Teachers' Dutch in Flanders: The last guardians of the standard?

Steven Delarue

Ghent University, Belgium

INTRODUCTION[1]

In Belgium, Dutch is one of the three official languages, apart from French and German. German is spoken by about 80,000 people in a small region in the eastern part of the country. French is the commonly used language of four million people in the southern part of Belgium, Wallonia, and it is the predominant language in Brussels, the country's capital (Corijn and Vloeberghs 2009). Dutch is the language of the six million Flemings who live in the northern part of Belgium. Dutch as spoken in Flanders, which we could call 'Belgian Dutch', differs slightly from the Dutch spoken in the Netherlands. In former days, Netherlandic Dutch was the norm for Flemish speakers of Dutch, but throughout the last few decades, the language used in the Flemish media has taken over this position (Van der Sijs and Willemyns 2009; Willemyns 2003). With Belgian Dutch determining its own course, apart from the developments in Netherlandic Dutch, Dutch can be seen as a pluricentric language (cf. Clyne 1992; De Caluwe 2012).

The bicentric character of Dutch coincides with different internal developments in both linguistic centres. For example, Netherlandic Dutch is currently confronted with 'norm relaxation' phenomena, manifested by more accent variation in the spoken standard (Grondelaers and Van Hout 2011), a growing phonological influence of non-standard varieties such as *Poldernederlands* or 'Polder Dutch' (Stroop 1998, Van Bezooijen 2001) and morphosyntactic changes such as the rapid spread of the object form *hun* of the 3rd person personal pronoun in

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subject position (Van Hout 2003). It has been suggested that this increasing variability in Netherlandic Dutch can be explained by the massive dialect loss that has occurred during the last decades (Grondelaers and Van Hout 2011: 217; Willemyns 2007). This development generated the need for a 'multi-stylistic standard variety' (ibid.), which can also be used in situations where the dialect used to be the common variety. Mattheier (1997) coined the term *demotizierung* (translated by Coupland and Kristiansen 2011 as 'demotisation') for that development, in which 'the standard has to be able to provide the full range of expressive resources the speakers need' (Auer 2011: 500). In Flanders there also exists a diaglossic language repertoire (Auer 2005, 2011), but without any apparent on-going processes of 'norm relaxation' in the standard. In between Belgian Standard Dutch and the dialects exists an extensive array of intermediate varieties, deviating from both the standard language and the dialects (De Caluwe 2009). Those intermediate varieties are often captured under the umbrella term *Tussentaal* (literally 'interlanguage' or 'in-between-language'). For the last few decades, Tussentaal has been subject to rapid expansion and, according to some, even standardisation (Plevoets 2008; Willemyns 2005), which can be attributed to two main factors (for an overview of other possible explanations, see e.g. Grondelaers and Van Hout 2011):

(i) The exoglossic standard language, which was imported from The Netherlands in the 20th century to resist French influence (cf. infra), never really won the heart of the Belgian speakers (Willemyns 2003), despite several large-scale standardisation attempts from the government, the media and education (for an overview, see Van Hoof and Jaspers 2012). This resistance against exoglossic Dutch paved the way for the emergence of a Flemish supraregional variety, viz. Tussentaal.

(ii) Processes of dialect levelling and dialect loss in the central regions of Brabant and East-Flanders, leading to a functional elaboration of Tussentaal. In an attempt to explain this causality, Willemyns (2007) argues that dialect loss necessitates an informal variety (in between the disappearing dialects and the standard) that indexes regional identity. Because of the smaller distance between this intermediate variety (Tussentaal) and the standard, 'many people see no inconvenience in using the former in situations where actually the use of the latter would be more appropriate' (2007: 271). As such, Tussentaal

seems to replace both the dialects and the standard, pushing the standard to the extreme formality side of the continuum (ibid.). The correlation between dialect loss and Tussentaal expansion appears to be confirmed by Ghyselen and De Vogelaer (this volume): their attitudinal research in the peripheral region of West-Flanders shows that the spread of Tussentaal progresses much slower if the dialect is still quite vital.

In most of the (Flemish) linguistic literature, the formal norm of spoken Belgian Dutch is referred to as *VRT-Dutch*, the language variety used on the Flemish public-service broadcasting station VRT (*Vlaamse Radio en Televisie* or 'Flemish Radio and Television'). Since its foundation in 1930, the VRT has imposed very strict norms on the language use of its radio and television hosts, with rigorous pronunciation tests and strict internal controls (Vandenbussche 2010). The zenith of uniformity and standardness continues to be (broadcast) speech by VRT news anchors, which is why Plevoets (2008, 2009) uses the term *Journaalnederlands* ('Newscast Dutch') for (Belgian) Standard Dutch. However, it is very doubtful whether this extremely strict norm is also attained (or even aspired to) outside of the news studio. In that respect, De Caluwe (2009: 19) refers to VRT-Dutch as a 'virtual colloquial variety [...], desired by the authorities, but rarely spoken in practice', and Grondelaers and Van Hout refer to the VRT pronunciation norm as 'an almost unattainable ideal achieved only by a small minority of Dutch-speaking Belgians in a limited number of contexts' (2011: 218).

If VRT-Dutch is seen as a largely virtual standard, one may wonder what the 'highest' non-virtual level of Standard Belgian Dutch is. For Grondelaers and Van Hout (2011: 219), that stratum can be equated with the speech of Belgian teachers. They are after all 'the first-line dispensers of standard usage' (Grondelaers and Van Hout 2012: 48), who are supposed to be 'loyal to official pronunciation norms' (De Schutter 1980). The fact that teachers are proclaimed to be the best speakers of the standard may be a nice compliment, but it also puts a lot of pressure on their shoulders: at a time when some linguists announce the end of the standard language era (Van der Horst 2008), school teachers are referred to as 'the last gatekeepers of the standard' (Van Istendael 2008: 31) and 'guardians of the standard language' (Van de Velde and Houtermans 1999). With the latter in mind, we set out to answer two questions in this chapter, an ideological one and an empirical one:

(i) How does the ongoing standard language controversy – with an in origin exoglossic and largely virtual official standard and a rapidly spreading intermediate variety (Tussentaal) whose standardisation, if that is what it is, is in any case unfinished – take shape in the Flemish (educational) context?

(ii) What language varieties and features do Flemish teachers exactly use in the classroom? And how does that language use relate to governmental and societal expectations and norms?

SOME BACKGROUND HISTORY

In order to grasp the complexity of the Flemish language situation and the role of different language varieties therein, a number of historical facts should be taken into account first. I want to limit myself to a very brief overview of the linguistic history of Dutch in Belgium, which has been extensively reported elsewhere (e.g. Willemyns 2003; Vandenbussche 2010; Vogl and Hüning 2010). Historically, it was the fall of Antwerp in 1585 that sealed the political division of the Dutch language territory. The Netherlands gained their independence (officially in 1648), whereas the southern part of the Low Countries was left under the subsequent foreign rule of Spain, the Austrian Habsburgs and the French empire, until the foundation of the kingdom of Belgium in 1830. Those foreign authorities did not see Dutch as a language suitable for government, culture or education, and propagated French as an official language instead (Willemyns 2003). As a consequence, most historians consider the 17th (and the 18th) century as a 'dark age' for the Dutch language in Flanders[2], as opposed to the 'Golden Age' in the northern Dutch Republic, where a Dutch standard language gradually began to take shape. As such, there was a sharp contrast around 1800 between the on-going standardisation in the north, and the collection of dialects unroofed by any standard in the south (Vandenbussche 2010: 310). Various contemporary testimonies seem to indicate that the northern and southern varieties of Dutch had become (or were claimed to be) mutually unintelligible at that time.

Following the defeat of Napoleon, the Congress of Vienna (1815) created a kingdom that unified the northern and southern Netherlands under the Dutch

[2] However, as Vosters and Vandenbussche (2008) show convincingly, even under Spanish and Austrian rule, varieties of Dutch played an important role in (semi-)official domains in the South, as well as local governments (cf. Vogl and Hüning 2010: 234).

king Willem I. In 1823, he introduced a radical language policy in the Flemish-speaking areas of the South, working under the French Enlightenment principle of 'one land, one language'. As such, Dutch was made the sole official language for administration, education, and the legal system (Howell 2000: 145). However, instead of eliciting approval and satisfaction, as Willem had hoped, his language policy was met with stiff resistance: as a result of nearly two centuries of linguistic separation, the northern Dutch written language had become a language almost as foreign to the Flemish as French. Apart from the opposition to this imposition of the northern Dutch language as yet another 'foreign' variety, there were also significant social and religious (Protestant Holland vs. Catholic Flanders) differences between North and South, leading to the independence of the Belgian state in 1830, and the reinstatement of French as the dominant language in all public domains. It was only in 1898, with the *Gelijkheidswet* ('Equality Law'), that Dutch was declared equal to French in official matters.

The failed reunification of the Netherlands (1814–1830) also gave rise to the Flemish Movement, prominent exponents of it being Jan Frans Willems and Hendrik Conscience. The very existence of this movement, founded to establish Dutch as the official language of Belgium, 'foreshadowed the major role that language policy would play in shaping modern Belgium' (Howell 2000: 145). During the late nineteenth century, the Flemish Movement was divided between the so-called 'integrationists', who wanted to introduce northern Dutch as the official language of Dutch-speaking Belgium, and the 'particularists', who favoured the development of a standard language based on southern Dutch usage. The integrationists eventually prevailed, and Dutch gained official status in Belgium as a result of the language laws passed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. However, the dominance of French persisted long into the twentieth century, and after collaborating with the Germans in both the First and the Second World War, the Flemish Movement got severely stigmatised, and had to reposition itself.

Eventually, the language conflict between Dutch and French was settled by establishing the 'territoriality principle', 'a way of institutionalising multilingualism in which territories are allocated specific languages and all public services in a particular territory are only provided in that language irrespective of the language that individual inhabitants speak at home' (Vogl and Hüning 2010). In 1963, the linguistic border was officially established, with Dutch being the official language in Flanders, and French the official language in Wallonia. Along the linguistic border, numerous enclaves are either officially Dutch- or

French-speaking, but have official facilities for speakers of the other language. Brussels, the capital, is officially bilingual. As such, the linguistic border created a unilingual Flanders and a unilingual Wallonia. Radio and television as well as schools were mobilised to start an impressive propaganda campaign, stimulating positive attitudes towards Standard Dutch and transmitting that relatively unknown (northern) variety to the Flemish population (Vandenbussche 2010; Van Hoof and Jaspers 2012; De Caluwe 2012).

'STANDARD LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY' IN FLANDERS

In order to discuss the vigour of the attempts to diffuse Standard Dutch among the Flemish and to access the ideological rationale behind the strict adherence to the standard in Flanders, it is essential to clearly define the notion 'standard language', 'a slippery concept (...) in need of further critical consideration' (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011: 11). The term 'standard' can be used in a *descriptive* way – with a focus on *language* – considering varietal range as a means of distinguishing between a distinctly demarcated group of standard features and non-standard features: feature X is standard, feature Y is not. From this point of view, it would make no sense to conceive of 'variation within a standard language', because variation implies an absence or a failure of standardisation (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011: 21). For some, however, *social judgements* and *social practices in the community* are the critical criterion for a language to be standard or not, rather than the descriptive details of varietal range and variation. In this approach to the standard language concept, in which (socio)linguistics and social theory interact with each other, 'the analysis of systematic linguistic variation is key to understanding the societies we live in' (Jaspers 2010: 1). Feature X is standard if it is considered a standard feature by the linguistic community, and research on which features are assessed as standard and non-standard features helps to gain insight in how societies are organised.

These two distinct approaches to what constitutes a 'standard' language, viz. focussing on *language practice* and focussing on *social judgement*, seem to correspond with two stages of Haugen's canonical standardisation model (1966a, 1966b): the focus on language practice fits into the codification stage, striving towards an invariant standard, whereas the focus on social judgement and attitudes in defining 'standard' corresponds with two aspects of Haugen's (final) implementation stage: *diffusion*, which can be interpreted as 'dominant patterns

of language use or [...] "behaviour"' (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011: 23), and *acceptance*, which essentially comes down to the attitudes language users have towards the acceptability of usage patterns (ibid.). In attitudinal research, it seems to be difficult for researchers to discern between acceptance (social judgement) and diffusion (language use, behaviour), as the two are often intertwined: for example, Woolard (1998: 16) defines attitudes as 'socially derived, intellectualised or behavioral ideology', inferring social judgement from language use or linguistic behaviour. This interlacement of social and behavioural aspects of ideology requires researchers to take a position on how they see the relationship between attitudes and behaviour, as well as take a stand on what triggers the spread of certain varieties or speaking styles: does that spread occur independently of social judgement (in a more 'mechanistic' way), or are attitudes the decisive factor behind the spread of certain variables? Most (variationist) researchers seem to study attitudes by analysing linguistic behaviour, following the claim of Milroy and Milroy that 'statistical counts of variants actually used are probably the best way of assessing attitudes' (1985: 19). The consequence of this view is that implementation (in the 'Haugian' sense) is simply explored as a matter of diffusion at the level of language use. Not only is social interaction left out of the picture completely, the interpretation of 'language use' is also fundamentally reductionist:

> From any critical sociolinguistic perspective, use means far more than the distribution of features or varieties as these are captured in variation surveys. Language in use might well reveal attitudinal/ ideological loadings, but only if we look at how variation is made meaningful and how social meanings are made contextually in salient practices. (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011: 24)

Research on language use and attitudes needs to be supplemented with close critical examination of indexicality in social interaction, in an attempt to access and expose ideologies operating behind and through discourse. Problematic in accessing these ideologies is the common discrepancy between overtly expressed support for the standard and, on the other hand, the quite pervasive persistence of non-standard language use. In a sociolinguistic tradition that started with Labov, this contradiction is explained by the existence of covert attitudes, 'social evaluations of language which remain hidden when people display their attitudes overtly [...] but which reveal themselves in people's use of language' (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011: 24). Thus, in order to fully access and understand language ideologies in speech communities, research needs to deal with

both language use and attitudes (both overt and covert). Only then can language ideology be fully disclosed, as 'a promising bridge between linguistic and social theory' (Woolard 1998: 27).

Ideology has proven to be very important in the Flemish context: throughout the struggle for Dutch language rights in Flanders, language had become a powerful nationalist motive (Howell 2000: 131), although Blommaert stresses the *supporting* and mostly symbolic role of language in political-nationalist contexts:

> *Language was never the only factor, not even the dominant one.* It was [...] an *emblematic,* romantic element that was shorthand for the more fundamental processes of democratisation and enfranchisement. [...] The language motif was the emotional rhetorical and symbolic cement that joined several ideological fractions of the struggle and helped create a mass basis for nationalist demands. (Blommaert 2011: 6, italics in original)

In present times, discussions pertaining to language policy or language use in public institutions (media, education) continue to stir up controversy in Flanders. One of the most recent disputes erupted in August 2012, following the publication of a book that took a neutral, non-denouncing stand on Tussentaal (Absillis, Jaspers and Van Hoof 2012), instead of the rejection which is still expected in the public domain (especially from professional linguists). Absillis et al.'s (2012) statements provoked newspaper headlines such as 'Tussentaal is very efficient in the classroom' (*De Morgen,* 29 Aug. 2012, p. 4), 'Dialect bridges the chasm with the common man' (*De Morgen*, 31 Aug. 2012, p. 10) or 'We all speak Tussentaal sometimes' (*De Standaard*, 30 Aug. 2012, p. 7)[3], which caused a lot of upheaval and angry letters from agitated readers, in which Flemish school teachers were criticised for speaking Tussentaal, rather than 'proper' Standard Dutch. The discussion dominated the Flemish newspapers for days and even weeks afterwards, proving the ideological sensitivity of the standardness issue in Flemish (institutional) contexts, especially in the media (Van Hoof 2013) and in education (Delarue 2011; Blommaert and Van Avermaet 2008)

This sensitivity is also mirrored in governmental language policy documents. Although the fire was never really extinguished, language policy was rekindled as a hot topic in Flemish education in 2007 with a report by the former Flemish Minister of Education (Vandenbroucke 2007), written with a view to respond to

[3] The original Dutch headlines were: *Tussentaal in klas is heel efficiënt, Dialect verkleint de kloof met de gewone mens* and *We spreken allemaal wel eens tussentaal*.

the 'problems' of language deficiency and multilingualism, and the inequality and discrimination which ensue from them. Vandenbroucke's solution to ensure equal opportunities for all Flemings essentially came down to one simple action point: the insistence on Standard Dutch, the only acceptable language variety in schools, inside as well as outside the classroom. The standard is defined as a variety which is the result of 'setting the bar high' (Vandenbroucke 2007: 4), and is characterised by 'rich proficiency' (ibid.) and 'appropriate language and communication' (ibid.: 11).[4] By contrast, non-standard varieties (e.g. Tussentaal, dialect) are qualified with adjectives as 'bad, inarticulate and regional' (Vandenbroucke 2007: 4) or 'sloppy' (Vandenbroucke 2007: 11).[5] As a result, there is no room in schools for…

> *[…] krom taalgebruik of verkavelingsvlaams of een streektaal die hen in een klein gebied opsluit en hun kansen op mobiliteit en emancipatie ondergraaft. [...] Het Nederlands en zeker het 'schoolse Nederlands' beperkt zich voor heel wat leerlingen tot de school en de klas. Dààr moeten we het dus waarmaken.*
> [[…] 'inarticulate language use or a vernacular that locks them [the students, sd] up in a small area and undermines their chances of mobility and emancipation. [...] For a lot of students, the use of Standard Dutch is limited to the school and to the classroom. *That*'s the place where it has to happen.'] (Vandenbroucke 2008, translation sd)

Vandenbroucke's successor, current Minister of Education Pascal Smet, wrote a follow-up document (2011) in which he profiled the distinction between standard and non-standard in an even sharper way:

> *In Vlaanderen groeien nog steeds veel kinderen op voor wie de moedertaal een regionale variant van het Standaardnederlands en dus niet het Standaardnederlands is. […]*

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[4] The original quotes were: *Slechts door elke jongere tot correcte en rijke vaardigheid in de standaardtaal te begeleiden, garandeert het onderwijs dat maatschappelijke talenten niet afhankelijk zijn van herkomst, maar van de mate waarin iemands talenten tot ontwikkeling zijn gebracht. De lat hoog leggen, vergt discipline.* ['Only by guiding every youngster to a correct and rich proficiency in the standard language, education guarantees that talents in society are not dependent of origin, but of the extent to which one's talents have been developed. Setting the bar high requires discipline', translation sd] and *Kunnen communiceren in Standaardnederlands is een noodzakelijke voorwaarde voor goed onderwijs. Bij het streven naar verzorgde taal en communicatie gaat het onderwijs vaak in tegen maatschappelijke tendensen.* ['Being able to communicate in Standard Dutch is a prerequisite for good education. In striving for appropriate language and communication, education often goes against social trends', translation sd]

[5] *Scholen die aandacht schenken aan taalzorg, zijn vaak eilanden in een context waar slordige tussentaal getolereerd wordt.*['Schools that pay attention to correct language use, are often islands in a context where sloppy Tussentaal is tolerated', translation sd]

> *Nochtans is een rijke kennis van het Standaardnederlands dé voorwaarde voor wie in Vlaanderen wil leren, wonen, werken, leven. Wie van elders komt, en geen Standaardnederlands leert, blijft in de beslotenheid van het eigen gezin of de eigen gemeenschap leven, en leeft – in Vlaanderen – buiten Vlaanderen.*
> ['In Flanders, many children still grow up for whom the mother tongue is a regional variant of Standard Dutch and thus not Standard Dutch itself. [...] However, a rich knowledge of Standard Dutch is *the* prerequisite for who wants to learn, live, work in Flanders. People who do not learn Standard Dutch remain in the seclusion of their own family or community and live – in Flanders – outside of Flanders.'] (Smet 2011: 3, translation sd)

Smet's view that Standard Dutch is a *conditio sine qua non* for successful participation in society and for socio-economic promotion (but see Jaspers 2012) contains a number of ideological ingredients which are recurrently found in (official) linguistic viewpoints of nation states for which the Herderian 'one nation, one language' ambition is still vital (Blommaert 2011). First, there is 'the dogma of homogeneism' (Blommaert and Verschueren 1998), which pertains to the rejection of internally stratified societies as dangerous and centrifugal, and to the preference for a 'best' society without any intergroup differences. In other words: the ideal model of society is a monolingual (and mono-ethnic, mono-religious, mono-ideological) one. Second, the statements of both ministers manifest clear features of Silverstein's 'monoglot ideology' (1996), viz. an ideology which regards monolingualism (as opposed to multilingualism) as axiomatic, and speaking one language as a *conditio sine qua non* for achieving in-group membership and participation in the 'linguistic community' (Silverstein 1996: 285; Blommaert 2009) or, in this case, Flemish society. Finally, both policy documents represent a compelling example of what Irvine and Gal (2000) have dubbed 'erasure': what does not fit the ideological scheme, is erased from it. In Smet's policy document, which totals 42 pages, the terms *Standaardnederlands* and *standaardtaal* ('Standard Dutch' and 'standard', respectively) are used 77 times, whereas *Tussentaal* (or any other synonym for the emergent colloquial variety) occurs not one single time. The line of reasoning seems to be that, if only Standard Dutch is propagated extensively, Tussentaal will disappear all by itself. Hence, governmental policy constructs and promotes a pure, monolingual society, denying the fact that practically all speakers reside in a 'contact zone' (Pratt 1987) in which different languages or language varieties are in competition. In this construction, schools (and education in general) represent the perfect seedbed for ideologies to take root and diffuse.

The ideological constructs just cited naturally coincide in the concept 'standard language ideology' (SLI), a term coined in Milroy and Milroy (1985), and defined in Lippi-Green (1997: 64) as 'a bias toward an abstract, idealised homogeneous language, which is imposed and maintained by dominant institutions and which has as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class'. Education is one of the dominant institutions responsible for imposing and maintaining the 'one homogeneous language' ambition.

The unrelenting vigour of conservative Flemish SLI (Van Hoof and Jaspers 2012) appears to be challenged by recent societal changes such as informalisation, democratisation (Fairclough 1992), globalisation, immigration, and feelings of anti-authority, which are typical of what Giddens (1991) refers to as the present-day era of 'Late Modernity'. Conservative SLIs are also affected by processes of destandardisation and demotisation which have been attested in almost all European countries (e.g. Deumert and Vandenbussche 2003; Van der Horst 2008; Grondelaers and Van Hout 2011; Grondelaers, Van Hout and Speelman 2011). In this chapter, destandardisation is defined as a development whereby 'value levelling' occurs between different varieties (or languages), eventually leading to a radical weakening and abandonment of the standard ideology. Demotisation, on the other hand, is understood as a development whereby the idea of what the 'best language' is has changed, without there being any signs of a radical weakening or attenuation of the standard ideology (Coupland and Kristiansen 2011: 27–30). It should be noted, however, that destandardisation and demotisation are not (always) conflicting developments. In cases of a very rigid, inflexible standard variety, the spoken standard is usually more open to demotisation (with norm extensions and norm relaxations) than the much stricter written standard. As the attitudes held towards a *written* standard are often more explicit and pronounced than those held towards *spoken* language, the demotisation in the spoken standard could easily be regarded as a form of destandardisation in view of the much stricter norms for the written language. Neither does demotisation always imply destandardisation (Auer and Spiekermann 2011): in German, for example, processes of demotisation induce the demise of regional variants in favour of more general *allegro* forms (colloquial varieties with reductions or cliticised variants of more typical standard forms, such as the deletion of final-t in *ist* 'is' or *nicht* 'not'), and thus a more homogenous German standard. Auer and Spiekermann conclude that 'if changes in both the standard's phonological structure and prestige [are allowed], there is no reason to assume

that the present-day, demoticised standard variety is undergoing a process of destandardisation' (2011: 174).

This emergent dialectic of strong SLIs that are being confronted with, and affected by societal changes and ensuing destandardisation processes presents researchers with a difficult task. How can this ideological deadlock be explained? What pushes (standard language) ideologies? The two factors most often cited in the literature to explain the emergence, spread and decline of ideologies are 'linguistic usage' and 'metalinguistic discourse'. Crucially, the direct impact of actual usage on ideology is heavily debated, and many researchers insist that the two must be carefully differentiated (Irvine 1992). As a result, ideologies are typically extracted from metalinguistic discourses, in accordance with the claim of, among others, Silverstein (1979: 193) that ideologies are often articulated as a rationalisation or justification of perceived language structure and use. Kroskrity (2010: 198) argues, however, that people display strongly varying degrees of awareness of local language ideologies. Accordingly, not all linguists are convinced of the explicitly discursive nature of ideology: 'influential theorists have seen it [ideology, sd] as behavioral, pre-reflective, or structural, that is, an organisation of signifying practices not in consciousness but in lived relations' (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994: 58). The two distinct factors in explaining the emergence, spread and decline of ideologies, linguistic behaviour and social judgement – which accordingly provide linguists with two methods of eliciting ideology, usage vs. discourse (cf. Kristiansen 2010) – seem to emanate from a different assessment of the degree of consciousness or awareness of ideology. In that perspective, sociological theory allows for varying degrees of people's consciousness of their own activities, ranging from discursive to practical consciousness. Kroskrity (1998) suggests a correlation between these degrees of consciousness and the nature or acceptance of language ideologies, with highly conscious ('discursive') ideologies being actively contested and, by contrast, unchallenged, highly naturalised, and dominant ideologies having a very low level of consciousness (Rampton 1995). This last group of ideologies is undoubtedly the most powerful one: ideologies are most effective when their workings are least visible (Fairclough 2001: 64), and when they penetrate the whole fabric of societies or communities and result in normalised, naturalised patterns of thought and behaviour. Ideologies then become 'common sense', naturalised conventions that are taken as given. For example, one possible explanation of the vigour of Flemish SLI is the massive language propaganda for the Dutch standard language that arose after the second World War, with explic-

it language sections on television, radio and in newspapers, and language propaganda at school (Van Hoof and Jaspers 2012). Up until the 1970s, proponents of language propaganda presented Dutch as a monocentric language, and these integrationist actions have conditioned (or even brainwashed) generations of Flemings to love a variety they rarely use themselves, as well as to heavily dislike non-standard varieties (Grondelaers, Van Hout and Speelman 2011: 206). As such, studies of Flemish language attitudes often show a schizophrenic situation, in which Flemings report that they are positively inclined towards a variety they almost never use. However, most Flemings are unable to identify this discrepancy, due to the low discursive presence of this SLI in lay people's minds.

The study of standard language ideology in educational contexts, as a part of what Wortham calls the 'linguistic anthropology of education' (2001: 253), is a quite recent addition to research on educational phenomena. While the concept 'language ideology' in itself has been around for a long time – also in 'educational linguistics' (Spolsky 1999; Hornberger 2000) – contemporary linguistic anthropology has created more ways for ideology to be applied to educational research, both on a macro-level and a micro-level (Woolard 1998). For example, the identity of an 'educated person' can be determined by language ideologies, and, as a consequence, the degree to which teachers are regarded as 'educated' depends to a large extent on how they speak (Wortham 2001: 257). (The absence of) accents, dialects and specific idiosyncracies is often regarded as indexical for education and competence perceptions of teachers. Crucially, the brand of research which investigates language ideologies pertaining to teachers (and the corresponding expectations people have of teachers) should be counterbalanced by the (language) ideologies of teachers themselves, a subfield which fits into the broader field of what Kroskrity (2010: 206) calls 'professional language ideologies', and which analyses language ideologies of specific professions as 'performing important roles not only in the displays of professional competence but also insofar as they contribute to, and otherwise create the very institutions in which various professions typically perform' (ibid.).

IN SEARCH OF TEACHER IDEOLOGIES: PRODUCTION VS. PERCEPTION AS *SLI* INDICATORS

Flemish teachers are in charge of the immense responsibility – bestowed on them by the government and the (cultural) establishment – of transmitting

Standard Dutch to their pupils. Flemish teachers are regarded as linguistic role models in this respect, diffusing 'pure' Dutch and functioning as gatekeepers of the norm. An evident question is to what extent these (ideological) expectations are represented in the *personal* ideologies of Flemish teachers, and in their actual usage. In an attempt to answer this question, I report two studies, one looking into the language use of primary and secondary school teachers in Flanders (Delarue 2011), and one probing teachers' perceptions of, and attitudes towards Standard Dutch, Tussentaal and dialect.

Language production of Flemish teachers: prevalent Tussentaal use

In a first study (Delarue 2011), a sample of 122 teachers was observed in the classroom with a view to study their language use. The teachers from this sample were randomly selected: schools in the provinces of West- and East-Flanders were asked if they wanted to take part in a *taalgerelateerd onderzoek* ('language-related study'), and if they could suggest the names of motivated teachers who were willing to co-operate. In order to collect language production data that were as 'natural' as possible, i.e. representative for the actual language use of the teachers involved, the teachers were told that the focus of the study was on the language use of their pupils, and that the researchers had little or no interest in the language use of the teachers.

Informants

Table 1: Distribution of informants across 9 age groups

Age groups	Number of informants	
(five-year intervals)	N	%
20–25	5	4,1
25–30	14	11,5
30–35	20	16,4
35–40	16	13,1
40–45	12	9,8
45–50	16	13,1
50–55	21	17,2
55–60	14	11,5
60–65	4	3,3
Total	122	100,0

As informants (N=122) were recruited on the basis of their willingness to co-operate[6], there were no specific requirements as to gender, age or region of birth or current residence. In spite of this random selection, informants were distributed fairly evenly over the different demographic categories: 65 teachers were female, 57 were male. 68 teachers were from the province of West-Flanders, 43 from East-Flanders, 10 from the province of Antwerp, and 1 from the province of Limburg. Table 1 demonstrates that the spread of the informants over the different age groups appeared to be quite even as well.

However, one informant characteristic was specifically controlled for during selection: in order to investigate whether the teachers' language use was influenced by the age of the pupils in their classrooms, I distinguished between three groups, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Grouping of teachers based on age of their pupils

	Age of pupils	N
Group 1: Teaching 6th class of primary school	11–12	30
Group 2: Teaching 3rd grade of ASO	14–15	45
Group 3: Teaching 6th grade of ASO	17–18	47

(ASO = *Algemeen Secundair Onderwijs*, 'General Secondary Education')

A first group, totalling roughly a quarter of all the teachers involved in the study (N=30), taught in the 6th class of primary school. The other teachers were secondary school teachers, teaching in the 3rd grade (Group 2, N=45) or the 6th grade (Group 3, N=47) of ASO (*Algemeen Secundair Onderwijs*), the Flemish type of 'general secondary education', as opposed to TSO (*Technisch Secundair Onderwijs*, 'technical secondary education'), BSO (*Beroepssecundair Onderwijs*, 'vocational secondary education') and KSO (*Kunstsecundair Onderwijs*, 'art secondary education').

There are three reasons for our restriction to general secondary education teachers. First, I assumed that these teachers would be the most 'standard speaking' of the Flemish teachers, as they have to prepare pupils for higher education

[6] It should be noted that the dependence of the sample on this willingness of teachers to participate can be a possibly confounding factor in both the research and the conclusions which are drawn from it. Although their willingness to contribute to this study may indicate that the participating teachers have strong opinions in favor of, or against Tussentaal – opinions which differ from those of the average Flemish teacher – we found no evidence in the interviews (which were conducted afterwards) that this was indeed the case.

and subsequent 'white-collar jobs' (Jaspers 2012). Second, it has been shown that pupils from technical and vocational education seem to attribute much less value to the standard norm, calling Tussentaal and dialect appropriate classroom varieties as well (Vancompernolle 2012), while pupils from general secondary education appear to have strong positive attitudes towards the standard. By selecting ASO teachers, I wanted to see whether and to what extent teachers (un)consciously respond to these attitudes and subsequent expectations from pupils. Third, only the current final attainment levels for ASO explicitly state that pupils have to be proficient in Standard Dutch in certain (more formal) situations; in other education types, pupils are only asked to be *willing* to speak the standard in certain situations, or no reference to Standard Dutch is made at all (Delarue 2011). Standard Dutch does not appear to be an issue in more vocational school tracks, in spite of the propagandistic efforts of the Flemish government (see above).

In the secondary schools included in the research, I did not only observe teachers of Dutch, but also teachers of other school subjects (e.g. Mathematics, History, Geography, Physics), as long as they were taught in Dutch. Among the school subjects that were left out of scope in correspondence with these criteria were P.E. (Physical Education) and all foreign language subjects (French, English, German, Spanish), with the exception of Latin and (Ancient) Greek, which are taught mostly in Dutch.

Data collection and analysis

Per teacher, one lesson or period was recorded, amounting to approximately 50 (secondary school) or 80 (primary school) minutes of recorded speech data per teacher/classroom context. All data were transcribed orthographically, and the proportion of Tussentaal usage in the speech of each teacher was quantified on the basis of a list of fourteen iconic Tussentaal features recurrently cited in the Flemish linguistic literature on the subject (De Caluwe 2002; De Caluwe 2006; Rys and Taeldeman 2007; Cajot 2010; Taeldeman 2008; Goossens 2000; Vandekerckhove 2004). For each of the teachers, a so-called 'Tussentaal-index' (Van Gijsel, Geeraerts and Speelman 2004; Van Gijsel, Speelman and Geeraerts 2008; Zenner, Geeraerts and Speelman 2009) was computed by calculating the proportion of Tussentaal realisations in the total frequency of each variable in the list of iconic Tussentaal features. In order to take the relative frequency of each variable into account, we computed weighted proportions (Van Gijsel,

Speelman and Geeraerts 2008). To give a simplified example: if a feature A occurs eight times, with six Tussentaal realisations, and a feature B occurs two times, with one Tussentaal realisation, we calculate a proportion of seven Tussentaal characteristics (on a total set of ten occurrences), which yields a Tussentaal-index of 70%.

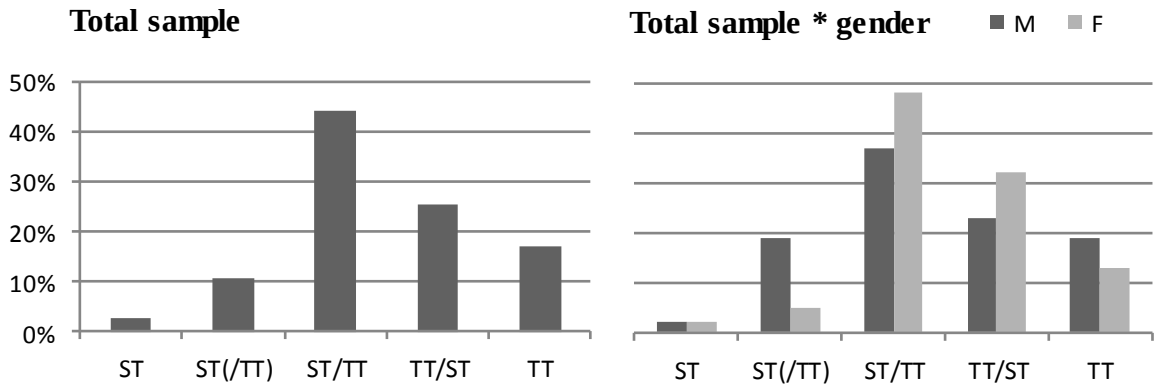
On the basis of their weighted Tussentaal-index (and the nature of the Tussentaal-features in their speech), all teachers were assigned to one of the following five categories:

1. ST: 'pure' Standard Dutch, with less than 1% of Tussentaal features
2. ST(/TT): Standard Dutch with more Tussentaal features (but still less than 5%), and only Tussentaal features which pertain to small phonological alternations (e.g. dropping the final *-t* in short function words: *nie* for *niet* 'not', *wa* for *wat* 'what') which also characterize informal spoken Standard Dutch
3. ST/TT: mixed use of standard and non-standard features, with a substantial amount of morphological, syntactic and lexical Tussentaal and dialect features (but less than 50% non-standard features)
4. TT/ST: same as ST/TT, but with a majority of non-standard features (50–75%)
5. TT: almost exclusively instances of Tussentaal (>75%)

Results

This section reports a preliminary, pre-statistical overview of our findings. In spite of the fact that we cannot categorically exclude that our teacher sample may be in some way biased in favour of, or against Tussentaal (see fn. 6), the large number of teachers observed, and the large amount of data collected enable us to draw four main conclusions from this investigation, which more or less converge with the findings so far available on Tussentaal (Walraet 2004; Olders 2007; De Caluwe 2011).

The categorisation of the teachers according to their language use in the classroom returns the distribution that can be seen in Figure 1. The fact that no more than 3% of the teachers in our sample speak 'pure' Standard Dutch when teaching entails that 97% of all teachers use some amount of Tussentaal features:



Figures 1 and 2: Distribution of teachers across five categories according to language use: in the total sample (left) and disaggregated by gender (right)

non-standard language use is thus widespread in a classroom context. The majority of teachers observed manifest a substantial (ST/TT 44%) or predominant (TT/ST 25%) proportion of Tussentaal realisations, while 17% even manifest more than 80% of Tussentaal (TT) realisations on the variables concerned.

If we break down the results by gender, *female teachers seem to use more Tussentaal features than male teachers* (Figure 2), a result which accords with the recurrently attested finding that females spearhead new developments (Chambers 2003). In his corpus research on Tussentaal use in Flemish speech, Plevoets (2008, 2009) came to the same conclusion, with a significantly higher Tussentaal use by (young) women. This statement seems to contradict the sociolinguistic axiom that women tend to use more prestige forms (i.e. standard forms) of language, in order to symbolically compensate for their lower social position (cf. Coates 1986). However, Plevoets (2012: 213) solves this paradox by showing that not Standard Dutch, but Tussentaal is the preferred language of the Flemish elite. As such, women still tend to adopt those forms of language that are considered prestigious by the social group they are part of, but that prestigious language is not (or no longer) Standard Dutch, but Tussentaal (ibid.).

Plevoets (2008) also finds a significantly higher use of non-standard language by the younger generations in his corpus. Speakers who were born in the 1960s proportionally use more standard features, but in the language use of younger speakers (born in the 1970s en 1980s) the amount of Tussentaal features is much higher. The results in the present study confirm these findings: Figure 3 shows the percentage of teachers in each of the five categories, divided into the nine age groups.

In the ST category, which contains teachers who speak (almost) exclusively Standard Dutch, all teachers are older than 50. In other words: only (a few) older teachers from our sample (born before 1961, confirming the corpus research cited above), use (almost) no Tussentaal features when teaching. In the ST(/TT) group, in which teachers with a low number of phonological Tussentaal features in their speech are included, teachers from younger generations pop up as well. It is remarkable, however, that still not a single teacher younger than 30 is included in one of either groups.

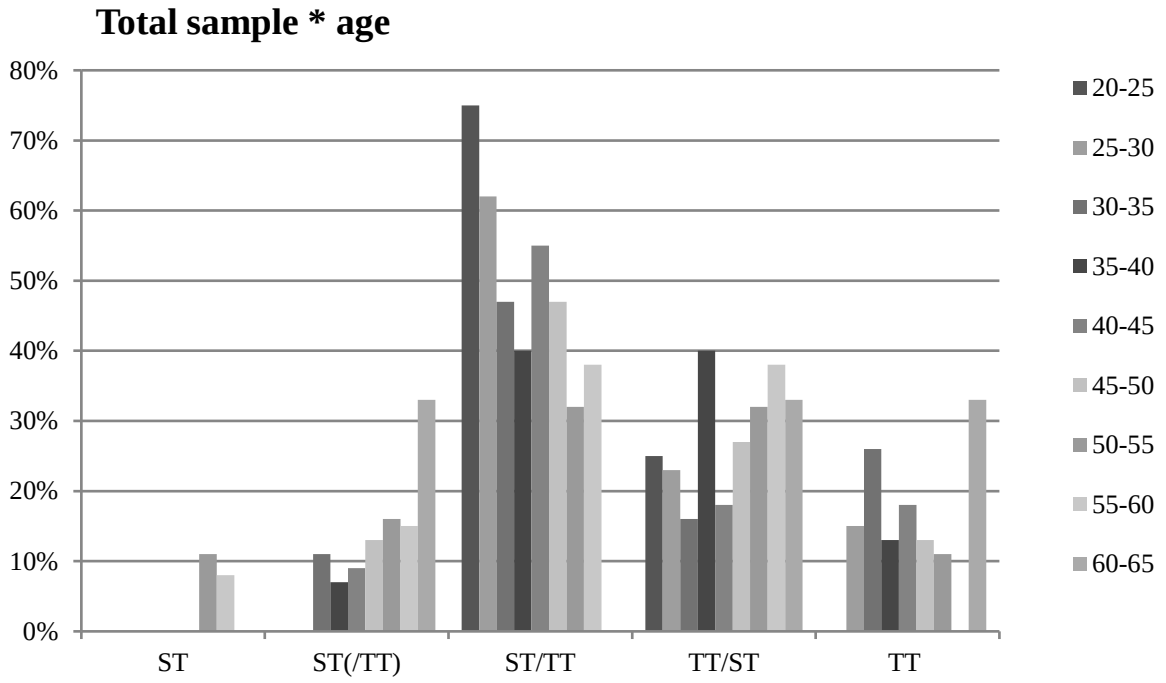


Figure 3: Distribution of teachers across five categories according to language use, broken down by age (five-year intervals)

All observed teachers younger than 30 turn out to use a substantial or predominant number of Tussentaal features when teaching. A striking observation, which seems to counteract the correlation between age and Tussentaal use, is the fact that the classroom speech of over 30% of the teachers aged 60 to 65 also contains a very high number of Tussentaal features (TT). A possible explanation for this counterintuitive observation is attitude-based (see below).

A last finding confirms almost all earlier research on language use by teachers in Flanders (Walraet 2004; Olders 2007; De Caluwe 2011): *most teachers show continuous code-switching in their speech, switching back and forth between Standard Dutch, Tussentaal and sometimes even dialect.* Table 3 gives a

Table 3: Classroom situations or factors which influence the language use of teachers, in selecting Standard Dutch or Tussentaal.

Standard Dutch	Tussentaal
More formal classroom situations • Instructions • Reading or teaching from the textbook, slides, worksheets,...	More informal classroom situations • Illustrating the subject matter • Giving examples, telling anecdotes alongside the subject matter • Explaining the (abstract) subject matter in plain words
Theoretical subjects	Practical or vocational subjects
General (and technical) secondary education	Vocational (and technical) secondary education
Maintaining distance between teachers and pupils • Teacher as a role model, an example • Exercising authority	Bonding, connecting with pupils • When talking to one individual pupil • To get the attention of pupils • In emotional situations (annoyance, distress, anger) • To incite pupils • To imitate pupils (or other people)
With large groups of pupils	With small groups of pupils
When talking at a slower pace	When talking at a faster pace

(non-exhaustive) overview of situations in which most teachers adhere to either Standard Dutch or Tussentaal. Standard Dutch is mostly used in more formal situations in which teachers devote conscious attention to their speech, viz. when giving instructions, or when citing the handbook or syllabus. In those situations, the language use of teachers is usually prepared to some extent: what they have to say is either written down explicitly, or at least considered beforehand. However, as soon as teachers feel that pupils do not understand the subject matter, and therefore try to illustrate it with an example or explain it again in simpler terms, almost all teachers resort to the language variety they are more secure and proficient in: Tussentaal. As most classroom contexts consist of con-

stant alternations between more formal and more informal situations (Ferguson 2003), the language use of teachers switches back and forth from more standard to more non-standard.

Moreover, some other factors also influenced teachers' language use. First, the course subject seemed to be of substantial importance: more Standard Dutch was used in theoretical subjects than in practical or vocational subjects. This coincides with the difference in language use according to education type: in general secondary education, more Standard Dutch is used, whereas in vocational secondary education, Tussentaal appears to be prevalent (together with dialect). Crucially, Dutch language teachers use a much lower amount of Tussentaal features when teaching. All teachers in the exclusive standard language category (ST) are teachers of Dutch (as a course subject); and only 18% of the teachers of Dutch (vs. 55% of other teachers) used more than 50% of Tussentaal features (the categories TT/ST and TT).

Second, the attitudes of teachers towards their position among their pupils appeared to be very important as well: in the sociolinguistic interviews conducted after classroom observations – these interviews are not further discussed here – teachers who indicated that they regard themselves as higher in rank than their pupils and as an example for them, typically use more Standard Dutch features when teaching. By contrast, teachers who want to connect with their pupils, showing more affection and emotion, and explicitly teaching in a more 'playful' way, use far more Tussentaal features. This distinction partially correlates with the age of the teachers: most of the teachers in the first group are older while most in the second group are younger. Crucially, a majority of the teachers in the large group of teachers between 60 and 65 who predominantly use Tussentaal in the classroom (cf. above) stress the importance of a more informal approach towards students, emphasising that they do not feel superior to the young people they teach. These are teachers who have become so experienced that they can loosen up on strict discipline in favour of a more 'father-like' attitude.

Third, the number of pupils in the classroom also appeared to influence the language use of teachers: in larger groups, teachers more frequently used Standard Dutch whereas in smaller groups, Tussentaal use was more widespread. As smaller groups allow for a more informal style, it could be argued that the informality factor discussed above is directly contingent on the number of pupils in the classroom.

Lastly, speech rate seemed to play a role: teachers with a comparatively faster speech rate used more Tussentaal features. This could be explained by the fact that women in our sample turned out to speak faster than men, as a consequence of which the speech rate factor is in fact a 'repackaged' gender difference. Another explanation could be that the faster teachers speak, the less time they have to monitor their own speech, thus speaking more spontaneously and less standard.

Conclusions

This first study, which was aimed at getting a closer look at the actual language use of teachers, clearly shows that – in accordance with available corpus work on Tussentaal – more and more teachers are manifesting a significant number of Tussentaal features in their language use in the classroom. Since younger teachers manifest a substantially higher amount of Tussentaal features than their older colleagues, it seems very unlikely that the governmental appeals for education-supported standard language promotion (as embodied in the policy documents of ministers Vandenbroucke and Smet) will ever be realised in Flemish classroom contexts.

Language perceptions of Dutch language teachers: strong SLI, but growing tolerance towards Tussentaal

If language ideologies can be derived from actual language use, the findings from the study reported in the previous paragraphs seem to reflect ideologies which differ substantially from the dominant conservative SLI. To shed more light on this divergence, a second, perceptual study was designed which elicited language attitudes from teachers in the region of Kortrijk, a city in the south of the province of West-Flanders (Demeyere 2012).

Stimulus materials

For this perceptual investigation, participants had to assess six different audio fragments (Table 4), which were taken from component h. – 'Lessons recorded in the classroom' – of the *Corpus Gesproken Nederlands*, the Spoken Dutch Corpus, and from the corpus of the lesson recordings compiled for the language production study discussed above (Delarue 2011). As such, all fragments con-

tained spontaneous speech, recorded in the classroom, with teachers explaining some subject matter to their pupils. Six different teachers can be heard in the six fragments, and the duration of each fragment is approximately one minute. The fragments differ from each other on two dimensions: the amount of Tussentaal features produced, and the region of origin of the speaker. Three fragments contained language use by teachers from the same (endogenous) region as the listener-judges (the region of Kortrijk, see below), in three other fragments teachers from an exogenous region can be heard, the Waasland, located in the northeast of the province of East-Flanders, between Ghent and Antwerp. By choosing fragments from both the endogenous and an exogenous region, this perceptual experiment also aims to elucidate what role regional accent plays in assessments of teachers' language use, and whether accents of other dialect areas (in this case the Waasland area) are either upgraded or downgraded compared to the own accent.

Table 4: Six audio fragments used in the perceptual investigation

Own (endogenous) region: Kortrijk	Standard Dutch	'Light' Tussentaal	'Heavy' Tussentaal
Other (exogenous) region: Waasland	Standard Dutch	'Light' Tussentaal	'Heavy' Tussentaal

Fragments were also selected in terms of the type and frequency of Tussentaal features: for each of the two regions, a Standard Dutch fragment was selected (containing no Tussentaal features), as well as a 'Light' Tussentaal fragment and a 'Heavy' Tussentaal fragment. Whereas the two Standard Dutch fragments had a Tussentaal-index of 0% (as calculated on the basis of the procedure discussed in connection with the previous study), the Tussentaal index for the endogenous and exogenous Light Tussentaal fragments was 39.5%[7] and 43.5% respectively. The index for the endogenous and exogenous Heavy Tussentaal fragments was 52.7% and 54.3% respectively.

An obvious question in this respect could be whether the difference between the Light Tussentaal fragments (avg. Tussentaal index 41.5%) and the Heavy Tussentaal fragments (avg. index 53.5%) was not too small for the respondents to be able to make a perceptual distinction between the two stimulus types. A closer examination of the samples, however, reveals a clear difference in terms

[7] Of the 38 occasions in the fragment where the teacher had the choice between a Tussentaal feature and a standard feature, he chose the Tussentaal feature 15 times (and the standard feature 23 times).

of not only the *number* but also the *type* of Tussentaal features used in the Light and Heavy samples. In the Light Tussentaal fragments, the majority of Tussentaal features was phonological (typical examples being the deletion of word-final *t* in short, frequent words such as *niet* 'not', *met* 'with', *goed* 'good', *wat* 'what', or *dat* 'that', and the deletion of word-initial *h* in *hij* 'he', *het* 'it', or *hem* 'him'). The one non-phonological Tussentaal token in the endogenous Light fragment was morphosyntactic, viz. the use of *'t zijn* 'it are' instead of standard Dutch *er zijn* 'there are'. In the exogenous Light fragment, the proportion of morphosyntactic feature tokens was admittedly higher (5/10), but 'deviations' consisted for the most part (4 tokens) of the nonstandard but generally used Flemish variants *gij* and *ge* of the standard pronoun *jij/je* 'you'. In addition, there was one instance of future *gaan* 'to go' instead of standard *zullen* 'will', another typically Flemish feature which does not stand out in spontaneous speech (in spite of being officially nonstandard). In addition to the phonological deletions just mentioned, Heavy fragments also contained a number of recurrently cited morphosyntactic characteristics which are iconic for Tussentaal, such as the case-marking of adjectives and articles (e.g. Tussentaal *ne gelen auto* for Standard Dutch *een gele auto* 'a yellow car') or the use of *–(s)ke* instead of *–je* for diminutives (*boekske* for *boekje* 'little book'). In view of the presence of these features, the difference between the Light Tussentaal fragments and the Heavy ones was more apparent than the small index differences seem to indicate.

By asking the informants to evaluate these six fragments with different amounts of Tussentaal use, I wanted to answer two questions: (1) Which Tussentaal features do teachers notice and are thus salient non-standard features? (2) Do teachers find these non-standard features acceptable in a classroom setting?

Listener-judges

16 Dutch language teachers were selected, stratified according to both gender and age. As such, the sample consisted of four cells: 4 male and 4 female teachers younger than 35, and 4 male and 4 female teachers older than 50. All teachers taught Dutch as a subject in the 5th or 6th grade of general secondary education (ASO), and were born and raised in the southern part of the province of West-Flanders. There are two arguments for choosing teachers of Dutch (instead of also selecting teachers of other school subjects, as in the first study). First, teachers of Dutch are supposed to be strong adherents of the Standard Dutch

norm, both in their own language use and in the language use (they expect) of their pupils (De Schutter 1980; Van Istendael 2008), which in our perspective makes them a particularly interesting group to elicit perceptions and attitudes from. Second, teachers of Dutch also seem to be the ones who are most involved in all sorts of language-directed activities in school contexts. For example, it has recently become obligatory for Flemish schools to develop a language policy, and in most schools, unsurprisingly, it is teachers of Dutch who play the crucial role in the workgroups and teams responsible for developing and elaborating such policies. In sum, teachers of Dutch seem to function as role models of the standard language, for pupils and colleagues alike. We may assume their perceptions of variants or varieties to be influential – and therefore important to investigate.

Procedure

With each of the 16 teachers, a sociolinguistic interview was conducted and audio-recorded, which consisted of two parts: the analysis and assessment of the six different fragments, and a more general set of questions about personal language perceptions and attitudes. The informants were given the opportunity to listen to every fragment twice. The first time, they were not allowed to make any written notes, and they were asked afterwards how they would describe the language use they just heard, and how acceptable they considered this variety to be in a classroom context. During the second listening session, the teachers were asked to write down any salient language features they had discerned. Those notes were discussed afterwards, and the interviewer then proceeded with some more general questions regarding language perceptions and attitudes towards Standard Dutch and Tussentaal in the classroom. In order to rule out a 'learning curve' or any other order effects as much as possible, the sequence in which the different informants heard the fragments was entirely randomised.

Results

Our findings suggest that all teachers are unanimous in their (very) positive appreciation of (teachers speaking) Standard Dutch. All informants praised the teachers in the two Standard Dutch fragments for speaking in a 'proper way', although some of the older teachers chided the teacher in the endogenous Standard fragment for 'a clearly West-Flemish accent', asserting that Standard Dutch

should remain a 'neutral' variety (that is, without any indications of the home region of the speaker in his or speech). The younger teachers, on the other hand, mostly appeared to be unable to distinguish the endogenous from the exogenous fragments: they heard almost no regional differences, and had no problems with the presence of accent in classroom language use. In general, however, the Standard Dutch fragments were met with approval of practically all the teachers involved.

In the perceptions towards the Tussentaal fragments, there appears to be a much more important age difference. The group of younger teachers (-35) was considerably more tolerant to the 'light' (mostly phonological) Tussentaal features. Younger teachers clearly did not downgrade teachers who used these 'light' Tussentaal features, and sometimes even seemed to find this 'informal standard' (as some informants called it) more attractive, less artificial and in some case *more* suited for teaching than pure standard language. By contrast, older teachers (50+) evaluated all Tussentaal as counterproductive when teaching, and denounced all non-standard features. Surprisingly, there appeared to be no regional differences: all informants assessed the endogenous teachers in exactly the same way as the teachers from the exogenous Waasland region.

In contrast to this substantial age difference, there did not appear to be any striking gender differences between the listener-judges, although overall, women seemed to be a bit more perceptive towards Tussentaal features and stricter in their disapproval of the fragments with predominant Tussentaal use.

Conclusions

The results of this second study clearly show that teachers are still very much attached to Standard Dutch as the preferred variety to use in the classroom. Older teachers appear to prefer an accentless standard, whereas younger teachers do not object to the presence of a regional accent. Moreover, the latter condone some light (phonological) Tussentaal features while teaching, and regard the resulting 'informal standard' as even more suitable for teaching, as long as the amount of non-standard features remains limited. For the older teachers, however, the use of Tussentaal is unacceptable.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

In the first half of this chapter, we have fleshed out the paradoxical opposition between the still vigorous standard language ideologies that exist in Flanders, and the typical societal changes of late modernity – globalisation, informalisation, democratisation – linguistically embodied in the diffusion of Tussentaal, the highly stigmatised colloquial variety of Belgian Dutch. Teachers are increasingly confronted with conflicting expectations from society (viz. the government, parents, and their 'core audience', the pupils): should teachers aspire for a more formal standard language, or 'go with the late modern flow' and use a more informal non-standard variety, i.e. Tussentaal?

The results from the perceptual study reported here seem to demonstrate that SLI remains quite strong in Flanders: Standard Dutch is still the preferred variety in the minds of most Flemish teachers. However, two important nuances have to be added. First, it seems that the conception of 'standardness' – in terms of the features it incorporates – is changing: especially in the mind of the younger teachers, Tussentaal features increasingly become welcome additions to an 'informal standard' (probably in response to the growing societal informalisation). In other words: SLI prevails, but is being stretched. Second, the present vigour of SLI seems to be mostly symbolic: while Flemish teachers praise Standard Dutch when asked explicitly, their actual language use in our production study reflects a strong and increasing inclination towards Tussentaal.

It is difficult to answer the question whether and to what extent the growing predominance of Tussentaal entails a process of destandardisation or demotisation. Some linguists refer to the Flemish language situation as an example of a 'standard vacuum', because of the lack of a vital, non-virtual standard language (cf. Grondelaers and Van Hout 2011). On the other hand, the 'informal standard' some younger teachers pay lip service to may well represent a process of demotisation, an extension of the range of varieties which are (still) regarded as standard. Of course, whether one regards this informal standard as an 'endoglossic bottom-up standardisation of Tussentaal' (Grondelaers and Van Hout 2011: 226–227) or a top-down informalisation depends to some extent on one's ideological reference points. Whatever may be the case: much more research is needed to make well-grounded predictions of what the future will bring: will the rampant spread of Tussentaal eventually influence language policies and dissipate standard language ideology, or will the (symbolic) standard ideal remain firmly intact, with a continuing supremacy of *VRT-Dutch* (Van Hoof and Jaspers

2012)? Or are we heading towards the Danish 'double norm' situation (Kristiansen 2001), with a dynamic standard variety for the media, and a more conservative one for education? We will have to await data-based answers to those questions before we can answer the much more difficult question whether teachers are indeed the 'last guardians' of the standard (or these standards).

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