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Dutch Overseas: Introductory Remarks on Dutch as an Immigrant Language

Jetske Klatter-Folmer & Sjaak Kroon

1 Introduction

This book is about Dutch as an immigrant language. It deals with the maintenance, shift, and loss of the language of origin of the Dutch emigrants who, mainly in the first decades after the Second World War, left the Netherlands in large numbers for a better future abroad. On their journey, they deliberately took along the material goods they thought would be useful in building this new future. They also, in most cases, unconsciously, took along their mother tongue, i.e., standard Dutch, a Dutch dialect, or (a variety of) Frisian as their main means of communication. Having settled in their new environment, most immigrants had to find out by trial and error what exactly was expected of them in terms of social behaviour and participation. Generally speaking, Dutch immigrants very quickly integrated into their second home country, at least that seems to be the general impression. This general belief that Dutch immigrants were very eager to blend into their new environment is certainly partly supported to a degree by a number of published collections of stories, experiences, and life histories of Dutch emigrants (see, for example, Elferink 1994). In addition to these, more or less subjective sources, more objective official data seems to support this view. An important source in this respect is official census data that seems to provide overwhelming evidence that Dutch immigrants did not consider their native language a decisive factor in succeeding as an immigrant in, for example, Australia, to mention just one of the favourite Dutch post-war immigration countries (see Clyne 1982). As a consequence, according to popular belief, the Dutch language was replaced by the dominant language of the immigration country within at most three generations.

Two examples may illustrate this point. The first is from Schouten (1992), a book on Dutch immigrants in New Zealand, which has a strong personal touch, referring to the language issue from the immigrant point of view as follows:

- 'Een, twee, drie, vier...' Aantje Schouten counted the boats along Oamaru's waterfront as she walked along with her three-year-old son.
- 'No Mum, you don't do it like that - it's one, two, three, four,' the youngster angrily corrected his mother - this was New Zealand and English was the only language.

Nobody else in the small South Island spoke Dutch, and his three older brothers, who were already going to school, were having a hard time for being so obviously different. (...)

The experience of the Schouten boys was common to a whole generation of immigrant children. There were few opportunities to use Dutch outside the family and very quickly it became a language that only the parents used. There was no compelling reason for the children to learn their mother tongue and most parents accepted the loss of the language as part of the process of adjusting to their adopted land. (...)

Like many immigrant children these boys tried to drop their Dutch as quickly as they swapped their plusfours for shorts. (Schouten 1992:135-136)

A second example, proving the same point, is taken from the host country point of view. In 1983, the *Conseil scolaire de l'île de Montréal* published some twenty-five booklets and accompanying leaflets on ethnic groups for educational use in Montreal. One of the volumes in this series is entitled *Les Hollandais à Montréal* (Primeau 1983). This booklet provides information about the approximately 12,600 people of Dutch origin living in Montreal, covering issues such as *Le pays d'origine des Néerlandais*, *L'histoire des Néerlandais ici*, *Les Néerlandais aiment le Canada*, *Une minorité invisible*, *Les activités des Néerlandais parmi nous*, and *C'est ainsi qu'ils vivent ici*. Coming from the Netherlands as a country that 'is well known for its tulips, windmills and canals' (Primeau 1983:5), the Dutch as an immigrant community in Montreal have kept

des coutumes et des traditions différentes des autres peuples. (...) Les Néerlandais aiment leur foyer et leur famille. Ils aiment ce qu'ils appellent le 'gezelligheid'. Ce mot néerlandais signifie confort et atmosphère agréable. La façon dont ils décorent leur maison fait bien voir ce que veut dire le 'gezelligheid'. On retrouve de vieilles horloges. On voit aussi des tuiles en céramique de Delf. (...) Des tableaux, des reproductions de peintures anciennes ou des tapisseries ornent les murs. Sur les tables, on aperçoit des centres de table sur lesquels sont déposées des plantes et des fleurs: les Hollandais sont reconnus pour bien les cultiver. Sur un mur, on peut aussi voir le calendrier des anniversaires. (Primeau 1983:13)

But when it comes to language, the Dutch in Quebec do not seem to be that 'conservative':

Les Néerlandais du Québec ne se préoccupaient pas beaucoup de la survie de leur langue ici, contrairement à d'autres communautés ethniques. Cependant, depuis la fin des années 1970, quelques cours de néerlandais sont apparus un peu partout au Canada dont à Montréal. Il faut bien dire que l'effort est modeste. (Primeau 1983:14)

These observations are not unique in the literature on Dutch emigration. It is, however, remarkable that an echo of these findings can even be found in recent Dutch publications dealing with the position of non-indigenous ethnic minority languages such as Turkish and Arabic and the teaching of these languages in schools in the Netherlands. According to Extra (1995), for example, the key to

understanding the rather negative attitude towards the maintenance of ethnic minority languages on the part of majority groups, such as national or local education authorities, school boards or principals, and majority language teachers should be sought in the attitude of many Dutch people in the Netherlands and abroad towards their own language and culture:

In a study entitled *Het Nederlands onbehagen* (The Dutch discomfort), Pleij (1991) argued that a major characteristic of Dutch identity seems to be the denial of such an identity, in combination with a widely observed lack of cultural self-awareness. A magnifying effect of this attitude can be observed in the attitude towards the language of origin of many Dutch people abroad. Successive population census data in the USA, Canada and Australia have shown that Dutch immigrants in each of these countries are at the top of the list of those minority groups who give up their home language to a large extent within one generation, and shift to English (...). At least in the context of these immigration countries where English is dominant, the language of origin is apparently not perceived by many Dutch people as a core-value to cultural identity. (Extra 1995:103)

It is not our intention here to contest the general impression of the Dutch immigrants as a group lacking great concern about language maintenance. What is intended, however, is to provide at least the beginning of an empirical basis for valid answers to questions regarding the linguistic behaviour of Dutch immigrants in varying linguistic contexts, at the group as well as the individual level, at the intergenerational as well as the intragenerational level, and at the level of language maintenance as well as language loss. It is hoped that the evidence provided here can lead to a deeper understanding of language contact processes and their consequences, reaching further than the common wisdom, all too easily assumed, about Dutch 'disappearing' as an immigrant language.

In order to reach this goal, the book, in addition to this general introduction and a second introductory chapter on the history and backgrounds of Dutch post-war emigration movements (*Elferink & Smits*), consists of thirteen contributions dealing with different aspects of maintenance, shift, and loss of Dutch in immigration contexts in nine locations around the world. In alphabetical order, these locations are: Australia (*Clyne & Pauwels; Bennett; Ammerlaan*), Brazil (*Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek*), Canada (*De Vries & De Vries; Vermeer*), France (*De Bot, Gommans & Rossing*), Indonesia (*Giesbers*), Israel (*Soesman*), New Zealand (*Klatter-Folmer*), South Africa (*Raidt*), and the United States of America (*Daan; Van Marle & Smits*). With the exception of *De Bot et al.*, which is a slightly adapted reprint of an earlier article on Dutch in France, all contributions were originally written for this volume, and, with one exception, they also deal with Dutch *overseas*, thereby illustrating that emigration from the Netherlands in the decades after the Second World War was, as a rule, overseas emigration, in many cases starting at the (still) famous *Vertrekhal* (Departure Hall) of the Holland America Line in Rotterdam harbour.

The remainder of this introduction is devoted to providing background information

on the different Dutch immigration countries that are represented in this book (section 2) and to discussing, from a comparative perspective (possible and factual), research questions and methodologies of the researchers who, thirty years after Heinz Kloss's famous article on language maintenance and shift of German immigrants in the United States (Kloss 1966), focus on investigating these phenomena from a 'Dutch' perspective (section 3). Section 4 contains concluding remarks.

2 Research sites

Although the locations dealt with in this volume share the common characteristic of being the destination of Dutch citizens who, for various reasons, under various circumstances and with varying degrees of success left the Netherlands in the 1950s, they are also different in quite a number of respects. Among the differences relevant to the issue of language maintenance, shift, and loss, the various official languages in the host countries, the religions and cultures, and their different histories in terms of immigration from the Netherlands require discussion.

The selection of immigration countries represented in this volume is both deliberate and accidental at the same time. The accidental aspect in our choice has to do with the availability of research results in the field of Dutch language maintenance, shift, and loss and the authors' familiarity with this research. Given this restriction, efforts were made to include as many different types of Dutch immigration countries as possible. First of all, the 'traditional' major Dutch immigration countries are represented: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States of America. Secondly, a number of countries are included that do have a Dutch immigration tradition, albeit a rather modest one in terms of the absolute number of immigrants. In this group, Brazil, France, and South Africa are included. A third group consists of countries that, historically speaking, do not have a real Dutch immigration tradition but do receive Dutch immigrants every now and then. Included in this group are Indonesia and Israel. With respect to language, immigration contexts in which less familiar languages such as French (France), Portuguese (Brazil), Afrikaans (South Africa), Indonesian (Indonesia) and modern Hebrew (Israel) functioned as host languages were included in addition to the usually well-represented Anglophone countries (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States).

Let us now look at these countries in more detail with respect to their (historical) immigration connection with the Netherlands.

Australia

According to Pauwels (1986), Dutch emigration to Australia only became significant after the Second World War. In 1950-1951, 19,863 Dutch emigrants arrived in Australia; in 1952-1953, 19,996 and in 1955-1956, another 14,126. After these peak years, Dutch emigration to Australia gradually declined. In 1961, there

were still 102,083 immigrants of Dutch origin, but in the following years many disappointed Dutch immigrants returned to the Netherlands; and in 1976, the number of Dutch immigrants living in Australia had dropped to 92,100.

Dutch emigration to Australia mainly related to individual rather than group or chain migration. A well-known exception was the seven families from the Dutch northern province of Groningen, united through a joint history in the resistance movement during the Second World War, who founded 'Little Groningen' in Tasmania. However, this group settlement was short-lived. The Dutch provinces of Zuid- and Noord-Holland, Noord-Brabant, Gelderland and Limburg supplied most Australia-bound emigrants.

Most Dutch emigrants settled in outer suburban areas. They generally had attended primary school as well as some form of secondary education in the Netherlands. They found employment in many different sectors. Here and there Dutch ethnic clubs were set up, which aimed at creating *gezelligheid* (social togetherness). In recent years, as the number of elderly Dutch people has increased, these Dutch clubs have tried to provide them with a typical Dutch environment. From the outset, however, Dutch immigrants, quite rapidly adapted to Australian society despite these ethnic activities, even in linguistic terms. The shift to English has been high in comparison to other ethnic groups, especially in the second generation. The degree of intermarriage, mainly with (Anglo-)Australians, is also relatively high (Pauwels 1986).

Brazil

Dutch settlement in Brazil started in 1624-1625 and more definitively in 1630 when the Dutch West India Company conquered Recife and came into possession of the northeast of the country. For twenty-four years, the Dutch ruled the sugar culture and trade in Brazil and, from 1637 to 1644, the Dutch colony was governed by Prince Johan Maurits van Nassau. In 1656, the Dutch were driven out (Janssen & Plantenga 1990).

Apart from minor and incidental settlement by farmers in 1860 (Espírito Santo) and 1902 (Paraná), organized Dutch emigration to Brazil did not really start until 1948 with the founding of a colony of Catholic Dutch farmers called Holambra by the *Katholieke Nederlandse Boeren en Tuindersbond* (Catholic Dutch Farmers and Market Gardeners Union). Some ten more or less successful larger and smaller Catholic as well as Protestant colonies followed, such as Monte Alegre (1949), Castrolanda (1951), and Arapoti and Holambra 2 (1960). Apart from these relatively closed and strictly managed agricultural cooperations consisting of communities of fellow believers and countrymen, there was also 'free' emigration from the Netherlands to Brazil. One of the most important differences between these two types of immigration were the limited possibilities in the colonies for getting into contact with Brazilian society - as one of the former Holambra farmers said: 'At Holambra you'll never get to know Brazil' (Smits 1989:126; quoted from Hack 1959).

Emigration numbers from the Dutch Bureau of Statistics and the *Directie voor Emigratie*¹ show that Dutch emigration to Brazil reached a peak in the 1950s. In the decades that followed, a relatively stable average of some 200 immigrants per year

were registered.

According to Sorgedrager (1991), the Dutch in Brazil have adopted a number of Brazilian habits, such as the *churrasco* (spit), but at the same time have maintained Dutch customs such as *Sinterklaas*. With respect to language use, Sorgedrager noted that the majority of first-generation Dutch immigrants were bilingual in Dutch and Portuguese, whereas their descendants were primarily Portuguese-speaking.

Canada

Ganzevoort (1985) calculated that between 1890 and 1980, some 200,000 Dutch people emigrated to Canada from the Netherlands and from the United States. In the years 1890-1914, they were mostly agricultural pioneer settlers; they were followed by farm-hands and farmers in the interbellum period and shortly after the Second World War. According to the Dutch Bureau of Statistics, some 170,000 Dutch citizens entered Canada in the first two decades after the war. In later years, industrial workers, service workers, and professionals were 'recruited' in the Netherlands and other countries. The number of Dutch immigrants in the period 1970-1994 was approximately 38,000.

When the Dutch arrived in Canada, they found themselves regarded as 'acceptable' immigrants and thus experienced Canadian society as open to change and offering lots of opportunities for personal achievement. As a consequence, the integration or assimilation of the Dutch into Canadian society did not take long. The ethnic clubs that were established were only short-lived because of their dependence on a few first-generation organizers. At present, the Dutch-Canadian can be considered a 'vanishing species' (Ganzevoort 1985), as is his language. Among the now remaining ethnic remnants are family names (*Vander Berg*, *De Groot*), *NL* (or Frisian) bumper stickers, the continued use of the picture window valance or curtain, and Dutch business names (*Voortman's Cookies*) (Ganzevoort 1985).

France

Like Brazil, France witnessed a wave of primarily rural Catholic Dutch migration following the Second World War. As early as the 1920s, however, France was known as an immigration country for Dutch farmers and farm labourers. According to Heymeijer (1926), the first Dutch immigrants settled in France in 1906, but the majority arrived after the First World War. In 1925, the estimated number of Dutch farmer families in France was 85.

According to Smits (1989), the activities of the Emigration Organization of the *Katholieke Nederlandse Boeren en Tuindersbond* in the 1940s and 1950s to promote group emigration and Catholic Dutch farmer settlements, for social and religious reasons, was ultimately not very successful. As early as the 1950s, the majority of Dutch emigrants went to France without the help of the Emigration Organization. The emigration numbers from the Netherlands to France provided by the Dutch Bureau of Statistics show a steady increase from some 12,000 and 15,000 immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s respectively to some 21,000 in the 1970s and 1980s and already some 12,500 in the first half of the 1990s.

Indonesia

Dutch sailors, and with them the Dutch language, first entered the Indonesian Archipelago at the end of the sixteenth century. According to Groeneboer (1993), the Dutch language, mainly as a consequence of the Dutch colonial language policy, was deliberately never spread amongst the native population in the Dutch Indies, and after some 350 years of Dutch dominance, on the eve of the Second World War, only an estimated two per cent of the total population was believed to be Dutch-speaking.

After the Second World War, large numbers of Dutch citizens returned from Indonesia to the Netherlands. The Dutch Bureau of Statistics mentions some 70,000 remigrants in 1946 and again 22,000 in 1947 (CBS 1950). Post-war emigration figures from the Netherlands, on the other hand, show that large numbers of Dutch citizens (temporarily) left the country for Indonesia (again). Although a total of 81,467 Dutch emigrants to Indonesia was recorded in the period 1945 to 1949, the country actually ceased to be an immigration country for Dutch citizens after the Second World War. On the 27th of December 1949, the date of the transfer of sovereignty, Dutch formally ceased to exist as the language of government and education in Indonesia. This is not to say, however, that the Dutch language totally disappeared from the Indonesian Archipelago. Commenting on this, Groeneboer (1993:463), in his profound study of Dutch language policy in the Dutch Indies from 1600 to 1950, concluded that Dutch in Indonesia is no longer a 'living language' but mainly plays the role of a 'dead language', i.e., the language that is necessary for study and research in sources, libraries, and archives.

Apart from individual exceptions, the Dutch presence in the Republic of Indonesia is now limited to a small community of expatriates, most of them (temporarily) working and living in Jakarta, who send their children to Dutch or international (i.e., English) schools. The number of Dutch 'emigrants' to Indonesia from 1960 onwards decreased from an average of 1,335 each year in the 1960s to 865 in the 1990s.

Israel

The majority of Dutch citizens who left the Netherlands to emigrate to Israel were and are Jews. Apart from some relatively small groups who, for Zionistic reasons mainly, left the Netherlands as Palestine pioneers in the 1930s, the majority of Dutch emigrants to Israel left the Netherlands after the Second World War. Apart from the Holocaust experience and the not very rosy post-war situation in the Netherlands, the foundation of the state of Israel in 1948 and the Korean crisis in 1951, combined with the fear of a new world war, played an important role in this decision (Michman, Beem & Michman 1992). According to Voet (1989), the total number of Dutch citizens emigrating to Israel between 1950 and 1986 was 9,819. In the same period, some 6,932 people of Dutch descent (re)migrated from Israel to the Netherlands. In the years around 1950, the annual number of Dutch emigrants to Israel was some 300, steadily diminishing, however, to some 150 each year. Only in the 1970s, especially after the Yom Kippur War, did the numbers increase again to an annual figure of some 350 emigrants.

Nowadays around 100 to 130 Dutch Jews, individuals as well as families, move to Israel each year. Most of them are under 40 years of age, and as it turns out they rather quickly learn modern Hebrew and easily integrate into Israel society (De Beer 1994).

New Zealand

New Zealand is connected with the Netherlands through its 'discovery' by Abel Janszoon Tasman, a navigator in the service of the Dutch East India Company in 1643. There must have been New Zealanders of Dutch origin ever since, but according to Schouten (1992), the first New Zealand census in 1874 only reported 112 males and 15 females of Dutch birth among the 300,000 settlers then living in the country. Apart from a peak of 149 Dutch-born people in 1921, this number has changed little over the years. The 1945 census reported 128 Dutch descendants in New Zealand. The figures after 1945 show a dramatic increase of immigration from the Netherlands, from 1,655 Dutch-born people in 1951 to 20,471 in 1966. In the 1960s, Dutch mass emigration to New Zealand came to an end. Figures from the Dutch Bureau of Statistics show that from 1960 to 1994, the average number of Dutch immigrants to New Zealand was 895 per year. According to Schouten (1992:257):

There are no reliable figures on how many people of Dutch descent live in New Zealand. Rough estimates put the figure at over two per cent of New Zealand's total population of 3.5 million - about 80,000. There could be as many as 100,000 New Zealanders with Dutch blood in their veins, but Dutch descent does not necessarily imply Dutch identity. The majority of migrants' children regard themselves as New Zealanders, and apart from a limited knowledge of the Dutch language and a taste for Dutch food, they probably see themselves as Dutch in name only.

South Africa

In 1652, Jan van Riebeeck, a high-ranking civil servant and physician working for the Dutch East India Company, founded a Dutch settlement for the care of the sick on the Cape at the utmost southern tip of Africa. Out of this settlement grew a colony which became the centre of the later Union of South Africa. Although South Africa became an English colony in 1806, it maintained a special bond with the Dutch language and culture until the mid-twentieth century, and Dutch retained its status as a second official language along with English until 1925, when it was replaced by Afrikaans, the language that developed out of Cape Dutch (Raidt, this volume).

Apart from some smaller groups of Dutchmen that went to South Africa at the turn of the century for reasons of *stamverwantschap* (kinship) (SLN 1939), the majority of Dutch immigrants arrived there only after 1945. According to Ploeger (1994), most of the immigrants arrived between 1951 and 1965 with a peak of just over 4,000 immigrants in 1952. According to figures from the Dutch Central Bureau of Statistics, after 1965, Dutch immigration to South Africa dropped to an average of approximately 1,200 immigrants per year in the period 1965 to 1985 and

560 per year between 1985 and 1995. No doubt the former South African racist policy of apartheid, leading to a general boycott of the country, can be held at least partly responsible for this development. However, according to Raidt (this volume), the Dutch in South Africa became rapidly assimilated in the English and Afrikaans speaking population and, in 1970, Dutch was the home or first language of only about 18,000 speakers, whereas, according to the latest census figures of 1991, it now has dwindled to 7,929 speakers.

United States of America

In 1626, representatives of the Dutch West India Company bought the Island of Manhattan from the native Americans living there. *Nieuw Amsterdam*, as they called the colony, flourished, but as early as 1664, Peter Stuyvesant had to surrender the city to the English and three years later New York, as it was called then, was exchanged for the South American slave colony of Surinam.

According to De Vries, Willemyns & Burger (1993:268ff), in the years to follow, the Dutch colonists who had mainly settled in the states of New York and New Jersey gradually changed to English as their main language of communication. When in the 1850s the first groups of new Dutch immigrants left the Netherlands, mainly, for religious reasons (Daan 1987; this volume) and arrived in the United States, the language of the (descendants of the) first Dutch colonists had almost disappeared. In the newly arrived, mainly Protestant immigrant families, Dutch was used at home as the language of their religion well into the second half of the nineteenth century. In the period before the First World War, however, these and the newly arrived Catholic Dutch immigrants also changed to English.

Twentieth-century Dutch immigrants to the United States - averaging some 4,000 people each year since 1948 - went and continue to go there, favoured especially in the 1950s by special immigration acts, mainly for economic and not primarily religious reasons. In this context, there does not seem to be much need for preserving their own identity or language, and the change to English as a language of communication is, generally speaking, reported to take place within three generations.

3 Raising comparative questions

Although the contributions in this volume share a common interest in the adventures of Dutch as an immigrant language, there are considerable differences between them in terms of their specific focus or angle of interest in the broad field of language maintenance, shift, and loss, their research methodologies, their subjects and data gathering techniques, and the wider explanatory and theoretical frameworks they use. Against this background of diversity, our main aim in this section is to raise some comparative questions and issues that we hope will guide the reader through this volume, and elucidate a little bit more the intricate processes of first language maintenance, shift, and loss in a migration context. This is not to say that many answers will be given. Although there have been a number of research projects in the field, described in collections such as Lambert & Freed

(1982), Weltens, De Bot & Van Els (1986), Seliger & Vago (1991) and Fase, Jaspaert & Kroon (1993; 1995), to mention just a few, there still seem to be more questions than answers (Paulston 1994; Fishman 1995).

Different approaches

In this book, language maintenance, shift, and loss are approached from various research angles. Generally speaking, a major distinction can be made here between a linguistic and a social sciences approach, the first dealing mainly with language proficiency at the level of the individual, the second with language use at the (social) group level.

In the first type of research, which focusses mainly on language loss, linguistics proper is on the agenda in as far as researchers try, by means of linguistic analysis, to interpret and account for specific form characteristics of the language that is used by people who for various reasons are supposed to have suffered or are suffering language loss. In this type of research, which, as a matter of principle, can take any linguistic theory as a point of departure, phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, or semantic characteristics of immigrant languages might be investigated, or processes like code-switching, mixing, or borrowing in different situations or language environments. This type of research may use spontaneous language data from audio-recordings or letters, as well as language data that are gathered by test procedures such as linguistic insecurity, cloze, or editing tests. Linguistic analyses of language loss data are to be found in *Clyne & Pauwels*, *Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek*, *Giesbers*, *Klatter-Folmer*, *Raidt*, *Daan*, and *Van Marle & Smits*.

Closely related to the linguistic approach to language loss is sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic research in this field. In sociolinguistic research, the main focus is on the way in which sociological factors can be used to account for the emergence of language loss phenomena and the pace and extent of their dispersal in individuals and communities. Important factors in this respect are, for example, immigration history, generation, age, sex, religion, marriage patterns, cultural profile, and socio-economic status. In this type of research, linguistic analyses can be a first step in identifying linguistic facts that may serve as language loss variables. The operationalization of 'language' in sociolinguistic research on language loss can be rather general, as in, for example, investigations that focus on reported language use, proficiency or attitudes ('Which language do you speak with your children, parents, grandparents, *et cetera*?; How would you rate your proficiency in your first language?; Which language would you like your children to acquire?'), as well as quite specific, as in, for example, investigations that try to explain certain language loss characteristics at the level of linguistic form in terms of social characteristics of the language users that produce these. Examples of the above are *Clyne & Pauwels*, *Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek*, *Vermeer*, *Giesbers*, *Klatter-Folmer*, *Raidt*, *Daan*, and *Van Marle & Smits*).

In psycholinguistic research into language loss, the main focus is the way in which language loss processes work at a cognitive level, i.e., in the 'bilingual brain' that has to cope with languages that 'coexist in a state of competition for a finite amount of memory and processing space' (Seliger & Vago 1991:4). This type of research often uses an experimental design in which linguistic or other stimuli are

used to explore language loss as a phenomenon that tells us more about the functioning of the human mind with respect to acquisition, memorizing, forgetting and retrieval processes with respect to language than about language itself. Psycholinguistic research into Dutch language loss is reported here by *Ammerlaan, De Bot et al.*, and *Soesman*.

As has been indicated, the (socio- and psycho-)linguistic approaches discussed so far mainly deal with processes of language loss, attrition, or obsolescence at the level of an individual who, in a situation in which he or she is separated from the L1 community, as a consequence mainly of its limited use, can no longer use his or her first language the way he or she used to. Whereas language loss is mainly related to the individual, the issue of language shift is basically one that is related to the social group. As such, language shift and death and their counterparts, language maintenance and revival (Fishman 1991), in which language is simultaneously an object and subject of social processes, are mainly investigated from a social sciences approach. In this 'language-as-commodity' approach (De Vries 1992:212), various types of research can be distinguished.

A well-established approach in the study of language shift over time is demolinguistics. The term 'demolinguistics' indicates that we are dealing with the application of demography to language. Demolinguistics derives its research data from periodically collected *national* population censuses which include questions on language use. However, data gathering in a 'quasi-population', which 'may be defined as a proper subset of an overall population, which is "selfreproducing"' (De Vries 1990:60) is possible, as in, for example, immigrant groups. Although language data collected in demolinguistic research often suffers from serious reliability problems mainly as a consequence of lack of consistency in the phrasing of language questions in successive censuses, on the basis of this type of research, large-scale intergenerational patterns of language shift have been thoroughly investigated, and the approach has also turned out to be applicable in small-scale semi-longitudinal research. Apart from *De Vries & De Vries*, who explicitly deal with large-scale language census data, *Vermeer, Raidt*, and *Clyne & Pauwels*, be it on a much more limited scale, also refer to language shift data on the basis of (limited) language surveys.

Apart from questions on language use in various situations, demolinguistic as well as sociolinguistic research (see above) can also include the issue of language attitudes in their questionnaires. This can be done by questioning the subjects on their language preference in terms of which language(s) they prefer to use in various contexts, to which language(s) they attribute most beauty, richness, expressiveness, *et cetera*, and which language(s) they would want their children and children's children to acquire and maintain. The theoretical framework that underlies the investigation of language attitudes is to be found in the socio-psychological approach to the study of language behaviour. In this context, research that in one way or another deals with the concept of 'ethnolinguistic vitality' (Leets & Giles 1995) seems to be of importance for understanding processes of language maintenance and shift. In this volume, a socio-psychological perspective is chosen by *Bennett* in investigating the relationship between speaking Dutch and feeling

Dutch in Australia.

In his book *Language planning and social change*, Cooper (1989:99), on the basis of a more general definition of language policy or language planning, as he prefers to call it, defines 'status planning' as referring to 'deliberate efforts to influence the allocation of functions among a community's languages'. As far as language maintenance or shift processes in immigrant communities are concerned, basically two types of efforts can be localised: those of the immigrating group and those of the host society. It will come as no surprise that these efforts, in both instances, can go either way: preserving or doing away with the immigrants' first language and replacing or not replacing it by the host society's dominant language in (some of) the language functions mentioned by Cooper (1989:100-119). With regard to language maintenance, especially allocating provincial, educational, school subject, literary, religious, (mass) media, and work functions to the immigrants' first language seems to be of interest. In this volume, *Daan* deals with aspects of language policy.

Different operationalisations

As indicated above, one of the basic problems in language maintenance, loss, and shift research is the operationalisation of these very phenomena.

If we define language loss as a form of individual language evolution by which an individual loses (part of) his or her competence or proficiency in a particular language (Andersen 1982), language loss research basically deals with language proficiency data, collected in one way or another, and the interpretation of these data in terms of language loss.

The first set of questions to be answered is related to collecting the data base reflecting this proficiency and the point of reference to be used in order to judge whether the collected language proficiency data show language loss. Basically, the choice here is between collecting spontaneous language data or using language tests. Although, at first sight, spontaneous language data seems to be the most adequate source for drawing conclusions on language loss, a closer look reveals a number of problems. With respect to oral data, especially if large numbers of subjects are involved, collecting the data is a very laborious enterprise, and, what is more, it is difficult to collect in a way that can be really considered spontaneous (observer's paradox). Secondly, since in the collecting of spontaneous data, subjects are not 'guided' to show certain aspects of language proficiency, they can easily avoid language problems that have to do with language loss: if a certain word or construction has been forgotten, another word or construction can always be used without the researcher even being aware of it. But using tests is not without problems. Discussing the use of global language proficiency tests in language loss research, Jaspaert & Kroon (1987) refer to three types of problems. The first has to do with the choice of the previously mentioned point of reference that serves as a baseline measure for analysis of language proficiency in terms of language loss. Possible candidates are the use of linguistic data from other sources, the so-called fully competent speaker, or a control group in the country of origin (cf. Jaspaert, Kroon & Van Hout 1986). The second problem concerns the influence on language proficiency test results of factors like metalinguistic knowledge and test skills. The

third problem has to do with the lack of grounded knowledge with respect to the elements that are most susceptible to loss and that therefore should be included in language loss tests. Possible solutions could be using either a fairly extensive test battery or opting for specific procedures, selected on the basis of theoretical considerations.

In this volume, spontaneous language data are used by *Clyne & Pauwels*, *Giesbers*, *Daan*, and *Van Marle & Smits* (oral) and *Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek*, *Klatter-Folmer*, and *Raidt* (written). (Additional) language testing is reported by *Vermeer*, *De Bot et al.*, and *Klatter-Folmer*. Experimental research procedures are used by *Ammerlaan*, *De Bot et al.*, and *Soesman*. *De Vries & De Vries* use official census data and *Bennett* uses a socio-psychological questionnaire.

Another issue under the heading of 'operationalisation' concerns the question whether research into language maintenance, shift, and loss must have a longitudinal design. Clearly, conclusions about the rate of language loss in individuals can only be drawn from longitudinal research. Apart from the organisational and financial problems of this type of research - which should certainly not be underestimated - a serious methodological problem that has to be faced in longitudinal designs has to do with the (positive) effect of repeated language loss testing on language proficiency (*Jaspaert & Kroon 1987*). Contributions referring to real longitudinal language loss data are *Clyne & Pauwels* and *Van Marle & Smits*. *Schoenmakers-Klein Gunnewiek* and *Klatter-Folmer* use a semi-longitudinal design in which language loss characteristics of different generations are compared. Different groups in terms of age and/or period of stay in the immigrant country, which allows longitudinal conclusions to be reached, are compared by *Ammerlaan*, *De Bot et al.*, *Soesman* and *Raidt*. *Giesbers* is a one-shot case study of the language loss of one individual.

Different language environments

Linguistically speaking, this book deals with (mainly Anglophone) immigration countries where Germanic languages are spoken, such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, but also South Africa (Afrikaans), and countries where (again: mainly) Romance languages are spoken such as Brazil (Portuguese) and France (French), both groups belonging to the Indogermanic language family. Apart from these, we have Israel with (modern) Hebrew as a representative of the Semitic language family and Indonesia with Indonesian, a language that belongs to the Malayo-Polynesian sub-family of the Austronesian languages. This variety of host languages or second languages to be acquired by Dutch immigrants in addition to their first language Dutch provides an interesting basis for cross-linguistic comparisons as recommended by, among others, *Van Els (1986)* and *Jaspaert & Kroon (1992)*.

From a linguistic point of view, a comparison of the changes that take place in the linguistic form of the Germanic language of Dutch immigrants in the process of competition with other languages in different Germanic, Romance, Semitic, and Austronesian language environments is interesting. It could provide deeper insight into the universal characteristics of 'externally induced' changes in L1, 'variously

called transfer, interference, convergence, interlingual effects, or crosslinguistic influences', in which 'an element (form, construction, *et cetera*) in L1 is patterned on analogy to L2' (Seliger & Vago 1991:7), and, as such, shed some more light on first language loss or attrition as a process in which language universals, in more or less the same way as in language acquisition (Berko-Gleason 1982), play an important role.

Different circumstances

From a sociolinguistic point of view, it is interesting to compare the different demographic, socio-economic and sociocultural circumstances in which Dutch immigrants found themselves in the various countries they went to and the influence of these circumstances on processes of language maintenance, shift, and loss. The contributions in this volume deal with a number of different circumstances.

Differences between group migration, for example, farmer families to Brazil and France, and individual migration to countries like Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States are of importance here, as are the differences between mainly economically motivated migration, as in the cases mentioned above, and migration for ideological reasons, as in the case of Israel or, to a lesser extent, South Africa. If one compares the situation of Dutch Catholics emigrating to Catholic countries like Brazil or France with Dutch Protestants going to the same countries, it will immediately be clear that religion can also be an important factor in processes of language maintenance and shift. Belonging to the same religion as the host society can be conducive to integration and language shift, whereas religious isolation may lead to linguistic isolation and language maintenance (cf. Huffines 1980).

The socio-economic status of the immigrants in their host country is also an important factor. Did they become independent farmers, sometimes even employing indigenous farm-hands as in Brazil or France, or did they start their emigration career as farm-hands themselves as in Canada or the United States of America? Were they well-educated middle-class emigrants who, as in the case of Israel wanted to contribute, among other things, to the development of their new fatherland or did they just come for their own sake, for merely economic reasons? Were they considered as welcome, hard-working, intermarrying, and easily integrating or even assimilating 'relatives', or as unwelcome, uninvited 'profiteers' who isolated themselves and stuck to their specific customs?

A final point here has to do with the question of cultural similarity or dissimilarity between the home and the host country. Although they might be very different in a number of respects, countries like Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and even South Africa offered Dutch immigrants a fairly familiar, basically western, white and Anglo-Saxon society and culture, whereas countries like Brazil, Indonesia, or Israel, certainly in the eyes of Dutch immigrants in the 1950s, had a much more exotic flavour in terms of language, culture, and inhabitants and were certainly less easy to deal with.

4 Concluding remarks

A number of comparative questions and issues have been raised in this introduction. No attempt has been made to answer them in terms of a profound comparative analysis of the language loss and shift data presented by the various papers that are collected in this volume. Such an attempt would doubtless prove futile because of the simple fact that one cannot compare the incommensurable. As a consequence of the overgeneralization and oversimplification that would be unavoidable in the comparative analysis of the rich and ample data presented here, one would most probably end up drawing very superficial and, in the end, pointless conclusions on loss and shift of Dutch as an immigrant language.

Rather than running this risk, we would like to propose a future cross-national and cross-linguistic research project on Dutch language loss and shift in which it would be possible to combine the approaches that have been used in the investigations reported on here and to avoid (at least some of) the methodological and practical problems and pitfalls that were encountered in carrying them out. Such an endeavour, carried out by a closely cooperating international team of researchers, could certainly contribute, by means of comparative analyses of comparable data, to a deeper understanding of 'what man does to language and what language does to man whenever the organic bond between the two is threatened' (Fase, Jaspaert & Kroon 1992:10).

The understanding of Dutch language loss and shift processes that we are ultimately aiming at cannot be reached without also taking into account the historical evidence that is available with respect to Dutch as a language in contact. Unlike the languages of other colonial powers in the seventeenth century, English, Spanish, and Portuguese, Dutch never became a world language. As is pointed out in De Vries, Willemyns & Burger (1993) in a chapter entitled *Nederlands buitengaats* (Dutch offshore), the Dutch were first of all seeking profit and were not concerned with spreading their culture or language. The famous Dutch 'spirit of commerce' led them to gain credit by knowing other languages rather than by standing up for their own language (Van der Wal & Van Bree 1994:375). This philosophy, however, did not prevent the Dutch language from leaving its traces in a number of languages spoken in the regions where the Dutch went ashore or even from contributing to the creation of 'mixed languages' (Bakker & Mous 1994), for example, Mohawk Dutch and Negro Dutch in the State of New York, *Negerhollands* on the Virgin Islands, Berbice in the Caribbean, and Petjo in the Indonesian Archipelago. Comparing these historical examples of language contact and its outcomes in terms of language creation and intertwining with contemporary language contact situations in which Dutch as an immigrant language finds itself in a situation of competition (Wardhaugh 1987) with well-established official language(s) of immigration countries such as the United States, Australia or France would certainly contribute to a further clarification and deeper understanding of contemporary processes of shift and loss in Dutch overseas.

1 Emigration figures reported here were provided by the Dutch Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS), *Hoofdafdeling Bevolkingsstatistieken* and the annual reports of the (former) *Directie voor Emigratie* (Direction for Emigration) of the Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment. See Elferink & Smits in this volume for some admonishing remarks on the value of Dutch emigration figures from various sources.

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