shortening has already been studied from a phonological and phonetic perspective, but the orthoepic dimension has never been looked at thoroughly. This contribution wants to fill this gap. Especially in Belgian Dutch pronunciation, vowel shortening is not uncommon (see 1.2). The effect of language norms is not easy to measure, but since non-authoritative language users and authors of pronunciation guides share the same sociolinguistic context, "this shared context can shape both norms and usage" (Vosters et al. 2014: 96). This makes it worthwhile to study not only the actual pronunciation, but also the normative dimension of vowel shortening.

The introduction consists of three parts. Belgian Dutch is a national variety of a pluricentric language. This notion is presented in section 1.1, followed by a brief description of the standardization process in Flanders. The notion of vowel shortening is explained in section 1.2. The relevance of our study is discussed in section 1.3.

1.1 Belgian Dutch: A Variety of a Pluricentric Language

Dutch is a Germanic language spoken by approximately 23 million people. It is an official language in the Netherlands, Belgium, Surinam as well as on the Caribbean Islands of Aruba, Curaçao and St Martin.[1] Dutch is considered to be a pluricentric language. Pluricentric languages are "languages with several interacting centers, each providing a national variety with at least some of its own (codified) norms" (Clyne 1992: 1). In this contribution we focus on Belgian Dutch. This variety is spoken in Flanders, the northern part of Belgium, by approximately 6 million speakers.

The standardization process of Netherlandic Dutch started in the 16th–17th century, when economical, political and social developments led to increasing mobility, the rise of a national identity, and a growing significance of the written form of the language (van der Sijs 2004: 29). In the region that is now known as the northern part of Belgium, the first true attempts to standardize Dutch were made in the 18th century. Especially towards the end of the 18th century, the idea grew that northern and southern Dutch were separate, independent varieties (Rutten 2011: 14–15). However, at the same time, the language of politics, science and culture was French, the language of the Enlight-

enment. In other words, in order to be(come) part of the intellectual and social elite, one had to master French (van der Sijs/Willemyns 2009: 254–255).

Under the Dutch government of Willem I (1815–30) the use of Dutch was promoted in the whole of Belgium. However, after the independence of Belgium (1830), citizens officially had "the freedom of language choice", but in practice, the dominance of French was re-established (van der Sijs/Willemyns 2009: 276). In the course of the 19th century, the so-called "Flemish Movement" opposed against the dominant position of French and recognized the importance of a standardized variety of Dutch for the northern part of Belgium. Eventually, the standard language of the Netherlands was "imported" in Flanders (Suffeleers 1979).

As a result of this integrationist policy, Belgian and Netherlandic Dutch "do not have separate written standards" (Grondelaers/van Hout 2011: 207). Since the second half of the 19th century, both varieties share the same spelling and spelling reforms are always implemented uniformly at both sides of the border. Also at the lexical level Belgian and Netherlandic Dutch show convergence (Geeraerts et al. 1999). But this convergence is mainly unidirectional: Flemish variants are replaced by their Netherlandic counterparts. Traditionally, dictionaries use a separate label to mark lexical items that are typical for Dutch in Flanders, whereas Netherlandic Dutch items do not get a label. Only quite recently, lexicographers have adopted the idea that Dutch is a pluricentric language, resulting in the introduction of a specific label for words typical for Dutch in the Netherlands (De Caluwe 2012).

On the pronunciation level, however, things are different. The integrationist language policy never yielded an identical pronunciation for both national varieties of Dutch. On the contrary: Van de Velde (1996) showed that in the course of the 20th century, the standard pronunciation of Belgian and Netherlandic Dutch clearly diverged (see also Van de Velde et al. 2010). Although the phonological system of Standard Dutch has always been presented as one and indivisible (e.g. Booij 1995), many pronunciation manuals did (and do) account for national variation. In Flemish manuals, several Flemish variants were (and are) widely accepted (Kloots 2000). A list of Flemish pronunciation manuals is presented in the Appendix.

1.2 Vowel Shortening: Tense Vowels Become Lax

The vowel system of Standard Dutch contains seven tense vowels (/a/, /e/, /i/, /o/, /y/, /u/, /ø/) and five lax vowels (/ɑ/, /ɔ/, /ɛ/, /ɪ/, /ʏ/), leaving diphthongs and schwa out of consideration.[2] Both sets of vowels can be distinguished on

---

[1] For an introduction into the history, geography and linguistic structure of Dutch, see De Schutter (1994). For a brief state of the art, see the website of the Nederlandse Taalunie ('Dutch Language Union') — http://taalunie.org/nederlandse-taalunie-0 [last retrieved March 29, 2014].

[2] In the Netherlands, the vowels /e/, /o/ and /ø/ have a slightly diphthongal realization (e.g. Adank et al. 2004, 2007; Van de Velde et al. 1997). However, inventories of Dutch phonemes

the basis of distributional features (e.g. Moulton 1962, Kager 1989, Booij 1995). For example, only tense vowels appear before the voiced fricatives /v/ and /z/ (with only a few exceptions in the entire lexicon, such as the loan words *puzzel* /pʏzəl/, *mazzel* /mɑzəl/). As a consequence, words like *zeven* (/zevən/ 'seven') and *lezen* (/lezən/ 'read') are pronounced with [e] in the first syllable, not with [ɛ]. However, tense vowels do not appear before /ŋ/ (e.g. *tong* /tɔŋ/ 'tongue') or before a consonant cluster consisting of a liquid or nasal followed by a non-coronal consonant (e.g. *lamp* /lɑmp/ 'lamp'). Hence, /tɔŋ/ and /lɑmp/ are not considered to be felicitous Standard Dutch words.

Since the early days of Dutch phonology, it is claimed that Dutch syllables cannot end in a lax vowel. This claim is more formally expressed as the *Bimoraic Constraint* (Kager 1989) and the *Minimal Rhyme Constraint* (Booij 1995). This regularity will be explored in the present study. Contrary to what these constraints seem to suggest, there are solid indications that especially speakers of Belgian Dutch do produce lax vowels at the end of syllables (e.g. Blancquaert 1936, Leenen 1965, Tops 2003). Moreover, psycholinguistic syllabification tasks have shown that children produce quite a lot of syllables that end in a lax vowel (e.g. Gillis/De Schutter 1996). Furthermore, in classification tasks, unstressed tense vowels originating from spontaneous speech were quite frequently perceived as lax vowels (e.g. Koopmans-van Beinum 1980, Kloots et al. 2014), especially by Flemish but also by Dutch listeners (Kloots et al. 2006).

From a phonological point of view, these deviations from the Minimal Rhyme Constraint and the Bimoraic Constraint are difficult to explain. However, Kager (2003: 140) presents an interesting refining of the Bimoraic Constraint that could — at least partially — explain the presence of syllable-final lax vowels: "de bimorische beperking [is] zeer zwak in onbeklemtoonde lettergrepen" ('the Bimoraic Constraint is very weak in unstressed syllables'). In other words, when a syllable is unstressed, lax vowels need not always be followed by a consonant.

When an originally tense vowel is realized as its lax counterpart, phonologists call this phenomenon *vowel shortening*, even though — see below — the tense-lax distinction should not (only) be interpreted in terms of vowel duration. Other terms found in the literature are *laxing* and *qualitative neutralization* (e.g. Van Oostendorp 2000, Botma et al. 2012). According to Booij (1995) and Kager (1989), vowel shortening would be typical for word-initial syllables not bearing the main stress of the word. However, some (Flemish) authors have claimed that speakers — especially in Flanders — also produce word-final lax vowels (e.g. Blancquaert 1936, Leenen 1965, Tops 2003). Word-

do not differentiate between diphthongized and non-diphthongized tense vowels (e.g. Booij 1995).

final lax vowels have also been observed by Kloots et al. (2014), especially for /a/: the final vowel of words like *extra* ('extra'), *firma* ('firm'), *komma* ('comma') and *villa* ('villa') was often categorized as [ɑ].

It is important to note that the phonological tense-lax distinction does not correspond to one specific phonetic feature. Tense and lax vowels can both be described in terms of *vowel quality* and *vowel duration*. Vowel quality can be described in terms of, among other things, vowel height, rounding and backness (Ladefoged 2006: 226). In general, lax vowels have a more central position in the vowel chart than tense vowels (e.g. Koopmans-van Beinum 1980, Ladefoged 2006: 94). From a durational perspective, only /a/-/e/-/o/-/ø/ have a longer duration than their lax counterparts. The other tense vowels (/i/-/y/-/u/) only have a long(er) duration before /r/ (Koopmans-van Beinum 1980, Adank et al. 2004, Rietveld et al. 2004). Vowel quality and vowel duration are both important, but it is not clear how exactly they contribute to the perception and the identification of vowels in Dutch (van Heuven et al. 1986: 227). However, for the /a/-/ɑ/-distinction, it has been shown that L1-speakers of Netherlandic Dutch rely more on spectral than on durational information (Escudero et al. 2009).

1.3 Relevance: Pronunciation Guides as a Tool in Language Planning

Vowel shortening has already been extensively studied from a phonological and a phonetic perspective (see section 1.2). In the present study an orthoepic perspective will be taken: the extent to which vowel shortening is inspired, supported and/or promoted by Flemish pronunciation manuals will be investigated. These manuals differ in a crucial respect from studies in phonetics or phonology: they were written for *prescriptive* purposes. They indicate how Standard Dutch, and more specifically Standard Dutch in Flanders should sound like, and which regional characteristics are undesirable. In other words, these guides are part of a *language planning* process.

More specifically, the pronunciation manuals studied in this contribution are an exponent of *corpus planning*, which refers to "the way language norms are chosen and codified" (Crystal 2003: 258). What makes prescriptive manuals interesting, is that they are tangible exponents of the standardization process of a language. In fact, an explicit norm is one of the necessary conditions for standardization (Haugen 2001). In addition, our study has a historical dimension: the year of publication of the pronunciation guides under study varies from 1860 to 2009.

Vowel shortening in Dutch has never been studied from a normative perspective before. Why is it relevant to fill this void? First of all, in general, the authors of pronunciation guides are excellent observers. Very often the description of the desired pronunciation goes hand in hand with a description of

the undesired variants, and in this way pronunciation manuals offer interesting information about regional (and social) linguistic variation. For example, Hickey (2009) showed that the 18th century pronunciation dictionaries of Thomas Sheridan and John Walker offer important insights into phonological changes in British English. Sheridan and Walker aimed at a fixed and unified standard without regionalisms. However, at the same time, they were very well aware of the massive variation in the speech of their contemporaries. Regional variants were described as "improprieties". Precisely these observations are relevant for present-day scholars in English pronunciation.

The same holds for Flemish prescriptive manuals. For example, the late–18th century Antwerp teacher and school inspector Jan Des Roches paid attention to the phenomenon of (improper) word-initial /h/-deletion in his *Nieuwe Nederduytsche spraek-konst* ('New Dutch Grammar') (Rutten 2011: 66). Earlier, the anonymous writer of *Snoeijmes der Vlaemsche Tale* ('Pruning Shears of the Flemish Language'), one of the rare prescriptive sources for the southern part of the Dutch language area dating back from the first half of the 18th century, already gave several examples of regional variation in pronunciation as well (Vosters/Rutten 2013).

Studying vowel shortening from an orthoepic point of view is also useful for another reason. This (preparatory) research is needed when we want to discuss the effectiveness of the guidelines given in pronunciation guides. Flanders has an extensive tradition of language legislation, prescriptive language manuals and campaigns to promote the use of the standard language in schools and by the media (e.g. Suffeleers 1979, Willemyns/Haeseryn 1998, Witte/Van Velthoven 2010). However, only quite recently scholars have become interested in assessing the effectiveness of all these, instructions and prescriptions. For example, Vanhecke (2004) studied the impact of language planning activities on the language choice (Dutch vs. French) of city hall administrations in 19th century Flanders. The effect of 20th century manuals and handbooks for linguistic propaganda on lexical choice in Flanders is studied by Geeraerts/Grondelaers (1997) and Hendrickx (2010). Up till now studies of Dutch pronunciation norms are rare (Kloots 2000). Nevertheless it is clear that if we want to study the effectiveness of these norms geared more specifically towards the syllable-final lax vowels, we first have to find out what the norm looks — or in this case: sounds — like according to the Flemish language planning tradition from the nineteenth century to the present day.

2.   Method

This contribution focuses on the pronunciation of syllable-final tense vowels without primary stress. We examine whether the advice in Flemish pronunciation guides is in line with the phonological claim that Dutch syllables never

end in a lax vowel (Booij 1995, Kager 1989). We concentrate on the shortening of /a/, /o/, /e/, /i/ and /y/. The vowels /u/ and /ø/ are left out of consideration since they are less frequent in Dutch (Luyckx et al. 2007).

The sample of pronunciation manuals is constructed as follows. The online library catalogue of the University of Antwerp was searched for the following keywords: *uitspraak, uitspraakcursus, uitspraakfouten, uitspraakgids, uitspraakleer/klankleer, uitspraakvademecum, uitspraakwenken, uitspraakwoordenboek* (that is, 'pronunciation', 'pronunciation course', 'pronunciation mistakes', 'pronunciation guide', 'pronunciation manual', 'pronunciation handbook', 'pronunciation advice', 'pronunciation dictionary'). All book records were carefully read and the relevant manuals were selected. Since we wanted to focus on the Flemish standard pronunciation, manuals published in the Netherlands and/or written by a Dutch author were excluded. Furthermore, we excluded pronunciation courses that only consisted of exercises, manuals for non-native speakers of Dutch, books focussing on the pronunciation habits of one specific region (e.g. Antwerp) and a 1950's method for primary schools (which also lacked the prerequisite theoretical support).

The resulting sample contains 19 Flemish pronunciation manuals. The bibliographic details can be found in the Appendix. The oldest guide dates from the second half of the 19th century (Ternest 1860). Only just before the First World War, two alternatives came on the Flemish market: Verachtert (1911) and Scharpé (1912). From that moment on, new pronunciation guides were published on a regular basis, even during the two world wars: Bossaerts (1917), Demanet (1939), Vander Plaetse (1941), Fonteyne (1942), Blancquaert (1957), Mussche (1962), Van Passel (1963), De Coninck (1970), Van Haver (1972), Scherps (1979), Van Roey/Frateur (1981), Van Maele (1996), Aalbrecht et al (1998), Beheydt et al. (1999), Timmermans (2008) and Lacroix (2009).

In these manuals, we looked for explicit descriptions of vowel shortening of /a/, /o/, /e/, /i/ and /y/. When vowel shortening was not explicitly discussed, we looked for examples of words with syllable-final vowels without primary stress (e.g. *hotel, student, villa*) and registered how these vowels — according to the author(s) — should be pronounced. The results are presented in section 3.

3.   Results

Since no systematic differences were found between the older and the newer guides, all results are presented together in Table 1. In fact, it is not surprising that older and newer manuals show the same tendencies. A comparison of the Standard Dutch pronunciation in recordings of public radio broadcasting from 1935, 1965 and 1993 demonstrated that the Flemish standard pronunciation —

unlike its Netherlandic counterpart — hardly changed over the years (Van de Velde 1996, Van de Velde et al. 2010). When an author *does* evaluate the shortening of a specific vowel in an atypical way, this evaluation is explicitly discussed.

The first thorough Flemish pronunciation manual was written by Ternest (1860). In an era when spoken media, sound recording techniques, and an international phonetic alphabet were still lacking, while the dialectal influences on the standard language were immense, he tried to show the Flemish reader what Standard Dutch should (not) sound like. At that time the question whether syllables could end in a lax vowel was not yet at issue. However, Ternest's manual does contain some interesting information on tense and lax vowels in a specific part of Northern Belgium, that is, the province of East Flanders. He observed that many speakers in this region did not systematically differentiate between both vowel types. For example, sentences like *hij rolde van de trap* (/hɛi rɔldə vɑn də trɑp/ 'he rolled down the stairs') and *God zal hem straffen* (/ɣɔt zɑl hɛm strɑfən/ 'God will punish him') were pronounced with [o] resp. [a] instead of [ɔ] resp. [ɑ]. Years later the same phenomenon was also described in phonological terms by dialectologists (e.g. Taeldeman 1978).

Next, we present the results for 18 Flemish pronunciation manuals, dating from the 20th and 21th century. Table 1 shows for every vowel (/a/, /o/, /e/, /i/ and /y/) how many manuals

— promote tense vowels in open syllables without primary stress, either in an explicit description or through examples ("only tense");
— explicitly accept lax vowels in open syllables without primary stress ("lax OK");
— do not give any information nor examples on the realization of vowels in open syllables without primary stress ("—").

According to the phonological literature vowel shortening would be typical for word-initial syllables (Kager 1989, Booij 1995). However, there are indications that Flemish speakers also produce lax vowels at the end of a word (see section 1.2). The pronunciation manuals under study do not systematically differentiate between word-initial and word-internal vowels, but sometimes they do give specific information on word-final realizations. The advice for vowels in word-final position is marked by # in the first column of Table 1.

Table 1 shows that lax realizations are only accepted — to a certain extent — for /a/. Surprisingly, Verachtert (1911) differentiates between *papier* ('paper') and *kalender* ('calendar'). Without further explanation, he calls the first vowel of *papier* short and that of *kalender* halflong. However, the vowel quality remains the same: both words contain [a] according to the author. Another enigma is the way Vander Plaetse (1941) treats word-final /a/. In his

	Example	only tense	lax OK	—	Total
/a/	*radijs* ('radish')	4	10	4	18
/a/#	*tuba* ('tuba')	6	6	6	18
/o/	*roman* ('novel')	15	1	2	18
/o/#	*piano* ('piano')	8		10	18
/e/	*metaal* ('metal')	13	1	4	18
/e/#	*facsimile* ('facsimile')	1		17	18
/i/	*tiran* ('tyrant')	12	1	5	18
/i/#	*sanctie* ('sanction')	11		7	18
/y/	*muziek* ('music')	15		3	18
/y/#	*accu* ('battery')	1		17	18
		86	19	75	180

Table 1: Preferred pronunciation in syllable-final vowels without primary stress in Flemish pronunciation manuals (n = 18)

alphabetic word list (with phonetic transcriptions), some words end in [a] (e.g. *alinea, axioma*), whereas others end in [ɑ] (e.g. *acacia, boa*).

Unlike the other authors, Scharpé (1912) also mentions the lax realization of weakly stressed [o] (e.g. *chronologie* 'chronology') and [e] (e.g. *metaal* 'metal'). Since he does not add any negative comments, we assume that he approves these lax realizations. Blancquaert (1957) is the only author who is open to the lax realization of /i/. He describes this lax pronunciation as a new trend: "in sommige vreemde woorden begint de /ɪ/ zelfs in open lettergrepen door te dringen" ('in some foreign words /ɪ/ even starts to appear in open syllables'). For example, he heard the same lax vowel in both the first and the second syllable of the word *minister* ('minister'). As far as we know, this trend has never been noticed in another manual.

Finally, we study the potential influence of *lexical stress*. Table 2 shows how many pronunciation manuals mention the factor stress when they discuss the syllable-final vowels of words like *hotel, student* and *villa*. There appears to be a clear difference between /a/, /e/ and /o/ on one hand and /i/ and /y/ on the other hand: stress is mentioned regularly for /a/, /e/ and /o/, but not for the high vowels /i/ and /y/.

	stress is mentioned	stress is not mentioned	Total
/a/	9	9	18
/o/	8	10	18
/e/	6	12	18
/i/	0	18	18
/y/	1	17	18
	24	66	90

Table 2: Flemish manuals in which the quality of syllable-final vowels is explicitly associated with stress (n = 18)

4.   Discussion

The overview of how pronunciation manuals treat vowel shortening reveals that lax realizations of syllable-final tense vowels are only accepted — by some authors — for /a/. The fact that pronunciation manuals pay special attention to /a/ can be linked to a recurring observation in the phonological literature. Although Dutch syllables are assumed to end in a tense vowel, "shortened" /a/'s are generally accepted (e.g. Kager 1989, Booij 1995).

According to the phonological descriptions of Kager (1989) and Booij (1995), vowel shortening would be typical for initial syllables (section 1.2). However, six Flemish authors of pronunciation manuals also accept word-final [ɑ] in, for example, *Afrika* ('Africa'), *dogma* ('dogma') and *drama* ('drama'). This finding can be linked to the categorization task reported in Kloots et al. (2014) where the tendency for tense vowels to be categorized as lax was less outspoken (but certainly not absent) in word-final position.

Only the comprehensive pronunciation dictionary of De Coninck (1970) contains (a few) words that end in a weakly stressed or unstressed /e/ or /y/, all other pronunciation guides ignore /e/ and /y/ in word final position. This may be due to the frequency and the distribution of vowels in Dutch. Studies of phoneme frequencies reveal that /y/ is quite infrequent in Dutch (e.g. Koopmans-van Beinum 1980, Luyckx et al. 2007). Moreover, not all stress patterns are equally frequent in Dutch and some phonemes seem to prefer particular positions in a word over others (e.g. Daelemans et al. 1994). For example, word final unstressed [e] is quite unusual in Standard Dutch. In fact, it is only used in some proper nouns (e.g. *Antigone*) and in specialized vocabulary (e.g. *procope*). In none of the manuals under study the examples were taken from a specific corpus or selected because of their high frequency, but our study reveals that, nevertheless, the choice of the examples (unconsciously) does re-

flect some general tendencies in the frequency distribution of phonemes relative to their position in the word.

In section 1.3 we assumed that authors of pronunciation guides are excellent observers. However, all in all, the pronunciation manuals did not pay much explicit attention to the phenomenon of vowel shortening: if mentioned at all, the pieces of advice reported in Table 1 are based on non-commented examples. Almost no attempts are made to "fight" vowel shortening in an explicit, systematic way.

On the other hand, vowel shortening is clearly not promoted either. Only for /a/, several authors explicitly approve of the syllable-final lax realization. For the other vowels the syllable-final realization without primary stress is neglected or it is illustrated with examples containing a tense vowel. In other words, our study did show that, except for /a/, Flemish pronunciation guides cannot be claimed to be the "source" of vowel shortening in Belgian Dutch.

Why is vowel shortening not discussed more explicitly? We see several possible explanations for this lacuna. First of all, some authors may not have noticed the subtle vowel differences or did not want to bother the reader with it. After all, as mentioned in section 1.2, the tense-lax distinction does not correspond to one specific, clear-cut phonetic feature. On the other hand, the majority of the pronunciation guides did notice the shortening of /a/, which suggests that they were not completely unfamiliar with the phenomenon.

Another possibility is that the Flemish pronunciation planners hesitated to mention vowel shortening since this phenomenon has been neglected in most Netherlandic pronunciation manuals and books on Dutch phonology. However, this explanation does not seem very plausible, since for several other variables (e.g. diphthongization of the long mid vowels /e/ and /o/), many Flemish pronunciation manuals explicitly plead against the Netherlandic variant (Kloots 2000).

A third explanation is didactic in nature. Maybe the authors were afraid that learners would get confused. Tense and lax variants can be regarded as a kind of *faux amis*. Traditionally, lists of faux amis are provided by teachers to prevent confusion, but of course, these lists can unintentionally *cause* confusion as well (e.g. Boers 2011: 56–58). On the other hand, faux amis can also be used as a basis for an "explicit discussion of the degree of equivalence" (Cook 2010: 140). In this perspective, not paying attention to the tense-lax distinction is a missed opportunity. A discussion of the similarities and the differences between sounds could help users to refine their perception and, eventually, in a next step, their production of Dutch vowels.

Finally, we also studied the variable *stress*. The authors of pronunciation manuals are clearly aware that vowel shortening is typical for vowels without

primary stress. However, the manuals (almost) never mention the possible influence of stress explicitly for /i/ and /y/. In the phonological literature on vowel shortening, no distinction is made between the influence of stress on /a/, /e/ and /o/ on the one hand and the influence of stress on /i/ and /y/ on the other hand. However, this finding does remind us of the durational dichotomy between /a/-/e/-/o/ (with a variable duration) and /i/-/y/ (without a more or less fixed duration) (e.g. Rietveld et al. 2004). Whereas for /a/, /e/ and /o/ vowel shortening goes together with a decrease in vowel length, tense and "laxed" /i/ and /y/ have the same duration. The high vowels /i/ and /y/ are only long before /r/. Unstressed vowels usually have a shorter duration than their stressed counterparts (e.g. Koopmans-van Beinum 1980, Rietveld e.a. 2004), but for /i/ and /y/, the difference in length, caused by the factor stress, is minimal.

5.   Conclusion

Flanders has a long tradition of language planning, including the compilation of pronunciation manuals. In this contribution we investigated if and how the phenomenon of vowel shortening has been discussed in Flemish pronunciation manuals published between 1860 and 2009. Vowel shortening refers to the lax realization of tense vowels without primary stress in syllable-final position. From a phonological point of view, these lax realizations are violations of the Bimoraic Constraint (Kager 1989) and the Minimal Rhyme Constraint (Booij 1995). Only for /a/ laxing is mentioned but not explained by phonologists. The Flemish pronunciation manuals in our study show exactly the same tendency. They do not promote vowel shortening. Only for /a/ the lax variant is occasionally accepted. However, quite often, the desired pronunciation had to be deduced from examples, while a systematic discussion of the phenomenon was lacking. So the question arises to what extent language users become aware of the advice on vowel shortening.

For /a/, /o/ and /e/, stress is mentioned as a relevant factor. In fact, this variable offers interesting perspectives for further research as well. The pronunciation manuals use several terms to describe the degree of stress, varying from "onbeklemtoond" ('unstressed') to "bijaccent" ('additional accent'), "licht geaccentueerd" ('slightly stressed') and "accentverzwakking" ('accent weakening'). In future research these terms could be explored in greater depth, so that a distinction can be made between unstressed vowels and vowels with secondary stress.

We conclude that authors of Flemish pronunciation manuals — hearing shortened vowels on a regular basis — have neither been passionate promoters nor fervent opponents of this phenomenon. The non-systematic, almost fragmentary way in which it is described seems to suggest that the shortened vow-

els in open syllables without primary stress are neither a result, nor a goal of conscious language planning.

Hanne Kloots / Steven Gillis
University of Antwerp
Department of Linguistics (CLIPS)
Prinsstraat 13
B-2000 Antwerp
Belgium
eMail: hanne.kloots@uantwerpen.be
          steven.gillis@uantwerpen.be

Appendix

Aalbrecht, Jelle / Peinen, Ward / Sas, Paul
   1998   *Uitspraakvademecum*. Leuven, Apeldoorn: Garant.

Beheydt, Ludo / Dirven, René / Kaunzner, Ulrike
   1999   *Uitspraak Nederlands. Tekst- en Oefenboek*. Leuven, Amersfoort: Acco.

Blancquaert, Edgard
   1957   *Praktische Uitspraakleer van de Nederlandse Taal*. Antwerpen: De Sikkel.

Bossaerts, August
   1917   *De beschaafde Uitspraak van de Nederlandsche Taal*. Antwerpen: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel.

De Coninck, Robert
   1970   *Groot Uitspraakwoordenboek van de Nederlandse Taal*. Antwerpen: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel.

Demanet, Fernand
   1939   *Zuiver spreken. Een Handboek voor Onderwijzers, een Leerboek voor Normaal- en Middelbaar Onderwijs*. Lier: Van In & Co.

Fonteyne, Ast
   1942   *Voorbereiding tot de Voordrachtkunst en de Welsprekendheid*. Antwerpen: P. Vink.

Lacroix, Christel
   2009   *Goed gestemd!* Tielt: Lannoo.

Mussche, Achilles
   1962   *Handleiding voor de Praktijk van het Algemeen Beschaafd. Voor Middelbaar en Normaalonderwijs*. Brussel: A. De Boeck.

Scharpé, Lodewijk
1912   *Nederlandsche Uitspraakleer*. Lier: Van In & Co.

Scherps, Georges
1979   *Nederlandse Uitspraakleer*. Leuven: Acco.

Ternest, Charles-Louis
1860   *Beknopte Uitspraekleer der Nederduitsche Tael*. Gent: C. Annoot-Braeckman.

Timmermans, Bernadette
2008   *Klink klaar. Uitspraak- en Intonatiegids voor het Nederlands*. Leuven: Davids-fonds.

Vander Plaetse, Antoon
1941   *Practische Uitspraakleer*. 2nd ed. Tielt: Lannoo.

Van Haver, Jozef
1972   *De Uitspraak van het Nederlands. Een beknopte Handleiding*. Leuven: Acco.

Van Maele, Geert
1996   *Handleiding bij de Uitspraakleer*. Lier: Van In & Co.

Van Passel, F.
1963   *Spreekkunst*. Antwerpen: De Sikkel.

Van Roey, Paul / Frateur, Ludo
1981   *Mijn Woord, uw Woord*. Antwerpen, Amsterdam: De Nederlandsche Boekhan-del.

Verachtert, Evarist
1911   *Theoretische & practische Uitspraakleer der Nederlandsche Taal*. Brugge: Houd-mont-Carbonez.

References

Adank, Patti / van Hout, Roeland / Smits, Roel
2004   "An acoustic Description of the Vowels of northern and southern Standard Dutch". *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*. 116: 1729–1738.

Adank, Patti / van Hout, Roeland / Van de Velde, Hans
2007   "An acoustic Description of the Vowels of northern and southern Standard Dutch II: Regional Varieties". *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*. 121: 1130–1141.

Bardovi-Harlig, Kathleen / Gass, Susan M.
2002   "Introduction". *Pedagogical Norms for Second and Foreign Language Learning and Teaching. Studies in Honour of Albert Valdman*. Ed. by Susan Gass, Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig, Sally Sieloff-Magnan, Joel Walz. Amsterdam, Philadel-phia: John Benjamins, 1–12.

Blancquaert, Edgard
1936   "Noord- en Zuidnederlandsche Schakeeringen in de beschaafd-Nederlandsche Uitspraak". *Verslagen en Mededeelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamsche Acade-mie voor Taal- en Letterkunde*. 1936: 597–612.

Boers, Frank
2011   *Ben je zeker? Nieuwe en achterhaalde Stellingen en Praktijken in het Vreemdeta-lenonderwijs*. Leuven, Den Haag: Acco.

Booij, Geert
1995   *The Phonology of Dutch*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Botma, Bert / Sebregts, Koen / Smakman, Dick
2012   "The Phonetics and Phonology of Dutch Mid Vowels before /l/". *Laboratory Phonology*. 3: 273–297.

Clyne, Michael
1992   *Pluricentric Languages. Differing Norms in Different Nations*. Ed. by M. Clyne. Berlin, New Nork: Mouton de Gruyter.

Cook, Guy
2010   *Translation in Language Teaching. An Argument for Reassessment*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Crystal, David
2003   *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing.

Daelemans, Walter / Gillis, Steven / Durieux, Gert
1994   "The Acquisition of Stress: A Data-Oriented Approach". *Computational Lin-guistics*. 20: 421–451.

De Caluwe, Johan
2012   "Dutch as a bicentric Language: a lexicographic (R)evolution". *Non-dominant Varieties of pluricentric Languages. Getting the picture*. Ed. by Rudolf Muhr. Wien: Peter Lang, 143–154.

De Schutter, Georges
1994   "Dutch". *The Germanic Languages*. Ed. by Ekkehard König, Johan van der Auwera. London, New York: Routledge, 439–477.

Deumert, Ana
2001   "Language Planning: Models". *Concise Encyclopedia of Sociolinguistics,* Ed. by Rajend Mesthrie. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 644–647.

Escudero, Paola / Benders, Titia / Lipski, Silvia
2009   "Native, non-native and L2 perceptual Cue Weighting for Dutch Vowels: The Case of Dutch, German, and Spanish Listeners". *Journal of Phonetics*. 37: 452–465.

Geeraerts, Dirk / Grondelaers, Stefan
1997   "Heeft Taalpropaganda Effect?" *Standaardisering in Noord en Zuid*. Ed. by Renée van Bezooijen, Jan Stroop, Johan Taeldeman. Gent: Koninklijke Acade-

mie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde, 94–112. [= special issue of *Taal en Tongval* 10].

Geeraerts, Dirk / Grondelaers, Stefan / Speelman, Dirk
1999   *Convergentie en divergentie in de Nederlandse woordenschat. Onderzoek naar kleding- en voetbaltermen*. Amsterdam: Meertens Instituut.

Gillis, Steven / De Schutter, Georges
1996   "Intuitive Syllabification: Universals and Language specific Constraints". *Journal of Child Language*. 23: 487–514.

Grondelaers, Stefan / van Hout, Roeland
2011   "The Standard Language Situation in the Low Countries: Top-down and bottom-up Variations on a diaglossic Theme". *Journal of Germanic Linguistics*. 23: 199–243.

Haugen, Einar
2001   "Standardization". *Concise Encyclopedia of Sociolinguistics*. Ed. by Rajend Mesthrie. Amsterdam: Elsevier, 681–683.

Hendrickx, Els
2010   "Als Standaardtaal u nauw aan het Hart ligt ... Over het Effect van Taalnormering". *Liever meer of juist minder? Over Normen en Variatie in Taal*. Ed. by Els Hendrickx, Karl Hendrickx, Willy Martin, Hans Smessaert, William Van Belle, Joop van der Horst. Gent: Academia Press, 91–109.

Heuven, Vincent van / Houten, Els van / Vries, Jan de
1986   "De Perceptie van Nederlandse Klinkers door Turken". *Spektator*. 15: 225–238.

Hickey, Raymond
2009   "'Telling People how to speak'. Rhetorical Grammars and Pronouncing Dictionaries". *Current Issues in Late Modern English*. Ed. by Ingrid Tieken-Boon, Wim van der Wurff. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 89–116.

Kager, René
1989   *A Metrical Theory of Stress and Destressing in English and Dutch*. PhD Thesis Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht. Dordrecht: ICG Printing.

Kager, René
2003   "Intuïtieve Syllabificatie bij Kinderen: Een Optimaliteitsmodel". *Fonologische Kruispunten*. Ed. by Georges De Schutter, Steven Gillis. Gent: Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde, 135–163.

Kloots, Hanne
2000   "Vlaamse Varianten in Vlaamse Taalgidsen". *Nederlands van nu*. 48: 17–19.

Kloots, Hanne / Coussé, Evie / Gillis, Steven
2006   "Vowel Labelling in a pluricentric Language. Flemish and Dutch Labellers at work. *Linguistics in the Netherlands 2006*. Ed. by Jeroen van de Weijer, Bettelou Los. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 126–136.

Kloots, Hanne / Gillis, Steven / De Maeyer, Sven
2014   "Vowel Pronunciation in open Syllables in spontaneously spoken Standard

Dutch. Exploring a phonological Constraint in a Listening Task". *Linguistics*. 52: 1167–1194.

Koopmans-Van Beinum, Florien
1980   *Vowel Contrast Reduction. An Acoustic and Perceptual Study of Dutch Vowels in Various Speech Conditions*. PhD Thesis Universiteit van Amsterdam. Amsterdam: Academische Pers.

Ladefoged, Peter
2006   *A Course in Phonetics*. Boston: Thomson Wadsworth.

Leenen, Jozef
1965   "Vreemde Woorden op zijn Nederlands uitgesproken". *Nu nog*. 13: 1–4.

Luyckx, Kim / Kloots, Hanne / Coussé, Evie / Gillis, Steven
2007   "Klankfrequenties in het Nederlands". *Tussen Taal, Spelling en Onderwijs: Essays bij het Emeritaat van Frans Daems*. Ed. by Dominiek Sandra, Rita Rymenans, Pol Cuvelier, Peter Van Petegem. Gent: Academia Press, 141–154.

Moulton, William
1962   "The Vowels of Dutch: phonetic and distributional Classes". *Studia Gratulatoria dedicated to Albert Willem de Groot* [= *Lingua* 11]. Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company, 294–312.

Oostendorp, Marc van
2000   *Phonological Projection. A Theory of Feature Content and Prosodic Structure*. Berlin, New York: Mouton de Gruyter.

Rietveld, Tony / Kerkhoff, Joop / Gussenhoven, Carlos
2004   "Word Prosodic Structure and Vowel Duration in Dutch". *Journal of Phonetics*. 32: 349–371.

Rutten, Gijsbert / Vosters, Rik
2011   *Een nieuwe Nederduitse Spraakkunst. Taalnormen en Schrijfpraktijken in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden in de achttiende Eeuw*. Brussel: VUB Press.

Sieloff Magnan, Sally / Walz, Joel
2002   "Pedagogical norms. Development of the concept and illustrations from French". *Pedagogical Norms for Second and Foreign Language Learning and Teaching. Studies in Honour of Albert Valdman*. Ed. by Susan Gass, Kathleen Bardovi-Harlig, Sally Sieloff-Magnan, Joel Walz. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 15–40.

Sijs, Nicoline van der
2004   *Taal als Mensenwerk. Het Ontstaan van het ABN*. Den Haag: Sdu Uitgevers.

Sijs, Nicoline van der / Willemyns, Roland
2009   *Het Verhaal van het Nederlands. Een Geschiedenis van twaalf Eeuwen*. Amsterdam: Bert Bakker.

Suffeleers, Tony
1979   *Taalverzorging in Vlaanderen. Een Opiniegeschiedenis*. Brugge, Nijmegen: Orion/Gottmer.

Taeldeman, Johan
  1978   *De Vokaalstruktuur van de "Oostvlaamse" Dialekten. Een Poging tot historische en geografische Situering in het Zuidnederlandse Dialektlandschap.* Amsterdam: Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers Maatschappij.

Tops, Guy
  2003   "De 'Franse' Uitspraak van sommige Leenwoorden in Vlaams Nederlands". *Memoire en Temps advenir. Hommage à Theo Venckeleer.* Ed. by Alex Vanneste, Peter De Wilde, Saskia Kindt, Joeri Vlemings. Leuven: Peeters, 453–466.

Van de Velde, Hans
  1996   *Variatie en Verandering in het gesproken Standaard-Nederlands (1935–1993).* PhD Thesis Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen.

Van de Velde, Hans / Hout, Roeland van / Gerritsen, Marinel
  1997   "Watching Dutch change: A Real Time Study of Variation and Change in Standard Dutch Pronunciation". *Journal of Sociolinguistics.* 1: 361–391.

Van de Velde, Hans / Kissine, Mihail / Tops, Evie / Van der Harst, Sander / Van Hout, Roeland
  2010   "Will Dutch become Flemish? Autonomous Developments in Belgian Dutch". *Multilingua.* 29: 385–416.

Vanhecke, Eline
  2004   "Taalkeuze in Vlaamse Stadskanselarijen in de negentiende Eeuw". *Taal en Tongval.* 56: 48–64.

Vosters, Rik / Rutten, Gijsbert
  2013   *Snoeijmes der Vlaemsche tale. Een anonieme Tekst over Taalkunde uit de achttiende Eeuw.* Gent: Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde.

Vosters, Rik / Belsack, Els / Puttaert, Jill / Vandenbussche, Wim
  2014   "Norms and usage in nineteenth-century Southern Dutch". *Norms and Usage in Language History 1600–1900. A sociolinguistic and comparative Perspective.* Ed. by Gijsbert Rutten, Rik Vosters, Wim Vandenbussche. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 73–100.

Willemyns, Roland / Haeseryn, René
  1998   "Taal". *Nieuwe Encyclopedie van de Vlaamse Beweging.* Ed. by Reginald De Schryver, Bruno De Wever, Gaston Durnez, Lieve Gevers, Pieter van Hees, Machteld de Metsenaere. Tielt: Lannoo, 2931–2946.

Witte, Els / Van Velthoven, Harry
  2010   *Strijden om Taal. De Belgische Taalkwestie in historisch Perspectief.* Kapellen: Pelckmans.